

Nilima Sheikh and Nalini Malani: Positioning of Two Women Artists in the Indian Feminist Historical

Deeplakshmi Saikia

Designation: PhD candidate, Visual Studies, School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Abstract

No category in any discipline is complete in itself and emerges in a void. Just like feminism in Europe had its beginnings in the religious framework, feminism in India can be said to have its nascent stages in the Indian independence movement. As the Indian struggle widened its scope from freedom from colonialism to other problems in the Indian society, women's issues also came to be dealt with, and eventually women themselves took up their cause. This had its implications on the Indian art world also, the major development of which was the coming up of several women artists, not only as producers and subjects, but also as a definite category in the lexicon of Indian art. Thus the 1970s which saw the second wave of Indian feminism also witnessed the burgeoning of many women artists who drew directly or indirectly from the historical. The present paper will be focusing on Nilima Sheikh and Nalini Malani, who were among this crop of Indian feminist artists. Through some of their works, their subjects of work, their representational techniques, etc., why they have been heralded as feminist artists, when there had always been women artists in India, will be brought to light. In the process, some of the problematics related to the criteria of perceiving women's artistic productions, because of the complexity of which, it took such a long period to categorize Indian women artists and more so Indian feminist artists, will also be touched upon,

Keywords: Feminism, artists, 1970s, Nilima Sheikh, Nalini Malani,

Date of Submission: 28-03-2022

Date of Acceptance: 09-04-2022

Just as society is structured by unequal relations between the sexes, its component material production is also characterized by unequal relations. On the one hand, art history studies cultural production and ideology, and on the other hand, it itself is a part of the cultural hegemony which maintains, omits, marginalizes or upholds the elements of art history, besides deciding what art history is, what art is, and what the artist is or can be. Sexism is inherent in most academic disciplines which results in the production and continuation of a gender hierarchy. What we learn about the world is influenced by the social order we live in, and women's studies may strive to study about the social relations between sexes and the systems which facilitate this, but there are problematics at every level. Gender is not a category complete in itself and thus when studying a feminist art history or even women's artistic production, other influential factors like history, caste, class, race, etc. also have to be considered.

The fields of feminist visual cultural studies and art history have been limited to a feminism which is relevant to Western art and thus relegating non-Western women artists to a peripheral feminist art discourse. Indeed the important characteristics of Western feminism are not always and easily applicable to all countries or context, just like there is no universal patriarchal framework within which one can address the gender issues in art. Feminism, at the outset, is also often considered to be a Western concept and thus Asian feminists are considered to be "outsiders". Because of this distancing, feminist art is often considered to be separatist, instead of integrative. (Bloom, 2010)

But how or what should art be in order to be feminist? Marjorie Kramer's position is that not all artistic works by women are or should be feminist, but there are two main kinds of feminist art: unconscious and conscious. Their commonality is that they both explain women's point of view. They are sympathetic to women and are understandable by society. Feminist paintings do not humiliate or exploit women. Feminist art is not art for art's sake. Instead it reaches out to people with a truth. Feminist art is the result of a feminist consciousness. (Kramer, 2001)

Joan Kee in "What is feminist about contemporary Asian women's art?" asks if the notion of a "contemporary Asian women's art" is necessarily feminist in nature and thus this question can be asked specifically in the context of Indian women's art too. This question does not deal with whether women artists identify themselves as feminist or if their works impart feminist messages. The issue instead relates to

interpretation. The most common problem that is taken under consideration is adequate representation of women artists' works. However, if women's art repeats the same logic of objectification, then we would be no farther from where we had begun. Our attitudes, conceptions and interpretations will decide the values that we will regard as important to our perception of feminism and the ones we will discard at the expense of others. (Kee, 2010)

This equating of consideration of women artists with production of feminist art is also questioned by Griselda Pollock. Although feminist art history began as a part of art history, women artists and especially great women artists have been much fewer than their male counterparts because the criteria to greatness and art history's typical procedures and protocols are already male-defined. Thus the answer is already determined. (Pollock, 2003)

