

CHAPTER – II

Printmaking has changed its identity from text to Fine Print gradually. Till the middle of the 19th century, reduplication, illustration for journals or novels, documentation and other forms of visual communication were the ends for this medium. Basically starting as a text printing medium into which illustrations were slowly incorporated Printmaking gave way to individual expression. The art institutions that were set up by the British in the mid 19th century were to have a great impact on Printmaking

Art institutions grant a sanctity to techniques. They offer an official recognition or sanction for any form of art, which may have been unorganised till then. The art institutions set up by the British all over India gave an academic status to printmaking which till then had only been a means of communication. So from being a technical innovation it became a technical skill in visual representation which had to be mastered. Visual image became the priority rather than the text. With the steam engine paper mills installed in Srirampore, good quality paper in sufficient quantity became available. With the exposure to European prints in form of presents to the Royal Courts, from the company artist – some of whom were skilled Printers who illustrated in journals intricate engravings or artist such as the Daniel brothers who made sets of topographical engravings in Printfolio forms, the priority that Image got over Text in Printmaking in India was actually long in coming. After the official sanction granted to images over text in art-schools, and the acknowledgement that this art could be officially taught to the natives, it took only a few decades till the time when Indian artist started considering

Printmaking as a means of fine expression. The direct consequence of this was the definition of the role Printmaking was to play in society and the broader and more indirect consequence were the ideological reaction this imposed.

Within these specifications, few isolated individual Printmakers through their work started realising certain possibilities beyond the accepted one. The co-existence of these two factors form the basic character of printmaking before it became a means of fine expression, independent and autonomous.

The point to be noted here is that Printmaking was the target in all these institutions but the ideology behind the 'training' was different. As a large number of students had been taught in these British academic style institutions and practiced as technically skilled fine artist in whatever capacity or as teachers, their understanding of the Printmaking medium becomes vital. When their works are seen and compared, the changes in the medium from a technical – medium to a fine expression becomes obvious and the need to study these academic institutions important.

The evolvement of printmaking is a separate non commercial fine art began when commercial printing gave up manual techniques for faster mechanical presses. By the 1st quarter of this century the separation in these two areas is clearly demarkated. Now within the fine expression itself printmaking identity as a valid form of expression is another matter. Printmaking was a very minor form of expression for fine-artist to indulge in infrequently. Therefore all the changes that have taken place in the art field,

have been mostly in painting. And if, we are to accept that Printmaking is a fine art in whatever capacity – then the changes and ideals that apply to painting would also apply to printmaking for it is impossible to start talking about fine prints produced in the post independent period without a background other than the technical innovation made. Therefore, it is necessary to briefly gauge the significant factors that shaped fine arts from the middle of the 19th century.

The 19th century was epochal for the cultural identity of India underwent transition and traditional links were broken down. Market expanded in the arts, courtly patronage started waning and this put the traditional guild-system in disarray. The British entrenchment of political power in India led to a change of the administrative and political power and the British government became the sovereign instead of the East India Company in 1857 and their result superior attitude towards their own identity and a need to uplift Indian taste led to serious consequences. In the major cities occupied by British or French or Dutch, new class hierarchies among Indian, based on money, and education started. As a result imitating the ruling class became inevitable. The need to emulate everything British and therefore superior was the accepted standards and this started to be propagated through liberal educational ideas. Similar trends were also evident in the art schools set up by the Britishers, where they propagated a kind of Art and Craft movement to instill a concept of fine art along the western cannons. This was to serve the dual purpose of teaching the Indians the skill to product work which would help in illustrative purpose. The syllabus was a facsimile of the British art schools – it was to cultivate proper aesthetic taste. Quotes such as – “The most important function of art

school is to maintain restore and improve the application of oriental art and industry and manufacturers –¹ illustrate this attitude.

Or as in words of Henry Haver Locke (1837-83), the first principal of the Government School of Art, Calcutta, who was supposed to be a liberal educationist and was advocated a synthesis of the English and Oriented System – “The object of the Institution was to give the native youth of India an idea of men and things in Europe both present and past not that they might produce feeble imitation of European art but rather that they might study European methods of imitation and apply them to representation of natural scenery, architectural monuments, ethical varieties and national costumes in their own country”² Locke’s method of education resulted in works such as those in (Plate 27) for these courses offered an attempt to correct the short comings of Indian method by studies from life according to the western method – in accordance with the canons of proposition, perspective and anatomy.³

The idea of setting up art schools according to Western academic norms had been considered by the British since 1830 A.D. onwards.⁴

The British had two distinct purposes while chalking out the syllabus of the art school –

¹ Review of progress of education in India – 1882-93 to 1896-97 Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol-4, Administrative Oxford, London.

² Report of the D.P.I. for 1876-77

³ (III Quintennia Report) The New India School in Retrospect. Sandeep Sarkar, L.K C 38

⁴ Nandlal Bose – The Helmsman, Amit Mukhopadhyay

1. To build up a vast body of copyist (following the course in Industrial or the mechanical art) who could draw perfectly, various kinds of flora, fauna, topographic and geographic features, rituals, festival, dresses, maps, charts etc. to help in the day to day administrative work.
2. A second type... took up the courses of what can be called the pure arts – they were subservient allies of the ruling class and lived by the expectation of the colonialists... the important aspect of including two different sections like the craft and fine art and drawing students from two different state of the society had a significant meaning...”⁵

For scholarships and stipends were offered to the former category and courses in European method of training such as painting, modeling and sculpture were open pure arts... the government had put its stamp of approval in class division of education.

The first art school set up by them was in Madras in 1850 A.D. This school set up by Alexander Hunter who engaged M. Durante⁶ as the supervisor for the wood engraving section which opened soon after the school started. In the year 1854 AD the Calcutta school of Industrial art was established, starting as a voluntary organisation with the sole purpose of founding an art school. The society for promotion of Industrial art was launched in Calcutta in 1959 by an English painter Hodgson Baatt with the support of Rev. James Long. Cecil Beadon, Wieliham Money, Raja Pratapchandra Sinha and Hiralal Seal with the intention of training artist. This school also started its graphic section soon

5. Ibid.

6. Graphic Arts in Kala Bhavan, Dr.Nirmalendu Das, Nandan – 1985.

comprising of engraving and Woodcut department. Mr. Fowler was brought from England to teach printmaking. The mode of education offered can be gauged when these references are taken into consideration –

“In the other hall were about 30 boys drawing and engraving on wood under the able professor Mr.Fowler”⁷

“There students received assignments to illustrate books and in 1858 the successful amongst them were given prizes in the Town Hall.”⁸ This institution became the Government School of Art by 1864 and is now the Government College of Art.

