

**Book Review****Art, Love, History and Culture: Santiniketan Collections****Author: Koral Dasgupta****Book: *Fall Winter Collections*****Price: Rs 395****Pages: 233****ISBN: 9789383098842****Year of Publication: 2015****Publisher: Niyogi Books, New Delhi****Review By: Dr Ajit Kumar \***

After her famous book about Shah Rukh Khan, *Power of a Common Man* (2014), Koral Dasgupta in her debut fiction book *Fall Winter Collections* has a wonderful series of chapters about the life at Santiniketan, the land of Tagore. Santiniketan, which is a paradigm of intellectual, artistic and cultural side, seems to be a well known place to the author. The book has a great description about the busy life pattern in Santiniketan. Her protagonists Dr Aniruddh Jain Solanki and Sanghamitra Banerjee teach at Viswa Bharati University. They both are alone and their philosophy and approach towards nature and art bring them closure. After the initial indifference, they later emerge as the best compliment for each other. In this way, Koral Dasgupta shows the similar and dissimilar approach of Solanki and Banerjee towards the different phases and aspects of life. She mentions in the very beginning, "Only difference between the sculptor and the professor is that the sculptor wants to capture his object of beauty, the professor lets go (Fall Winters 6). She describes the different perspectives of the people about art and theology. She highlights the ideas of each and every one around, which includes the university people and the rickshaw puller. The eventful and detailed description of Aniruddh, a sculptor by profession, and Sanghamitra enhance the artistic beauty of the book. The fiction of love increases the twist to the existence of this book as wonderful piece of literature.

The most important thing which impresses the most is Koral Dasgupta's description of Shantiniketan which begins right from the first page of the book with her narration of *Poush Mela* and especially Debendranath Tagore's birthday at Santiniketan. In chapter, 'King and Queen' Dasgupta describes another event, "Today is Bengali New Years Day, Vishwa Bharati also celebrates Tagore's birthday today...The university closes for summer vacation after celebrating the occasion on 14<sup>th</sup> of April" (Fall Winters 147). In fact, she uses a sublime language which obtains the attention of reader and offers a flow of reading the book. Her simple language seems the voice of the heart of everyman. The title of each chapter such as 'What's in a Name', 'The Journey Begins', 'It is inauspicious for Women', 'Kaun Gali Gayo Shyam...', 'Slice of My Life', 'Lines that Mean Nothing', 'Manali', 'Note to My Mother', 'The Imperfect Dawn', 'Krishna's Sixth Woman' etc. are woven so emphatically that the book emerges as a series

of eventful and detailed description of love, art, culture and history. Throughout the book, it exhibits that the language of chapters comes out spontaneously without any forced strain.

The book, indeed, takes the reader to Santiniketan, and introduces the different cultural and historic facts and phases of life there around. The way, author has defined the different stages of human life proves her to be a great analyst of the Nature, art and cultural treatise. She has literally succeeded in her aim of depicting the history and traditions of Santiniketan. There is nowhere a touch of artificiality; rather Dasgupta has poured out the best emotions about the place and love story both without any involvement of any synthetic element used. The book is published well and is a veritable exhibition for any book lover on account of error free printing and fascinating cover design along with its artistic and emotional content in a unique manner.

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