This issue is also dealt with by Linda Nochlin in her question and essay by the same name: Why have there been no women artists? While the first reaction to this by many is quoting the life and career of some women artists, it only tacitly reinforces the underlying suggestion that there have been no great women artists because women lack the inherent quality necessary to produce great works- the phallus. Another answer to the question is the assertion that women's art is also "great" but a different kind of "great" than men's. But Nochlin asks that if there really were hidden great women artists, then what are feminists fighting for now? Thus one has to scavenge further to the root of the problem. But Nochlin says that this problem of inequality is not oppressive men but the very nature of our institutional structures and the view which they impose upon people. (Nochlin, 1989) However, she doesn't explain how this could be when institutional structures are themselves formed by people. Nochlin also dismisses the idea of genius which she calls a "golden nugget" that people are supposed to be born with. The idea of genius and talent is articulated by George Kubler. According to him, it is an artist's training as well as their position in the sequence of works that have been and are being produced which will determine the value of their works. Thus, some people may be more talented than others but genius is not a hereditary or a congenital phenomenon. (Kubler, 1962)

Regarding the idea that women's work needs to be understood differently, Judy Dench proposes that women's artistic creations will never be understood accurately until women themselves are understood. Women who aim to create work through their experience will never be suitable for the tools of criticism and art evaluation which are based on male experience. (Chicago, 2001) Nilima Sheikh once (in response to a question from Vasudevan Akkitham about the use of lyricism as a language) stressed on the need to find a new language for critique of art. According to her, there was nothing wrong with the prevalent terms but there should be an effort to find different ways to talk about works which are attempting a different genre. Therefore, new terminologies are required to talk about art. (Achar, 2012) Although this is just one instance of insistence by a woman artist, the important thing is how it is not considered by other people, as will be shown later.

That women's work needs to be perceived differently is also because women represent with and/or because of who they are. Luce Irigaray, in an interview, dismisses a schism between she who is a woman and she who writes. She thinks that it is oppression and lack of a sexual culture because of which some people can make a distinction between being a woman and writing or creating as a woman. (Irigaray, 2001) The solution to this might be to define different criteria for viewing or evaluating women's art. But this is problematic because it will result in only another way of appreciating or consuming art, confining women's art to a gender-defined category, while the usual criteria for appreciating art will remain the same male-defined. This is why Marxist paradigms and historical explanation of women's artistic production is important. (Pollock, 1987)

The paradigm of art history has to be shifted to see art as a social practice which combines many relations and determining elements. Instead of only adding elements, new ways have to be formulated to understand what it is that we study and why we study it. One of the related disciplines which put forward new approaches was social history of art, and Marxist historiography became important for producing a feminist paradigm to study cultural production. This is because the feminist historical materialism did not replace class with gender, but instead saw the interdependence of class, gender and even race. Besides being seen as resultant of the social struggles of class, race and gender, artistic practices must also be seen in the light of the meanings they produce, how and for whom the meanings are produced. Thus, a feminist art history not only demands recognition of women artists and their works but also the recognition of gender power relations, the social and cultural histories that constructed sexual difference, etc. (Pollock, 1987)

This subject produced a lot of art especially in the 1970s because of the feminist movement which acted as a force against decadence and for bringing in changes for better.

The manner in which the category of the woman artist was shaped took place in the context of the Indian women's movement, especially in the way it redefined popular ideas about women and highlighted the violence in women's lives. Although it seems absurd to consider that the Indian woman artist did not exist before the 1980s, but if one reads the writing on modern Indian art in catalogues, articles and books, one finds that the category of 'Indian woman artist' came into being only around the mid-to-late 1980s. Several factors

such as art institutional, art historical and art operational contributed to this but also in conjunction were feminist thought and the Indian women's movement. (Achar, 2012)

The late 19th and early 20th century saw a growing feminist movement in India. This was due to several reasons, major among which were the influence of colonialism before independence and the experiment with democracy post-independence. The 19th century saw the rise of women's issues as well as the issue of equality, based on the liberal-democratic premise. A shift was to be seen in the image of the women, from women as the symbolic mother, to the protective and ravaging mother goddess, to Gandhi's emphasis on the spirit of endurance and suffering in women. Even though Gandhi was upheld as an icon of the Indian women's movement, his depiction of women's qualities was deemed inadequate by certain feminists.

The post-independence feminist movement was based firmly on the principles of equality. Now women were seen not only in relation to men but in themselves. Moving away from the mother symbol, the use of the daughter as a symbol brought into focus the pain, vulnerability, shock, rejection, loneliness and loss experienced by a girl from childhood till adulthood, and the repetition of the same cycle upon the birth of another daughter. These emotions had not been previously expressed in exhibitions, plays and pamphlets.