The Elphinston Institute of J.J. School of Art, Bombay, was set up in 1857.⁹ It had two sections – Drawing and Wood Engraving. They were under the supervision of Terry Williams.¹⁰ The printmaking medium did not become popular in this institution – the lithopress that was set up in 1860 was used only for publication of books. Pictorial publications were non existent. Only in this century there are some examples of printed image from this institution. The Jaypore School of Industrial Arts started in 1886.¹¹ the

⁷ Calcutta Woodcuts – An aspect of Popular Art – Nikhil Sarkar. Woodcut Prints of the 19th century Calcutta – edited by Ashit Paul, Seagull, Calcutta 1983.

⁸ Paintings of the Three Tagores – Abanindranath, Gaganendranath, Rabindranath. Chronology and comparative study: Dr Ratan Parimoo, Maharaja Sayaji Rao University of Baroda

⁹ Director of Technical Institutions in India – Anant Vinayak Patvardhan Revised II Edition, Aryabhusan Press Poona – 1915 p. 34.

¹⁰ Story of J.J. School of Art 1857-1957 pb – Govt of Maharashtra by the Dean J J School of Art, Bombay.

¹¹ Ibid, Page 493.

Mayo School of Arts, Lahore in 1875¹² and the Lucknow school of Industrial Arts¹³ in 1870's. During the first decade wood engraving and lithography was introduced in all these institutions.

So even though printmaking units were set up in all art institutions, we see that it was not used as an expression by itself.¹⁴ The students were given a thorough technical grounding where by they became capable of reduplicating to perfection. These newly trained printmakers could compose with motif in perspective, could give the feeling of volume, foreshortening, to indicate movement and to show the third dimension. Typographical sketches, portraiture and a way to duplicate in large quantity the existing Bazar paintings and documentary illustration. Basically the way to realistically render in illustration. The need for such visual representation was a new means of communication. However no original expression can be found amongst these works and neither was it encouraged in these art schools, despite the instructors being aware of possibilities from western examples.

These printmakers from these colleges gradually entered the market but their entry did not dislodge the traditional printer from the trade. They coexisted for they supplied to different demands "Amongst the traditional printers too, this shift academic realism never found proper roots presumably from an absence of a strictly materialistic philosophy of life and a faith in the thereness of things – so a kind of reality that came

¹² Ibid, Page 389.

¹³ Ibid, Page 367-371.

¹⁴ Dr Nirmalendu Das, Graphic Arts in Kala Bhavan, Nandan 1985

through the traditional sources was engaging naivete and what came through the art schools was a polished rigidity.¹⁵ 'The British did not have a clear policy of art education. One view was to develop Indian taste, and the other was to train craftsmen so that the excellent tradition of Indian crafts might survive and their deterioration could be stopped. But the actual training given was based on realistic rendering of object and copying of western pattern books and design. Naturally this did not result in improving the taste or perpetuating the tradition. Another shortcoming of the British policy was that it did not give the right to Indians to become artists. Hence the art school training had no such aim, because the British believed that Indian has not produced any fine art.'¹⁶

One of the possible reasons that printmaking never became a fine expression during these years is because it has 'craft' connotation. It was taught in art schools according to strict rules of using skill to reduplicate, repeat existing images. It served a definite purpose in society rather than any aesthetic experimentation. So printmaking had skilled technicians who repeated their images in large number to satisfy a need in society.

Promising printers who passed out from these institutions set up their own units and the huge demand for printed material could accommodate all types of printers. Printers like Kalidas Pal were well known for their proficiency in wood and metal engraving. He became teacher in Government College of Art and Craft Calcutta in 1858. He later set up his own studio. He is supposed to have trained many in the technique of

¹⁵ K G Subramanyan, *Living Traditions*, page-7

¹⁶ Ratan Parimoo – *Painting in the Swadeshi (Home Rule) period Early 20th century Indian painting since 1850 Studies in Modern Indian Art.*

engraving. One student – Anand Prasad Bagchi (1849-05) is a well known product of such a training. His works can be exemplified by the lithographs he made for Rajendra Lala Mitra's *Antiquities of Orissa* Vol. I 1875 and Vol. II 1880 in Bhuvaneshwar. By 1876 A.D. Anand P. Bagchi had set up his own studio and could cater to the various needs of his clients through chromo lithography on puranic literature and portraits of eminent Indians etc. Artist from these art schools have been called skilled designers or craftsmen and they coexisted with other indigenous untrained creators and many mediocre British artist who came to India. These students skill cannot be denied but their artistic ability was called by a kind of imperialistic domination for Indian art and its unaesthetical, unnatural qualities were denigrated. Indian art was valid as far as crafts or industrial application was considered. The British continued to maintain their right to originality as they privilege. Indian traditions, conventions, ideals and customs coexisted with colonial policies and the 19th century is an admixture of two values system in all walks of life.

Raja Ravi Verma (1848-1906) can be marked as an artist with such an identity. His art was European in style and technique with an Indian theme. He was an aristocrat and a member of the ruling family of Kerala and he represents the ethos of his class. He glorified the mythical, religious and traditional value. He was successful in reintroducing Indian themes. His training as a traditional Tanjavur school artist and European acadamism which he had gained from his mentor Theodore Jenson a European painter presents the plurality of his work. Ingeniously synthesized with the western academic

norms of perspective, colour, background, with an illusioustic style, the figures have western proposition with Indian ornaments costumes and hairstyle.

Ravi Verma's credit as a printmaker is singular – He made reproductions of his oils (Plate 26) in oleography medium in large quantity and these became so popular that by late 19th and early 20th century there were hardly any cultured home in Indian where these prints did not find a place. These oleography in full colour in the stipple method were cheaper than his paintings and each work had a large number of copies. The first Ravi Verma press was set up in Goregaon in 1893 to oleograph his paintings and later another press was established in Bombay.

Thus Ravi Verma's exploitation of the multiplicity of the medium to its full advantage presents the positive side of the coin. The other aspect is these prints were only a reproduction of his painting and not original works in themselves. So he popularised his works through prints, but perhaps the true printerly possibilities could have be realised by him and his art lovers if he had created original works and circulated them in large numbers.

