

Gogi Saroj Pal & F. N. Souza: an Inquiry of the Projection of Art and Aesthetics in context to Traditional Indian Norms

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ABSTRACT

The projection of women in the paintings is a debatable topic from the remote past. The subject itself establish a comparative angle as it includes male and female. In ancient times, the artworks used to create an aesthetics and meant for the pleasure of onlookers. The approach of modern artworks is entirely different and opposite. To analyze the concept of art and aesthetics in relation to conventional Indian philosophy, Gogi Saroj Pal and F. N. Souza have been used as case studies to observe the changes in depiction as per the advancement of modernity. Francis Newton Souza, who portrays his artwork in a very innovative manner, has adopted a peculiar style. Although the distortion created by Souza has its own distinctive character, it is not suitable for individuals who want to enjoy art for its own sake without having any academic background. The works of Pal, who investigated the novel perspectives on women, have also been reviewed in this investigation.

Keywords:

INTRODUCTION

If the works of Post-colonial artists i.e. Souza and Pal are taken into consideration, Francis Newton Souza who is very progressive in the depiction of his artworks has taken an eccentric approach. Although the deformation which has been done by Souza has its own unique character but not for those who seek pleasure in the art without any theoretical knowledge. He mentioned once that he doesn't see any bifurcation between the Western and Eastern traditions of art like his contemporaries: "Even then, I never agreed with this division between "Indian" and "Western art". To me, knowledge was universal and aesthetics were Catholic" (Bhardwaj 2009). His notion of seeing aesthetic value was quite different as compared to most of the artist of his time. He was a vigilante who was very scientific as well in his thought process and development of forms on the surface. He used to be criticized for his flaming nudes and used deformation and deconstruction in his artworks. Sharma mentioned that "In his lifetime, Souza's paintings barely sold in India. He never had showpiece works like serene landscapes or spiritual abstracts or interpretations of Indian myths that usually appeal to Indian art buyers. Most of his paintings ridicule everything from Christianity to sex. "I use aesthetics rather than bullets or knives as a form of protest against stuffed shirts and hypocrites", he once said (Sharma, 2015).

Souza was belonging to the age where deformation and abstract expressionism was on peak in the art of the Western world. After the mark of the cubism, the meaning of aesthetic has been entirely changed and various isms and art movements supported the realistic encounters in the depiction of their artworks rather than the materialistic notions of the physical or outer body. The very phenomenon of gracefulness and physical beauty has been transformed into anti-beauty and ugly creations, which is the uttermost reality of life. Souza shared the same notion of projection and he was very close to the philosophy of Croce where he has depicted his subjects in an expression of his inner intuition. Most of the aesthetical theory indicate toward an aesthetic value of an art object, the very value which can be defined through the cognitive assets of the individuals. On the contrary, the works of Souza denote precognitive dreams and thoughts and most of the times he portrayed women with an anti-art approach. The art which is entirely opposing the notion of delightedness and pleasure. He has gone over the human psyche to depict metaphysically and sometimes he is also very connected with the philosophy of Plato, who considers art as an organic production of reality rather than imitating the morality of good art. He is also somehow envisaging the onlookers to the phenomenon of Catharsis through creating tragedy on the surface. But, in the discussion of his painted woman, the sexuality is still dominant as it was dominant in his life.

In the paintings of Souza, we can see a majority of different forms, but they do not belong to real life, they are neither human nor deity but they are beyond this two standard forms. In ancient Indian art, basically, the artist used to make familiar forms either in the shape of human beings or other creature and supernatural beings. The female figures of Souza are beyond such familiar or known shapes and figures. He has used multiple forms but as per his observation, he modified them first and then turned them into art forms. If we take the aesthetical beauty into some philosophical ways than they all might be acceptable but if we judge them as per the concept of beauty or visual pleasure, they are entirely shocking and disturbing first. He was the follower of aesthetic realism in the production of his artworks. As Souza has taken fellowship from his contemporaries like Bacon who was merely engaged in the production of aesthetic value in his artworks but his artworks do have an artistic or cognitive value, which arrests the gaze of the onlookers towards the thinking of a deeper subject, and that is the deformation of humanity. For the works of Bacon, Kieran argued that “Moreover grotesque, ugly and incoherent artworks may be valued by virtue of the way they enable us to explore our cognitive attitudes, beliefs, and desires. So, in the case of a Francis Bacon, though horrifically ugly and repulsive, the work may have great appeal and artistic value because it enables us to confront and explore what it would be like if humanity were rotten, diseased, corrupted and distorted. Through engaging with such artworks we may learn and develop our cognitive understanding of what certain human possibilities would or could be like (Kieran, 1997). Souza also experimented with some chemical effects in the last phase of his life; those paintings are known as chemical paintings. In these chemical paintings, he has used some printed images, which are closely related to man-woman intimacy after burning or scratching some of the parts of these images. So he entirely devastated the application of colors in his paintings.

