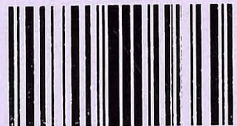


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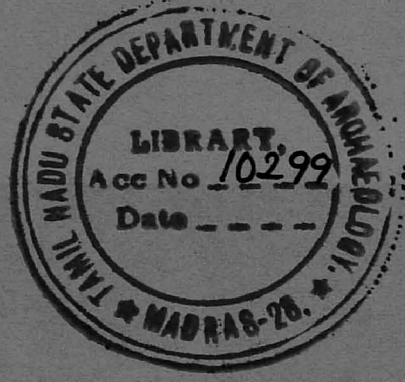


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ஒளிரச்சய்வதே ஒவிய நுண்கலை



# நுன்கலை

மலர் : 11 இதழ் : 2

1995-96

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# CONTEMPORARY INDIAN ART

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A. S. RAMAN

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INDIAN ARTISTS never had it so good. The market spruced up by its sotheby and Christie connection is high profile and paintings change hands at absurdly inflated prices. This otherwise undesirable trend, which, if left unchecked, will only breed naked commercialism, is welcome, because of its positive impact on the morale of the artist and the quality of his work. With his doubts and dilemmas gone, he has at last found a voice for himself. He has evolved a vibrant and authentic idiom which is as Indian in its ethos as it is international in its elan. In other words, he keeps moving forward with one foot in the past. Whatever traditional references we find in his work are within the context of contemporaneity.

The present are scene the world over, whatever its national backdrop, has many common features, such as, to mention a few: (1) Shift in the focus from content to form, (2) close interaction between the artist and the public, (3) growing commercialism, (4) enhanced social status of the artist resulting in his unprecedented affluence and authority, (5) the proliferation of icults and coteries leading to unhealthy and ill-tempered confrontations which only destroy creativity and (6) the shared vision, idiom and technique. With the east-west divide out of sight, the interface between the artists of one country and those of



Avvaiyar - by S. Dhanapal

another becomes easier and smoother and acquires a special significance in the larger perspective of the intrinsic universality of artistic expression, cutting across continents and centuries.

Different countries have different levels of artistic development, depending on their own traditions, perceptions and motivations. The quality of a country's art of course is not determined by her physical size or political stature or economic power or military arsenal or even cultural ethos. Small countries such as Cypress and South Korea have made rich contributions to the art of the world. Even some former socialist republics where it was believed there was little scope for creativity had a strong *avant-garde* presence underground.

Today the Indian artist who is no longer at the receiving has begun to assert his identity through his felicitous and fullblooded creations. There is no denying the fact that the art of India, particularly painting, has come of age. Significant work has been produced during the last 30 years. The time for apologies and explanations, discriminatory comparisons and assessments is over. Our artists no longer feel inhibited or embarrassed by European values and concepts. In India today art expression at its best is a remarkable synthesis. It is deeply rooted to the source of our ancient tradition, both in form and spirit, and, at the same time, it is refreshingly in tune with the temper of science and technology so characteristic of the 21st century. Conflicting sources have converged to produce a robustly eclectic idiom. Assimilation is a telling and tangible reality.

Art in the West is a product of the artist's agonies, while in the East it comes out of his ecstasies. With the West and the East coming closer together than ever before, a new art can be seen emerging- an art blending neatly the agonies of the West and the ecstasies of the East. Thus the dichotomy between modernity and tradition apparently is irrelevant against the background of the ongoing East-West dialogue. However, art today is no longer what it

was a few decades ago. Science is to art in the 1990s what rekligion was to it in the Middle Ages. With the world in the grip of technology explosion and communication revolution, physical demarcations among countries have disappeared and with these national identities also are crumbling, at least in relation to visual arts. A new culture is emerging, the culture of robots and computers. Hardware inputs have precedence over human values. With the coming together of science and art, religion and art have drifted too far apart to interact meaningfully. The focus being on skill, slickness and sophistication, marginalisation of creativity is complete.

If, therefore, we still have in our midst artists, who, being passionately in love with old world charms and concerns are strong, upright and daring enough to stand defiantly against this global trend and assert their essential Indianness with out compromising the basics of the *avant-garde*, we should be happy and proud. They are no doubt a dwindling minority. But how rich a country's heritage depends not only on its pedigree but on the quality of the contributions that the minority of its creative talents, committed to a living tradition, and more importantly to a living idiom, make. And, in turn, the quality of creativity depends on the ethos that legitimises it.

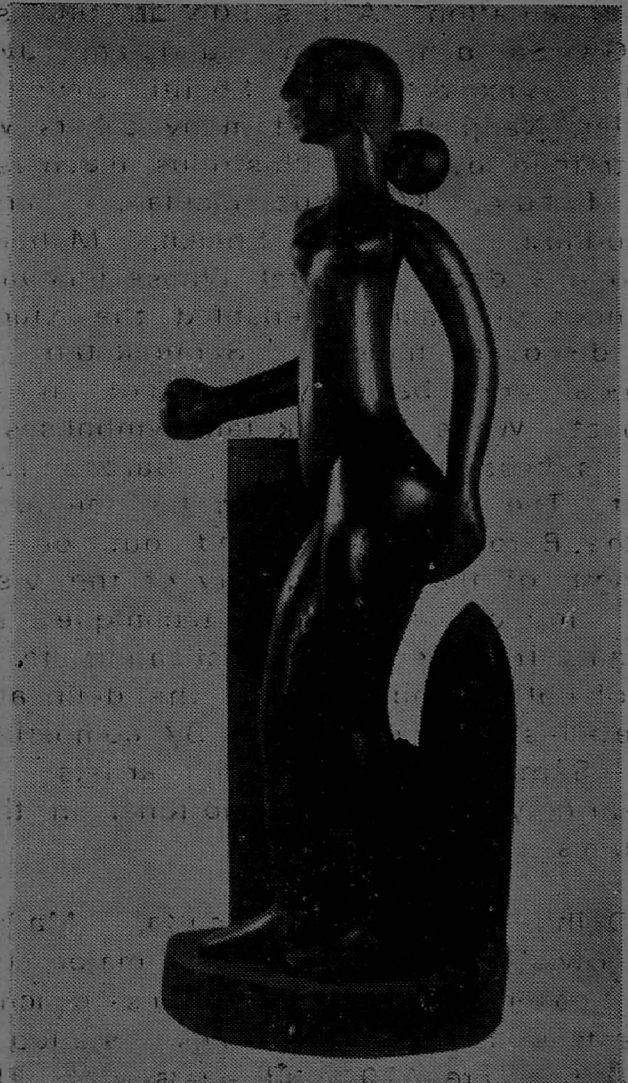
Contemporary Indian art is like a big river. As we watch it enter the sea, it overwhelms us by its sheer abandon and amplitude. Naturally we lose sight of its humble source in the distant hillside hollows where it is a mere trickle. To vary the metaphor, the present art of India is a large orchard of fruit-bearing trees where the yield is so rich and varied that we don't even think of the roots which we take for granted-roots which have made this bounteous crop

possible. The sources of the Indian artist's fecundity are traceable to the efforts of the pioneers of the pre and early post-Independence years—pioneers who had a dream and struggled hard to make it come true. The dream of East-West encounter in the true spirit of creative interaction. The affluence and the glamour which the younger artists in India enjoy today would not have been possible, if such visionaries and crusaders of the movement as Amrita Sher-gil, Jamini Roy, Rabindranath Tagore, Sailoz Mookherjee, Ramkinker Baij, KCS Paniker and several others had not prepared the soil for modernity to take root in. Earlier the Bengal school had achieved a breakthrough by giving a new thrust and accent to the hallowed Indian tradition of fresco and miniature painting and the grand manner of the Far Eastern landscape painting.

The present-day Indian artists are better attuned to the challenge of modernity than their seniors of the pre-and post-Independence years, because the world has become a much smaller place since engendering in the process a fraternity of creative workers with shared values, norms and perceptions. India today has artists as good as their confreres in any developed country. Only they lack global exposure. Indeed, expatriate artists such as Anis Kapoor, FN Souza, N. Krishna Reddy, SH Raza, P. Mansaram, prafulla Mohant, Ambadas, B Viswanathan and S. Paramasivam, to mention a few, have achieved international stature. But these few swallows don't make an Indian summer which is yet to come.

Western artists and critics tend to oversimplify their reactions to contemporary Indian art which, according to an eminent British sculptor, Stephen Cox, "misses the point." When he made this comment publicly during his visit to Delhi in 1986 at the time of the VI Triennale India, he stirred up hornets' nest. What he meant was that a truly Indian thing has never

happened, because the Indian intellectual identity has been through the West due to the colonial hangover. Of course there has never been a Renaissance in the European sense of the term, though there have been spasmodic but spirited attempts at intellectual assertion from time to time. To some extent, there is truth in the criticism that basically India remains unchanged not only in terms of visual culture but in terms of intellectual interaction. Therefore, viewed against this background, the attempts being currently made by Indians to produce an art that relates to the international mainstream are all the more relevant.