It is also argued that the oleographs of Ravi Verma were a second rated version of his painting so here two points come forth which designates printmakings a second in comparison to painting –

The technique was not handled to its full potential – they seemed more like second-rate copies of existing work.

Thus printmaking medium was only good enough for copy and not originals – their popularity amongst public notwithstanding who accepted these aspects and for a long time no artist too thought of possibilities of this versatile technique for an original works.

Aesthetically speaking, Ravi Verma's art catered to a particular class of people – the Neorich and the pro-British middle class. His works were given wide publicity as the triumph of Western art over Indian art by the promoters for the best of intelligence of those days were indifferent to arts and aesthetics – and art educators negative publicity condenscending attitude to Indian art led to protest amongst Indian as well as Europeans – examples of such can be read in letters such as the one in 'Times of England' in 18 Feb 1910. In protest in 1905, art institutions such as Kala Parishad was started to encourage Fine art to create taste for pure art and make market for the artist. Its propagators were A.P. Bagchi, Ravindranath Tagore, Bamaprasad Banerjee, Gagendranath Tagore and O.C. Ganguli. They discussed issues such as the status of Indian in art field. However in certain art institutions such as government school of art, Calcutta with its dynamic principle – H.H. Locke with his policies on rejuvenating Indian art did provide inspiration to a generation of artist. His interest in ancient Indian art and aesthetics can be summed up through this excerpt "while the paths of literature and sciences are being preservingly and worthy traded by scholarly Bangalees that of art is almost neglected by them. I am not forgetting that there has been a Ram Raj namely, Babu Rajendra Lal

Mitra, these exceptions set to point out the rule – which certainly has been the neglect of the study of art amongst educated Hindus."¹⁷

After Locke's death Earnest Barnfield Havell (1861-1934) joined the Art School as its principal. "He tried to change the system of Locke's method of teaching almost overnight. He planned to give the students a through grounding of traditional Indian art, since its ancient human beginning and cure them of the evil influence of western art."¹⁸

To this end all the painted copies of European art and plaster replicas of sculpture were thrown away in a large pond in the campus leading to students protect and formation of Public Art Academy (1817-1917) set up by Rajen Prasad Gupta (1875-1927) where a galaxy of students adept at academic realism were trained and produced. Such activities clearly point out that the issues were being argued on but their acceptance was doubtful moreover where ever western academism was questioned – it was done practically only in painting / sculpture. Potential of printmaking by and large remain unexplored or rather in duplicating existing academically accepted works it catered to anti-Indian ideologies. Perhaps with it's multiplicity if a few artist had used this medium as a form of protest – it would have reached a wider audience. Such a situation existed in art-institutions. But on the other hand Printmaking was extremely prolific as a commercial medium and it had also flourished as popular prints in Baltala and other

¹⁷ A Reassessment of Bengal School in the Contemporary Context – Anil Acharya and Soman Som Bangla Shilpa Imalochonar Dhara. L K C 38.

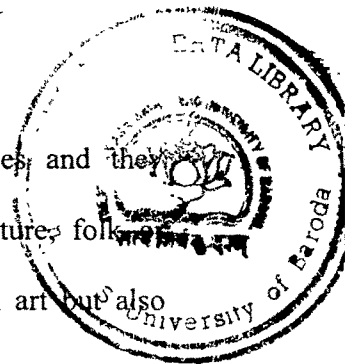
¹⁸ The Neo-Indian School in Retrospect – Sandip Sarkar L K C. 38

regional prints at the same time. Academically print had already assumed a subsidiary status to painting and sculpture.

During this time Lord Curzon the Viceroy to India made his famous law for protecting of ancient Indian monuments and works of art. Havell was fortunate to get his approval – even though he was an orientalist zealot Sandip Sarkar is of the opinion that given the rigorous training attained by these academically trained artist and their attempt to capture things that were relevant from artistic heritage and what might have happened indigenously thereof if Nationalism and Orientalism had not been imposed and stopped the natural process, these artist might have produced relevant works. Academic realism was the manner of expression towards the end of the century. There may have been minor variation in the work of each artist/students but the technique of handling was rigid and innovation in rendering was not encouraged. In printmaking such a rigidity leads to stereotypes.

However in spite of this by the end of the last century a certain contemporary idea about art and artist did develop. It is also interesting to note that in the year 1879, a massive exhibition called Arts of Bengal was on display in London featuring the Calcutta woodcut among the others, organised by the White Chapell Gallery and the Victoria Albert Museum. Reaction against regarding Indian art as inferior led to the germination of pride in the quintessential Indian ethos. Indian art sources lay in its philosophy and religious system, in its symbolism. Traditional art did not imitate the visible world and if it could produce good art in the past so could the contemporary artist create out of their inspiration through traditional heritage. The traditional craftsman turned printer as well as

the academically trained print maker were aware of such controversies, and they consciously or naturally incorporated indigenous sources such as miniatures, folk puranic textual sources. Thus Prints imbibed formal qualities of Western art but also reflected traditional sources.



The end of the 19th century also saw the rise of 'Bengal School' or 'Revivalism' as is termed by art historians – these artist headed by Abanindranath Tagore produced works of a particular style which was supposed to reflect the traditional, Nationalistic essence of India, strictly shutting of the outside influences (though Abanindranath Tagore was aware of Mughal paintings, Far Eastern art and Western Art and his style was not without these influences). The Bengal school came into existence due to the reaction of connoisseurs of Indian art such as E.B. Havell, Okakura Kakuzo, Ananda Koomaraswamy, Sir Percy Brown, Heirich Zimmer, Lawrence Byron, Sister Nivedita, Basil Grey, Vincent Smith – a group of indophiles, mostly, European and Indians educated in England – they protested against Indian art being considered inferior and saw works of Abanindranath and his followers as nationalistic and a revival of the glorious past and heritage. The Indian Society of Oriental Art was started in 1907 by such administrative and non-official orientalist curiously got the active support of the Government in spite of ideological bias. They tried to translate the oriental ideology into some kind of programs for art activity – amongst it propagator, were Abanindranath Tagore, Gagnendranath Tagore, Anand Koomaraswamy, Sister Nivedita, Okakura

Kakuro. The last two were apprehensive about the governmental support and along with Ravindranath Tagore found the Vichitra Club in 1912 having similar ideologies.

