

I. Shanta Kumar Rai's Paintings on Suppression of Women

Shanta Kumar Rai's paintings focus on the issues of submissive women and their domesticity in the patriarchal society of Nepal. With the help of artistic styles, techniques as well as forms, Rai excavates the real scenario of the contemporary Nepali women in the world of art. In patriarchal society, women are treated as submissive characters who are limited within the domestic arena and give up their personal desires and passions for the sake of their family for maintaining the social norms and values. Rai also shed some light to what actually it is like to be a woman in the contemporary society using a feminist perspective towards the art. This thesis asserts that the depiction of submissive women in Rai's paintings are realistic representation of females life in "third world" and seek to foreground the muted or unheard voices of marginalized women in male chauvinistic society.

The male chauvinistic society does not hear the voice of women's predicament. Their daily routine of busy life within the house and forest passes by cutting grass, carrying woods, growing crops, cooking food, preparing meal, cleaning utensils, bearing and caring children and so on. In that process of living they had a close relationship with nature, animals and birds. Women share their unexpressed and unheard feelings and emotions with birds and animals as their friends. Shanta Kumar Rai portrayed this relationship between women and bird realistically in his artworks.

Presenting the exact picture of submissive females in third world in his paintings, Rai implicitly interrogates the hegemonic patriarchy which has made the women to internalize those evil norms and values of societies. This study shows those lines and limitations created for women and tries to blur it for maintaining equalities and opportunities for our sisters, daughters and mothers. As women are supported by the domestic birds, animals and nature fairly, the society should provide equality not

in bombard words, rules and regulations but in behavior and practices. In an article “Women’s world in Santa’s Painting” published in *Sambodhan*, Editor writes:

Shanta Kumar Rai as a feminist artist, favors to sketch women’s life to make attention of the society to hear those unheard voice of women. Rai has painted about 100 paintings centered with women using water and acrylic color. Many paintings about women are either in the subject matter of mother’s love or interaction and cooperation between women. While women centered paintings are created, Rai gives place to bird in each paintings. To the Answer of the question ‘Why women are portrait with birds?’, Rai replies, ‘Laborious women shares their feelings and emotions with birds in sign language to each other.’ (6)

As the newspaper *Sambodhan* claims, Rai paintings are subjected to the women’s domesticity and their tremendous pains and pangs which is not understood by the rude patriarchal society.

Shanta Kumar Rai is one of the active, talented and prominent idol artists of Nepal who has contributed to the domain of Nepali Art by his mastery of technique and subject matter. His versatility in subject matter ranges from landscape painting, nature studies to portraits. He depicts the contemporary issue of society as the main focus of his artworks which gave him a unique identity from other.

Rai was born in 1962 A.D. in Jagmai, Illam, Nepal who had a deep interest in art from his early childhood. After the completion from the Fine Arts Campus in 1982 in Kathmandu, Shanta Kumar Rai, along with the other member of the New Art Circle like Naresh Saiju, Nagendra Paudel, Tarzan Sangpang, Ratna Kaji Shakya, Shankar Nath Rimal, Hari Khadka, Dhurba Khadka, Jeevan Rajopadhyay and Arjun Shrestha had a vision of working as a collective group towards furthering the development of

contemporary Nepalese art. Working with fellow artists of New Art Circle under the guidance with Bangdel, Rai emerges as a bright star shining in the world of art. His limited colors and brushwork reflect the new trends of the Nepalese Art and the almost Impressionist brushwork captures the fleeting moments of the constantly changing Himalayan landscape. A tireless artist and worker, Rai is treasurer of Nepali Art who is continuously working to uplift the art scenario of Nepal.

Rai, disciple of renowned artist Bangdel, is founder member of Society of Modern Art (SOMA), Nepal Water Colour Society and New Art Circle. He is also Secretary General of Artist Society of Nepal. Because of his dedication towards the nation in the field of Art, he became the council member and head department of painting in Nepal Academy of Fine Art (NAFA). He has also actively participated in each and every revolutionary national movement along with other great artists with the means of art as the responsible citizen of Nepal. As the president of Nepal Lalitkala Munch, Rai has conducted different national group exhibitions, seminars, workshops to promote the art not only centered with the four lines of valley but all over the marginalized part of Nepal. Not only that, he also rewarded those old and dedicated artists who has contributed their life for the sake of development of Nepalese art by organizing different program to salute them nationally.

Renowned figure in art, Rai has been awarded with First prize in Fine Art Campus (TU), Ranglal Bangdel Memorial prize and dozens of prize during different art exhibitions. He has participated in dozens of national and international group art exhibitions. His work has been showcased and collected in India, Belgium, USA, United Kingdom, Korea, China, Maldives, Germany, Japan, and Australia. In *Spacetime Dainik*, Deebas Guragai also elaborates upon Shanta Kumar Rai and his paintings and writes:

In response to the question whether Rai is satisfied or not with his paintings, Shanta Kumar Rai replies that new thinking, new opinion, new ideas, new creation of art will be stopped if we became satisfied. However he draws the pictures for the satisfaction of his community, nation and he himself. He has exhibited more than two dozens of paintings in all over the countries such as Nepal, India, Germany, Belgium, Korea and America with his unique color combinations and techniques made his paintings distinct from others. (3)

These lines prove the potentiality of Shanta Kumar Rai in the field of painting, and his continuous journey to excavate the realistic picture of women with the help of his unique art techniques.

Shanta Kumar Rai started in the journey of art by creating the picture of relationship between human and nature in his canvas. He used to draw the relationship between human and nature by direct observation of beautiful nature using water and acrylic colors. But later on he has chosen Nepali women and bird as his main concern of his artworks in expressionistic style. The artist Rai instead of representing the world as it is, undertakes to express inner experience by representing the world as it appears to his emotional, abnormal and troubled state of mind. The pathetic situation of women is eternalized and felt by him and poured in his paintings through the color, lines, and brush strokes with melancholic expression. He wanted his paintings to make the viewer empathize with the spirit of the subject of suppressed women. Rai has painted the submissive women in expressive manner to make the feeling and the impression upon the person looking at his paintings.

Shanta Kumar Rai is so much fascinated and inspired with the beautiful aspect of nature that lures him towards the field of art. Rai himself says:

Art is the beautiful aspects of life which is essential for everyone.

Nature is the teacher of art from which we can learn so many new things. Art is also the mixture of life and world. Art is attached with every aspects and lifestyle of human beings, without it no society can run smoothly. The civilization of human beings also began from art.

No subject matter is untouched with art. Art is everywhere and all over the world. (4)

In the starting journey towards art, Shanta Kumar Rai painted landscape, portrait, and composition paintings using different medium and technique especially in water color. Later on in 1990's he specializes himself focusing on contemporary social issue of women. His main subject matter of paintings became women figurative which revolve around women's domestic world. He says, "Before 1990's most of my paintings are landscape, but later on I choose women figurative paintings blending with new symbols. I emphasized on the deep expression of women with bird that is the symbol of nature."

Rai is deeply touched with the daily activities of women. He felt their emotions and feelings eternally and pour it through his way of art techniques and styles to show the society about the real scenario of women and upgrade the condition of women. Rai says:

Perhaps Nepali women are the most hardworking and busiest women in the world who continuously work from early morning to late night. They involve in all the domestic activities such as cutting grass, carrying woods, managing the cow shed, milking, sweeping the floor, carrying water, cooking, washing utensils and clothes, bearing and caring child, and taking the responsibilities of all family member till

dark night. This routine continuously repeats daily without any choice. Though their life passes for the welfare of their family, nobody asks them even a single word how they are and what their condition is. (5)

The symbol of bird shows the peaceful aspects of nature in Shanta Kumar Rai's Paintings. The nature treats all the human beings equally which does not discriminate to anyone. It sees all the being with the same spectacles. Because of it the women who are dominated and discriminated by the so-called intellectual patriarchal society, get solace and peace in nature. Their daily routine passes with nature and the strong knot is made between them. In newspaper *Kamana*, Rai says:

No one can understand the feelings and pains of women. Though they want to share their pathos, no one can listen to it. To communicate and share these heavy loads of their heart, they have chosen bird as their nearest friend who can just hear their emotions without any demands. During the domestic activities of cutting grass, chopping woods, farming, and so on, women directly have connected with nature and its aspects. So the birds represent nature, which is aware about the feelings and emotions of women, but patriarchal society is indifference with it. So I have portrayed women with the symbols of birds to show the connections between the nature and domesticity of women in my paintings. (5)

The most important element of painting is color techniques. The painting should touch the heart of spectators. The color combination arouses such feelings and gives lively aspects to the paintings. In newspaper *Himalayan Times*, Rai says:

I was influenced by the magical color combination of Bangdel's paintings. The color techniques of his paintings are so realistic that we

can feel the coldness comes out of mountain from his paintings. We should bring such feelings through our paintings by various color combinations. I tried to bring the freshness and newness of color in my paintings to stimulate the emotions of women that strokes the heart of observer. (4)

Cool colors modeling with warm colors expresses the storm of pains and pathos existed in the heart of women as the core issue of feminism in Rai's Paintings. Frederick Hartt writes:

Colors can be described in terms such as brilliant, soft, harmonious, harsh, delicate, strident, dull, and in a host of other ways. Blue and its adjacent colors in the familiar color circle, green and violet, are generally felt as cool, and through association with the sky and distant landscape appear to recede from us. Yellow and red with their intermediate neighbor orange, are warm and seem nearer. (20)

Rai has used maximum color of blue, green, purple, violet and black which are cool colors. He has used minimum color of yellow, red, brown, white, orange and scarlet which are warm colors. The warm colors which are minimal in use shows women's freedom and happiness which are snatched by the cool colors that represents the cold nature of society towards women. The color of sky shows the peaceful nature of women as well as the far relation between women and society quite opposite with bird. The variation of color in female character in Rai's paintings shows the various aspects and awareness of women.