Nude - By Dhanraj Bhagat—Wood Carving

Baroda and Santiniketan have been major centres of art for many years. In fact Santiniketan was the art capital of India for at least two decades till Baroda in the early 50s emerged the alternative. Santiniketan attracted artists because of its strong art faculty (Kalabhavan) under the direction of such dedicated teachers and creative geniuses as Nandalal Bose, Ramkinker Baij, Binodbehari Mukherjee and several others. Baroda became famous with the establishment of Fine Arts Faculty at the MS University under the direction of a succession of liberal and progressive-minded professors who believed in involving the student in creative processes right from the word go by stimulating his spirit of enquiry and experimentation. Artists now famous, such as GR Santosh, Vivan Sundaram, Jyothi Bhatt, Laxma Goud, Shanti Dave, RJ Chillar, Nagji Patel and many others were all trained by such illustrious teachers as NS Bendre, KG Subramanian, Sankho Chaudhuri, Ghulam Sheikh, Mahendra Pandva and Jeram Patel whose innovative methods of teaching enabled the student to discover himself. Santiniketan and Baroda are basically different in one respect. While Santiniketan symbolises all that is best in Oriental art, Baroda looks West. The works produced by the artists of the Baroda Group stand out on the strength of the sheer quality of the vision that unfolds and the technique that sustains it. There is sophistication in the use of colour and form and the delineation of detail is sharply accented. By comparison, the Santiniketan trained artists are endearingly lyrical and emotional in their attitudes and perceptions.

Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Lucknow, Hyderabad and other major cities have government-run institutions coaching students in art. Some of these, started by the British, are 150 odd years old. They are inevitably rigid and straitlaced in their

attitudes and methods because of bureaucracy. Governments at the Centre and in the States have been playing an active, if not exemplary, role in the promotion of art since Independence. Their programmes and policies predictably have low rating because invariably patronage goes to the wrong people. Naturally, the officially sponsored exhibitions, workshops, camps, publications, cultural exchanges, competitions and other activities have made no impact on the art scene which continues to be dominated by artists who are independent, anti-establishment and self-sufficient.

Among these MF Hussain is the best known, though he adopts not very subtle methods to attract public attention. He somehow manages to be in the headlines and not for his creative endeavours. Frankly, he is under no compulsion to resort to gimmicks for making his presence felt, because the sheer sorcery of his work can never put him out of sight. There is such power in his art that no one can resist it. The music of his line and the magic of his colour reveal his extraordinary skills and the range of his creative mind attuned to the nuances of classicism as well as modernity. He simply follows his line wherever it goes and it takes him to sources as far apart as Picasso, Jain manuscripts, Rajasthani folk ethos and Chinese calligraphy. However, what comes out of his assimilation of these influences is vintage Husain. Everybody relates to him without reservations because of his openness, and, more importantly, transparent Indianness. Being a cult figure, he remains on display all the time, which is unfortunate.

J Swaminathan who died recently also was a cult figure. He expressed himself better in words than in lines. For basically he was more a cultural activist than a creative artist. He owed his aura to his close association with Octavia Paz, the Nobel Laureate for



**Beggars with Pets' by Badri Narayan**

Literature, who admired Swaminathan's sensitive and scintillating writing. Swami, as he was popularly known, of course wished to be judged more as a painter than anything else. He had been briefly and casually trained by Sailoz Mookherjea who, as one of the most perceptive and provocative artists of his time, had made a tremendous impact on Swami, whose canvases no doubt bear the imprint of his mentor's genius particularly in their simple and serene undertones of lyricism and romanticism, reminiscent of our miniatures. But the fact is that Swami's language essentially was verbal, not visual. He will be remembered by the posterity with gratitude for his dedicated efforts to make Bhopal's Bharat Bhavan one of the world's leading art complexes both conceptually and structurally.

KG Subramanian, who lives at Santiniketan, is one of India's most respected artists. His work, rich in its traditional references and *avantgarde* resonances, is at once serene, sensuous, utterly simple and succinct. It

carries the weight of his profound scholarship tightly and gracefully. He firmly believes that modern Indian art is meaningless and totally irrelevant, if it is rootless. He himself draws his strength from indigenous sources such as terracottas, icons, murals and folk forms.

Jehangir Sabavala is a master of the gentle and gracious art of persuasion. In his work one senses a subtle and delicate fusion of poetry and philosophy. His understanding of Nature comes through his keen observation and deep meditation. That is why he totally withdraws himself from what goes on around himself. His type of work is possible only in a state of solitude and tranquillity. His exquisitely crisp and controlled landscapes are created in the privacy of his communion with Nature. He works from sketches drawn from memory. He makes charcoal drawings on canvas. These serve as the skeletal frame of the paintings to follow. He applies paint gently in meticulously graded tones. Respec-

ting the intelligence and imagination of the spectator, he leaves unsaid most of what he wishes to say. Forthrightness and forcefulness are against his temperament. He has his critics, Many. They consider his work too cold and contrived. But to all lovers of genuine creativity he gives immense joy. Dom Moraes says. "Sabavala's landscapes have the sounds of the colours of absence."

Krishen Khanna, a virtually self-trained, Delhi-based, high profile artist commanding a distinguished and discerning clientele, is a refined artist with a subtly evocative vision and a suavely disarming style. Ramnath Pasrich, another self-tutored artist, is known for his superb Himalayan landscapes which he paints on the spot at breathtaking altitudes-sometimes 17,000 ft and above. Painting which once he did casually to amuse himself with is today his magnificent obsession. He is aware that his painting exercises at such awesome altitudes are suicidal. But he is not deterred. He goes to the Himalayas each summer and returns with exquisitely evocative landscapes.

Rasik Raval regarded art as something serious, intimate and private. He did not respond to influences. An epitome of oneself: That was how he looked at art. He was preoccupied all the time with building within himself a self-sufficient and self-generating reservoir of creative energy through his own efforts. His art is all intuition and no intellect. He never introduced impurities into his painting which remained refreshingly free from gimmicks, cliches, formulas and echoes. That is why there is so much of power, grace, mobility and human warmth packed into his work. If at all he drew inspiration from any source, it was from the Garden of Eden. Herman Goetz writes on him warmly in his volume on India in the authoritative Methuen series on *The Art of the World*. Also, there is an entry on him

in the 1956 edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Painting*.

KV Haridasan is important as a pioneer of neo-Tantric art in India. Intellectually his mentor was KCS Paniker who moulded several generations of creative artists in Madras. Haridasan was the first to evolve a telling idiom from the vocabulary of the rich, ritualistic Tantric signs and symbols, based on his own studies researches and investigations. He has an insight into the intricacies of Tantric principles and practices. Tantra rigidly prescribes specific lines, colours and configurations for each ritual. GR Santosh, Biren De, Prafulla Mahant (London-based), PT Reddy and other well-known exponents of neo-Tantric art owe a lot to Haridasan's early efforts directly or indirectly.

Ambadas, who lives in Norway, is a distinguished painter of abstractions in which formless creativity can be seen at its finest. He expresses himself in an idiom which is totally unrelated to all studied notions of tradition, modernity, abstraction and so on. He is intuitive and spontaneous. He maintains that there is something great beyond fashionable theories and that is creative force which in Sanskrit means *chetana*. Art is not mere technique. It is basically concentrated and consecrated creative expression. It should, according to Ambadas, evoke in you the same mood that you experience in a temple or a church. There was a time when he just splashed colour all over canvas Jackson Pollock style to see what would happen to Paul Klee, Marc Chagall, Joan Miro. They are all his spiritual Kith and kin. Having gone through the ups and downs of life including abject poverty and imprisonment, he has become sober and philosophical, retrieving his faith in the Vedic culture. Inevitably, his art has a metaphysical dimension.

FN Souza, who is New York based, is another serious expatriate. He is a born



**Musicians - By Rasik Raval**

non-conformist. He divides his time between America and India. He needs America for sharpening his tools and India for strengthening his roots. He made solid contribution to contemporary Indian art in the middle 40s when he formed the famed Progressive Group in Bombay committed to opening up Indian art to intense East-West interaction. Prominent among the other members were : MF Husain, H.A Gade, SH Raza, KH Ara and VS Gaitonde. Their seniors, KK Hebbar, NS Bendre and Shiavax Chavda, who had already received recognition as artists of national stature, opted to stay out. Earlier, a similar group called Young Turks under the leadership of PT Reddy had come and gone without achieving much. At about the same time the Calcutta group with an identical agenda was established on the initiative of Prodosh Das Gupta, a well-known sculptor, supported by Nirode Mazumdar, a very sensitive painter who later worked with Braque in Paris, Gopal Ghose, a brilliant landscape painter, Rathin Maitra, an Expressionist *parexcellence* and several others. Later, after the Partition, Delhi Silpa Chakra, a cohesive group of forward-looking painters and sculptors emerged in the capital under the leadership of Bhabesh Sanyal, now in his late 90s. He was assisted by artists who had to leave Lahore. The better known ones among them were Dhanraj Bhagat, Har Krishan, Prannath Mago, Avinash Chandra, Damyanti Chowla Devyani Krishna and Prabha Loknath. Down south Deviprasad Roy Chowdhuri, an eminent sculptor in the romantic Rodinesque tradition, was a charismatic father figure. As Principal of the Government College of Art and Craft, Madras, he not only attracted students from different parts of the country but shaped them into outstanding creative talents. Nearly all the now famous painters and sculptors of South India, particularly of Kerala and Tamil nadu were trained by him. Prodosh Das Gupta, Paritosh Sen and Gopal Ghose also were his students. KCS Paniker, his student and successor, who commanded

great respect from his contemporaries for his memorable achievements as teacher, artist and organiser, was the moving spirit of the Madras-based Progressive Painters' Association comprising many leading artists of the city committed to competitive excellence in their creative pursuits.