The direct impact that the art of Bengal School had on printmaking cannot be pointed out however amongst the painters of this period, few who indulged in printmaking were Mukul Dey, Abudur Rehman Chughtai, Ramendranath Chakravarty etc. Their art reflected the neo-Bengal school ideologies and lyricism through lines as in Chughtai or in Mukul Dey's and in Ramendranath's work a more painterly concern is apparent. Artists such as Gagendranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Binod Bihar Mukherjee, Ram Kinkar, Janini Roy, who worked in the first quarter of the present century experimented in printmaking technique. Their contribution is important for it is through their attitude towards the medium that printmaking changed its status from a craft or technique used to reproduce existing images into a separate form of expression with its own potential.

Gagendra Nath Tagore (1867-1938) is considered to be the first Indian artist who used the printmaking technique creatively and transformed it from a more commercial activity to a cultural activity. In the years between 1917-21, Gagendranath Tagore made several lithographs. His caricatures on social political (Plate 28, 29, 30) and other problems of his time are full of gestures, expressions and simplified forms punctured with linear arabesque and satire on human behaviour. This concern and reaction about the state of things and environment makes his subject an unusual one for his time. His personal point of view and its depiction through a popular media like printmaking is another

important fact. Not only was the subject unique, but the medium of expression most suitable to his work. The other important fact to be noted is that his lithographs in black and white or colour – were original expressions and not a print reproduction of his paintings. As such, Gagnendranath's short yet prolific venture into this medium is important. Being taught the technique of printmaking by his tutor Hari Haran Bose (1868-1920) and as a contemporary to A.P. Bagchi, it is remarkable that Gagnendranath Tagore experimented in the medium and did not end up producing works which were documentary or illustrative as was the trend. His exposure to Japanese print (of which his family had a collection) and his explorations allowed him to try out a unconventional manner of expression. Gagnendranath Tagore was aware of the European modern movements and he tried to come into terms with them going beyond narrow Revivalistic norms and evolved a personal style. Looking beyond its technical aspect Gagnendranath Tagore presents the idea of an artist printmaker. The main point to be noted here is that Gagnendranath Tagore prolific and unconventional expressions may have been unusual for his times. His prints may be considered an isolated venture into the unusual for a short time. But the importance of this unconventionality is that possibilities of the medium were opened up his contemporaries or the later printmakers. Gagnendranath Tagore perhaps realised that the contemporary reality had nothing to do with the available range of clichéd images, that it was necessary to discover new situations, characteristic of his time and to build up new powerful and unhackneyed images.

Myths, legends were no longer a reality for him. His search was for the new Indian picture book which revealed the extraordinary subtle form of social criticism

beyond the feeble imitation of mannerist phase of Bengal school. The method of the unclassical was not only able to regain the lost reality and it also created a new art form unique to Modern Indian Art.”¹⁹

Gagnendranath's significance is because – he was the first artist to express in the original printed form. He used those qualities of the medium to advantage, which are an intrinsic form of it and have been used before for similar purpose – namely – wide circulation of prints on social satire which ridiculed the bourgeoisie and their habits. The most obvious comparison that comes to mind is William Hogarth. By using subject which was not of the accepted mainstream, Gagnendranath set a new precedent. For this focused on his subject as well as technique. Had “Gagnendranath made lithographs of similar subjects to his painting – probably it would have been judged as an extension of his work in another medium as an experiment or may be even reproductions of his paintings such as in the case of Ravi Verma. That he had realised the potential of the medium and made many works in three years. However he did not take up lithograph or any other printmaking medium after this – he in fact donated litho his press.

Gagnendranath is significant because through his attempt he could convince some artist of printmaking possibilities. Gagnendranath also exemplified that art is a part of the social structure. It is because of his work that artist like Nandlal Bose realised the social significance of art. "He realised that art must be rooted in the social demands of the time

¹⁹ Amit Mukhopadhyay – The job of the Hand and Machine, Indian Printmaking Guild – 1994.

and that art has a social and psychological function to offer.”²⁰ Gagnendranath's works probably gave a lot of confidence to aspiring artists who may have wanted to try this medium as an expression.

Gagnendranath's prints may be called a very individualistic expression of the theme's generally found in some Battala prints and Kalghat paintings. The eloquent theme arising from contemporaneous reality and its bold and simplified expression were common to all. This new social realism and its criticism in very realistic manner arose from the contempt felt for the new class of 'Babu' known as Naba Babus. Their way of life was ridiculed and the social secular criticism that crept up in Kalighat patta or Bhatta prints were also followed by Gagnendranath. Of course in the latter's case the manner of expression was quite different from folkish or traditional styles.

These lithographic cartoons of Gagnendranath Tagore's art is probably the most original portion of his work in the sense that they are direct unadulterated expression of his views on contemporary society. They are chronicles of the time and give a radical view of the age – with no lyrical reconstruction, which allowed a lot of freedom. Interestingly Gagnendranath's 'Scream' series and Edward Munch's Woodcut 'The Scream' were contemporaneous, the former after 1917 and the latter before 1915.

Mukul Chandran Dey travelled to America in 1916 to learn etching from James Blinding Stone in 1916. He was the first Indian to travel abroad to learn the medium. On

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Pranabranjan Ray Colonial system of Education and Nandlan's Negation – 1983

returning he started etching in Vichitra Sabha – a club set up by the Tagore family in the southern verandah of their residence ‘Jorasakho’. Here his work inspired Nandlal Bose and the latter tried to make prints. In 1920 Mukul Chandra Dey went to England to learn etching and engraving under Mure Head Bone. On his return he started working for the Society of Oriented Art and by 1928 he was a well established and reputed printmaker – he became a landscape and portrait artist working a prosaic Western style. His career continued further as the Principal of the Government School of Art, Calcutta.

The change in the nature of printmaking medium in the first few years of the 20th century was gradual. When the whole country printmaking scene is observed, it is obvious that art activities concentrated in the east in Calcutta and a more commercial aspect of it in the west in Bombay. In other areas of India, printmaking was erratically pursued by individual artist but in most art institutions it remained a rather neglected technical skill.