This helplessness brought about the issue of equality but in time the concept of equality was widened and women, instead of demanding for equality with men, began to lay more stress on control over their own bodies, control over their own lives and the larger right of self-determination. However, this right of self-determination has been subject to much debate. Initially, equality between the masculine and feminine was stressed, which were also considered to be complementary. But later on, the issue of gender-based difference rose up in the 1980s which celebrated femininity and has sometimes been interpreted as rejection of masculinity.

Several movements from the nineteen-forties to the nineteen-seventies, such as the communist-led food campaigns, Chipko movement, the anti-alcohol and anti-price-rise movement, the nationalist, Telangana and Tebhaga movements saw mass participation by women. But these movements are said to show anti-patriarchal elements rather than feminist. This is because they did not have the tension of difference and sameness that was a central issue in the feminist movement. (Kumar, 1993) This conflict between the notions of complementarity and equality was resolved only after the second wave of feminism in India in the 1970s. (Kumar, 1993)

The 1980s were also the times when feminists started concerning themselves not only with the distress of women but also their playfulness and pleasure. This was because equal importance wanted to be given to the positive aspects of women's life, such as their forms of celebration and creativity. In order to do this, feminist associations held workshops which had sessions on songs, dances, drama and painting. Women were encouraged to explore their own creativity which could have liberating effects. This was also good because non-verbal forms of expression allowed a short-cut to communication, cutting across class barriers. Women who were not verbally eloquent also found other media to express themselves. In the process, not only were folk cultures given recognition enforcing a sense of regional, ethnic and national identity, but it allowed experimentation with these forms in a feminist context. Thus by the early eighties, feminist activities had branched variedly, and among others, into production of literature and audio-visual material. (Kumar, 1993) Feminism had also developed within it three major streams, among which one comprised of the radical feminists who concentrated on defining the differences between femininity and masculinity by experimenting with traditional sources of women's strength, creativity, etc. (Kumar, 1993) Thus feminist art shares its ideology with the political movement, before the museums and art galleries, and is a political propagandist art.

Evidently, one could now see a new feminist interest in the arts as well as history which focused on representation. Two key endeavours, among others, were Stree Shakti Sanghatana's oral history project which emphasized the role of women in the Telangana movement, and Susie Tharu and K. Lalitha's project on women's writings. The latter challenged the simple notions of loss and recovery of women's cultural productions and instead focused on women's experience. So in engagement with the women's movement and intervention in the notion of aesthetic, an aesthetic of the personal was worked out, and it is in these efforts that the strengthening of the category of the 'Indian woman artist' can be witnessed.

In the late 1980s, Arpita Singh, Madhvi Parekh, Nalini Malani and Nilima Sheikh made the important decision to hold a series of group shows organized around artistic considerations which focused on gender. According to Nilima Sheikh, the aim was to reframe their work in such a way that the issue of gender was in the foreground. Interestingly, the goal was not individual opportunities or recognition but to test how the grouping of women artists would affect their individual works and open up the field. One crucial metaphor they employed to display their shows as the marginalized site of gender was the medium of watercolour. Instead of using oil and canvas, which signified 'high' art, they used watercolour and paper. Also, they opted to show away from the major national art exhibition centers, such as in New Delhi and Bombay, and instead showed in smaller galleries and places like Bhopal and Bangalore, further emphasizing the marginalized in gender relations.

Coming back to the women's movement, it seems clear that the artists themselves were dealing with the issues which rose out of the movement. For instance, Nilima Sheikh's *Champa* had the impression of the women's movement on it. Dowry death was one of the issues under focus in the women's movement and

Champa was shaped precisely by the movement's take on the issue, as Sheikh had herself acknowledged in her 2004 seminar presentation. The *Champa* series also tried to formulate representational strategies that illustrated its relevance with other analogous events such as bride-burning. Sheikh used traditional tempera painting techniques to question the sides of Indian tradition which undermined women. She used text from vernacular folk songs along with the paintings- an idea she continued to use in her work.

The 1986 exhibition by National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi and the Festival of India, USSR that showcased the contemporary women artists was also an important event. These shows as well as the series undertaken by the women artists were largely understood under the modernist paradigm. This was because feminist engagement then was not considered to be radical or even necessary by the frameworks that structured the understanding of modern art in India, although this was to change within just a few years.