To return to Souza. The great minds in whose company he feels thoroughly comfortable are a queer mix : Gandhi, Christ, Marx, Freud and Picasso. He is particularly fond of Gandhi and Picosso—Gandhi with whom he shares his passion for truth and picasso whose expertise in telling the truth artistically he emulates. One who looks for roots in Souza's work will not find them there unless one goes very deep. He says : "Born in Portuguese India, in a Roman Catholic background, I studied in British India—studied not only art but the religious and philosophical books of the Hindus' Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, etc. The question of an Indian tradition did not bother me. I knew it had to be a part of me. How could I get away from it ? But to try and superimpose it on contemporary Indian art is to be merely chauvinistic and jingoistic. "

N. Krishna Reddy, who is Professor and Head of the Department of the Print-Making at the Colombia University, New York, Anis Kapoor who is already in the mainstream of the British Sculpture, SH Raza who lives in France and P Mansaram of Canada are among the more vibrant Indian presences abroad.

There are many more artists who have enriched contemporary Indian art with their personal contributions bearing the stamp of creativity and craftsmanship of the highest quality—artists of the calibre of Ganesh Pyne, Bikash Bhattacharjee, Paritosh Sen, Jogen Chowdhury, J. Sultan Ali, L. Munuswamy, Jatin Das, Sunil Das, Satish Gujral, Manjit Bawa, GR Santosh, KS Kulkarni, PT Reddy Bhupen Khakkar, Laxma Goud, Badri Narayan, Prabhakar Barwe, Vivan Sundaran, SG Vasudev



'Maithuna' (A Detail of a Mural in Enamel on Steel)  
by S. G. Vasudev

K Jaipal Panicker, Devyani Krishna, M Reddeppa Naidu, Arpana Caur, Aunupam Sud, Anjolie Ela Menon, Arpita Singh, Nalini Malani, Vasudha Thozhur, K Muralidharan, T Vaikuntem and K Rajaiah and several others. They are all brilliant exponents of a living art in a living idiom. They are all the time searching for new impulses—for new ways of looking at things.

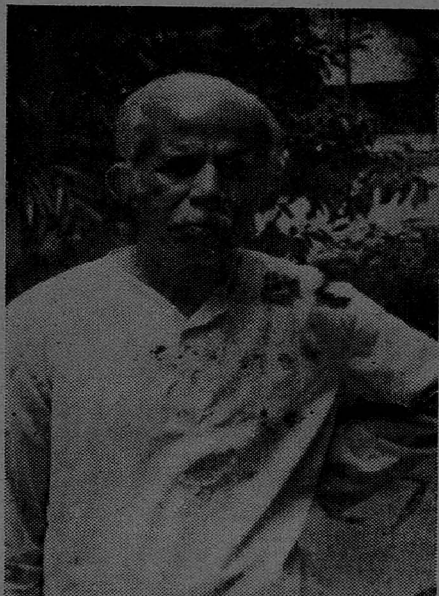
VS Gaitonde, KM Adimoolam, Achuthan, Kudalur, Bhagvan Chavan and Shyam Sharma are some of the leading non-figurative or not so figurative painters with a mastery of the language of colour. They can evoke vibrations in the spectator through the sheer purity and intensity of colour which comes compellingly alive in their hands. The tones and textures of their compositions are instinct with delicate rhythms and resonances.

Ramkinker Baij and Dhanraj Bhagat, now no more, were the pioneers of modern sculpture in India. Bhagat assimilated the contemporary idiom intellectually, while Baij, accepted it intuitively. Baij being of tribal origin had no difficulty in expressing himself freely and naturally like an emancipated spirit. Most of the present-day sculptors were either trained or influenced by them directly or indirectly. Prominent among the living sculptors who matter are: Chintamani Kar, Ved Nayar, K Kunhiraman, Rajendra Patwari, Avtar Singh, Balbir Kat, Lotika Kat, Shiv Singh, Valsan Kolleri, C Dakshinamurti, Mrinalini Mukherjee, Amarnath Sahgal, Meera Mukherjee, Jagadish, RJ Chillar, Yadagiri Rao, AnilKumar, Mahendra Pandya, Sankho Chaudhuri, S Dhanapal, PV Janakiram, Vidyasankar Sthapathi, PS Nandhan, S Nandagopal, Nagji Patel,

D Rajasekharan Nair, N Karunamurti, and N Raghavan. They are all serious and responsible sculptors with a sense of personal identity and a feeling of pride in their creative skills and sensitivities.

Cholamandal on the outskirts of Madras is an idyllic retreat by the sea built by artists, and for artists. This commune conceived as an extension of the joint family idea works in the true spirit of give and take. The artists who live here are: S Nandagopal, SG Vasudev (when he doesn't live at Bangalore), PS Nandhan, P Gopinath, D Venkatapathy, M Senathipathy, C Douglas, Bhagvan Chavan, KR Harie, S Ravi Shankar, N Raghavan and a few others. KCS Paniker was Cholamandal's founding father. It's his dream come true. Some of the finest examples of contemporary Indian art are being created here.

Lalit Kala Akademi has a very important role to play in projecting contemporary Indian art nationally as well as globally to promote healthy interaction within the artist community. But has been in very bad shape because of its domination by manipulators mediocrities, say critics. It will regain its legitimacy and respectability only when the artists of the mainstream associate themselves actively with its agenda. Today I see happy signs pointing to close affinities between the new General Council under the leadership of Chairman Anand Dev and the high profile artists of the mainstream. Is Contemporary Indian art's finest hour in sight?



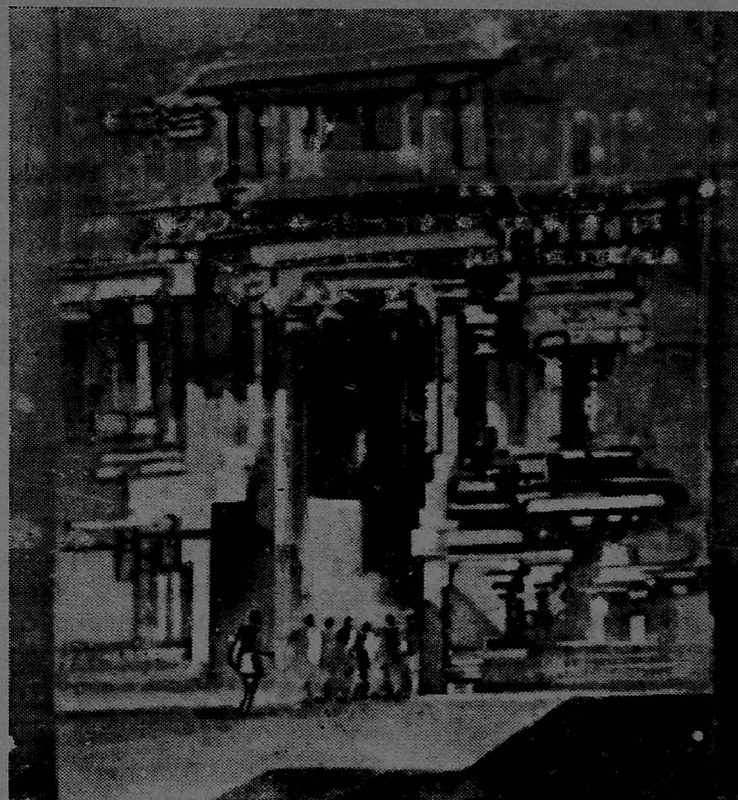
## Prof. R. KRISHNA RAO

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Tmt. LAKSHMI VENKATARAMAN

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There are different distinct types of subjects indulged in by Prof. Krishna Rao in his paintings during his life as an artist — temple architecture, cattle, portraits, floral designs and the abstract designs with the bird motif called the 'Homage to martyres'. The temple architecture seem to have had a great fascination for him. The majesty, the great dimensions and its own historical and religious aura of the great Brihadeeswara temple at Thanjavur has been depicted by him in several paintings. A symbol of Saivism as well as the art patronage of the Chola dynasty the magnificent tower and the colossal Nandi painted with dedication by this artist can take the viewer back through history. Krishna Rao has also been very much interested in the entrances of the south Indian temples. The Meenakshi temple of Madurai seems to have held his attention all the time. He has painted several views of the temple and the entrances; the Western gopuram in particular was his favourite subject because of its graceful contours. In 1948 Krishna Rao designed the symbol of the Madras state with this tower as the subject. Though watercolour is a sort of a delicate medium, he was able to bring the effect of the granite walls through the vibrant yellows and ochres and the blue-purple shadows of the inside. He had also designed in 1971 the emblem for the raffle ticket of Tamil Nadu, a child with raised hand.