Women are compelled to be submissive and passive victim of society though they have still strong sense of disgust and revolt against the system and rules of society. Rai has painted female figures in passive and submissive way with domestic

works ordered by norms of male-based society. Men and women marry for procreation but men do not care about the working of female bodies, as a result women consider sex as burden. Frederick Hartt writes:

What men have historically demanded of women was a home and children. Until quite recently it took a steady round of childbearing to produce a few living heirs. Most women were married in their teens, and most married women were pregnant most of the time. Many died in or a result of endless childbirths, and relatively few survived the child bearing age for long. Men also wanted to make sure that the children were their own. (15)

These lines show the confinement of women within the household activities, giving their flesh and bones for the welfare of their family members. Such uncountable deeds given by patriarchal society are the fences for the women which deprived them from every opportunity in their life.

Shanta Kumar Rai's Paintings explore the voice of marginalized women who are subjected for the males in Nepalese society. The voice of female which is not heard by the so-called intellectual male based society, is excavated by presenting the figure of women involving in domestic way of life. An Indian journalist, Rishi Mathur writes:

The work of Shanta Kumar Rai is highly appreciated and loved by Indian art viewers and lovers. Shanta Kumar Rai has depicted the realistic picture of contemporary Nepali women who are limited in the boundary of four walls of house. He has the good probability and capacity of being newly emerging artist in the world. In the first

exhibition in India, Rai has shown the reflection of Nepali flavor through the art which is noticeable and praiseworthy. (6)

Shanta Kumar Rai's paintings, experimental in content and form, are blend of natural and social reality. For his subject matter, he has centered on women's domestic world, their sufferings, emotions, their procreation, dresses, their sharing and chatting with each other in group, their gaze, their downward heads, in relation with the innocent creature like bird and their way of life. Raj Kumar Degpal writes in *Kamana* magazine:

In the journey of art, Shanta Kumar Rai has been sketched many objects since two decades, but now his main concern is the relationship between women and bird. For Rai, Nepali women are still in exploitation, domination and suppression; their voices of pains are heard by none. So they are voiceless in this cosmos. While women go to cut grass, carry woods, grow crops and involve in all other domestic works they are attached with nature and they share their feelings and sorrows with birds as their companions. (5)

Though in surface level women are having equal rights, freedom and happiness in the modern age of twenty-first century, but in underlying level women are discriminated, dominated, marginalized and subordinated by the social structure which is based on male made discourse. The paintings of Shanta Kumar Rai depicts those hidden pain and pathos of women who serves themselves for the betterment of their husbands, children, families and society but get nothing except alienation and loneliness through their whole life.

Women from womb to tomb become headache for the patriarchal society.

When they were in womb, the preference of son child causes abortion and dies before

their birth. Though they were given birth, their struggle begins in son centered family of patriarchal society. In the maternal house women become doll in the hand of their father and live under their rules and regulations. After their marriage women have to satisfy the desires of their mother-in-law, father-in-law, husband and other family members. Sometimes they were raped and tortured by their own husbands. They give their flesh and bones in the house hold activities. Though they give up all their desires and passion for the sake of their family, nobody becomes their own who understand them; nobody can ask how they are; they live their entire live with unknown bodies. But they select the nature as their friend where they spend most of time in their life. They share their inner feelings and emotions with birds, animals and nature. Outwardly the present condition of women in third world countries like Nepal seems to be in favor of women, but in practical they are always dominated, exploited and suppressed.

The thesis has been divided into three chapters. The first chapter introduces the artist Shanta Kumar Rai's Paintings and the Suppression of Women. The second chapter entitled Representation of Suppressed Women in Shanta Kumar Rai's Paintings will critically examine and analyze Shanta Kumar Rai's paintings with the help of the theoretical tool, third world feminism. The feminist critics and theorists like Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and Ranjana Kumari's ideas are taken in this research work. It will study how the voices of female are unheard; their labor goes in vain; their identities are smeared in the conservative male gaze society. Finally the third chapter entitled Submissive Women will conclude the whole research work.

II. Representation of Suppressed Women in Shanta Kumar Rai's Paintings

This section will analyze the paintings of Shanta Kumar Rai in which the domesticity and suppression of women in Nepali society is portrayed which conveys the turgid emotional state of the artist reacting to the anxieties of the submissive Nepali women that directly or indirectly interrogates the prejudiced patriarchal society. Rai has painted the series of paintings which belongs to the subject matter of women. His paintings are centered with the issue of women and their pain and pathos. Focusing on the images of women in his paintings, Rai focuses on the condition of women in third world countries. The different types of birds along with the image of women reflect the peace and calm nature of women opposite to the men who are violent and aggressive. The patriarchal society mistreats women as inferior, submissive, minor, other, secondary being as well as unpaid house labor. Rai highlights the roles and conditions of women in family, society and nation in his paintings through his artistic techniques, styles, mediums and forms. Rai depicting the women in his paintings deconstruct the patriarchal norms and values which are in favor of male and brings impartiality and opportunity for women.

Lain Singh Bangdel, successful and versatile figure in the field of Nepali art as well as across the world, has introduced western modern art in Nepal after his return from Paris completing the study from the western school of art. His influence is tremendous to the contemporary artists of Nepal. Rai, as the disciple of Bangdel, has adopted the modern style of art, Expressionism in his paintings to make attention the society about the condition of marginalized Nepali women. In expressionism, each artist had their own unique way of expressing their emotions in their art to convey emotion and meaning rather than reality. The distortion and exaggeration, dimensional subjects that lack perspective as well as vivid and shocking color

combination in art produces an emotional response of the viewers which instruct the society about the troubled and tensed vision of human life or society. Shanta Kumar Rai's paintings are related with expressionistic techniques. His paintings show the anxieties, feelings, repressed desires, suppressions and emotions of women. The faces of the women in the paintings are sad and melancholic. There is the maximum use of black and blue color which shows the gloomy and dark life of the submissive Nepali women in the cruel patriarchal society. Rai has meticulously portrayed the tensions of suppressed women in traditional Nepali society with the method of expressionistic technique.

Rai's paintings are concerned with the subject matter of women. In a painting entitled *Village Women* (Plate 1) he depicts the well dressed Nepali village women with a bird. In this painting, there are two women who are wearing Nepali dress *Cholo, Lungi, Shawl* and *Patuka*. The dress the women wearing belongs to Nepali culture which shows that the women are very much concerned with their culture and are obeying the norms and values made by patriarchal society. Actually they are forced to do so. They are not allowed to wear the modern dresses or comfortable dresses. They have to cover all the parts of their body with full dress made by male chauvinistic society. It is because; males always wanted their female well mannered, disciplined and cultured. They have made a demarcation line for women which must not be violated. If violated, they give hard punishment as well as mental torture to them. They also humiliated the women with offensive words such as witch, bitch and whore. Whatever the norms and values have been made to dominate women, women always obey and respect it without any resistance either it is correct or not. Despite of having good behavior and attitude, they are too much exploited, abused and discriminated in their own society. Females are made passive, naive, meek and weak

in the hand of the patriarchal society. There is the limitation in wearing dresses which indicates the limitations of female rights within four walls of house. Women have to do all the domestic works in house and are not given chance to uplift their life style or fulfill their own desires. In the 21st century most of the women are still deprived of the education, safe motherhood, sanitation, health and so on. It exhibits that women are made powerless by men in spite of having talent to lead the nation and world.