Parallely, it was moves in art institutional spaces, such as a search for forgotten artists, re-evaluation of artists who had been undermined, re-examination of the criteria by which artworks were legitimized and problematized, etc, by which the category of the 'Indian woman artist' was arrived at. (Achar 2012: 226-231)

Sheikh continued to use tempera even after the *Champa* series but increasingly in ambitious scale. In 1996, *Shamiana* was unveiled at the Second Asia-Pacific Triennial, an installation with six hanging tempera on canvas scrolls, covered with a canopy made of synthetic polymer paint on canvas that referenced a marriage tent. Geeta Kapur, on this work, talked about Sheikh's gain from Persian and Rajput miniatures which she transformed into a female atmosphere. According to Kapur, her depictions of desire as suicidal abandon and as climax reminds one of Meera, the 16th century poet saint, whose songs can still be traced in contemporary women performers. The paintings act as background for the performance of female artists. She thus brings forth a collection of legends and in a visual geography, offering a feminist trope for spatiality. (Sheikh, 1996)

Sheikh had held an exhibition at Stuttgart Hall Foyer, Max Muller Bhavan, Mumbai in 1995, *Songspace*. The catalogue of this exhibition is important because it starts with the issue of lyricism- an expression she had a problem with when it came to be applied to her work. Roshan Shahani starts by saying that "in Nilima's hands, lyricism reaches the summit of eloquence." And he goes on to say that the lyricism is radiated by the tall canvas hung as curtain drapes. (Sheikh, 1995) Deeptha Achar, on the other hand, also problematizes this by saying that when Nilima Sheikh's work is called 'lyrical' or 'feminine', it becomes imperative to draw her work to the political because this is where her work has always belonged. Her representational strategies and exploration of conventional frames as well as new possibilities and new meanings is often missed out. Her work is located at the nexus between gender and community, and only conventional ahistorical studying of it erases the issues of representation within the women's movement as well as within the art world. (Achar, 2012) Sheikh's language is connected with an awareness of the historical processes and she is constantly experimenting with moods and methods for describing her subject. (Sheikh, 1996)

Nilima Sheikh received her Master of Fine Arts degree from Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in 1971. It was the first university to give a degree in Fine Arts in the country, and under Hansa Mehta as the Vice-Chancellor, a liberal literate climate marked by self-expression, enquiry and consciousness grew through art. Mehta mustered all her resources in order to fulfil her vision for the university. As a result of which, the future artists who were trained there became aware of their position in history. Traditional view and stereotypes related to artists and artisans were discarded. Also important was the new alignment of skill and learning. (Sheikh, 1997) Thus, Nilima Sheikh was trained in an institution which was not only reinforced by immense liberalism and pragmatism, but also had as Vice-Chancellor one of the women architects of the Indian republic, who had equally clear and strong visions for the university.

One of Sheikh's contemporaries and partners in the 1980s exhibition series was Nalini Malani who, in the early 1970s had begun portraying larger social issues through allegorized autobiographies. Her subject matter was female trauma, and she began portraying women as survivors of bodily violence. She used a plane of representation to bring the concealed parts of women's lives to visibility, such as in *Grieved Child* (1981), although Malani did recognize that this was virtual visibility.

The use of watercolour as a medium also enabled her to manipulate figures in such a way that Malani's figures seemed to be of a different species. Anthropomorphic standards were not adhered to in her peculiar men, depressed women, injured beggars, misshapen children, etc. Yet her works were not primitivist. Her works suggested the oddity of the human body while engaged in everyday chores and naturalized it.

Besides trying to naturalize the contortions of the human body, she also hoped to break the social roles assigned to women by testing different skins. In every society, women are given certain roles they need to act out. For instance, women are expected to grieve and thus portray the disruption that has been caused by an event such as death. In paintings like *Women Destroyed* (1986) and *Signs of Depression* (1986), she showed that if a woman is not able to conform to the role she has been allotted, her resistance will be apparent in her "hysterical" behavior. (Kapur, 2000)

Besides the female presence, men are also tackled in different ways by Malani. One trick she employs is that of androgyny. Along with bisexual qualities, her characters such as in *Of Angels and Monsters* (1989), could be sexless. Ironically, Malani presents her male figures with a sublimity which is seldom found in the female ones.