Entrance to Temple

Watercolour has always been the favourite medium of Krishna Rao and he never handles any other medium. Now at the age of eighty he feels that he has got the sense of pure water colour. The glory of the ancient temples Shine through the deep purples and indigos and the vibrant reds,

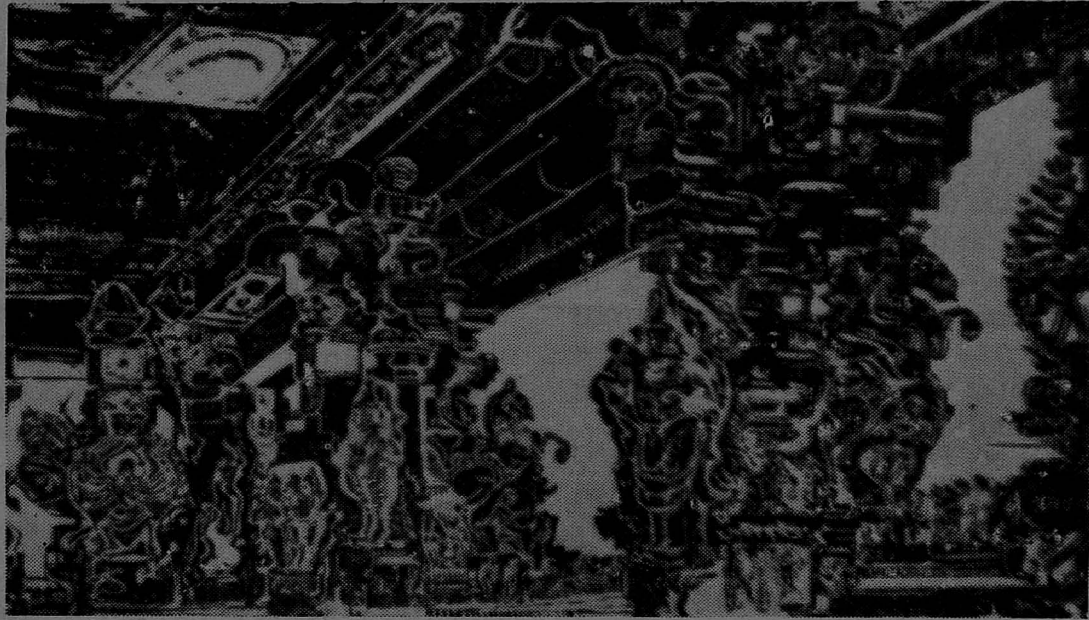


Madras Central

oranges and yellow ochres of his palette. His inspiration even at an young age was kindled by the great temple architecture of Madurai, Tirupparankunram, Srirangam and Thanjavur. Besides the temples of South India he has also painted several views of the river Ganges in Varanasi and the life on the river banks along with the typical temple towers, the Pandas, the umbrellas and the pilgrims worshipping at the Ghats. This subject has also been handled by him in his pen and ink drawings.

When cubism was the craze world over among artists, Krishna Rao also indulged in it. But even then his subject was Lord Krishna as if to prove his view that there must be Indianness in our paintings, what-over may be the techniques and medium

that the artist wants to deal with. Rao feels that art institutions should teach comparative interests of Eastern and Western art. Another subject for which Krishna Rao has had a great liking is herds of cattle and sheep. As a child when travelling in Tamil nadu his fancy was caught by the landscape of palmyrah trees, the banyan and pipal trees and the grazing cattle and goats. He has painted several charming compositions with these animals in different attitudes; just a few deft strokes of the brush he could bring alive the atmosphere of dust and warmth. The same palm trees come in stylised forms in his recent works, the earlier negative spaces converted into positive areas by the interesting patterns he weaves around.



Kizhi Koondu Mandapam

Portraiture also is his forte. Men's faces with long beards seem to have been his favourite. Without crowded brush strokes and too many colours, the simple monotoned transparent watercolour has been sufficient to bring out the essential characteristic of the person. Look at the pen and ink drawing of his wife, for instance; just a few lines have been able to bring out an effective portrait.

In spite of his old age he does not rest quite but continues to paint. Recently he has been creating with stylised flowers and leaves interesting intricate designs with a stained glass like definition. For these he has used acrylics, which is again water-based. An idea which has grabbed his attention too of late is what he calls 'Homad to martyres' where he uses the motif of the bird in intricate abstract patterns using bright major colours.

Krishna Rao did not go into the School of Arts and Crafts straight away after completing his schooling in Madurai. He came

to Madras in 1938 and joined the office of the architect Chitale. When in 1942 people had to be evacuated due to the escalating second world war, he could have gone away too. But the architectural drawings had captured his imagination and he had developed on his own the skill and observation to render architectural compositions. He decided to join the School of Arts and continue the job on a part time basis on half the salary. In the School the painting teacher, the well known artist K.C.S. Panicker had a soft corner for him. The principal at that time was another famous artist Roy Choudhury, who also guided him. He completed the five year course in just three years as he was already extremely good in drawing. The city of Madurai presented Krishna Rao with a variety of scenes to paint and he did just that in the impressionistic style and held an exhibition. After completing the course at the School he joined the War Publicity Department in 1945 and painted several posters. In 1948 he once again joined the School of Arts but as a teacher and a little later became

the professor of Commercial Art. He went to Kumbakonam as the Vice Principal of the School there and returned to Madras as the Principal when Panicker retired in 1968 from that post. Krishna Rao retired from service in 1971 and in 1972 he became the Director of the Art Department in Kalakshetra, Madras.

In the 1930s the realism of the English movies attracted him just as impressionism in painting appealed to him. His favourite in drawing was Frank Brangyen and in painting it was Claude Monet. He also wrote an article comparing the art of Brangyen and Roy Choudhury. We are surrounded by art in various aspects of our life here, he feels. He explains the kolam which is drawn in front of our houses in Tamil Nadu every morning: "it is a design derived from a sign, which in turn comes from a signature; a sign is a symbol derived from a signature; therefore 'kolam' is a symbol of our ethos". There has been on death

of honours for Krishna Rao. The All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, Delhi, which had earlier selected him as one of the 'Veteran Artists', conferred on him the title 'Kalavibhushan'; he was one of the Eminent Artists chosen by the Tamil Nadu Ovia Nunkalai Kuzhu; most of all he cherishes the special award which was given to him on 1 January 1995 by the Kanchi Kamakoti Feetam.

If in his fluent English, Tamil or Marathi he can picture for us the life in Madurai, his paintings and drawings would speak of the glory of these places to the future generations when there would be only multistoreyed monstrocities-hopefully the temples and other religious monuments would be left alone crowding the skyline. At least for this reason the present generation of art and history lovers would volunteer to preserve his works, even though in his younger years he himself or others did not bother promoting him.

# KALAIICHEMMAL - R. VARADARAJAN

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K. BALASUBRAMANIAN

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Among the Second Generation of Contemporary artists produced by the College of Arts and Crafts, Madras one of the most significant and talented painter and Graphic artist is Thiru Raghavan Varadarajan — the recipient of National Award in the year 1983. He has developed a style of his own and his works has in appreciation of many including Mrs. Anjali Sircar the well known Art Critic who says that R. Varadarajan's Abstract Art captures the poignancy of the Human Situation and at the same time is a hymn to the mind of man that attempts to raise beyond sorrow and agony.

Born in Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu in the year 1935, Varadarajan spent an uneventful boyhood. He was slow moving and often ill and his parents decided that a Course in Fine Art was the best suited for his temperament. So he joined the then School of Arts and Crafts, Madras in the year 1953 and after completing a six years Course in Painting under the guidance of Late K.C.S. Panicker - a Painter and a Teacher who guided the *Destiny of the South* and Thiru S. Dhanapal, came out with a First class (I RANK) Diploma in Fine Arts (Advance Painting). Subsequently he was awarded the Cultural Scholarship by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, to do a Specialization Research Study in painting from 1959-1961, under the guidance of Late K.C.S. Panicker. During this period, he began