Ravindranath Tagore was critical of the ‘Bengal School’ and their promoters who were obsessed with the idea of reviving the traditional arts. His idea of creative expression was to allow wider perspective. He was aware of Indian tradition, art of China, Japan and the European movements. The prevalent art education system which produced stereotyped works prompted Ravindranath to establish an entirely different educational institution called Bhrahmacharyashrama (1901) designed basically to free education from politics with Tapovana ideals. Then in 1912 he started the ‘Vichitra Club’ where all the creative elite of Bengal could meet. This club had nationalistic goal but

without the dogma of orientalism – it had a more programmatic emphasis and initiated duties to this end which were later taken up by Kala Bhavan. The club was wound up by 1917 as unsatisfactory. By 1917-18, he became aware of inadequacies of his Bhrahmacharyashrama and he came out with an all round development of human potential which he believed could be provided with freedom from day to day routine classes, examination, degree unhealthy competition between students. The main emphasis was in the growth and development of human faculties in close relationship with nature art, music, dance and drama. With this aim Visva Bharti was founded. Its art department – Kala Bhawan with a small museum and art library was established in 1919. Nandlal Bose taught for a short while in the same year then in 1921 took charge of Kalabhavan on Ravindranath's invitation. Dr. Nirmalendu Das claims that Kalabhavan and its ideas in art education were a renaissance in the beginning of this century. Ideas of art and aesthetic had changed from the accepted one. A lot of stress was put on traditional heritage in the teaching ideals of Kala Bhawan.

Printmaking as a creative medium seriously started in newly opened Kala Bhavan at Shantiniketan during 1920's... and Nandlal Bose was in the forefront of this. Graphic art was introduced in the teaching program of Kalabhavan from the beginning and Nandlal Bose was a liberal instructor who allowed his students to experiment with the various techniques to know its possibilities and scope. He was perhaps the first artist who encouraged his students to experiment with graphic qualities of the medium rather than just learn the reproductive value. Having been taught himself by Mukul Dey under set norms – his foresight in allowing experiments in printmaking is very important – it

opened up possibilities. Not that these experiments led to expertise in each case – they remained an inquiry into a medium. Nandlal Bose's exposure to Indian, Far Eastern and European art as well as works of artist such as Gagnendranath Tagore allowed for a more liberalise use of the techniques. Eventually it led to printmaker qualities and individual expression through personal understanding of printmaking possibilities. Nandlal started making maximum use of graphic media as a language of artistic expression. He did woodcut, wood engravings, lineocuts, etching, drypoint etc. and his work inspired his students. (Plate 31.)

Printmaking activities also got encouragement due to exhibitions, lectures seminars and demonstrations by visiting foreign artist and art critics : In 1922 in Calcutta, the members of the Indian Society of Oriental Art organised an exhibition of the works of German Expressionist group at Samabay Mansion where sixteen wood cuts of Lyonel Fernuger, twenty woodcuts of Gerhard Marcks, nine etching of George Muche and seven works of Lothar Schreyer were exhibited. For the first time contemporary Indian artist came into contact with original creative prints.

In 1922 Gagnendranath Tagore, Ravindranath Tagore and Stellar Kramrisch arranged the first exhibition of the Blue-Reiter group outside Germany in Calcutta.. This was markmaking for Germany was coming to the fore front of western modern art movement.²¹ Woodcut technique had assumed a new language under these German expressionist and the force of their expression and the obvious scope of the medium was

a source of inspiration for aspiring printmakers. The Landholders Association, Calcutta, organised an exhibition of Japanese wood cut prints from in 1924 from the personal collection of Kakiyo Okakura (1862-1931) a scholar and philosopher from Japan and the author of *Ideals of the East* published in 1903. At the same time the Society of Oriented Art organised a Japanese prints exhibition with authentic collection of Woodroffe.

Within a matter of few years, many Indians artist could get exposure to the versatility of the woodcut medium as practiced by German Expressionist or Japanese woodcut artist, both masters in their own way. They could not have failed to notice this aspect along with the broader issues of culture style, manner of expression etc. These exhibition were brought to India with a definite purpose and the enthusiasm behind these enterprises is also important. One may question why so many exhibition on printmaking were brought within a short span?

In 1920 Sir Muirhead Bone's etchings were exhibited. Unlike the Revivalist school ideals, Kala Bhavan's ideology was not anti-west. Students learned Indian traditional art technique and history as well as European art technique and history – specially contemporary art trends of south west Europe. During 1921-22 French artist Madam Andre Karpeles visited Shantiniketan.²² Being an expert wood engraver, she demonstrated this technique and it was learned by an innovative student Ramendranath Chakravarty – this first hand exposure to the technique inspired the students. In 1920-21 Gagnendranath Tagore donated his lithopress to Kala Bhavan but due to lack of

²¹ Abindranath Tagore and Gagnendranath Tagore – A Reappraisal – Sovensom L K.C.-20

22. Dr.Nirmalendu Das. *Graphic Arts in Kala Bhawan Nandan* 1985, page 39.

experienced instructor or artist, this technique did not make progress. Japanese woodcut in multicolour was the next point of interest again it was Ramendranath Chakravorty who started experimentally in this in 1925. In 1923 Mexican connoisseur Freeman had visited Shantiniketan and demonstrated his process. In the same year Surendra Nath Kar went to London to learn lithography and etching but could not become an expert in these. However, he and Ramendranath tried to publish a folio of Bengal dolls in colour lithography - this project was taken up due to Nandlal Bose enthusiasm for experimentation. It was abandoned due to lack of technical expertise and soon after the lithography section closed down. Etching and woodcut continued. Others who continued printmaking in Shantiniketan were Manindra Bhusan Gupta who did a series of woodcut prints in small sizes as greeting cards, Biswaraup Bose who went to Japan in 1935 to learn woodcut technique and he returned back to direct and inspired many others into colour reproduction of indigenous pictures in Japanese woodcut process. In 1925 Nandlal had himself visited China and Japan and brought back Chinese rubbing and Japanese woodcut prints.²³

From the above examples it is clear that in Shantiniketan, printmaking activities were prolific. But a point to be noted is that in all the mediums attempted the amateurish sporadic interest did not allow for any serious continuity of expression. In the lithography unit after initial experimentation in technique an attempt at the programme to publish a folio of Bengal dolls came to a halt due to lack of technique. The subject matter pertained to documentation rather than a creative expression. Surendranath's initiative to try