Another aspect of her representation of men is her persistent portrayal of the subaltern which reflects her desire to relate with the common man or woman. However, her sense of responsibility seems undecided as it takes a lot to get out into the skin of another to form a corporeal connection. Often driven by a reformist purpose, she denies the larger human agency. (Kapur, 2000)

This raises the issue of class. Nalini Malani belongs to an upper middle class Sindhi family displaced at the time of Partition from Karachi and settled in Bombay. Revolutionary feminism has always raised the issue of classism. Within the feminist movement, on one hand, there have been demands for equal rights within the existing class structure, and on the other, there are demands for fundamental changes in the existing structure. It is often seen that revolutionary feminism is often dismissed by reformist feminism. Revolutionary feminism believes that it is only through consideration of the interconnected systems of racism, classism and sexism that feminist liberation can actualize. (hooks, 2000) Otherwise, this gap between the object and the subject, the agency and the representation, the artist and the work of art, will always continue.

The city-street is another element of Malani's representational area and the city she paints is the city of Delhi. Although art practice in India has remained confined to the middle class, it was with the rise of women artists from the 1970s that besides other notions, the divide between the public and the private sphere came to be challenged. Nalini Malani who also emerged in the early 1970s has problematized the notion of the public sphere from the point of view of representation of violence.

In recent times, the idea of the public sphere has been revised. Alternative discourses on public sphere have been constituted by subordinated groups like women, workers, gays and lesbians, etc. to put forward alternate explanations of their identities, interests and requirements. There is a tendency to dismiss the differences between them which are also studied by visual culture separately. But the mixing of these objects of study is visible in the case of works by contemporary women artists. Especially, the works of women artists which deal with violence is reflected in the way specifically the event of riots is evident in their art. (Mukherji, 2012)

However, violence does not need to be directly and explicitly marked out in works of art by women. The theme of violence was present in Malani's "Woman Series" in 1974, sensing that gender works in coordination with caste and class. Her focus was on the surroundings of her studio- an urban slum. This became the background of her figures. In *Devi*, the central figure of a Sati mocked female martyrdom and questioned the nationalist agenda of using a woman body in the name of tradition. Following the demolition of Babri Masjid and the communal riots of 1992, she moved away from the medium of painting to installation art form. Her *Medeaprojekt*, in collaboration with Alakananda Samarth, the actress, was a metaphorical expression and critique of nation, family and motherhood in a patriarchal society. (Mukherji, 2012) Addressing the nation, Malani's video installations are based on plays, stories and social critiques. The texts she chooses portray dispossession, the nation's betrayal of its citizenry, the loss suffered by the people in relation to their nation, etc. She tries to materialize social suffering in images and her choice of style for this is always tragic. (Kapur, 2007)

Nilima Sheikh also explored the issue of community suffering through sectarian violence and state brutality in her *Painted Drawings*. She focused on the grief, trauma, violence and terror that the ordinary people of Kashmir and Gujarat underwent, although avoiding combining the two. She explored the relationship of the people to those places in which they lived and suffered and the process and implications of their return to these places. The figures in her works, often neglected in mainstream accounts, bear witness to the past times as well as longings. Her works are not simple representations of violence but represent the complex relationship between violence and how different people are subject to it differently. (Sheikh, 2009)

Nalini Malani's studio was also a place from which obtained a view of the mixed population which was compelled into being a community. In a title of one of her works, *A Gross Idealization of Lohar Chawl* (1989), she focuses on the metropolitan wish of putting Bombay at par with cities like Berlin, New York, Paris, etc. Lohar Chawl at Princess Street is where her studio is located. In works like *The City and Its Ghosts/The City and Its Phantoms* (1988), she has been drawing the secret city at night with its phantom-like male and female figures. Her *City of Desires* (1991) with circus-like madness and spectacle form an allegory of the actual reality. Images of rape and riot expand the vocabulary and narrative of individual and collective pain and survival. The watercolour *The Sufi and the Bhakta* provide anonymity to its central figures without alienating them through their ordinary activities. (Kapur, 2000)

Nalini Malani and Nilima Sheikh were among the producers of artistic creation who drew their strength, subject matter and sources from social history, and especially from the Indian women's movement. Undoubtedly, even before the category of the Indian woman artist came to be formulated, there were women artists. But this term was not used in the lexicon of Indian art history as a specific category. With the coming of

these women artists in the role of producers, now women were not only subjects of work, but women's experiences, thoughts, feelings and qualities were represented by women through various forms of creativity. Representation is also a kind of power play. There is a dichotomy between those who construct meaning and those on whom meaning is constructed. Representation thus regulates and defines subjects, positioning them according to class, caste, religion and gender. Representation is often related to resemblance and it results in spectatorship. Thus who is the agent of representation and who is the spectator is very important.