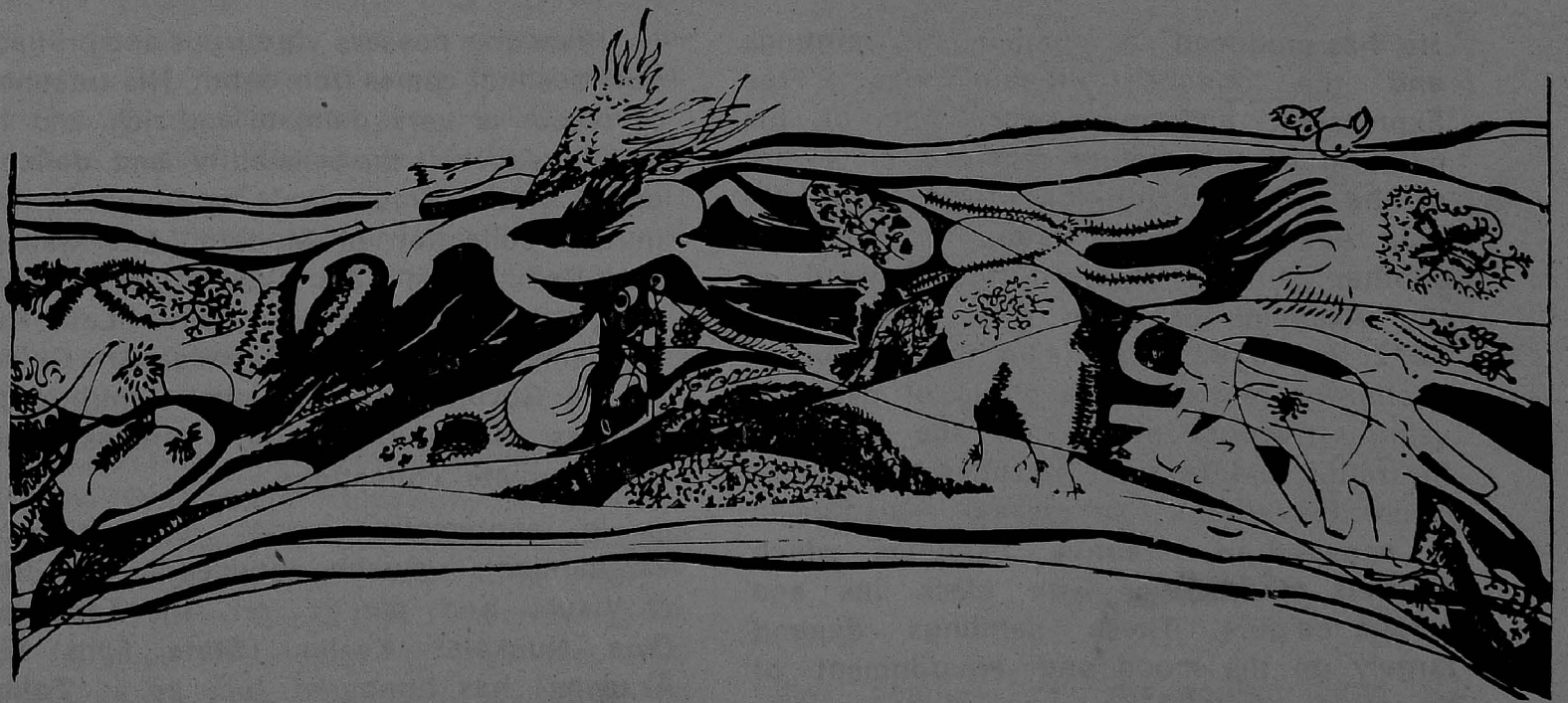
to work on large size canvasses depicting human tragedy in a more distorted way with simplicity and bright colours. He has done a number of paintings to interpret mass brutality and the cruel acts on the helpless people and other living things on earth. His paintings of this period titled "Fantasy" have been exhibited in a number of All India Exhibitions including the National Exhibition of Art.

In 1960, Varadarajan discovered Graphics as a medium for his expression and began to concentrate on print making. Some of his best graphics - "She showed the Moon to the Monkey", "Woman and child", "The Tree", "Monkey and the Moon" were exhibited at the Paris Biennale in 1961. His work was sold at this Exhibition and was reproduced in the Biennale catalogue as an example of Contemporary art in India. He has participated in the International Graphic Art Exhibition at Poland in 1964.

He joined the Faculty of the Government College of Arts and Crafts, Kumbakonam in the year 1966 and after four years of service there, he was transferred to Madras College of Arts and Crafts. This helped him to continue his work in the creative atmosphere of the College of Arts and Crafts, Madras and he again started to paint more seriously in creating non-representational paintings with massive forms and bright colours.

HALA... HAY... H... H... H...







He has produced a number of paintings and the dominant theme was "Free Expression" and movement. One of his paintings of this nature received an award at the Annual Exhibition of the State Lalit Kala Akademi, Tamil Nadu in 1976 and another painting received the award of the Akademi of Fine Arts, Calcutta in 1977. In 1979, Varadarajan took to Collage Technique and created a group of paintings using terracotta pieces on the canvases for relief and Texture. He called his collages 'Inner Expression'. At present Varadarajan is engaged in creative paintings, which consists of drawings with black ink and acrylic colours. These paintings depend largely on the mood and environment of his mind.

His works possess vigorous and brilliant qualities that come from depth. His treatment of colour is very delicate and rich and his paintings reveal the sensibility and delicacy of his work. Varadarajan's paintings are now in the collection of Modern Art Gallery, New Delhi; Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi; Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi; Lalit Kala Akademi, Tamil Nadu; National Art Gallery of the Government Museum, Tamil Nadu; Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi and many private collections.

In appreciation and recognition of Varadarajan's valuable services in the field of Visual and plastic art, the Tamil Nadu Ovia Nunkalai Kuzhu (State Lalit Kala Akademi) has honoured him as a "Fellow of the Akademi."

# FLORAL DEPICTIONS IN AMARAVATI SCULPTURES AND OTHER ART PIECES

M. N. PUSHPA

The appreciation of flowers and 'nature' interestingly influenced any piece of art work, whether it be a painting or a sculpture or a bronze or a wood carving. The love for flowers kindles rapport across the centuries. The plant remains, in the archaeological sites, leads one to know about the climatic conditions that prevailed during that period, its age and ultimately the approximate age of the archaeological finds.

Plant materials form the basis of several chronological techniques, radiocarbon dating (popularly known as C-14) tree ring analysis and pollen analysis. The patterns of rings in living trees may be linked by overlap with the patterns shown in dead timber. The cross dating method, principle becomes archaeologically significant, when timber used in the construction of ancient buildings can be fitted into the known sequence of plants which prevailed, that time which makes it possible in the dating of sites.

Several of the Archaeological exhibits in the Government Museum, Madras as floral depictions. A few among them have been selected and their floral designs described here. Greek and Persian influence is involved in several of the decorative designs such as the leaf patterns and the atlantes bearing the heavy garlands on



Venugopala

the copings of the railing from the Amaravati stupa.



Dakshin Murthy

The Amaravati sculptures as exhibited in a special hall devoted to sculptures from various Buddhist sites in the Krishan valley, such as Jaggayyapeta, Ghantasala and Bhattiprolu, out of which the Amaravati sculptures form the core of the collection. The casing slab according to C. Sivaramamurti is a splendid example both from the view point of the archaeologist trying to identify the positions of different types of slab and to reconstruct in thought the original *stupa*, and from that of the student of art to whom it reveals an ocean of sculptural dexterity. The Tibetan historian Taranatha refers to *Dpal-Idan-'bras-spun'* (accumulation of grain) or Dhanayakataka and the great *caitya* there.

The Bodhi tree symbolic of Buddha's enlightenment, is an oft-sculptured theme in all *stupas*. The seat that Buddha occupied under the tree, is even today an object of veneration. General Cunningham says that

the '*Vajrasana*' or diamond throne of Sakyamuni still exists under the Pipal tree at Bodhgaya. It is mentioned that Ashoka fostered the Bodhi tree which miraculously sprouted even when it was cut down by his jealous queen. The evolution of *torana* is mentioned as a pair of pillars to which were secured the two ends of a *torana* wreath. Later the decoration of the *stupa* with fresh flowers and *torana* pillars with flower or leaf gardens formed the structural representation. It is mentioned that the earliest surviving gateway is the one at Bharhut where the numerous miniature caryatides between the curved bars of the *torana* suggest that they might have been evolved from fresh mango leaves hanging from a string. This principle of mango leaf *torana* is adored even now by the Hindus on festive occasions. Earlier the leaves were presented in a natural way, later on modified into ornamentations.

Connecting the four gateways is the rail round the *stupa* on the outside of which



Floral Designs Depicted in the Gate way

are found some floral designs of lotus on the uprights and cross bars and a long undulating flower garland on the coping.

From the coping of the Amaravati rail the tree spirit is represented by a held in a tree trunk. The tree spirits are often described in the Jatakas. Plants and trees are personified as jungle goddesses. Jatakas are abundant in descriptions of benevolent tree spirits offering food, dress and ornament for those who seek them. The jewels carved as springing from the tendrils and buds of the creeper designs on the Bharhut coping, says C. Sivaramamurthi is the theme of the Kalpavalli. In Amaravati monuments, one could find *sculptures* of trees with festoons, garlands

etc. The *toranas* comprised of a pair of stambhas to which a garland of flowers and festoons were secured.

Garlands were very popular in ancient India. Flowers strung together and garlands made artistically and worn on the head and body. The floral arrangement, and the mode determined the name of the wreath For (eg) the work *Vatamsaka* denotes the flowers on the topmost of the hair.

In Amaravati pillars the depiction of lotus petals is very often the pattern seen.

