

## Second Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy Memorial Lecture

October 6, 2023

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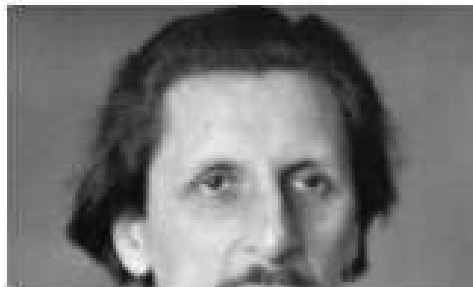
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The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) organized the Second Ananda Coomaraswamy Memorial Lecture on October 6, 2023. The lecture was held to commemorate the 76th Death Anniversary of A.K. Coomaraswamy, a pioneering art historian of the 20th century. The topic of the lecture was "Towards

Decolonizing Indian Art History via the Problem of Mimesis in the Citrasutra."

### About A.K. Coomaraswamy

- A.K. Coomaraswamy was a renowned art historian known for his intellectual eloquence and advocacy for the indigenous roots of Indian art.
- His work remains influential and inspiring across various fields of study.
- IGNCA acquired Coomaraswamy's collection of books, art objects, paintings, photographs, and correspondences in 2008.

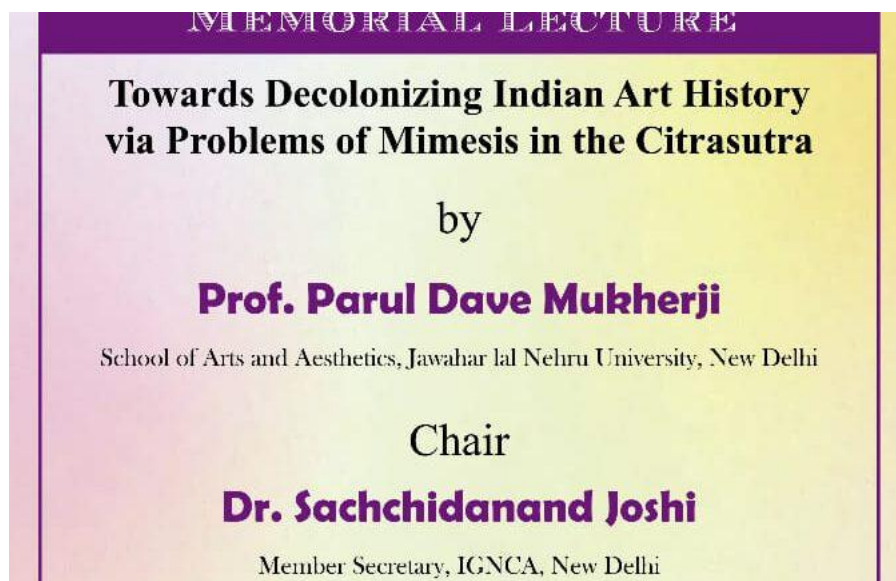
### Objective of the Lecture

- The lecture aims to acknowledge A.K. Coomaraswamy's significant contributions to the field of art and culture.
- It focuses on the theme of decolonizing Indian art history and revisiting the theory of performative mimesis (anukarana vada) in Indian aesthetics.

### Background

- The study of Indian art history was initially influenced by European norms and methodologies, but recent efforts aim to understand and explain Indian art from the perspective of the culture it originated from.
- The lecture will address the concept of decolonizing Indian art history in today's context.

Home > National News >



NATIONAL NEWS

## Second Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy Memorial Lecture To Be Held On 6th October At IGNC

By India Education Diary ... On Oct 5, 2023

New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts is going to organise Second Ananda Coomaraswamy Memorial Lecture to be held on the topic 'Towards Decolonizing Indian Art History via the Problem of Mimesis in the Citrasutra' to commemorate the 76<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary of A.K. Coomaraswamy. Prof. Parul Dave Mukherji, School of Arts & Aesthetics, JNU, New Delhi and the session will be chaired by Prof. Sachchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary, IGNC, New Delhi.

Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy was one of the pioneering art historians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century whose art-historic writing is an intellectual landmark due to its interpretative eloquence and ardent advocacy in favour of the indigenous roots of Indian art. He remains a unique and inspiring scholar and author across the many fields of study he made his own.

With this view in mind, IGNC is organising the second Memorial Lecture titled 'Towards Decolonizing Indian Art History via the Problem of Mimesis in the Citrasutra' by Prof. Parula Dave Mukherji to acknowledge the critical and comprehensive work done by Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy in the field of art and culture. In 2008, IGNC acquired his collection of books, art objects and paintings (Bengal school, Rajput and Pahari School of paintings etc.), photographs and his correspondences with Indian and Western philosophers, historians, church chroniclers/historians, curators and friends, from his legal heir. He was the first to recognize and condemn the far-reaching consequences of the Macaulayite education system.

In Education in India, he writes, "I cannot think that European teachers and educationists quite realize how far 'English' education as it is given in the East is crushing all originality.. in the unfortunate individuals who pass through the mill. Yet the 'Babu' and the 'failed B.A.' upon whom the Englishman looks down so contemptuously are the fruit of his handiwork, the inevitable result of the methods of education which he has introduced. Broadly speaking, you take people, educate its children in foreign subjects, and do so in a foreign language, ignoring their culture—and then are surprised at their stupidity! Suppose England was governed by Chinamen, and a premium set on Chinese culture; English children taught Chinese subjects in the Chinese language and left to pick up the English language and traditions anyhow at home—would there not be some 'failed mandarins?'" Modern Review, 1908.

The study of Indian art history initiated between the mid-19th and early 20th century by Western scholars applied European norms and methodology to Indian art. More recently, this Eurocentric bias has diminished. Increased familiarity with objects of Indian art and their aesthetic language has led to attempts to understand and explain such objects from the point of view of those for whom they were made.

Most of the 19th-century scholars of European art, who had little access to Indian art objects, derived their dismal view of the art of the subcontinent mainly from exotic travelogues.

They saw Indian architecture as subject to no rules, Indian sculpture as dominated by obscene or monstrous forms and Indian painting as a mere exercise in crude, bright colours, lacking such Western techniques as perspective and Hegel (1835) and John Ruskin (1859) saw Indian art as irrational or unnatural, flying in the face of 'Classical' (Hegel's term) and Christian values, having reached this state by degeneration from rational origins in ancient Greece.

The talk aims to develop the idea of decolonizing Indian art history through this theory and a new engagement with the visual arts of early India.

What does decolonising Indian art history mean today? This question will be addressed by revisiting an overlooked theory of Indian aesthetics, anukarana vada or the theory of performative mimesis.