Therefore, evidently, women had come to occupy different places in the history of culture and their art was a result of the different positions they had occupied, both as women and as artists, in different historical moments.

REFERENCES:

- [1]. Achar, Deeptha. (2012). 'Invisible Chemistry: The Women's Movement and the Indian Woman Artist' in *Articulating Resistance: Art and Activism*, edited by Deeptha Achar and Shivaji Panikkar, 219-235. New Delhi: Tulika Books.
- [2]. Bloom, Lisa E. (2010). 'Negotiating Feminisms in Contemporary Asian Women's Art' in *The Feminism and Visual Cultural Reader*, edited by Amelia Jones. Second edition, Routledge,
- [3]. Chicago, Judy. (2001). 'Woman as Artist' in *Feminism-Art-Theory: An Anthology 1968-2014*, edited by Hilary Robinson. United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishers.
- [4]. hooks, bell. (2000). *Where We Stand: Class Matters*. New York and London: Routledge.
- [5]. Irigaray, Luce. (2001). 'Writing as a Woman' in *Feminism-Art-Theory: An Anthology 1968-2014*, edited by Hilary Robinson. United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishers.
- [6]. Kapur, Geeta, (2000). 'Body as Gesture: Women Artists at Work' in *When Was Modernism: Essays on Contemporary Cultural Practice in India*, ed. Geeta Kapur, Tulika Books, New Delhi,
- [7]. Kapur, Geeta. (2007). 'Gender Mobility: Through The Lens of Five Women Artists in India' in *Global Feminisms: New Directions in Contemporary Art*, ed. Maura Reilly, Linda Nochlin, Merrell Publishers.
- [8]. Kee, Joan. (2010) 'What is feminist about contemporary Asian women's art?' in *The Feminism and Visual Cultural Reader*, Amelia Jones (ed.), Second edition, Routledge.
- [9]. Kramer, Marjorie. (2001). 'Some Thoughts on Feminist Art' in *Feminism-Art-Theory: An Anthology 1968-2000*, ed. Hilary Robinson, Blackwell Publishers.
- [10]. Kubler, George. (1962). *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- [11]. Kumar, Radha. (1993). *The History of Doing: An Illustrated Account of Movements for Women's Rights and Feminism in India 1800-1990*. New Delhi: Zubaan.
- [12]. Mukherji, Parul Dave. (2012). 'Contemporary Women Artists in India: Riots, Violence and the Multiple Politics of Praxis' in *Articulating Resistance: Art and Activism*, edited by Deeptha Achar and Shivaji Panikkar. New Delhi: Tulika Books.
- [13]. Nochlin, Linda. (1989). 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?' in *Women, Art, Power and Other Essays*, Westview Press.
- [14]. Pollock, Griselda. (2003). 'Feminist Interventions in Art History' in *Vision and Difference: Feminism, Femininity and the Histories of Art*, Psychology Press.
- [15]. Pollock, Griselda. (1987). 'Women, Art, and Ideology: Questions for Feminist Art Historians' in *Women's Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No. ½, Teaching About Women and the Visual Arts (Spring-Summer).
- [16]. Sheikh, Nilima. (1997). 'A Post-Independence Initiative in Art' in *Contemporary Art in Baroda*, edited by Gulammahomed Sheikh. New Delhi: Tulika Books.
- [17]. Sheikh, Nilima. (2009). *Drawing Trails*. New Delhi: Gallery Espace Art Pvt. Ltd.
- [18]. Sheikh, Nilima. (1996). *Painted Drawings*. Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery.
- [19]. Sheikh, Nilima. (1995). *Songspace: Scroll paintings*. Bombay: Gallery Chemould.
- [20]. Sheikh, Nilima. (1996). *Shamiana*. Australia: Queensland Art Gallery.

Deeplakshmi Saikia. "Nilima Sheikh and Nalini Malani: Positioning of Two Women Artists in the Indian Feminist Historical." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 27(04), 2022, pp. 35-40.