Rai has used different colors like red, orange, yellow, black, brown and blue in the *cholo*. The variety of colors shows the multiple desires of female that are repressed inside them. The patriarchal society has snatched their wishes and desires. The orange color is optimistic and uplifting rejuvenating our spirit. It brings spontaneity and a positive outlook on life and motivates to look on the bright side of life. Likewise red is also warm and positive color associated with our most physical needs and our will to survive. It is also the color of sexuality which can create life. These warm colors tell the creativity, emotions and desires of women to live a better life. The cool color blue relates to verbal communication, self expression, peace, truth, devotion and wisdom. Like that of blue color, women are very peace, innocent, calm and quite in nature originally and they are too much devoted towards their family and society.

The white color is traditionally related to death and mourning. In Hindu culture, death usually means the end of one life and the beginning of another, moving forward to a new life. The white color in *Shawl* and *Patuka*, indicates that women are mourning in their present condition and desiring to leave the world. They are so much tired with the inhumanly behavior of patriarchy. So they wish to die for another birth where they can fulfill their wishes and desires. Furthermore in the painting, the *Patuka* is tied in their waist. The *Patuka* is the symbol of bondage and limitation

which ties the women within the limited arena of the house and all the facilities are restricted by the males. This *patuka* represents the chain for the women to limit their rights, needs, hopes and expectations for prevent them to make their bright future. The red necklace in her neck shows the marital status of women. In Hindu culture, if any woman is married, she should wear red necklace which is called *tilahari* in her neck and put red *sindur* in her forehead. It is their identity which refers their compulsion for married women to hang and put with no objection. The identity which is given by patriarchal society, dominates in their personal freedom. It is reversed in the condition of the men that they can walk, speak and take part in the social activities without any hesitation and humiliation. Society praises the male people in their birth as well as in their whole life span. After the death of the women, the men can marry their life and settle in another family. But the women have to stay their whole life with extreme melancholy and tears by looking the photo of the dead husband. In this painting as well the women who is sitting in the right expresses that she is unhappy and hanging the white shawl on the shoulders and not wearing any ornaments such as necklace, bangles and earrings which represents her husband is expired and become widow for her whole life. The life of the women after the death of the husband is helpless, poor and unhealthy in the Hindu society and culture, because the traditional culture of Hindu made the women as a slave, dependent and entirely handicapped.

In her essay 'Can the subaltern Speak?', Spivak also brings the idea from the Hindu mythology in which the custom of *Sati* is described as a moral propaganda to be followed which gives salvation to the wife after the death of her husband and saves a good place in the heaven. She writes:

...the woman as object of one husband, obviously operates in the interest of the legally symmetrical subject-status of the male. The self-

immolation of the widow thereby becomes the extreme case of the general law rather than an exception to it. It is not surprising, then, to read of heavenly rewards for the *sati*, where the quality of being the object of unique possession is emphasized by way of rivalry with other females, those ecstatic heavenly dancers, paragons of female beauty and male pleasure who sing her praise: 'In heaven she, being solely devoted to her husband, and praised by groups of *apsaras* [heavenly dancers], sports with her husband as long as fourteen Indras rule. (98)

This signifies that women are like object that can be thrown by the patriarchal society. In the Hindu Myth, the women are taken as obedient wives, goddesses, and angels just to impose their superior nature. If the husband dies, the wife has to give up her life in the name of religion to be rewarded by the heavenly bodies after death. Though the *sati* system is demolished from the world, still the widows are compelled to live lonely life without any joy and happiness.

In the recent period, poor women are suffering from the malnutrition and various types of diseases in their families. In the village areas due to the superstition, ignorance and illiteracy, the birth of the girl is taken as a curse for their family. In this traditional and conservative society, women are taken as a machine which bears the child. Social participation and public participation are not given to them and they are solely taken as a decoration of the room and they are not permitted to go out and talk with other families, friends and relatives in the absence of husband and family order.

The women are sitting in dark place. This dark black color reflects the dark nature of patriarchal society towards women. It means women are living their life under the darkness. All the beautiful color of their life are snatched and left nothing to them. But the background color is yellow and green that represents the nature which

gives a little bit hope to women to survive their life in such domination. The nature is giving company to women who are isolated though they are in their own family. No one understands their feelings and emotions in male gaze society.

In the center of the canvas, the woman is holding a white dove in her hand. The face of women looks like she is telling something to the bird. The bird symbolically is peaceful and innocent being. The women are sharing their pain and pangs, which is unheard by the so-called superior patriarchy to the bird. The white dove is the symbol of purity, kindness and love which denotes the lovable nature and kindheartedness of women. It is also the symbol of nature where the nature is loving, caring and giving solace to the women mentally. The physical and mental tortures are get relief with the little care of the little creature. Women are confined to household work with no access to and control over resources and restricted mobility in the private sphere. When they are cropping in the field, cutting grasses, chopping woods, looking grains or bringing water from the pond, they make a strong knot with birds and natural things. In patriarchal society no one hears and asks the women how they are. Though they work morning to night daily for their family members, all the members become indifference to their sorrows. So they make the birds as their best friend who can listen their emotions and feelings without any objection.

Rai has portrayed the figure of women in his each painting. But all the women are not facing their face towards the viewers. All the women are bowing down their head. In this painting *Village Women* (Plate 1) also the women are not looking straight forward. Their eyes are closed. The social customs and traditions say that shyness is the jewelry of women. They should not talk much in the family; their head should be down as obedient child. If they try to talk or say anything she is mocked as if the crackling of the hen and the patriarchy suppresses their voices. The color of the skin is

pale and withered. The facial expression of women shows the deep sadness kept inside them. They are not happy in their present situation made by male gaze society. Their condition is worst. They need to do so many tasks that they do not want. Because of many tortures such as unwanted pregnancy, sexual harassment, dowry murder and dowry related troubles, untouchability during menstruation, sickle and basket instead of pen and book given to them, and other uncountable domination, they are sad and always bowing their head down with fear and sadness.

There are two women together, it means all the pain and pathos of women are same in patriarchal society. They are unite and having similar position in the society. Their hands are open and empty that shows they have nothing left. They had sacrificed all the things they have to their family and society. Only one thing is left that is grief and depression which can be seen through their pale faces.

Like *Village Women* (Plate 1), *Motherhood* (Plate 2) is his next series of paintings in which he has drawn the female figure in the centre holding her baby in her laps and an owl near the woman watching her motherly love activities. A mother is a woman who gives birth to a child conceiving nine months in her womb with great labor pain. Once the baby is born, the mother produces milk with the lactation process. The mother's breast milk is the source of antibodies for the infant's immune system and commonly the main source of nutrition for the child. In the painting, *Motherhood*, a woman had just given birth to a child and taking care of it by touching gently with her warm hand. The figure of women is highlighted with a rectangular shape with warm color. This shows the important role of mother in bearing and caring a child. The mothers speak in simple way that suit to their children to understand speech to their children. She delivers love and affection to her child continuously without any rest. But with the span of time, the child forgets all the love and sacrifice

given by the mother and becomes the member of patriarchal society and tries to dominate women.

The mother in the painting is very massive in size that shows the big responsibility of rearing the child given by the male society. In patriarchal society, women should take the responsibilities of all the domestic activities. The ring of light in the back of mother's head is called halo. The halo is used to indicate the holy or sacred figures in different religions and art. Here in this painting the halo given to the mother shows the holistic quality of the mother. The devotion of mother is great like the Gods or goddesses. The God created the universe and beings; the God is the supreme or superior to all. The creator of the baby is the mother. Mother is like earth which conceives the seed in her womb and carries the weight for nine months with no rest. The mother also supplies milk in the body of the child to make strong. Her care made the child liberated for the journey of development. Mother's face is bowing down towards her child that tells she has lost her self-centrality; her status has changed from woman to a mother; her responsibility now has increased. They sacrifice their life for the betterment of their children, husband and family. But the cruel patriarchal society never and ever understands it.

The warm color in the face of the mother evokes calm and gentle feeling towards her child. The red color in the *Cholo* of mother is positive color that indicates love and strong knot between the child and mother. The dark blue color in the *Lungi* is the color of conservatism and responsibility. It means she is taking responsibility in the conservative society where males are created superior. The background of the painting is yellow and green which reflects the nature. Women have to do so many works in nature. The nature gives harmony and peace to the women when they are tired of hardworking. The base where the mother is sitting is brown. The brown color

is the color of dull, boring, frugal and lack of humor. This indicates the boring life of women in patriarchal society. The boundary created to the women made their life dull without any joy and happiness.

Presenting the images of bird is the uniqueness of Rai's paintings. In this painting *Motherhood*, also he has taken the bird owl in his painting. The owl is watching the mother who is taking care of her baby. Owl is symbol of vigilant and of acute wit; wisdom. The owl knows everything about the women. It understands the bitter life of women because of its wit. So that the face of the owl is also looks so sad. The bird is also mourning in the condition of the women made by conservative male gaze society. The conservative Nepali culture cannot allow freedom to live colorful life to women as they should condemn to be jailed in their husband's house through their whole life. The bird owl is fountain of knowledge, but the woman in patriarchal society is uneducated. So the bird is suggesting the women to overcome their pathetic condition and live a free life of happiness.