**Date- 6<sup>th</sup> October**

**Day- Friday**

**Time - 4 PM**

**Venue - Samvet Auditorium, Janpath Building, Janpath, New Delhi- 110001(Nearest Metro Station- Janpath Gate No-1)**

**India Education Diary Bureau Admin** - 99960 Posts - 0 Comments

# IGNCA Organizes Second Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy Memorial Lecture

5 October 2023 by Shubham Mittal



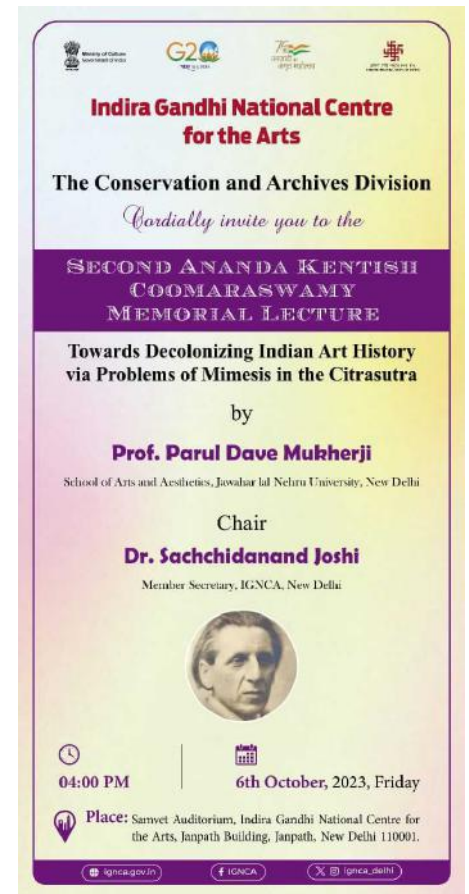
The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) is hosting the Second Ananda Coomaraswamy Memorial Lecture on October 6th, 2023, to mark the 76th Death Anniversary of A.K. Coomaraswamy. The lecture's topic is "Towards Decolonizing Indian Art History via the Problem of Mimesis in the Citrasutra". It will be delivered by Prof. Parul Dave Mukherji from the School of Arts & Aesthetics, JNU, New Delhi. The session will be chaired by Prof. Sachchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary of IGNCA, New Delhi. This lecture serves as a tribute to A.K. Coomaraswamy and addresses important themes in Indian art history.

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## More About the News

The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) is organizing the second Memorial Lecture with the aim of acknowledging and honoring the significant and comprehensive contributions made by Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy in the field of art and culture. The lecture, titled “Towards Decolonizing Indian Art History via the Problem of Mimesis in the Citrasutra” and delivered by Prof. Parul Dave Mukherji, underscores the importance of decolonizing Indian art history, a subject that A.K. Coomaraswamy explored extensively.

IGNCA's acquisition of his collection, including books, art objects, paintings, photographs, and correspondences, reflects its commitment to preserving and promoting Coomaraswamy's legacy. Coomaraswamy was a pioneer in recognizing and criticizing the impact of the Macaulayite education system on Indian culture and heritage.



## Who was A.K. Coomaraswamy?

Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy was indeed a pioneering art historian of the 20th century. His contributions to art history are characterized by interpretative eloquence and passionate advocacy for recognizing the indigenous roots of Indian art. Coomaraswamy's work remains influential and inspiring in various fields of study due to its depth and unique perspective, making him a celebrated scholar and author whose legacy continues to be appreciated and studied by many.

## Study of Indian Art History

The study of Indian art history has evolved over time. Initially, Western scholars applied European norms and methodologies to Indian art, which reflected a Eurocentric bias. However, in recent years, there has been a shift away from this bias. Scholars have become more familiar with Indian art objects and their unique aesthetic language, leading to attempts to understand and explain these objects from the perspective of the cultures in which they were created.

The upcoming lecture, titled “Towards Decolonizing Indian Art History via the Problem of Mimesis in the Citrasutra”. It aims to explore the concept of decolonizing Indian art history in contemporary times. It will revisit an often overlooked theory of Indian aesthetics known as anukarana vada or the theory of performative mimesis. This theory plays a crucial role in reevaluating and decolonizing the understanding of Indian art and aesthetics. It seeks to answer the question of what decolonizing Indian art history

means today by examining the theory of performative mimesis and its implications for the visual arts of early India.

## About The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)

The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) is an autonomous institution under the Union Ministry of Culture. It was established in 1987 in the memory of Indira Gandhi, the [former Prime Minister of India](#). IGNCA is a multidisciplinary cultural center that aims to promote the understanding and appreciation of Indian arts and culture.

### Divisions under IGNCA

- **Research and Publication Division:** This division conducts research on Indian arts and culture and publishes books, journals, and other scholarly materials.
- **Museum Division:** This division manages the IGNCA Museum, which houses a collection of over 200,000 objects from all over India.
- **Cultural Activities Division:** This division organizes and promotes a variety of cultural activities, such as exhibitions, performances, and workshops.
- **Training Division:** This division offers training programs in various aspects of Indian arts and culture.