Besides the Buddhist sculptures, floral representations are seen in bronze icons, stone sculptures and wood carvings.



Borders Showing Flower Vase & Lotus Tedallions

(i) Vatapatrasai lying on banyan leaf illustration in 'Bronzes of South India', - by P. R. Srinivasan,

(ii) Vasudhara from Nagapattinam illustration in 'Nagapattinam and other Buddhist Bronzes' - by T.N. Ramachandran. The photographs are reproduced with the kind courtesy of the Director of Museums, Government Museum, Egmore, Madras-8.

Plate - V

The left side of a *yakshi salabhanjika* is shown, with a background of a bough of a tree.

Plate - VI

*Buddha pada* in the centre of the decorative lotus medallion; fineness and artistic workmanship are noteworthy.

Plate - VII

The Bodhi tree is depicted as adored by elephants at the top; and worshipped by devas at the bottom. The circular panel again depicts the lotus medallion.

Plate - VIII

The borders with creeper design. At the bottom is seen a seated dwarf, supporting a big decorated vase, from the mouth of which springs a lotus stalk encircling the panels.

#### NOTES ON ILLUSTRATIONS

Plate - I Caitya slab showing the stupa with lotus medallion

Plate - II The Rail patterns alternating with floral designs and trisula on the wheeled pillar.

Plate - III A heavy garland is depicted being carried by the bearers.

Plate - IV A border of lotus and other flowers

Plate - IX Apart from Amaravati the floral depictions are represented in Hindu sculptures as seen in *Venugopala* belonging to 16th century, showing the creeper design in the upper panel.

Plate - X & XI Dakshinamurthy belonging to 13th-14th century and 14th-15th century, are depicted being seated under the Banyan tree.

Plate - XII In a carved gateway from Bellary, belonging to 13th century (Hoysala Kakatiya period) floral depictions are seen.

Plate - XIII Carved in a wooden rafter of a house occupied by Count-de Lally, during the siege of

Madras in 1758, floral depictions are represented alongwith a seated Brahma on lotus. Minute details are carved out in such a manner, that the artistic outlook deserves appreciation.

Only a few samples were examined to show that a number of archaeological collections involving much of nature's beauty is in the collection of Government Museum Madras.

The above analysis is only to reveal that the antiquities, and Botany have a closer connection which may be termed as 'Archaeobotony'. In this paper an attempt has been made to emphasize the influence of environment on artefacts.

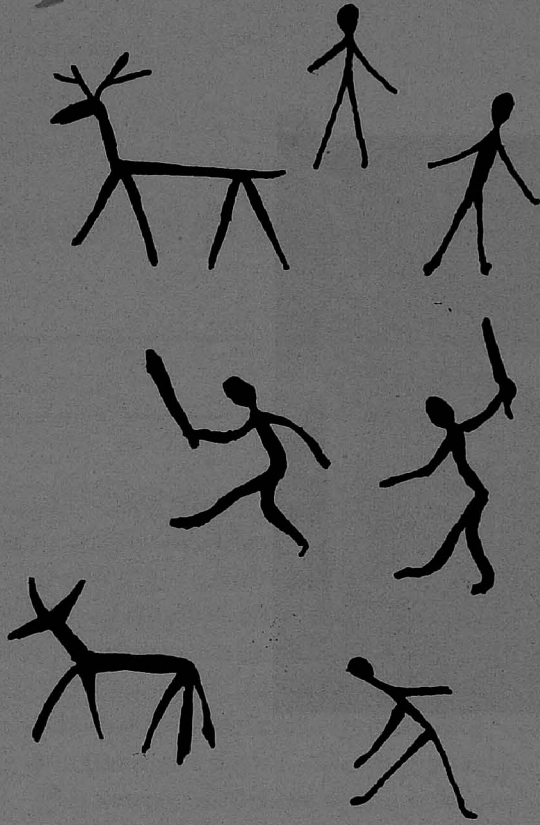
## கார்ட்டூன் கலை வடிவங்கள் புனையா ஓவியம்

ஓவியர் எஸ். கே. இராமானுஜம் (ரானு)

கேலிச்சித்திரம், துணுக்குப்படம், கருத்துப் படம் என்று பலவாறுக் கூறப்பட்டு வரும் கலை வடிவங்கள் உலகத்தில் உள்ள பல்வேறு மொழிப் பேசும் மக்கள் அனைவரும் எளிதில் புரிந்து கொள்ளத் தக்க வகையில் 'கார்ட்டூன்' என்று ஆங்கிலத்தில் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டு வருகின்றன. இந்த நாட்டின் மிகப் பழமையான ஓவியக்கலை என்று கண்டறியப்பட்டுள்ள 'கார்ட்டூன்' சித்திரங்களை மேல்நாட்டுக் கலை என்றே நம்மில் பெரும்பாலானோர் கருதுகிறோம். ஆனால் அது உண்மையல்ல. இரண்டாயிரம் ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன்பே 'மணிமேகலை' என்ற நூலில் புனையா ஓவியம் என்று கார்ட்டூன் சித்திரங்களைப் பற்றி குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார்கள். ஆகையால் புனையா ஓவியம் என்பதே கார்ட்டூன் உருவத்தில் முதல் படியாகும். படிப் படியாக இந்த புனையா ஓவியம் என்பது (அதாவது கார்ட்டூன் என்பது) பழங்கால கோவில்களிலுள்ள கல்வெட்டுக்களில் உருவாகத் தொடங்கின. அப்படியே அது வளர்ச்சி யடைந்து கோவில்களிலுள்ள கோபுரங்கள், மண்டபங்கள், தூண்கள், பாறைகள் போன்ற வைகளில் புனையா ஓவியம் (கார்ட்டூன்) அக்கால சிற்பிகளால் உருவாக்கப்படத் தொடங்கியது. மற்றும் இதேப்போல் புனையா ஓவியம் (கார்ட்டூன்) ஓவியர்களால் கோவில்களிலுள்ள மண்டபங்களின் அடித்தளங்களிலும், சுவர்களிலும் தீட்டப்படத் தொடங்கியது. நாளடைவில் புனையா ஓவியம் (கார்ட்டூன்) பொது மக்களை கவரக் கூடிய ஒரு சிறந்த கலை என்பதை ஓவியர்களும், சிற்பிகளும் உணர்ந்தனர். அதன்படி ஓவியர்களும், சிற்பிகளும் கடவுளின் பலவித வாகனங்களை கார்ட்டூன் வடிவில் உருவாக்கி தெய்வ வழிபாட்டில்



கொண்டு வந்தனர். உதாரணமாக ரிஷபம் (காளை வடிவம்), குதிரை, மயில், யானை, சூரன், சிம்மம் போன்று பலவித வாகனங்களை கார்ட்டூன் வடிவில் உருவாக்கி மக்களின் மனதை கவரும்படி செய்திருக்கிறார்கள். மற்றும் கார்ட்டூன் வடிவ பூதகனங்களை



கார்ட்டூன் கலை வடிவங்கள்

2. கார்ட்டூன் உருவங்களை உருவாக்கி அவைகள் ஒன்றோடு ஒன்று பேசுவதுபோல் அவைகளின் வாய் அருகே கட்டங்கள் வரைந்து அதில் வார்த்தைகளை எழுதுவது.

3. எந்தவித வார்த்தைகளுமின்றி தனி கார்ட்டூனாகவோ அல்லது தொடர் கார்ட்டூன் படங்களாகவோ வரைதல்.

மற்றும் கதைகளுக்குக் கார்ட்டூன் (Cartoon Illustrations), அரசியல் கார்ட்டூன் (Political Cartoon), ஒரு மனிதரை கார்ட்டூனில் வரைதல் (Cartoon Caricature), எழுத்துக்களை கார்ட்டூன் வடிவில் அமைத்தல் (Cartoon Lettering), கார்ட்டூன் வடிவில் பலவித டிசைன்ஸ் (Designs) உருவாக்கி அச்சிடுவது போன்றவைகளைப் பத்திரிகைகளில் காணலாம்.

உலகத்திலுள்ள ஒவ்வொரு தேசத்திலும் கார்ட்டூன் உருவங்களில் மாறுபாடுகளைக் காணலாம் உதாரணமாக, மேல்நாட்டு கார்ட்டூன்களில் உருவங்கள் அணிந்திருக்கும் ஆடைகளுக்கும், சூழ்நிலைகளுக்கும் ஏற்றபடி கார்ட்டூனின் அமைப்பு வித்தியாசப்படும். அதேபோல் நம்நாட்டு சூழ்நிலை மற்றும் ஆடை அலங்காரங்களின் வித்தியாசங்களையும் நாம் கார்ட்டூனில் காணமுடிகிறது, நம் நாட்டின் சூழ்நிலையையும், ஆடையலங்காரங்களையும் மனதில் கொண்டு பலவித புதிய கார்ட்டூன் உருவங்களைக் கற்பனையில் உருவாக்கினால், மேல்நாட்டவரைப் போல், கல்வி, விளம்பரங்கள், பாடநூல்கள், திரைப்படங்கள், தொலைக்காட்சிகள், கண்காட்சிகள் இன்னும் சிறுவர்களுக்கான பொழுதுபோக்கு மற்றும் விளையாட்டு சாதனங்களுக்கும் கார்ட்டூன் வடிவங்களைப் பயன்படுத்தலாம். கார்ட்டூன் வரையக் கற்றுக்கொள்வது மிகவும் சுலபம். ஆகையால் ஓவியர்களுக்கான பயிற்சி நிலையங்களில் கார்ட்டூன் பயிற்சியை மாணவர்களுக்குக் கொடுத்தால் பல கார்ட்டூனிஸ்டுகளை உருவாக்க முடியும்.