In the next painting entitled *The Widow* (Plate 3), Rai has presented the picture of a widow character and her unbearable pains because of the terrific tortures given by male oriented society. There are four women in the painting sitting together seems communicating to share their temperaments. One woman is wearing a white blouse and green sari without wearing any ornaments which indicates that her husband is no more in this world. The white dress in the Hindu culture is regarded as the color of death and mourning. The woman wearing the white dress is also mourning with the death of her husband. Her life partner left her all alone in this hostile world but she is obliged to start a new happy life with a companion because of the norms and values made by male based traditional society. Being a widow, she is not allowed to beautify herself with colorful dresses or shining ornaments. Her colorful life is burned in the

ashes of her dead husbands and remained to live black and white life with no joy and no happiness. The male can marry another time if his wife expires but female are restricted to do so. Even they are blamed and cursed as they are the cause behind their husband's death. There is inequality and discrimination for the women where men are called superior.

In the present painting, the widow is surrounded by other three women and in the tip of the widow's hand white bird is sitting. The bird is the symbolic representation of peace and freedom. The widow, who is tied with the chain of the patriarchal norms and values, wants to be free from the present condition and be like the bird to live a free life without any bondage. The women, who are sitting near the widow, are trying to console her and participating in the grief of her tragedy. The women suffer from the same trauma in their life. They are always dominated in one or another way. Extreme exploitation and discrimination made their head down. Their faces are pale and sad. The maximum use of cold color like blue, grey and black indicates the cold nature of male towards female. The painting is painted in three dimensional shapes with the effect of dark and light colors. The figure of women is not clear but the color combination in it touches the heart of the viewers. Rai is conveying the pathetic condition of women to the viewers to encourage their status in this cruel patriarchal society.

In Rai's next painting entitled *The Output of Gender Discrimination* (Plate 4), expresses that the women may show their violent act when there is extreme discrimination, exploitation and suppression towards the women in patriarchal society to their social transformation and bright future in the days to come. In the context of Nepal, this picture depicts the surface of reality which women are facing in this society. After the establishment of democracy in 2007 up to now they have been

exploited in many cases so that the revolutionary act of the women was shown in the long decade of civil war which was made by CPN Maoist to transform the society and avoid all sort of social discrimination. In the decade long war, women were enthusiastically participated as a insurgent to revolt against the government for their rights. We know, women are the symbol of peace, love and affection. They tolerate everything but it does not mean that they are remained silence until there is feudalism, gender discrimination, physical and mental torture to them in the society. During the six decade after the promulgation of democracy in Nepal many women have been participated for their rights to include in the constitution but due to the political instability the government was remained deaf to listen the voice of the women. So the civil war which was made in Falgun 1st 2052 B.S. upto 2062/63 gave the radical change in the Nepalese society. The painting depicts that women initiate their movement peacefully to fulfill their demand in the preliminary stage but if it is frequently neglected by the government they can alter the way and create the great war which cannot be stopped by any mechanism and creatures in the world. In this figure, the poor, exploited, helpless and homeless woman who is carrying the gun on the back represents that she is tired from that contemporary society and compel to stand in the violent struggle to uplift the women status in all around the globe.

In addition to this, in the painting the woman is raped by the devil character male people and when she is not protected from everywhere, she chooses the armed revolution to preserve her and all females in the male chauvinistic society to protect their virginity. The female dove which is sitting on the knee of the woman shows that it is asking about the condition of the woman. The conversation between a bird and a woman represents that the animal is better than the human being. Animals are so sincere and discipline instead of so-called civilized human creatures. The almighty

God has given the sexual power for the existence of the creatures. In the world, there is no animals and birds where there is discrimination happening in between two opposite sexes. But the so-called intellectual and civilized human beings are showing their superiority and inferiority in between heterogeneous. Similarly to continue the world both sexes are needed for the existence of human beings. To get rid from the misery in this painting, the woman has seen the beautiful world where there is equality, mutual respect and harmony in the society by the help of the gun powder which crack down all sort of discrimination, exploitation, the gulf between haves and have not and monopoly tyrannical shadow of the father based society. In the picture, there is a white flower on the mouth of the single barreled gun which symbolizes the peace, harmony and equality with the revolution in the society. The white lotus is the symbol of love, purity, mystery, truth, perfection and mutual sexual relationship. Likewise the bullet of gun which burst out through the barrel creates the mutual environment for the development and progress of the world without any discrimination. Revolution is not a small thing but it gets birth from small work and rampant in the world. To address the demand of the women especially in feudal society it is the fabulous way to get the rights and opportunities. The bird which is shown in the picture realizes the problem of the woman rather than the man. It also represents that the pet animal is so sincere to their master instead of human being in this physical world.

In this traditional and deep rooted patriarchal society, the future of the women is in danger with superstitious beliefs, ignorance, illiteracy and so on. The black and dark color used in the paintings shows the negative side of women's life which is full of pangs and pains given by the extreme tortures of male gaze society. The males are having superior position in society by creating binary opposition between males and

females. The men are superior, independent, powerful, literate, strong, decision maker and oppressor in the society. But women are made inferior, dependent upon men, powerless, illiterate, weak, domestic creature and oppressed in patriarchal society. It is the strategy of patriarchal society to dominate the women by giving different inferior position to them. Likewise the dark color used in the painting represents a fear of the future of women. Women have no future in the hand of male based society. They are deprived from their fundamental rights and opportunities. Because of it they don't get chance to be educated and decorate their life in their own way. But the background of the painting is white and yellow which are bright colors. The white color is the color of perfection. It is symbol of purity, innocence, wholeness and completion. It is beginning of everything before anything is muddied as well as preparation to move on a new beginning. The color yellow represents happiness and fun. Yellow is uplifting to the spirits; it helps to create enthusiasm for life and can awaken greater confidence and optimism. The use of bright color of white and yellow in the painting denotes the formation of a new identity of women with different beautiful colors of their own choice where they can get new hope of happiness, joy and freedom far from the darkness of the conservative patriarchal society.

Women are mistreated as inferior, submissive, minor, other, secondary being as well as unpaid house labor. The patriarchal norms and values are in favor of male. Male are supposed to be principal gender of the society, a leader of political, social and cultural institution is only to control and repress female. Therefore, patriarchy an ideological foundation has just served the interest of men only. Women, in the patriarchy, are less advantaged less or ill paid than men in the same labour. They are less advantaged in their access to material goods, power status and possibilities for self actualization. The cause of this inequality lies in the social structure of patriarchy.

The social values and norms are construction of male that is always against the female right.

Similarly, Rai in his next painting *Smearred Identity of Women* (Plate 5) presents the hegemonic influence, identity crisis and submissive nature of Nepalese women that represents the pathetic condition of women. In the painting, there are four women sitting together in group. But the entire figures of women are not clearly drawn in the picture. This smeared picture of women indicates the identity crisis of women in male headed society. Women are badly treated and they don't have any equal opportunities and they are misbehaved. In the service of their husbands, children and other family members they forget their self identity. They don't desire to fulfill their own wishes. Their devotion towards their family erases their identity; she has to get miserable and devastating marital life. They are like slaves who works for their masters and their names come with their masters. Women also are called by someone's daughter, someone's wife or someone's mother and compared with objects as they don't have their own name. They are given different identity deleting their self identity. Even they themselves forget who they are because of busying their life in domestic activities for the sake of their family and relatives. In fact they don't have any identity. In this painting the unclear picture of women reflects the unclear existence of women caused by male oriented society and emphasizes the need to reform their role to assert their own identity in their family, society as well as the whole nation. Regarding the relation between male and female or husband and wife Ranjana Kumari in *Religions and Status of Woman* writes:

A woman's husband is her lord and it is her religious duty to see that he is happy and comfortable by yielding to every wish. The woman is defined primarily in relation to her husband and interest and

participation in domestic matter is expected to her. The role of wife and mother is the optimal, singular and essential. Through which a woman fulfills herself. (9)

In Hindu culture, husbands are the god figure for their wives. They worship their husband everyday and take fast for the long life of their husband. The one and only sacred duty and responsibility of wives, is to make her lord happy in any condition. The women are made deeply rooted in religious norms and values which always make them devotees of the males.