²² Dr Nirmalendu Das. Graphic Arts in Kala Bhavan Nandan 1985, page 39

23. Ibid. Page 40

lithography and etching, petered out due to a lack in technique. This continuous struggle to master the technique did not allow these artist to proceed further and this is more unusual in the light of the fact that technical expertise was available to Indian printmakers – in the printing field many had established commercial studios where exquisitely rendered copying was practiced. Artist such as Ramendranath, Manindra Bhushan and Biswaraup Bose were great experimentalist. However, their research attitude towards the medium was misdirected – for if we look at their work we will notice that there is a conflict between graphic media and the content and form they used. Their aim was to built up a picturesque effect on the graphic surface and for this reason most of their prints became painterly rather than graphic. Though graphic was not merely a re-duplicative medium to them still they lacked a proper understanding of the particular character and potentialities of various surface effects of graphic media.²⁴

Shantiniketan contribution lies in the fact that the change in the idea of a printmaker from a technician to a fine artist could get encouragement in the totally non commercial attitude towards expression. The exhibitions from Japan and Germany helped in emphasised this idea and so did the workshop by different visiting artist. Printmaking was gradually being allowed to become a fine expression. However, this transition did not take place overnight. To understand graphic quality in printing and mould it to a fine expression took ingenuity. But the very fact that printmaking was considered as a fine expression and it was being encouraged in an art institution – though informally is the point to be noted.

24 Ibid.

Dinkar Koushik in his 'My student days in Shantiniketan' conveys that printmaking was considered one of those extraneous activities whose novelty of material, utility and aesthetic purpose was a challenge. He mentions etching and woodcut along with mural, frescoes, terracotta, batik, alpana, leather work, wash tempera etc. The students were taught to experiment and skillfully handle these mediums. Till 1969 printmaking remained a part of the painting department. Relief was the main medium whereas lithography (when re-set up) was an advanced study subject. Woodcut, engravings linocut and stencil process were compulsory. There were three groups in printmaking.

1. Creative Print Making – taught to create original prints based on monochromatic matrix and due to lack of proper understanding the works become more like painting than graphic.
2. Printed design – Alpana and design on woodcut and linocut well known for its oriental and decorative character.
3. Reproduction of pictures of Indian paintings specially medieval or contemporary painting of reputed masters by colour wood cut and stencil method.

Probably in the works of Nandlal Bose, Binod Bihari Mukherjee (Plate 32, 33) and Ramkikar (Plate 34) graphic arts true potential were realised to a greater extent. These painters who indulged in the printmaking medium seem to convey the true graphic quality of the medium though the number of prints they made was comparatively small.

Their aim was not reduplication or make painterly imitations. They had experienced with various techniques such as woodcut, wood engraving, linocut, etching, drypoint, lithograph and with large cement blocks – trying to properly understand the medium. Nandlal Bose's works were formalistic and reflected his paintings. The woodcuts Varsamangala, Abdul Gaffar Khan and Gandhiji, drypoint Arjuna, Pine Forest; etching, village tailor; lithograph Santal Dance and linocuts of Sahaj Path should be considered markmaking according to Dr. Nirmalendu Das. His woodcuts and linocuts are based in simple design, clear arrangement of space with balanced distribution of black and white, negative and positive form, his lithography, etchings and drypoints are done in a sketching character in terms of liberated lines and his efforts are seen to build up the graphic quality

Binod Bihar Mukherjee and Ramkinkar the two outstanding pupils of Nandlal Bose made a few graphic prints. They evolved their own style and concept through organised lines and textual values. Their work was not lyrical, poetic, romantic as of the Bengal school or their counterparts like Ramendranath or Manindranath Bhushan etc.

The emergence of printmaking from a duplicating medium of the 19th century to a fine expression by early 20th century is slow. Many printmakers who took up the medium could not overcome problems such as mastering technique and more precisely understanding the innate graphic quality of the medium. They tried to create original works by early twenties but they failed to understand that printerly and paintingly possibilities were different. In fact of great odds – when artist were sent to foreign

countries to acquire the knowhow, perhaps being the only one exposed to these qualities when they came back to teach this acquisition their preoccupation was technique and graphic remained a quicksilver like fact which slipped away in the indigenous circumstances. Printmaking in the 19th century as taught in schools had been documentary – those of Battala were graphic but then their creators were wood engravers turned printers – with the fore knowledge of the rightness in wood. It took artist with genuine talent such as Gagnendranth, Nandlal, Binod Bihari or Ramkinkar to indulge totally in the medium without inhibitions and to come up with remarkable works.

They did not meticulously follow mechanical details such as following step by step process or get inhibited by rigid technical details – their concern was with a pictorial graphic surface. The kind of teaching programme for printmaking practiced in Shantiniketan did not benefit the less talented students – a lack of interest rising from technical incapacities and inability to realise their own expression led to very few artist printmaker with original expression like Shankho Chaudhary, Madhukar Sheth, Dinkar Koushik and K.G. Subramanyan amongst others.

Kala Bhavan's important contribution to Indian printmaking history validates from the fact that many students of this institution were invited to teaching post in different institutions all over India. Their integrated knowledge in various expressions from stage decoration to painting including printing could be introduced in the institutions they taught in.

In the post independence era between 1950-1969 interest in printmaking diminished in Kalabhavan making printing activities stagnant. In 1967 this was partly rectified when degree or diploma course at graduate level was introduced for the first time in India to graphic arts. The graphic section contained relief process, planography and intaglio the latter two for specialisation only. In 1968 summer camp in graphic rejuvenated this departments activities still further. Artist such as Somnath Hore, K.G. Subramanyan, A. Ramchandran, Binod Bihari, Ramkinkar and Sukhomay Mitra took part. In 1969 Somnath Hore joined as Head of Graphic Arts and along with Biswarup Bose expertly guided the students. In 1973 silliscreen unit was set up but the project came to a halt after a few months – today this department is established.

Shantiniketan's contribution to graphic art perhaps lies in the spirit generated by artist such as Binod Bihari and Ram Kinkar. In fact most of their prints seem contemporary to present times and it is perhaps such spirit of freedom which allowed printmakers a peep into the possibilities of the medium.