IGNCA is a valuable resource for scholars, artists, and the general public. It provides a platform for the study and dissemination of Indian arts and culture. It helps to promote cultural understanding and appreciation.



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संस्कृति मंत्रालय

# दूसरा आनंद केंटिश कुमारस्वामी स्मारक व्याख्यान कल 'चित्रसूत्र में निर्दिष्ट मिमेसिस की समस्या के माध्यम से भारतीय कला इतिहास को औपनिवेशिक दृष्टिकोण से मुक्त कराने' के विषय पर आयोजित किया जाएगा

Posted On: 05 OCT 2023 4:38PM by PIB Delhi

इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय कला केंद्र (आईजीएनसीए) 6 अक्टूबर, 2023 को आनंद कुमारस्वामी की 76वीं पुण्य तिथि के उपलक्ष्य में दूसरा आनंद कुमारस्वामी स्मारक व्याख्यान आयोजित कर रहा है, जिसका विषय 'चित्रसूत्र में निर्दिष्ट मिमेसिस की समस्या के माध्यम से भारतीय कला इतिहास को औपनिवेशिक दृष्टिकोण से मुक्त कराना' है। यह व्याख्यान नई दिल्ली स्थित जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय के स्कूल ऑफ आर्ट्स एंड एस्थेटिक्स के प्रोफेसर पारुल दवे मुखर्जी देंगे और सत्र की अध्यक्षता नई दिल्ली स्थित आईजीएनसीए के सदस्य सचिव प्रोफेसर सच्चिदानंद जोशी करेंगे।

आनंद केंटिश कुमारस्वामी 20वीं सदी के अग्रणी कला इतिहासकारों में से एक थे, जिनका कला-इतिहास लेखन अपनी व्याख्यात्मक वाक्यदृष्टि और भारतीय कला की स्वदेशी जड़ों की खोज के कारण एक बौद्धिक मील का पत्थर माना जाता है। वह अध्ययन के कई क्षेत्रों में एक अद्वितीय और प्रेरक विद्वान और लेखक हैं, जिनकी अपनी सुदृढ़ मान्यताएं हैं।

इस विचार के मद्देनजर आईजीएनसीए कला और संस्कृति के क्षेत्र में आनंद केंटिश कुमारस्वामी द्वारा किए गए आलोचनात्मक और व्यापक कार्यों की स्वीकारोक्ति के तौर पर प्रोफेसर पारुला दवे मुखर्जी द्वारा 'टूवार्ड्स डिकोलोनाइजिंग इंडियन आर्ट हिस्ट्री थू द प्रॉब्लम ऑफ मिमेसिस इन द चित्रसूत्र' शीर्षक से दूसरे मेमोरियल व्याख्यान का आयोजन कर रहा है। 2008 में, आईजीएनसीए ने उनकी पुस्तकों, कला वस्तुओं और चित्रों (बंगाल स्कूल, राजपूत और पहाड़ी स्कूल ऑफ पेंटिंग आदि), तस्वीरों और भारतीय और पश्चिमी दार्शनिकों, इतिहासकारों, चर्च इतिहासकारों/इतिहासकारों, क्यूरेटर और दोस्तों के साथ उनके पत्राचार का संग्रह उनके कानूनी उत्तराधिकारी से हासिल किया था। वह मैकालेवादी शिक्षा प्रणाली के दूरगामी परिणामों को पहचानते थे और इसकी निंदा करने वाले पहले विद्वान थे।

पश्चिमी विद्वानों द्वारा 19वीं सदी के मध्य और 20वीं सदी की शुरुआत के बीच शुरू किए गए भारतीय कला इतिहास के अध्ययन में भारतीय कला में यूरोपीय मानदंडों और पद्धति को लागू किया गया। हाल ही में, यह यूरोकेंद्रित पूर्वाग्रह कम हुआ है। भारतीय कला वस्तुओं और उनकी सौंदर्यात्मक भाषा के साथ बढ़ती परिचितता ने ऐसी वस्तुओं को उन लोगों के दृष्टिकोण से समझने और समझाने का प्रयास किया है जिनके लिए दरअसल वे बनाई गई थीं।