Gogi Saroj Pal has also taken the variation of forms into new paradigms of representation in some abstract ways like Souza but her approach is also very different. So we can assume that both the artist are somehow not on the page of creating eye-pleasing art forms. Their purpose is to give the concept first and for the construction of concept, they have created their own values regarding the creation and variation of forms in the depiction of womanhood. The painting titled “Triad”

represents a female figure with two male figures and the title of the painting is suggesting towards the three, the three-way relationship has been executed in the painting. The painting is also projecting the gigantic female nude who is the center of the painting. The painting indicates the complexity of the relationship triangle but the structure of the body is very strange. One of the Pal's series titled "Altar for Nirbahya" has various forms of woman as engaged in powerful display against rape and social injustice. In these painting, Pal has used the symbolic significance of different objects to depict the inner trauma of the rape victim and to suggest a solution towards such traumatic incidents. This kind of projection is also somehow subverting the very norms of traditional Indian aesthetics or the six limbs of Indian paintings. The proportion of the figures is not well-maintained by both the artists. Both the paintings are creating two opposite sentiments one is pointing towards the strangeness of the man-woman relationship and another is proposing a thoughtful approach towards rape victims. In concern of grace and charming appearance, both the paintings are not getting fit into the *Lavanaya-yojnam* concept because they are not having anything like this. The aspect of similitude is again juxtaposing the thought of six limbs tenet. The color application of both the paintings are very strong and going with the themes.

Souza was highly conceptual in his way of depiction like the Dadaist and the Surrealists or the Futurist as he first of all target the trending norms of beauty, then he distorted its organic nature with rampant unrealism in the milieu of precognition. The paintings of Souza are far beyond the traditional norms of aesthetical delight or the norms of traditional Indian Six Limbs. He has developed a sense of variety in forms as per his experimental cliché where he was always roaming around. The imaginative diversion has been found in almost all of his painted nudes. The dramatic figures of his surface are not measured by aesthetic norms of proportion or similitude or gracious, as he is rejecting the very notion of beauty several times on his painted canvasses. Additionally, it can also be presumed that he was not showing the man-made concepts of beautiful art but he is taking the real or truth first in his depiction. He then made this truth as ugliest and filthy as he can make to show the reality in an imagined world, which could be scientific and supernatural at the same time. In this very notion, the woman who has been depicted by him is most of the times became an object of manipulating this rebellious attitude towards the so-called norms of beauty and society. She has become a tool in the hands of the artists to heal Souza's scars which he has got from his very childhood after suffering from such manipulation of beauty and pleasure. In respect of emotional sentiments, his numerous paintings take his onlookers into a nightmare where they feel hatred, alarmed and helpless at the same time. The woman who has been painted in their lusty attitude, also evoke sexual desire as they are inviting the onlookers into their dirty world. The onlookers can hardly get back to the reality without getting shocked or seduced by their hyperbolic appearance. He has shared the same ideology as like Duchamp and preferred sexuality and nudes at the first place among all the subjects as it is stated that "A final confirmation for this double-sided intent may be observed in some remarks Duchamp makes about his interest in sex: "I believe in eroticism a lot," it is "a thing that everyone understands," and "It replaces, if you wish, what other literary schools call Symbolism, Romanticism (Mcmahon, 1992).

Conclusion

The color application has also been taken to envisage the fire to scare and problematized the very notion of delicate beauty and charm. It can be taken into consideration Souza was on his way to distort the prevalent imagery of beauty and aesthetics and woman somehow came in the way of it

and became a tool of objectification and gender politics.

Coming towards the art of Gogi Saroj Pal, it is very clear that she is not executing his female protagonists to depict the beautiful woman, though her executed figures are full of a feminine grace. But as per the six limbs of Indian paintings, she does not follow any norm she is not taking similitude in her forms or not executing proportionate bodies as she usually does not work in realistic forms. Her work is also imaginative and contextual while most of the times we can observe generally there is a feeling of calmness and peace in most of her works. The most dominated sentiment which has been evoked by her executed female figures is strangeness in a balanced peace. The applied colors are also driving the same feelings in the onlookers. Numerous of her paintings are also have the bizarre approach as she usually executes half human and half animal in most of her series. After seeing the painting one can observe a sense of detachment to the existing world. The detachment which is not quite unknown, but reminds the supernatural depiction of ancient Indian art, where we can see the supernatural beings as having the body of human and animal. These earlier images used to be associated with the divine being, but Pal has given those powers to the early or common woman. She gives her the divine importance after being earthly, they are significant, and they are powerful in their respective world. There is no limit to how art can be used to make life more sensible. Gogi Saroj Pal, as per Western Aesthetical norms displaying the realism through her artworks, though her works are coming out a fantasy like Souza's she analyzed the reality first then takes a cognitive and precognitive discourse to compose the realistic encounters, associated with the life of the common woman. Souza chose the voluminous and overly sexualized depiction of women since he is a Catholic and was born in a state that was impacted by Western traditions. Picasso, Goya, Degas, Henry Matisse, and Francis Bacon were among the European and Italian masters of contemporary painting who had a significant impact on him. These artists all portrayed women in sensual and peculiar ways. The most influential was Picasso, a contemporary of his as well as someone who really inspired him. Similar facets of women were depicted by Picasso. Picasso is renowned for loving every woman that he portrays. Many of Souza's paintings resemble those of Picasso but his exclusive style is still dominant in his works.

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