Due to the various activities by individual artist as well as exhibitions of works brought to India, the possibilities of the medium became better known to the printmakers. The black and white contrast of graphic prints in the lithography posters of the Russian Revolution, in magazines and newspaper, the German Expressionist Artist works during the world-wars; the Radical American Graphic Artist on antifacist illustration, all exploited the quality of 'graphic' and multiple image. From the late 30's as the struggle for Independence strongly entered its final stage, political issue, socio economic

conditions brought on through the Bengal Famine and Tebhaga Movement came under focus. The Progressive Writers Association and Indian People Theatre Association encouraged artist. Zainul Abedin (1914-1976), was greatly affected by the Bengal famine of 1943. He made hundreds of sketches in black Indian Ink depicting the victims (Plate 35, 36, 37). These works have a political connotation because the famine was manmade. Zainul Abedin poster like drawings, made from actual events was a significant event in Indian art. He inspired many artist to be as direct in their expression. He taught a whole generation of artist as a teacher in College of Arts and Crafts, Calcutta. Somnath Hore was greatly inspired by him. Another artist whose works are exemplary in the pre-independent art is Chitta Prosad, Bhattacharya, (1913-78). He also came into the limelight through his work for the famine. He travelled in rural areas, sketching the effects of the famine which were published by the Bengali weekly Janayudha and English weekly Peoples War of the Communist Party. He also made many works on anti-fascism during the War. Very graphic expression of dominance of the powerful over the weak, on misuse of war profit, on victimisation of the common man. Whereas Zainul's works are realistic, Chittoprasad exaggerates the symbolic and gives a dramatic overtone to his work. (Plate 38, 39, 40).

He has used the linocut technique advantageously, expressively cutting according to shape of the forms so that the black and white distribution is powerful. This style can be contrasted with works of Harendas (Plate 41) who is also judicious but lyrical in the distribution of black and white. Chitta Prasad is one of the early examples of a printmaker who believed in a social cause and used the medium of printmaking to express his beliefs.

He believed that “no Indian artist can afford to keep himself away any longer from expressing his or her moral and political thoughts”. In printmaking he felt that it was “one of the means to start a tradition in which art becomes an expression of people’s aspirations”. Quote Chalasani Prasad Rao on Chitta Prasad

Chitta Prasad was aware of the power of printmaking. His drawings on questions about the existing social system during his time were either published in newspapers through linocuts, therefore, its wide circulation was very unique. Zainubedin had made drawings on the plight of the poor in the Calcutta famine of 1943, but Chitta Prasad went one step beyond and used printmaking thus ensuring a wide distribution. He was deeply influenced by Marxist ideology and his works express his concern for the common man. He worked with Progressive Writers Association and Indian People’s Art Theatre and the communist party. Works of Kolwitz, Mexican and Chinese paintings and Japanese woodcuts, Goya, Mughal and Rajput miniatures as well Buddhist cave paintings seems to have influenced him according to C.P. Rao. But his work also incorporated the Bengal folk.

Jaya Apaswamy says about graphic during this time “The period of transition around independence was not a suitable environment for printmaking. There were hardly any printmaker and there was little demand for the print.” Outside institutions there were no print studios. Even though the idea of an artist as a creative individual had evolved in India and some of these artist worked against overwhelming odds – socially, politically and economically.

In spite of such adverse circumstances these artist persisted in their expression.

In fact a large part of the stylistic change that can be seen in pre and post independent art owes a lot to printmaking. Whereas painters took a long time to come out of a romantic ideal state in art as started by the Bengal school. in Printmaking the direct expression of the artist without any illusion or colour, lyricism mythology or traditional it took a powerful turn. The Printmakers had to deal with raw images.

Chitta Prasad and Zainul Abedin are two artist who have greatly inspired one of the pioneers of Indian printmaking – Somnath Hore. As a young artist who was interested in helping the poor through art, both Zainul's sketches and Chitta Prasad's graphics had a marked influence. This is visible in the handling of the torso of emancipated people in Zainul and Somnath's works. From Chitta Prasad, he learnt the method of travelling from village to village and sketching quickly which were later transformed into prints.. Somnath Hore's drawings were politically motivated. However, his prints made from the drawings of Tebhaga are an introspective non-political exercise. He does not make political print posters for by this time – early 50's he is disillusioned by political issues. However, he is inspired by Chittaprasad's use of the medium of woodcut and linocut. And he makes several works from his former sketches. He was also inspired by Kathe Kolwitz, and Chinese wood engravings. (Plate 42, 43, 44, 45).

Disillusioned with politics as a motivation for art Somnath Hore felt 'I had churned out enough political posters with misleading slogans, messages unrelated to

reality. There was a sense of despair as several of us turned away from political slogans towards what we felt was a truer pursuit of creativity – artistic endeavour. We began to realise that the appeal of a work of art lay not in the theme as such but in the expressive power of the individual in terms of the pictorial element.²⁵ This is one of those statements which exemplify the transition of ideologies behind art and perhaps because Somnath Hore was a prolific printmaker his first recourse to expression was to reexpress himself in this medium from his Tebhaga dairy. The transition of printmaker as an independent artist and the printmaking medium as an independent mode of expression can be said to have begun from here onwards. As a printmaker Somnath's works have inspired many from this point onwards. Somnath Hore's dedication to the printmaking medium has greatly contributed to the evolution of graphics in India. Initially as an individual artist who found the medium inspiring enough to make woodcut prints from the Tebhaga dairy images. Then as a teacher he continuously tried to develop printmaking in spite of material inconveniences which did not stop his work. Perhaps he had the instinctive ability to recognise the 'graphic' sensibilities. This transition as an artist-printmaker is a decisive choice. As such Somnath Hore's contribution as the first artist to choose Printmaking for fine expression is momentous. He was experimenting with a medium in which he had not much practice, in which his exposure was through works of foreign artist or rare individual artist in India. Printmaking techniques were not common knowledge amongst Indian artists. The graphic sensibility was totally undefined. Previous examples were rather illustrative or politically motivated or made to serve some purpose.