There are different religions and myths in this cosmos, all religions have given females as inferior status and regarded them to become secondary citizens. This is true to Hindu religion which defames widow women and limits their freedom and choice. Religion alone cannot be blamed for assigning inferior position to females. However, religion is the byproduct of patriarchy and unless and until these social norms and values change women will continue to suffer in society from a situation where religion and patriarchal society are in alliance. Males and females are equal in the hand of God stressing natural conception it is true that God it is who did create you from a single soul and their form did create his mate that he might be well with her in love. But a girl is maintained by her father while unmarried and by her husband after marriage. Girls are in the control of their father and husband like horse's helter always in the hand of their owners. They are moved from the direction of the male characters. Females are not getting their own wishes and desires, and they are not allowed to make their own decisions to live the life they want, they have to depend on family's decisions. Women are not getting freedom, equality and liberty. But they are mentally tortured, bitten mercilessly and some time burned alive or murdered in the name of witch and for the sake of dowry.

In the painting *Smearred Identity of Women* (Plate 5) Rai has used dull color all over. Dull color is the symbol of loneliness, emptiness, absurd and meaningless. This symbolizes the life of women which became absurd and meaningless because of the tremendous dominations and tortures of patriarchal society. Furthermore the women are living the life of loneliness. Though they are in their own family, they are not possessing significant post and respect to live the life with dignity and freedom. They are all over alone and none of the family members ask them how they are and what their condition is. The dull and minimalistic color in the painting shows the boring and colorless life of women. Rai exposes the pathetic situation of female under the grip of social structure, which exploits female's subjectivity, creativity, productivity by making them confined just in the domestic activities taking the great risk of their life.

In patriarchy, the relation between male and female is arbitrary rather than natural. Regarding the issue of relation between male and female in patriarchy, in her work *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (1991), Chandra Talpade Mohanty writes:

The connection between male and female as historical subject and the representation of woman produced by hegemonic discourse is not a relation of direct identity or a relation of correspondence or simple implication. It is based on arbitrary relation set up by particular culture. (242)

This statement shows the reality of the third world women's subjugation, hegemonic belief that is unable to raise the voice against the male domination or suppression. They are having suffocated life in their husband's house. They are the subject of social ostracism and get various tortures and pains to exist in the society.

In the backside of the women, white color is flowing down which denotes the wall is cracked and the cold of the rain is entered through the cracked wall. The crack symbolizes the broken desires of women which are unfulfilled by the cold nature of men. In patriarchy female are taken as an object to please their male. They have becomes the possession of their husband rather than an independent creature. The males are guardian for the possession of the women's body. They exercise their superior position to suppress them and to exploit female's innocence and beauty. Though the life of the women is pathetic and miserable in the hand of patriarchal society, they never stop dreaming to live beautiful life of freedom and self identity. In the painting, one woman is catching one red flower. This red flower shows the beautiful aspects of nature and brings hope to the women to live such beautiful life. Nature is almighty God which treats all the beings equally without any biasness. It never creates any binary opposition between any creatures. The women who are too much concerned with their domestic work make a bond with nature knowing the fair attitude of nature. They can share their emotions and feelings which are repressed within their heart and cry loudly to feel better. The flower indicates that the women want to get rid from their present painful condition and live a better life in the male ideology. The red color symbolizes the upcoming revolution made for the sake of women's self identity and freedom. Women want to question the patriarchal society which always dominates, exploits and gives tortures to the women by making different values, norms and traditions. The women are no more puppets and cannot continue to be tortured by males in the misogynistic society. When there is so much suppression the output will blast soon and all the lines created to restrict women will be blurred.

In the same way Rai in his another painting titled *Pregnancy* (Plate 6) has reflected the miserable condition of women in male chauvinistic Nepalese society. Nepalese society is based on patriarchal system which has violated lots of women's right and freedom. Patriarchy is a social structure in which males are created superior and head of the family. It is a system where woman gets subordinate status as worker whose production is exploited and appropriated by male. Historically, women under patriarchy, whatever their class and race, have been assigned to the task of social reproduction like childbearing, housekeeping, food preparation and of ill and dependant, emotional and sexual services. In such social structure men exercise power over women. As a central figure, man financially supports a family while woman stays at home and cares for the children and house hold affairs. Patriarchy is the institutionalization of male dominance over women in society.

In the painting *Pregnancy* (Plate 6), massive figure of two women has portrayed in the center of the canvas. One of the women is pregnant and another woman is sitting beside pregnant woman and a bird is sitting in her hand. They are not looking straight and bowing down their head. The male ideology makes them bowing their heads before them. They do it in the absence of male because patriarchal society humiliates and makes them feel shy. Women still do not have any capacity to adopt their free will. Women follow what the males of the society order them, which clarifies the subordinated position of female in the Nepalese society.

In the painting (Plate 6), the pregnant woman is mentally disturbed in the critical time of pregnancy. She is worrying about the coming result. She is totally confused whether she gives the birth to son child or daughter. She is afraid of being tortured and banishment given by patriarchal society if she give birth daughter. The preference of son child in the male headed society often victimizes women and gives

different unbearable physical as well as mental tortures. In Hindu culture, son is the gateway of the heaven. Because of it, until women give birth to son child, they need to suffer a lot. She needs to carry the baby for nine month and with extreme blood bleeding and labor pain gives birth to child. But the society does not understand her pangs and pathos, instead treats them badly if the child is daughter. The pregnant woman in the painting is also suffering from the same trauma and difficulty. On the other hand, the bird holding woman is also in the state of anxiety that is reflected by the facial expression. The expression of the woman tells that she is dominated and discriminated because of not giving birth to child. In patriarchal society if a woman is unable to give birth to baby, the society blames for her inability and begins to give torments. They do not find out the cause of the unproductivity. Whatever the cause may be, but woman is responsible for it. The so-called superior male marries another woman to continue his generation. The barren woman is treated badly by their own mother-in-law and newly married wife of her husband. Though the woman is suffering from the norms and values of patriarchy, they do not hesitate to give tortures and dominations to other female members. In the hand of patriarchy, females also adopt the norms and try to dominate women though they themselves has been experienced from the same traumatic situation.

In the painting (Plate 6), Rai has presented the contemporary Nepali women's situation who are marginalized and subordinated in every arena of the society. The painting is in three separate part where the light effects is different from each. The first and third part is dark which shows the dark life of the women with lots of extreme pains and pangs given by patriarchal society. The centre part of the painting is painted in light colors which reinforce the light of knowledge and wisdom of women that they are going to give after giving birth to a child. The red color below

her stomach indicates the blood bleeding of women through the pregnant period. The maximum use of green color tells the peaceful and lovely characteristics of women similar to nature. The bird in the painting is far better than the so-called intellectual patriarchal society. It understands the emotions and feelings of women by giving company in each and every domestic works of women.

Similarly, Rai's another painting named *An Objection with Beauty of Women* (Plate 7), shows the realistic scenario of typical Nepalese women attaining their period of complexity by the indifference and dominating of male ideology. The symbolic representation of women via light and dark is imperfection, the subject concise. The state of women in our society is traumatic because of the superiority of men. Males are supposed to be dominant gender of the society, a leader of political, social and cultural institution is only to suppress and dominate females. The contemporary patriarchal society has just served the interest of men only. Women are less advantaged less or ill paid than men in the same labour. They are less advantaged in their access to material goods, power status and possibilities for self actualization. The cause of this inequality lies in the social structure of patriarchy. The condition of women is imperfect and they are just treated as a machine to serve the males.

In the painting (Plate 7) the woman in the right side of canvas, is not clearly portrayed and the color is totally dark. This seems she is caged inside the frame with having no identity. She is no more living her life in an absolute freedom where she can get full liberation away from materialistic world. She has been victimized by the norms and values of hegemonic ideology. She becomes the subject of social ostracism get various difficulties to exist her in the society. Her darkness is mysterious enough to encounter her violation. She might be a fact of humiliation and doggish behavior of the society. She is dark and is not beautiful. The particular concern is that she do not

have a fairly complexion, a physical trait that obstinately remain as the hall mark of beauty in many parts of the world.

The woman in the left side of the painting in a fairly reflection is glad enough to trace out her pregnancy comparatively to former case. She upholds whiteness as a crucial aspect of beauty. The paradox of her time is most critical being an upcoming mother. The bird at the tip of her finger represents nature which has felt her pain and wept for her telling how well it understand her. Nature is only companion with whom she shares the most memorable and beautiful phase of her life. Nature is always there for the woman and is the most beautiful, trust worthy and lovely companion. She remains closest to nature and her miserable time is observed by nature all the times. But the cruel and hegemonic patriarchal society undermines her each and every time though she is at her period of extremity.

The both women in this painting represent a sort of inequality. One is extremely in a miserable phase, lacking a magical and extraordinary phase to love and encourage for her glowing life whereas another is unhappy as she is not judged perfectly by society in her most precious period of life. Therefore nature is renowned friend for both. A bird remains here as a friend of pregnant lady is twisting and turning its head to the lady which made her to forget her loneliness. It made her happy and a dreamer, a wanderer of the imaginary world beyond definition. It gave her the art of music, dance and developed her passion and interest in her livelihood. It made her a warm to fight bravely with her tears and made herself stronger.