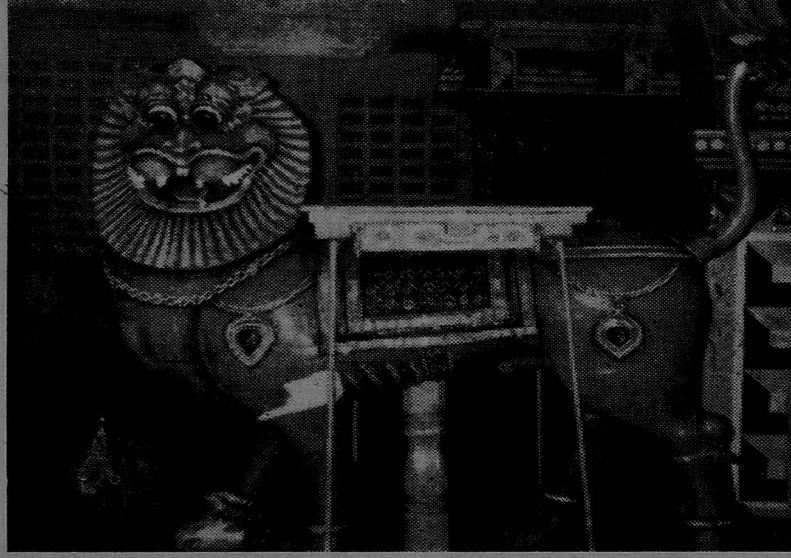
சித்திரங்களாகவும், சிற்பங்களாகவும், வாகனங்களாகவும் திருக்கோவில் ஸ்தலங்களில் உருவாக்கி பொதுமக்கள் கண்டு களிக்கும்படி செய்து கார்ட்டூன் கலையை வளர்த்திருக்கிறார்கள்.

பல நூற்றாண்டுகளுக்கு முன் கல்வெட்டுக்களிலுள்ள மனிதனின் முழு உருவங்களை அப்படியே உள்ளபடி செதுக்க முடியாமல் சிறிது தலை பெரியதாகவும், உடல் சிறியதாகவும் செதுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளதை பார்த்து, பல ஆயிரம் ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன்பு குகை மனிதன் முதன் முதல் கார்ட்டூன் வடிவத்தைத்தான் (புனையா ஓவியம்) வரைந்தான் என்றும், கார்ட்டூனிஸ்டுகள்தான் (புனையா ஓவியத்திலிருந்து) ஓவியக்கலையே உருவானது என்றும் கருதலாம்.

கார்ட்டூன் சித்திரங்களை மூன்று வகைகளாகப் பிரிக்கலாம்.

1. கார்ட்டூன் உருவங்களை வரைந்து அதன் கீழ்ப்பகுதியில் துணுக்குகளை எழுதுவது.

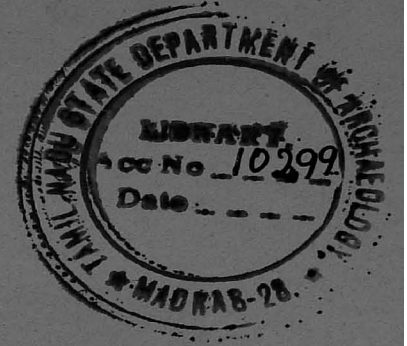
இப்பொழுதும் புனையா ஓவியத்தைப் பரம்பரை பரம்பரையாக நம் நாட்டு மக்கள் திருஷ்டி கழிக்கும் பூசணிக்காய்களிலும், சிறிய பாணைகளிலும், சோளத்தட்டு பொம்மைகளிலும் பயன்படுத்தி வருவதைப் பார்க்கிறோம். ஆனால், இப்பொழுது கார்ட்டூன்



கலை தனிப்பட்ட முறையில் வளர்ச்சியடைந்து வருகிறது. உதாரணமாக மிருகங்கள், பறவைகள், புழு, பூச்சிகள் மற்றும் மரம், செடி, கொடி, காய்கள், பழங்கள் போன்ற பலவித உருவங்களைக் கூட கார்ட்டூனிஸ்டுகள் பல விதங்களில் தன் கற்பனை சக்தியால் பல புதிய, புதிய படைப்புகளைப் படைத்து அனிமேஷன் திரைப்படங்களிலும் (Animation Picture) தொலைக்காட்சிகளிலும், பத்திரிகைகளிலும் புகுத்தி நாளுக்கு நாள் கார்ட்டூன் கலையின் பெருமையை பொதுமக்களுக்கு புரியும்படி செய்து வருகிறார்கள்.

இனி பிற்காலத்தில் இந்த கார்ட்டூன் கலையின் நிலையைப் பற்றி சிந்திக்கும்போது, மனிதனுடைய அறிவும், ஆற்றலும் நவீன முறையில்

வளர்ந்து வருகிறது. உதாரணமாக கம்ப்யூட்டர் முறை முன்னோடியாக இப்பொழுதுள்ளது. மனிதனின் கற்பனை சக்தியில் உருவான கம்ப்யூட்டரில் கூட இப்பொழுது பல விதமான கார்ட்டூன் அனிமேஷன் படங்களைத் தயாரிக்க ஆரம்பித்து விட்டார்கள். ஆகையால் பழங்கால கார்ட்டூன்களுக்கும், இப்பொழுது உள்ள கார்ட்டூன்களுக்கும், நாம் உருவ அமைப்பில் பல புதுமைகளைக் காண முடிகிறது. இன்னும் பிற்காலத்தில் கார்ட்டூன் கலையின் வளர்ச்சி கம்ப்யூட்டர் மற்றும் தொலைக்காட்சிகளின் மூலம் பெருமளவுக்கு வளர்ச்சியடையும் என்பதில் சந்தேகமே இல்லை. கார்ட்டூன் கலையில் ஆராய்ச்சிக்கு முடிவேயில்லை. கற்பனை வளர வளர, கார்ட்டூனில் பல புதிய படைப்புகளும் உருவாகும்.



## சுடுமண் சிற்பக் கலையின் வரலாறு

சீ. வசந்தி

நமது கிராமப்புறங்களில் உயரமாக உருட்டிய விழிகள், கொடுவாள் போன்ற மீசையுடன் நிமிர்ந்து அமர்ந்திருக்கும் அய்யனார் சிலைகள், பொம்மைக்கலைக்கு ஆதாரமாக நிற்பவை, பண்டையத் தமிழகத்தில் இக்கலைச் சிறப்பாகப் போற்றப்பட்டதால்தான் இன்றளவும் அதன் எச்சங்கள் பல தற்காலக் கலைஞர்களிடத்து செல்வாக்குப் பெற்றுள்ளது. இப்போது, இக்கலை 'சுடுமண் சிற்பக் கலை' எனப் பல கலைஞர்களின் படைப்புத் திறனில் மிளிர்கின்றது. இக்கலை வளர்ந்த வரலாற்றைக் காண்போம்.

### இலக்கியத்தில்

தமிழ் இலக்கியங்களில் சுடுமண் பாவைகள் பற்றிப் பல செய்திகள் காணப்படுகின்றன. சிலப்பதிகாரத்தில்,

“கண்ணுள் வினை ஒரு மண்ணீட்டாளரும்” (5:30) என்றும், மணிமேகலையில், மண்கொண்டு பொம்மைகள் செய்யும் கலைஞர்கள் பற்றி வருகின்ற பல குறிப்புகளில் ஒன்றில்,

‘பாங்குற மண்ணீட்டிற் பண்புற வகுத்து’ எனவும் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளன. தெய்வப் புலவர் திருவள்ளுவரின் குறளில்,

‘நுண்மாணுழைபுல மில்லா நெழினலம் மண்மாண் புனைபாவை யற்று’

(குறள் 407)

எனக் கூறப்பட்டுள்ளது. மணிமேகலையில் பல தொழில் புரிவோர் பற்றிக் கூறப்படும் போது, ‘மண்ணீட்டாளர்கள்’ குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளனர். இவர்கள் மண்ணைக் கொண்டு சிற்பங்கள் செய்யும் சிற்பியர் ஆவார்கள். மண்கலன்கள் செய்யும் குயவர்கள் கலம் செய்கோ

எனவும், வேட்கோ எனவும் வழங்கப்பட்டனர். எனவே சுடுமண் பொம்மைகளைச் செய்யவே சிறந்த சிற்பாசிரியர்கள் இருந்து, சிறந்த இடத்தைப் பெற்றிருந்தனர்.