व्याख्यान का उद्देश्य इस सिद्धांत के माध्यम से भारतीय कला इतिहास को औपनिवेशिक दृष्टिकोण से मुक्त कराना और प्राचीन भारत की दृश्य कलाओं के साथ एक नया जुड़ाव विकसित करना है। भारतीय कला इतिहास को औपनिवेशिक दृष्टिकोण से मुक्त करने का आज क्या मतलब है? इस प्रश्न का समाधान भारतीय सौंदर्यशास्त्र के एक उपेक्षित सिद्धांत, अणुकरणवाद या प्रदर्शनात्मक अनुकरण के सिद्धांत पर दोबारा गौर करके किया जा सकता है।

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Ministry of Culture

# Second Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy Memorial Lecture to be held tomorrow on 'Towards Decolonizing Indian Art History via the Problem of Mimesis in the Citrasutra'

Posted On: 05 OCT 2023 4:38PM by PIB Delhi

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) is going to organise Second Ananda Coomaraswamy Memorial Lecture on 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2023 the topic 'Towards Decolonizing Indian Art History via the Problem of Mimesis in the Citrasutra' to commemorate the 76<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary of A.K. Coomaraswamy. Prof. Parul Dave Mukherji, School of Arts & Aesthetics, JNU, New Delhi and the session will be chaired by Prof. Sachchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary, IGNCA, New Delhi.

Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy was one of the pioneering art historians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century whose art-historic writing is an intellectual landmark due to its interpretative eloquence and ardent advocacy in favour of the indigenous roots of Indian art. He remains a unique and inspiring scholar and author across the many fields of study he made his own.

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The study of Indian art history initiated between the mid-19th and early 20th century by Western scholars applied European norms and methodology to Indian art. More recently, this Eurocentric bias has diminished. Increased familiarity with objects of Indian art and their aesthetic language has led to attempts to understand and explain such objects from the point of view of those for whom they were made.

The talk aims to develop the idea of decolonizing Indian art history through this theory and a new engagement with the visual arts of early India. What does decolonising Indian art history mean today? This question will be addressed by revisiting an overlooked theory of Indian aesthetics, anukarana vada or the theory of performative mimesis.

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By **Technology For You** - October 5, 2023

Ministry of Culture



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# Expert stresses need to decolonise art history

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Parul Dave Mukherji in New Delhi on Friday. TRIBUNE PHOTO

In a lecture at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Parul Dave Mukherji from the School of Arts and Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) shed light on redefining Indian art history through the lens of mimesis (representation of the real world or naturalism) and decolonisation.

Delivering the second Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy memorial lecture, instituted by the IGNCA under the Culture Ministry, Mukherji began with a compelling example from the Ajanta Caves, showcasing an overlooked painting of circa 5th century CE and the depiction of the mouth and teeth.

This unexplored detail symbolised, for her, the inherent blindness within the discipline of art history and the urgent need for decolonisation by way of active attention to long neglected indigenous works.

While acknowledging the ubiquity of the term “decolonisation”, Mukherji urged a more precise understanding of what it truly entails and what it should exclude. She emphasised that it should not be assumed that all disciplines prevalent in Europe originated from some original matrix in ancient India, nor should it suggest that ancient Indian art history could be traced back to Vedic science.

To comprehend the decolonisation of art history, Mukherji highlighted its Western origins and the circumstances of its arrival in India, underscoring the connection between Indian art history and colonialism.

Mukherji's exploration led her to the theory of Anukarana Vada, or performative mimesis, drawing from the Silpasastras. While there is no direct translation for "mimesis," terms like "satya" (truthful), "sadrasya" (similar) and "pratibimba" (reflection) resonate with its essence.