Despite of brightness and darkness to observe, both women are lacking smile. Beauty is power and a smile is its word. Smile is an omnipotent weapon of humans. It also makes one more approachable and exudes positive energy that attracts people. Smile is so powerful that it can brighten even the darkest day. But women are not

happy and we cannot see their smiley face in this patriarchal society. In the painting also, there is lack of smile in both characters which is seen through their dark spots. Their reason to smile has been snatched by the male head society. In the name of second sex or inferior gender they are deprived in various important opportunities like in education, occupation and decision making matters. And they are misbehaved. Female in the Nepalese culture are marginalized by feudal ideology or elitist discourse. Elitist discourse always tends to treat female as an object subjected to serve their male. Women have been exploited in the name of womanhood, motherhood, chastity and virginity as well as tradition like dowry bride price. Because of the tremendous tortures given by patriarchal society women have forgotten to smile. Women are often marginalized and trapped within the subordinate gender roles. The violence against women goes largely unrecognized. Wife beating, murdering, girl trafficking, rape and so on violence made the life of women hell because of the monster like behavior of rude patriarchal members. They are twice discriminated on the basis of class and gender and their social economic and political status is inferior and low to that of males.

In the painting, cloud is another close observer for the pain of women like the little bird. Cloud is emblem of nature and watching the pangs and pathos of women nearly. Cloud examined their critically exploited condition and found them to be good for nothing. Due to their deliberate problems and their dissatisfaction, it is weeping and rolling down tears in the form of rain. With their grumpy face, it would probably state to appear as a rain. The water produced in the rain wants to wipe away all the tears of the women. The pains of women get reduced by the rain coming from the cloud. So here the nature which treats equal to all the beings giving solace for the physically and mentally tortured women. On the other side, the cloud is the source of

recreation and reproduction. It gives water to the earth and the nature starts to produce plants. Similarly the women are also the creator give birth to a child and rear their child giving full of love and affection, despite of many tortures, pains and pathos. Though they are sad and crying tears of blood, they present themselves with a sweet smile in their face and devote their whole life to them. Women are like a candle which burns itself to give light to the world. Females are also burning themselves to enlighten their house and family members as well as the society.

In his next painting, *Five Women* (Plate 8) he has painted a group of five women with a bird. The texture of the painting is very soft. The way of using colors in the painting arouses feelings and emotions to the spectators. It directly touches the heart of any person who observes it. It is the maturity of the artist that can create such masterpiece of painting and conveys message to the observer. In the painting, there are five women sitting together in group. Their hands are calling to each other. It seems that they are having conversation between each other. Only the women can understand the emotions and feelings of another woman. All the women together show their unity between the women. Nowadays in village also many groups are made to discuss the issue of women together. *Aama Samuha, Mahila Samaj, Nari Jagaran* and other groups talk and raise the voice of women. By making groups though, they are talking about the issue of women emancipation, the condition of women is not improved yet. But still there is a hope to uplift the status of women. The unity of the women in the society can acquire the light of knowledge and wisdom and due to this light of enlightenment they can be independent and free in the society.

In the painting all the faces of the women are bowed down which delivers the message that they are upset and sad. They are discussing about their serious problem. But they don't know how to get rid of their present condition. All the women are

village women. They are uneducated because of the restriction of the male oriented society. In village, son is given valuable opposite to the daughter. Son can go for their further education far from the house. But no women are allowed to cross the line of their house and *dhoko* and *namlo* are handed instead of bag and books. Because of this, many women are uneducated in rural area. This illiteracy of women in village is the main cause of domination and deprivation from different sector of their life. They cannot resist against the norms and values which snatched their identity. Before marriage they are controlled by their father; after marriage by their husband; after giving birth to a son, they are controlled by their sons. This trend is going on with no change at all in Nepalese society. The society carries the values, norms, religions of patriarchal, which buries the freedom of women. Rai has presented this bitter reality of women in his painting to show the social members how the condition of women is.

In the left side of the painting, there are four women who were wearing blue, violet, green and black colored dresses. The color blue, violet, green and black denotes cold colors. These cold colored dresses are the symbol of distance, gloomy, sadness and death. It means the existence of women in this patriarchal society is not lively; they are living a dead life. Their real identities are wiped out from non-representation, misrepresentation and under-representation. Sometimes the males praise and compare the females with other abstract things and object. Another moment they treat women as demon, whore and slave. They treat women as naive, delicate, passive and weak creature. The black color is the cold nature of the society towards the women which symbolically denotes the death of the identity and freedom of the women. The social norms and values are structured by male in which the women are compelled to accept it. The power to attorney is always in the hand of male members. By the power, the males always rule over the women in each and

every aspects of life. Women are made to marry beyond their choice. They have no identity of their own, they are just bounded within the four walls of house. Women are fully imprisoned with the house hold activities. Their main task is to take care of their husband, children, family members and take care of their house. All the numerous domestic work like cleaning house, preparing food, washing clothes and utensils, cutting grass, carrying woods, and so on are only for women, which is their identity. They are confined within the domestic arena.

In the right side of the painting the artist has painted a woman in different way than the rest of four women. The woman is wearing bright colored dress and handling a bird in her hand. The color of the dress is red, orange and yellow. These colors are warm colors that show the freedom, happiness and light of the life. In her hand, a beautiful red bird is sitting and staring at the women. The bird is the symbol of peace, freedom and knowledge. The bird that knows everything brought peace, freedom and knowledge to that warm dressed woman. She knows the real condition of women and wants to challenge the the-then society which gave no respect to the women. The background of that woman is very bright than other women. It means that the woman is now enlightened with the knowledge given by the free bird. She is very happy knowing her real identity. She has stepped her feet from ignorance to awareness. Because of that all other women are surprised and want to ask what the reality is to that enlightened woman who is handling a bird. On the other hand, the mixture of red, orange and yellow colors in the enlightened woman suggests the burning flame. This suggests that the woman is burning like flame to challenge the patriarchy. The woman is going to burn the norms and values of the patriarchy to get her freedom and identity and want to get peace of her mind like the bird. Because of this strong and courageous decision of that enlightened woman, all other women are very much surprised and

inspired and want to join the woman to save support the feminism. All the women are unite together and arguing, discussing and making decision to save their own existence in the society.

Rai's *Five Women* (Plate 8) can be compared with Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger* (Plate 9) according to its subject matter though the context may be different from each other. The main focus in both Rai's Paintings and Picasso's painting is feminine. The Spanish artist Pablo Picasso's painting *Les Femmes d'Alger* (Plate 9) painted in 1907, is the most innovative, revolutionary and controversial painting which led to anger and disagreement amongst his closet associates and friends. Picasso has abandoned the form and representation and there is incredible reductionism and contortion of space and dislocation of faces explosive. It seems clumsy, overworked and unfinished. The painting has five nude female prostitutes from a brothel appear as slightly frightening with angular and disjointed body shapes. Two women are shown with African mask like faces and three more with faces in the Iberian style of Picasso's native Spain. In the painting, five women are gazing out at the viewer, their faces terrifying bold and solicitous. There is a strong undercurrent of sexual anxiety. A brothel is the place where women are made nude and sexually exploited.

The women in the painting of Picasso painted without charm or sadness similar with the women painted in Rai's Paintings. The women are painted like the fences of a stockade living the dead life in the brothel. The disorders in the painting are the result of aggression and anger towards the society that compel the women to adopt the hellish profession for the survival. The broken and unfinished colors as well as the dislocations of body structure reflect the cracked and ruptured life of prostitutes with lots of pains, pathos and sufferings. The compulsion of women to live tough lifestyles in the patriarchal society is shown by using the rough lines in the painting. The fruits at the bottom of the

painting denote the compulsion of women to fill their appetite by selling their flesh. The picture in the painting is the replica of the brutality of cruel male dominating society. Though the right of human beings is to live the life with full of dignity, self-respect and freedom, women are time and often made naked and lose their pride by the selfish and gluttonous nature of males. The enthusiastic dreams and desires of women to live a happy liberated life with full of self-esteem are broken down. In both paintings the temperament of women and their miseries, pangs and tremendous tortures provided by the traditional patriarchal society is well portrayed touching the emotional currents of women. The five women in Rai's painting seem sad and tired of continuing the norms and values made by male members. All the women are facing towards the red bird which symbolically represents the freedom and prosperity that they want to get. In the same manner, the five prostitutes are also fade up with their daily routines of being nude in front of the males and want to get rid of it which can be seen through their sad and gloomy faces and disordered body parts. The artist pours his anger towards the domination and exploitation of women by breaking the old traditional rule choosing line drawing rather than the color.

