

SYMBOLIC EXPRESSION OF MITHILA PAINTING AND ITS SOCIOLOGICAL OVERTONES

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ABSTRACT

Gender, caste and ritual seem to have largely shaped the contemporary Mithila painting and its interpretation varies accordingly. This is the only traditional painting in the world solely grown in the lap of women but the caste variation outlines the works of art in their own way. Moreover, the painting creates space for ritual performance, the filled symbols within the outline convey cultural meaning that appear pivotal to the natives for their proper guidelines in their life. Context further marks their complexity in expression and clarification in meaning. Although Mithila society proclaims to be patriarchy, its cultural manifestation lies mainly in the hands of females. Therefore, women who look as if to have lower position in the outer Maithili world, communicates symbolically through their paintings at every ritual occasion.

KEYWORDS: *Gender, Castes, Ritual, Symbols and Spiritual*