

FEMINIST STUDY ON PAL'S PAINTINGS

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Abstract

Art, an ever growing vast subject met with yet another revolution during the 1960s around the world with its major impact particularly manifested during the 1980s in India with the introduction of elements of Feminism. Feminism, as per literature, is the advocacy of women's right on the grounds of sexual equality. And this 'advocacy' went so far as it didn't introduce itself to the domain of Art, instead it made its way into it and got absorbed so vastly that it opened a completely new perspective of the way various art-forms are looked at now. In the paper, an effort is being made to carry out a feminist study in Art by analyzing GogiSaroj Pal as the feminist artist.

Keywords: Feminism, Kama dhenu, Kinnari, Hat yogini, Form, Painting.

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I. INTRODUCTION

There is no fix formula when you go about achieving a task. With time, everything is bound to change. Change... can be often good. The changes in Art-forms brought upon during the late 1960s amidst anti-war demonstrations as well as civil and queer right movements has established the now well-known Feminist Art Culture which in turn has provoked the spectator through its contents critical questions on social and political situations in the hope that with its help, things may improve. Almost contemporarily, many feminist artists in India also made them established by 1980s at par with the men but with their own respective and independent concerns.

An enterprising and rebellious lady with daring and up straight intents, who also happens to have had many solo shows in India and group shows around the world with numerous awards under her credit including the prestigious National Award of Lalit Kala Akademi, Mrs. GogiSaroj Pal from India is being analyzed as the Feminist Artist in this paper.

II. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVE

Motivation is hard to find when life becomes routine. It is the struggle mode where life comes alive. The scope of this feminist study on Pal's painting forms endorses that struggle as a witness, giving life to the Feminism in art-forms in India. It motivates the art enthusiast in general to go deep into their thoughts and explore the hidden concepts of their perceptions about women's life with all its complete aspects varying under each different context.

The objective of this study is to analyze Pal's series of Kamadhenu, Hat Yogini and Kinnari painting forms.

III. KAMADHENU SERIES (1989-1995)

Kamadhenu is a Sanskrit word made from Kama meaning desire, and Dhenu meaning cow milk. Kamadhenu though not being a deity in itself, it is considered as sacred by Hindus in Indian culture. It is expected that she would grant all the wishes and desires of her owner. It goes without saying the importance of such a species. Her milk is used to nurture life of many life-forms, and the dung is a source of fuel and brick for millions of rural families. The skin when later used as clothing provides the warmth. Even the urine has a cure for many a disease.

When one looks at the Kamadhenu paintings, it is so striking to see that how the two life forms are merged together with different composition, carrying often women part shown till bust followed by the physical feature of the animal cow. With the use of mostly contrast colors, one easily gets into the extrinsic emotions depicted in the content, and the eyes just give away the cue that what would be going around in the mind of the women in painting. The paintings show mostly middle aged women in their 30s which is an average age of a married woman with kids, who being in her optimum level of physical strength, gives contribution to the entire supportive role in the patriarchal families lead by their husbands. The similar question each of these charming painting seems to ask its viewer occurs as after all this struggle, in the end, how she is taken care of.

IV. HAT YOGINI SERIES (1995-1997)

Hat Yogini, again a Sanskrit word which depicts a Yogini (female practitioner of Yoga) performing Hatha Yoga (form of yoga attributed with force). In this version of women, the mighty aspect of Kamadhenu can be distinctly seen. The Hat Yogini is shown riding ferocious and powerful animals such as tiger, and fights against with demons in a similar fashion to a diety in Hindu mythology, called Kali. According to Mrs. Pal in her interview at Art Talk show, she says that the concept of Hat Yogini came in with the idea of giving a place to women to practice yoga for her, which was not quite common in Indian tradition. Doing so would have certainly helped in the improvement of physical well-being and spirituality of women. Fighting against with the demons comes as yet another part of exploring her potential in the face of adversity instead of backing down.

V. KINNARI SERIES (1989-1999)

Kinnari, a yet another Sanskrit word, is a question statement asking that how much a woman you are. The prime idea behind the paintings Mrs. Pal says is the survival instinct of women only for the sake of well-being of next generation, which requires constant struggle and sacrifice exactly as birds do while migrating towards favorable locations thereby changing habits and routines. The merged form of creatures is again evident here in the form of women shown till her bust and consecutively complemented by a bird's body. The facial expressions again look similar to that of Kamadhenu. But here, she doesn't appear to be wishing for someone asking her that how she

is. Instead, she seems to be pretty busy in planning further her entourage's movement with stance as to have accepted the current status quo in her life for the reasons best known only to her.

VI. CONCLUSION

Initializing a measure is such an extreme task and the painting series mentioned in the analysis was although a smaller part of the whole, nevertheless, it bears a significant contribution in the Feminist impact on Art in India specifically, and the world in general. From one of the common aspect of all three series of paintings, we learn that the women depicted mainly lives in the patriarchal society which also happens to be the norm around the world. Thus, it is ample to say that Mrs. Pal has covered lives of majority of women in her paintings showing emotions of compassion, passion, power, ferocity as well as emotional maturity in social and political scenario. Unfolding thought provoking ideas with varying contexts in every changing plate of painting so as to spread situational awareness about women this had been the mantra of Mrs. Pal's work then, and still stands at the center in today's feminist art-culture.

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