In this way, Rai expresses that, the women have been much more exploited, discriminated, dominated and made them inferior. Despite of including several rights in the constitution, the socio-economic status of the women not yet developed, though they are somehow literate and skill in each and every social aspect. Till now, they are bound in the four walls of domestic arena. In the superficial level, either they are seen happy or enthusiastic but in the core, they have been suffocated with full of misery and pain. Comparatively, so-called intellectual human being's behavior is far worse than the other creatures in the globe. Through, the symbolic presentation of bird in the painting exhibits that the bird can understand the difficulties and burden of women rather than the barbaric and cruel patriarchal society. At the end, Rai has raised the question towards the male-dominated society, upto how far the suppression and autocratic rule of the male people would exist in the world.

III. Submissive Women

This research analyzes Shanta Kumar Rai's Paintings as the representation of the marginalized voices of Nepalese women through the window of third world feminism. The images of Nepali village women, their domestic works, child bearing and rearing activities, pregnancy, women gossiping, stooped posture of women, sorrowful faces, their repressed desires and painful situations in the paintings reflect the unbearable tortures and dominations eternalized by women in male headed patriarchal society. The so-called intellectual members of male chauvinistic society compelled the women to act and live their life according to the wishes and direction of the men. The brutality and cruelty of patriarchal norms and values have violated the rights and snatched the happiness of women. The images of birds represent the nature where women spend most of their time in domestic activities. The little creature bird as a good companion to women understands their pains and pangs far better than the cruel patriarchal society. Rai centralizes the issue of domesticity of women as the main subject matter of his painting and interrogates the contemporary patriarchal Nepalese society, which has made women as submissive naive creature bounded within four walls of house.

In the patriarchal Nepalese society, women are treated as inferior meek creature who are made slave and confined within the domestic field and forced to live hellish life without any joy and happiness. Rai has exhibited the realistic condition of the Nepalese women in his paintings who are limited within the household activities abandoning their own wishes and desires and tries to blur the lines and limitations created by the patriarchy. In his painting *Village Women* (Plate 1) the women in full Nepali dress reflects the restriction of female rights in the contemporary patriarchal society. The ornaments that the woman wears, is just to satisfy the taste of males. In

each painting women have stooped their head with shyness and fear of the devil characteristics of males in patriarchal society. Some widow characters in the paintings such as *Village Women* (Plate 1) and *The Widow* (Plate 3) represent the pathetic, helpless and miserable condition of women after the death of their husbands in conservative Hindu society. The traditional norms and values of Hindu society made the women slave, reliant and entirely handicapped. Females are just treated as child producing machine and means of entertainment for males. In the paintings like *Motherhood* (Plate 2), *Pregnancy* (Plate 6) and *An Objection with Beauty of Women* (Plate 7) Rai has highlighted the mental and physical disturbances of pregnant women as well as the holistic nature of mother who devotes her whole life for the sake of her child and family. Though they sacrifice their life for the betterment of their children, husband and family, the rude nature of patriarchal members never realize it. The paintings *Five Women* (Plate 8) and *The Widow* (Plate 3) indicate the unity of women, their sorrows, emotions and desires to uplift their status in the society. The grouping of women shows that they are sharing their pains and pathos with each other to get relief and outlet from their conditions. In *Smearred Identity of Women* (Plate 5), Rai raised the issue of identity crisis of women in male headed society. Patriarchal society has underprivileged women's identity, subjectivity and creativity with handling many duties and responsibilities to them. The painting entitled *The Output of Gender Discrimination* (Plate 4) reflects the possible revolution of women for their emancipation from tremendous discrimination, exploitation and suppression in the superstitious society of Nepal.

All in all, the Paintings of Rai shows the domestic activities of women in Nepalese patriarchal society which deprived them from each and every facility to make their life living worthy and pleasurable. Women should not be treated as dolls

or puppets in the hand of males; proper guidance and attention should be given by all the members of the society to uplift their status; equal rights should be granted not only in the words but also implemented.

In Nepalese context, women are compelled to follow the norms and values constructed by the patriarchal society. Women have to live accordingly with the commands and wishes of male dominated society; even they cannot stop their breath with their own wish. Women are bearing tremendous tortures and dominations in each and every steps of their life. In patriarchal society, women are limited within the four walls, treated as doll, taken as the child bearing machine, given dual identity of witch as well as angel, sexually exploited, raped, sold and made prostitute, deprived from proper education, bitten mercilessly and murdered. All the paintings of Shanta Kumar Rai are the realistic representation of the pathetic condition of third world women which are analyzed from the perspective of Third World Feminism.

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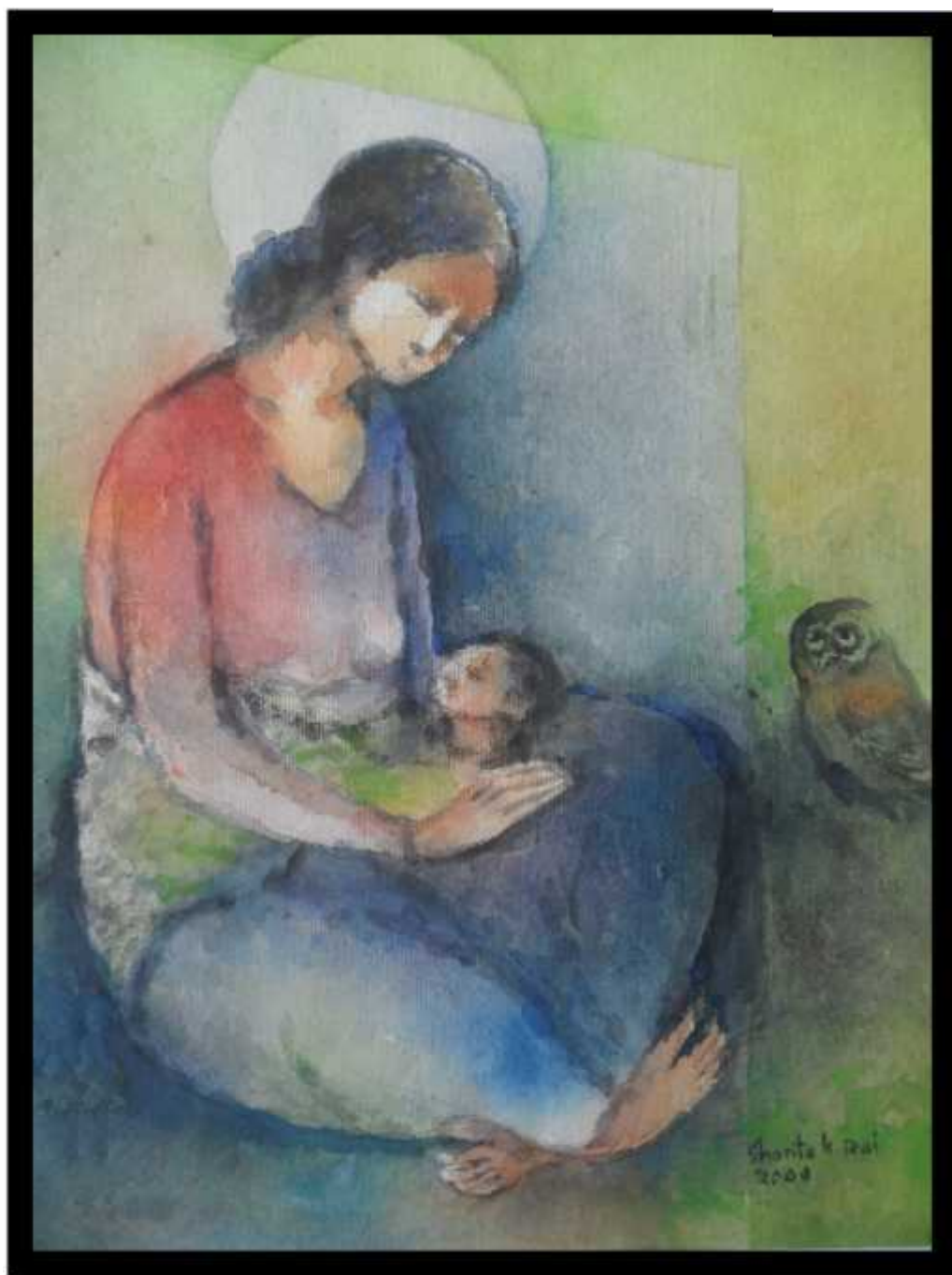
Appendix:

Plate: 1



Shanta Kumar Rai, *Village Women* (2010), Nepal Academy of Fine Art, Kathmandu.

Plate 2



Shanta Kumar Rai, *Motherhood* (2009), Nepal Academy of Fine Art, Kathmandu.