Challenging the notion that naturalism is a Western domain, Mukherji cited Stella Kramrisch, an Austria-born art historian who brought forward Indian naturalism, emphasising that each culture possesses a unique mode of representing the world.

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## भारत

Posted at: Oct 6 2023 11:10PM

## 'कुमारस्वामी ने भारतीय कला को उपनिवेशवाद से मुक्त कराने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभायी'

नयी दिल्ली, 06 अक्टूबर (वार्ता) प्रोफेसर पारुल दवे मुखर्जी ने शुक्रवार को यहां कहा कि आनंद कुमारस्वामी ने भारतीय कला को उपनिवेशवाद से मुक्त कराने की दिशा में काफी महत्वपूर्ण प्रयास किए, जो मील का पत्थर साबित हुआ है।

इन्दिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय कला केंद्र (आईजीएनसीए) ने ए.के. कुमारस्वामी की 76वीं पुण्यतिथि के उपलक्ष्य में 'द्वितीय आनंद केंटिश कुमारस्वामी स्मृति व्याख्यान' का आयोजन किया। व्याख्यान का विषय 'टुवाईस डीकॉलोनलाइजिंग इंडियन आर्ट हिस्ट्री वाया द प्रॉब्लम ऑफ मिमिसिस इन द चित्रसूत्र' था।

इस मौके पर जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय के स्कूल ऑफ आर्ट्स एंड एस्थेटिक्स की प्रो. पारुल दवे मुखर्जी, आईजीएनसीए के सदस्य सचिव डॉ. सच्चिदानंद जोशी, प्रसिद्ध इतिहासकार, समीक्षक एवं लेखक आशीष खोखर, आईजीएनसीए के पुरालेखाकार डॉ. कुमार संजय झा सहित अन्य अतिथि गण उपस्थित रहे।

प्रो मुखर्जी ने कहा, "भारतीय कला को यूरोप केंद्रित मान्यताओं से देखने की बजाय भारतीय दृष्टिकोण से समझने की आवश्यकता है।" उन्होंने कहा कि केवल दक्षिण-एशियाई मानस ही अपनी कला को प्रामाणिक रूप से समझ सकता है।

श्रद्धा, संतोष  
वार्ता

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22 May 2024 | 9:12 AM

नयी दिल्ली, 21 मई (वार्ता) उच्चतम न्यायालय ने संविधान के अनुच्छेद 370 के तहत जम्मू एवं कश्मीर को प्राप्त विशेष दर्जे को रद्द करने के अपने फैसले पर पुनर्विचार की मांग करने वाली याचिकाएं मंगलवार को खारिज कर दीं।

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21 May 2024 | 11:33 PM

नयी दिल्ली, 21 मई (वार्ता) राजस्थान के मुख्यमंत्री भजन लाल शर्मा के मंगलवार को पश्चिमी दिल्ली लोकसभा क्षेत्र में आयोजित रोड शो में जन सैलाब उमड़ पड़ा।

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21 May 2024 | 10:54 PM

नयी दिल्ली, 21 मई (वार्ता) आम आदमी पार्टी की नेता आतिशी ने कहा कि चार जून के बाद जब इंडिया समूह की सरकार बनेगी तो इलेक्टोरल बॉन्ड की जांच होगी जिसमें न सिर्फ भाजपा के नेता जेल में जाएंगे बल्कि प्रवर्तन निदेशालय (ईडी), केंद्रीय जांच ब्यूरो (सीबीआई), आयकर विभाग (इनकम टैक्स विभाग) के अफसर भी जेल जाएंगे।

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## पूर्व मुख्यमंत्री चौहान ने मोदी को तीसरी बार प्रधानमंत्री बनाने की दिलाई शपथ

21 May 2024 | 10:49 PM

नयी दिल्ली, 21 मई (वार्ता) प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी के नेतृत्व में 400 से अधिक सीटें जीतने के विश्वास के साथ मध्यप्रदेश के पूर्व मुख्यमंत्री शिवराज सिंह चौहान ने भारतीय जनता पार्टी