### இந்தியாவில் சுடுமண் பொம்மைகள்

இந்தியாவில் குறிப்பாக, சிந்து சமவெளி நாகரீக காலத்தில், ஹாரப்பா, மொகஞ்சாதாரோ, லோத்தால் ஆகிய இடங்களில் கிடைத்த சுடுமண் பொம்மைகள் உலகப்புறம் பெற்றவை. இவை சுமார் கி. மு. 3000 ஆண்டு களுக்கு முற்பட்டவை ஆகும்.

பின்னர், வட இந்தியாவை ஆண்ட மௌரியர், குஷாணர், குப்தர் போன்ற அரசமரபினரின் காலத்தில் சுடுமண் கலை உன்னத நிலையை அடைந்தது. இதை மெய்ப்பிக்கும் வகையில், வட இந்தியாவில் பல்வேறு பகுதிகளில் நடைபெற்ற அகழாய்வுகளில் சுடுமண் பொம்மைகளும், பொருள்களும் கிடைத்துள்ளன.

### தமிழகத்தில்

இலக்கியங்கள் இயம்பும் மண்ணீட்டாளர்களின் கை வண்ணத்தில் மிளிர்ந்த பல சுடுமண் பொம்மைகளும், பொருள்களும் (பல்வேறு காலகட்டங்களைச் சேர்ந்தவை) தமிழகத்தில் நடைபெற்றுள்ள பெரும்பான்மையான அகழாய்வுகளிலும், மேற்பரப்பு ஆய்வுகளிலும் கிடைத்துள்ளன.

முதல் முதலில், புதிய கற்கால மக்கள்தான் மண்கலன்களைச் செய்ய அறிந்திருந்தனர். எனவே, இக்காலத்தையே சுடுமண் பொம்மை



‘தாய்சேய்’ அரவக் குறிச்சி—உத்தம நாயக்கன்

கள் செய்யப்பட்ட தொடக்க காலமாகக் கூடக் கருதலாம். பையம்பள்ளியில் நடைபெற்ற அகழாய்வில் சில சுடுமண் பொம்மைகள் கிடைத்துள்ளன. பின்னர், பெருங்கற்கால ஈமச்சின்னங்களில் இவை கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. ஆதிச்சநல்லூர், கொற்கை, சேலம் மற்றும் நீலகிரி மாவட்டங்களில் கிடைத்துள்ள பழங்கால ஈமச்சின்னங்களில் சுடுமண் பொம்மைகள் காணப்படுகின்றன தஞ்சை மாவட்டத்தில் மேலப்பெரும்பள்ளம் என்ற இடத்தில் முதுமக்கள் தாழிகள் இரண்டு கண்டுபிடிக்கப்பட்டன. அவற்றின் கழுத்துப்பகுதியில் சுடுமண் பெண் உருவங்கள் இருந்தன. இவை இறந்தவர்களின் உருவமாகவோ தாய்த் தெய்வ வழிபாட்டின் தொடக்கமாகவோ இருக்கலாம். இதனை அடுத்து பூம்புகாரில் கிடைத்துள்ள சுடுமண் உருவங்கள் கைகளால் செய்யப்பட்டுள்ளன. இங்கு கிடைத்ததைப் போன்றே திருக்கோயிலூர் அகழாய்விலும் கையினால் செய்யப்பட்ட ஒரு பெண்ணின் சுடுமண் பொம்மை கிடைத்துள்ளது. பின்னர் கி. பி. முதலாம் நூற்றாண்டைச் சேர்ந்த அழகிய ஆடை அணிகலன்களுடன் மிக நேர்த்தியான வேலைப்பாடு

களுடன் செய்யப்பட்ட சுடுமண் பொம்மைகள் கோவை, தருமபுரி ஆகிய பகுதிகளிலும், அரிக்கமேட்டிலும் கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்டன. இவை வெளிநாட்டினரின் கலைத் தொடர்பை உறுதிப்படுத்துகின்றன.

இவற்றை அடுத்து கி. பி. 7-8ம் நூற்றாண்டைச் சேர்ந்தவையும் சோழர் காலத்திய கலை நுணுக்கங்களுடன் கூடியவையும் காஞ்சிபுரம், உறையூர், திருக்காப்பலியூர், அழகரை, கரூர், அரவக்குறிச்சி, திருக்கோயிலூர், உத்தமநாயக்கன்பாளையம் ஆகிய இடங்களிலிருந்து கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்டன. கி. பி. 17-ம் நூற்றாண்டைச் சேர்ந்த தஞ்சை நாயக்கர் மன்னர்களின் காலத்திய சுடுமண் பொம்மைகள் இராஜாளி விடுதி என்ற இடத்தில் கிடைத்துள்ளன. கி. பி. 18-ம் நூற்றாண்டைச் சேர்ந்த மராட்டிய மன்னர்களின் காலத்திய சுடுமண் பொம்மைகள், தஞ்சையில் உள்ள செக்கடி மேட்டில் சமீபத்தில் கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. எனவே, சுடுமண் பொம்மைகளின் வரலாறு, தமிழக வரலாற்றுடன் தொடர்ந்து வந்துள்ள ஒரு வரலாறு ஆகும்.



பொருவாம்பட்டி — பனையகுளம்

### சுடுமண் பொம்மைகள் செய்யும் முறை

சுடுமண் பொம்மைகள் சாதாரண களி மண்ணால் செய்யப் பெற்றவை. இவை மிதமான சூட்டில் வேக வைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. எனவே, பொதுவாக மண்கலன்களில் தெரியும் கரி இவற்றில் படிவதில்லை. இவை களி மண்ணாலும் சுதையாலும் செய்யப் பெற்றவை. கையாலும், அச்சுகளாலும் உருவாக்கப் பெற்ற சுடுமண் பொம்மைகளும் அகழாய்வில் கிடைத்துள்ளன. இருபுறமும் கூடிய அச்சு ஒன்று ஓர் அகழாய்வில் கண்டுபிடிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. தமிழகத்தில் கிடைத்தவற்றில் கையால் செய்யப்பட்டவையே மிக அதிகம். சில சுடுமண் பொம்மைகளின் உள்புறம் கெட்டியாகவும் சில உள்புறையுடனும் (Lallow) காணப்படுகின்றன.

### செப்புச் சிலைகளும் சுடுமண் பொம்மைகளும்

தென்னிந்தியாவின் செப்புத் திருமேனிகள் உலகப்புகழ் பெற்றவை. செப்புத் திருமேனியை செய்யும் முன்னர், செய்யப்பட வேண்டிய உருவத்தை மெழுகில் வடித்து, அதன் மீது ஆற்று வண்டல் மண் பூசி நெருப்பிலிடுவர். நெருப்பில் மெழுகு உருகி மறைந்துவிடும். இதிலிருந்து சுடுமண்ணால் ஆன குழிவான அச்சு கிடைக்கும். இந்தச் சுடுமண் குழி அச்சில் தன்கு காய்ச்சிய செம்புக் குழம்பை ஊற்றி, செப்புத் திருமேனிகளின் படிமம் செய்யப்படும். எனவே, பிற்காலக் கல் சிலைகள், செப்புத் திருமேனிகளின் முன்னோடியாகச் சுடுமண் உருவங்களைக் கொள்ளலாம்.

சுடுமண் பொம்மைகள் மற்றும், சுடுமண் பொருள்களைக் கொண்டு அக்கால மக்களின் வாழ்க்கை நிலையையும், பொருளாதார நிலையையும் அறியலாம். சமய நிலையையும் சமயப் பொறையையும் தமிழகத்தில் கிடைத்த சமண, புத்த மற்றும் சிவன், வீஷ்ணு சுடுமண் உருவங்களைக் கொண்டு அறிய முடிகிறது.

தற்காலத்தில் சுடுமண் பொம்மைகள் மண்ணால் மட்டுமில்லாது சுதையாலும், சிமெண்டாலும் செய்யப்படுகின்றன. செங்கல் கள், சுண்ணாம்பு (உப்புடன்) சேர்த்து அரைத்த கலவை கொண்டு சுதை உருவங்கள் செய்யப்படுகின்றன. சிமெண்ட் பொம்மைகள்

2:1 என்ற விகிதத்தில் மணலும், சிமெண்டும் கலந்து செய்யப்படுகின்றன.

செங்கை எம். ஜி. ஆர்., தென்னார்க்காடு, சேலம், கோவை ஆகிய மாவட்டங்களில் தற்போதும் ஓங்கி உயர்ந்து நிற்கும் ஐயனார், யானை, குதிரை சிலைகள் சுடுமண்ணால் ஆனவையே. கிராமங்களில் சுடுமண் கலை இவ்வாறு காக்கப்படுவது போல, நகரங்களில் நவராத்திரி விழாக்காலங்களில் கொலு பொம்மைப் படிகள் அமைப்பதன் மூலம் இன்றளவும் அழியாமல் பண்டைய இக்கலை காக்கப்பட்டு வருகிறது.

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