Plate 3



Shanta Kumar Rai, *The Widow* (2010), Nepal Academy of Fine Art, Kathmandu.

Plate 4



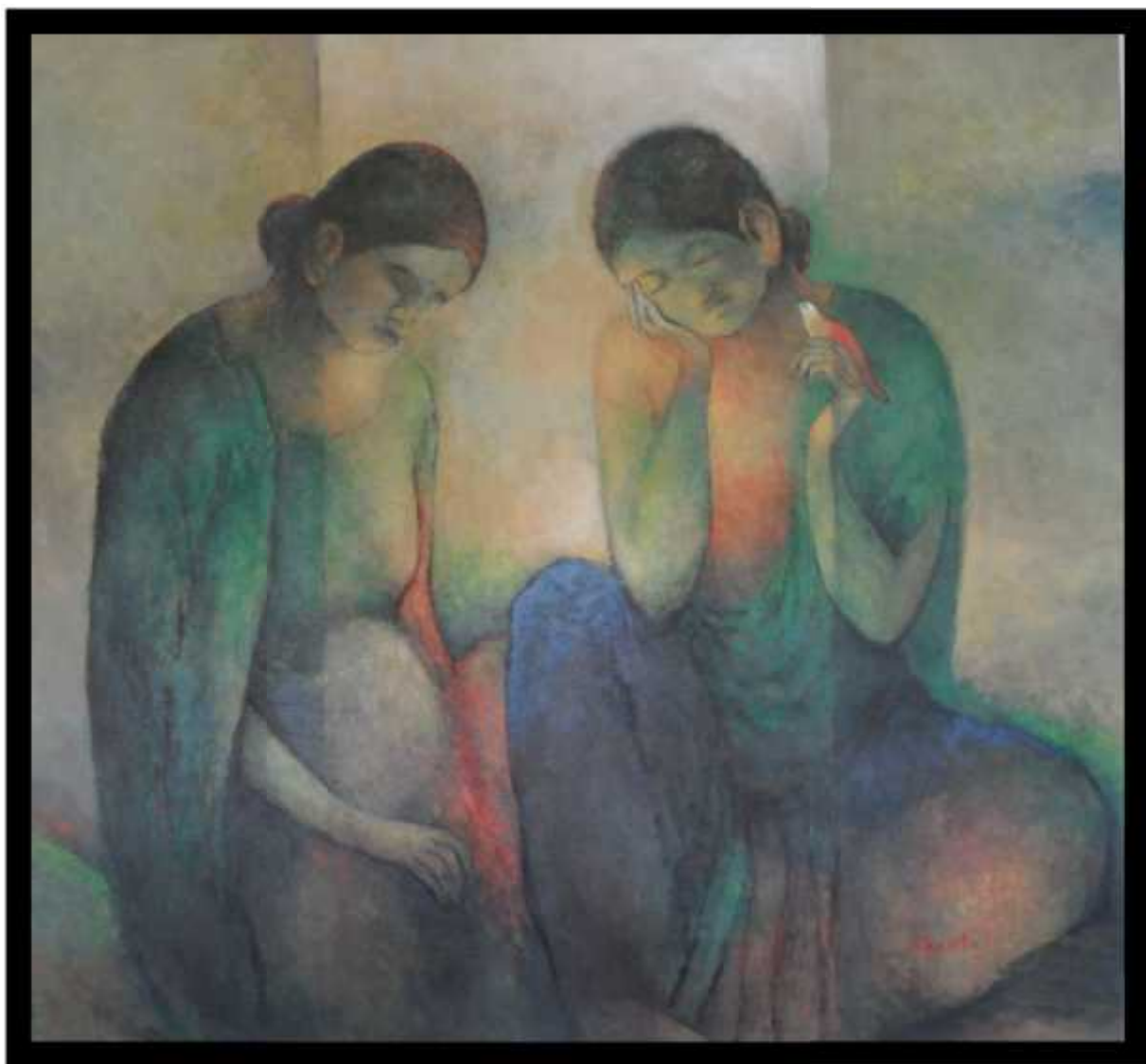
Shanta Kumar Rai, *The Output of Gender Discrimination* (2008), Nepal Academy of Fine Art, Kathmandu.

Plate 5



Shanta Kumar Rai, *Smearred Identity of Women* (2012), Nepal Academy of Fine Art, Kathmandu.

Plate 6



Shanta Kumar Rai, *Pregnancy* (2010), Nepal Academy of Fine Art, Kathmandu.

Plate 7



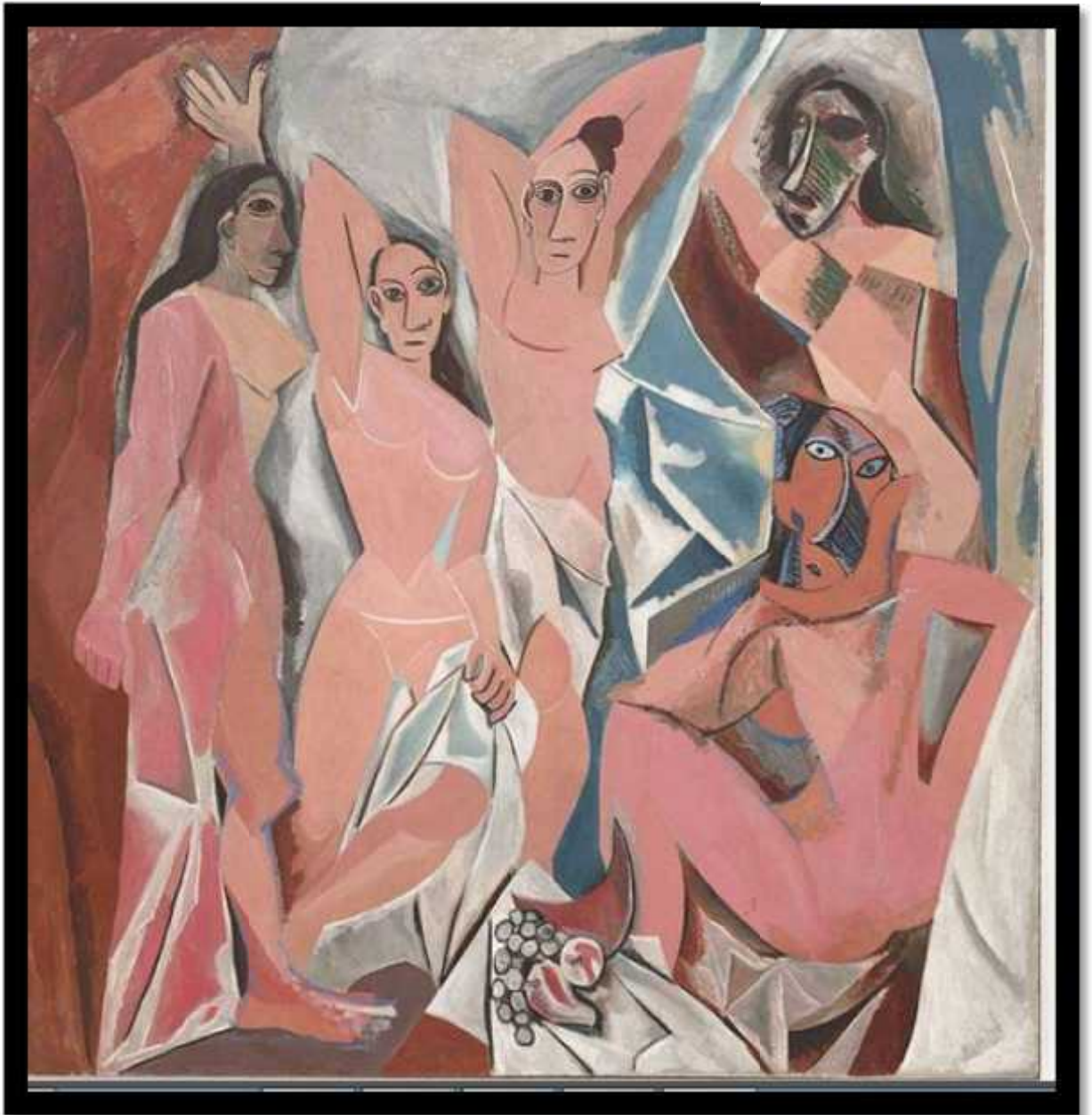
Shanta Kumar Rai, *An Objection with Beauty of Women* (2009), Nepal Academy of Fine Art, Kathmandu.

Plate 8



Fig. 8 : Shanta Kumar Rai, *Five Women* (2012), Nepal Academy of Fine Art, Kathmandu.

Plate 9



Pablo Picasso, *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J. No. 119)* 1907, Museum of Modern Art, New York City.