(भाजपा) के दक्षिण दिल्ली लोकसभा क्षेत्र के उम्मीदवार रामवीर सिंह बिधूड़ी को भारी मतों से विजयी बनाने की मंगलवार को यहां लोगों से अपील की।

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## UNI Photo



AHMEDABAD, MAY 21 (UNI):- Kolkata Knight Riders player Mitchell Starc celebrates the wicket of Sunrisers Hyderabad's batsman at the IPL 2024 T20 cricket match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Sunrisers Hyderabad at the Narendra Modi Stadium, in Ahmedabad on Tuesday.UNI PHOTO-149U

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**mrspa23@gmail.com**

# **IGNCA held Coomarswamy Memorial Lecture by Prof Parul Dave**





\*Coomarswamy attempted to decolonise the Indian Art- Prof. Parul Dave

## Mukherji\*

New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts organised Second Ananda Coomaraswamy Memorial Lecture on the topic 'Towards Decolonizing Indian Art History via the Problem of Mimesis in the Citrasutra' to commemorate the 76th Death Anniversary of A.K. Coomaraswamy. Prof. Parul Dave Mukherji, School of Arts & Aesthetics, JNU, New Delhi was the speaker and the session was chaired by Prof. Sachchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary, IGNCA, New Delhi. The distinguished guest of the event was Shri. Ashish Khokhar, Dance Historian, Critic and Author. Dr. Kumar Sanjay Jha, Archivist, IGNCA was also present during the lecture.

Prof. Dave while delivering her lecture touched upon different facets which has emerged in the field in the contemporary times. She in the course of the lecture shed light on the topic of the lecture and said, "Decolonizing art history has recently emerged as a way of updating the discipline and bringing it in line with contemporary debates on non-Eurocentric interpretations of one's past". Prof. Dave in her talk drew upon from her research and asserted how Citrasūtra openly endorses mimesis or 'anukriti' as a key aesthetic frame. She reiterated that it is possible to read back a strand of decolonising art history in Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy's defense of Indian art in colonial times, which however came at a price of suppression of mimesis in Indian Art.

She continued and added that Coomaraswamy attempted to decolonise the Indian art and only South-Asians understand its art authentically. She further added that Coomaraswamy did attempt a critical historiography in art history. Indian comparative aesthetics is dealing with different sense of mimesis where the movement and interpretation are intertwined and 'Chetna' is understood in the sense of art making added Prof. Mukherji.

Some pertinent questions were also raised in the course of her lecture like, 'Is there a need to return to the overlooked theory of mimesis from a new contemporary position after 7 decades of political sovereignty?' She concluded by saying that is it possible to look at native art in history in non-native way and it is where lies the challenge of decolonising Indian art history. Prof. Parul lecture was an attempt to move to rehabilitate a 'native' art and serve the interest of decolonizing art history today.

Ashish Khokhar in his remarks said that the knowledge pool is so vast in regard to this subject, that rewriting and re-positioning and the whole new approach to

what is India in India today and how West perceived India needs a re-examination. He added in this context that it is where organisations and institutions like IGNCA, which is multidisciplinary in its approach has a critical role to play. He extended his thanks to IGNCA for being the forum in bringing all the stakeholders at one place.

Earlier Dr. Kumar Sanjay Jha in his welcome address said that, “Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy was one of the pioneering art historians of the 20th century whose art-historic writing is an intellectual landmark due to its interpretative eloquence and ardent advocacy in favour of the indigenous roots of Indian art”. Dr. Jha asserted that Coomaraswamy remains a unique and inspiring scholar and author across the many fields of study he made his own. He concluded by saying that Anand Coomaraswamy was the first to recognize and condemn the far-reaching consequences of the Macaulayite education system



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## "COOMARSWAMY ATTEMPTED TO DECOLONISE THE INDIAN ART": PROF. PARUL DAVE MUKHERJI



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**Virendra Mishra Delhi Bureau**