“THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ARTIST TO THE ART SCENARIO IN JAMMU KASHMIR AND LADAKH AFTER 1947”

ABSTRACT

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Guide

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“Art is a living voice from the past, sometimes the only voice and no history of revolution can be complete or valid that has not listened to this voice”

(Herbert Read)

These lines show the importance of art in human life. In fact art is a language that depicts one’s feelings and thoughts in an artistic manner. Art is a beautiful way to express one’s inner feelings and deepest emotions through lines, forms and colours. Art enlightens both the creator and the beholder. It is a medium through which the heart expresses itself. As are not only expresses the emotions and feelings but also represents the social political environment of it’s time, I was greatly inspired to study the works of great artists of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The efforts of the local artists before and after the independence can still be seen.

After the study of the works of the artists, I am to know that not sufficient work has been done on these unknown artists, which inspires me to choose this topic, “The contribution of the Artists of the Art Scenario in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh”. My main objective in choosing this topic was to understand the whole new meaning of Art in Jammu and Kashmir State from 1947 to the present day. During this time artist of this region they were also trying to establish the status of the art like else where. In this topic will be touching the various phases of Art during this period. I will also to compare the work of earlier artists with the present day artists. My aim is also to study and gather information about the social physics, religious importance and the contribution of the individuals in the filed of Art which will enable the new budding artists to understand the struggles of the Artists, they had undergone during their journey towards fame.
Before 1947 Jammu was the main center for the miniature painting, these were also small centers which comes under the Jammu school like, Ramnagar, Reasi, Jasrota, Akhnor etc. Jammu school left its impression on the history of the miniature painting. These small schools flourished under the local rulers but after the decline of the local kingdom these art schools were also lost.

The story of modern art in Jammu and Kashmir starts with the opening of technical school in the 1st quarter of the 20th century, at Srinagar, Jammu Anantnag and Mirpur (now in Gilgit occupied are of J&K in Pakistan). Because in the backdrop of the western realism introduced through water colors, oil painting by armature European tourist during the 19th and early 20th century and commission given to the professional Artist by the local rulers.

These schools established to promote and revitalize local craft, imparted training in floral design, drawing, painting and clay modeling along with other subject like smithy, willow work etc. here local trainees were introduced to the tool of western realism like drawing from models, nature studies in water colors, oil painting etc the work of Master Sansar Chand, Sat La Khuru, M.N. Khosa, D.N Walli. Dost Mohammad, R.C Wantu, M.N Dhar etc. mainly consisted of landscape and portraits, oscillating between that of visual realist and romantic naturalist approach in a decadent Victorian style. And where an effort to Comment on living environment was made they ended up in allegories.

Till the closure of these technical institutes in 1951 many of the trained students became either teachers in these institutes or drawing teachers in various local schools. Drawing masters like Dma Nath Walli, Mohi-Ud-Din, Shiv Nath Raina etc. have greatly influenced some of the young students who later on became artists by profession.

In 40’s and 50’s at Jammu Hem Raj, Chandu Lal, Bodh Raj, Devi Dass, O.P. Sharma, V.R Khajuria etc (all students of Master Sansar Chand) either became commercial artists or painted landscape and portraits.
In Kashmir S.N. Bhat, Triloke Kaul, P.N. Kachroo. All these three known for the western cubist and impressionist style of painting. Ghulam Rasool Santosh. He is known for the tantric art Nisar Aziz. P.N. Kachroo, Pran Kishore, Bansi Parimoo, Mohan Raina etc. trained in academic realism practiced the same in their formative years as artist. But in late 1940’s and early 50’s the awareness of prevailing stylistic eclecticism in Modern Art; an outcome of radical material, social and intellectual innovations of 20 Century through traveling, exhibitions (UNESCO prints exhibition 1951-1953), visiting artists from other parts of India, news papers, films and magazines, inspired the life of the young artists of the valley. The exposure to the Western Modern Art with a Universal pictorial vocabulary opened a new world of Art with a Universal pictorial vocabulary opened a new world of visual possibilities of expression for the artists like P.N. Kachroo, S.N. Bhat, Triloke Kaul, Ghulam Rasool Santosh, who played a pivotal role by launching groups like progressive painters and cultural front etc.

Compared to the then prevailing notice of the artist as a competent craftsmen (R.C. Wantu has a shop, D.N. Walli used to sell his landscapes from house boat. S.N. Khosa worked as illustrator to the various important events in the valley and so on). The young artists found themselves in a new role, that of an intellectual and creator, an inheritor of a universal pictorial language.

The art works (mainly painting, as modern sculpture and introduced in 70’s only) created during 50’s and 60’s range from factual academicism, poetic simplification, linear calligraphy with cubist structures were obviously the result of experimentation to find a suitable individual expression.

It is during this time that S.N. Bhat held first exhibition in Bombay (1951-53) and Triloke Koul and Ghulam Rasool Santosh went to Fine Arts College Baroda for studies in art.

Some of the artists of the 50’s were also influenced by the Marxist ideology and befriended young politicians who were to occupy the
highest government position later on and their empathetic attitude to the new art and artists created conducive climate while some other artists got official patronage.

In the 1960’s the establishment of Academy of Art culture and language are two institutes of Music and Fine Arts in Srinagar and Jammu gave the much needed impetus to the art movement in the J&K State.

Since there has been no Fine art Institutes in Ladakh after 1947, its effect is clearly visible in the art field; there are still only a few ladakean students who completed their Degree from IMFA Srinagar.

During the decade of 70’s local artists Vijay Gupta, V.R Khajuria, Gayoor Hassan, Bhusan Kaul, Abdul Rashici John, Gokal Dembi, Rajinder Patwari, S.K Kaw, T.S Batra, Masood Hassan, after studying at leading Art college of the country joined these instituted in various subjects viz, painting, sculpture, applied arts etc.

The other artists who are in the teaching staff of the institutes are the products of the same viz. M.K. Bhatt, M.A Mehoob, Rajender Tiku, Shabir Mirza, Aftab Ahmad, Shuja Sultan, Gobind Kaur, Vijay Saraf, Brij Sharma, Rajeshwar Singh Jamwal, Rakesh Kaul, Raj Singh Jamwal, Upinder Singh etc. they are all known for their own individual style but the most common thing in their works is the element of the surroundings (Landscapes).

In nineties the Institutes have trained another group of artists in different field of art, painting, sculpture and applied art, among those some of these students by virtue of their talent and high standard of works, they continued the students and had post graduation from outside the state and some of them joined institutes and few of them has been continuing their practice outside the Jammu.

I extended my Quarry to also known the process of artists those who are working in Art field from the last 10-15 years, some of them chosen
their workplace out of Jammu, and same have come back to Native place.

These artists of the state today like their contemporaries elsewhere inside and outside the country share the totally of human thoughts, beliefs, accomplishments and their creations (i.e. sculpture, painting, graphics etc).