²⁵

Wounds, Somnath Hore

In 1953 he became an assistant teacher in the Calcutta Corporation and a year later he was invited to form a graphic department at the Indian School of Art. He started with woodcuts and his works inspired many younger artists such as the First Year students of Government College of Arts, Calcutta, who had protested against the college conventions wanting a more contemporary ideology, and called themselves 'Chitrangshu' (this later became the Society of Contemporary Artist). A new phase in Somnath artistic pursuit started in 1958, when he joined the Delhi Polytechnic. In the Government College of Art's, Calcutta in graphic few students had done linocut and woodcut such as Sanat Kar, Suhas Roy, Bhusan, Sudhir Ranjon etc. but there was nothing steady in graphic in contemporary art. Before the 50's, only Haren-Das had devoted himself to woodengraving and he could not spread it beyond the graphic syllabus of the College because his was considered lyrical and rather passive. Haren Das's works though exquisitely rendered did not inspire the younger artist. Perhaps the need of the hour was more radical or more expressionistic. Though Haren Das's works have been re-discovered recently, it had failed to ingratiate an interest outside academic necessity during the 50's. On the contrary, Somnath Hore's works had a following amongst, Sanat Kar, Suhas Roy, Bhushan etc. So in spite of working prolifically, Haren Das's works were an isolated instance in the 50's. His importance may be in the fact of a dedicated printmaker in adverse circumstances. So in a wider perspective we can see that a few number of printmakers all over the country were working consistently in this medium. Whereas Krishna Reddy in collaboration with Hayter was at the point of the most important experiments in the 20th century in Printmaking, Kanwal Krishna had also acquired this

technique of colour printing and was setting up his own studio in Delhi. Artists such as Y.K. Shukla or L.M.Sen too were prolific in their places. So printmakers who considered the medium as a fine art were already stationed in several places in India. But compared to Painters or Sculptors Printmakers worked in isolation.

In art-institutions, printmaking was in the curriculum, but always as an experimental, art craft medium. Until the late 50's when Lalit Kala Studio's in several places in the country were set up and many had presses installed; or until 1958 when Somnath Hore took charge of the Graphic Department of the Delhi Polytechnic and almost single handedly build up a major interest in printmaking amongst artist, printmaking was not really prolific.

In the post independent year of 1950, the main factor that promoted printmaking to develop into a Fine Art expression was through setting up of the Faculty of Fine Art in M.S.University of Baroda. The Faculty's graphic art department was set up from the very beginning. It was modest but individual department offering subsidiary course to the main subjects such as painting, sculpture and applied arts. Printmaking was a separate department where anybody interested could come and work – during and beyond the official timings.

According to Dr. Nirmalendu Das, the art education in 100 years prior to independence had proved to be inadequate. Existing institutions had fallen into a stagnant manneristic approach toward art be it in content or technique. He also claims that if the

renaissance in art education had started with Kala Bhavan in the beginning of this century then a similar role was played by the Faculty of Fine Arts in the post independent phase.

So one of the main events which was to indirectly promote printmaking in the next twenty years was setting up of the Fine Arts Faculty, Baroda. Until this point, Printmaking had gained gradual sanction and identity as a fine expression through the works of printmakers who worked against odds and, were few in number. They were isolated and were seeking an identity beyond the academic convection that printmaking had till then.

In the year 1850 art started to be taught academically in Art schools set up by the British. Painting Sculpture Drawing and Printmaking were granted variable status – as skills that had to be acquired, as training that could be received. A hundred years later in 1950, in the Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University of Baroda, the definition of art and art education had taken a different ideology, Art Education within a 100 years had changed.

Such changes are quite normal and they answer to the need of the time.

In the post independent era when Nehruvianism, Internationalism and a promoted zest for surging forward was apparent in every aspect of rebuilding the nation many seminars were held on art education. The existing art institutions seemed not to have fulfilled the need to broaden the art identity of India. "The present approach to art education has not been properly conceived. Art is more skill or craft than an education.

Professional education is neglected or organised with inadequate equipments and antiquated methods.”

The purpose of education is to prepare one for life as well as for living, to train and develop ones various faculties so as to produce a full and integrated personality well adjusted with oneself and in relation to the environment. The purpose is to contribute as a whole to make the intellectual emotional physical and spiritual development leading to good individuals and good citizen. Art is helpful for all this and after this art is a separate discipline a professional training and an important human activity”. This may sound a little contrived now but in the post – independent era, every activity was coloured by the need for an upliftment and search for national pride – as B.C. Sanyal has pointed out : “What is the epic struggle for independence if not for national identity. Art is what life is, if life the national ego – art is its echo...” this feeling reflecting the spirit of pending Independence from the imperial yoke which actually did happen in the year 1947... ‘I think the date around 1950 would turn out to be significant in many walk of life as well as in the creative activity through the various arts in our country. It was a part of time when by the very thought of being free from the colonial stigma many felt that we could achieve anything probable through human endeavour. It was like a revival of our primeval self respect as a great creative nation.’²⁶ Something of the spirit of Independence was in the air when the Faculty of Fine Arts was started at Baroda in 1950 by the newly established Maharaja Sayajirao University. It enjoyed the status of a faculty from the beginning. The institution professionally opted for a progressive and modern art

26. Dr. Ratan Parimoo, N.S.Bandre – Profile of a Pioneer, L.K.C. 37.

centre compatible with the demands and philosophies of modern society. It envisaged to integrate the relevant spirit and heritage of India and that of the Modern Art Educational Movement in Europe. The faculty offered both the degree and diploma courses as parallel preparation programs.

Visual art institutions which existed in India such as those set up by the British in different parts of the country offered diploma courses. After independence, the art institutes that came up were due to an increasing awareness to enhance fine arts. Board of Studies meetings improvised and innovated on the existing infrastructure. Many institutes started becoming affiliated to universities. Because it was felt that visual-arts in India had not made a desirable progress when compared to studies in other disciplines.

Before the Faculty was established in 1950 such under-currents and discussions had taken place in the frequent meetings or Board of Studies amongst artist – teachers and external experts. This has to be hypothetically reconstructed for there is no recorded blue prints of the objectives or methods of art teaching. There is no definite document of art education ascribable to Baroda.²⁷ However as the main adviser on the Board of Studies and the first teachers laid the foundation to manner of art-education. To promote the idea of an art-education affiliated to a university was a very progressive. And to give degree for visual art too was a novel idea. This legitimised the art education. It gave it a sanction. Instead of art-lessons as vocation or a skill, students of an institute were contemporary artist in the making. The status of an art and artist had been legitimised. It

27. Ibid.

is another matter that, in retrospect one can claim that – every student acquiring a degree from this institution does not automatically become an artist.

However at the commencement, the best intention to make a total artistically ‘rounded’ personality was the endeavour. “Not that there was no scepticism and opposition to the fact of considering the teaching of art-skill at a university level was a kind of violation of the sacred preserve. Conventional academics and artist themselves felt unsure whether art could be fostered and taught within a University to its advantage. They were afraid that the burden of discussive studies would outweigh or impair the creative freedom”.²⁸ The generally accepted idea on “art was of a manual skill that grew partly through training under a master and partly as a natural gift and it passed without much change from age to age. An aspiring artist tried to learn his masters manner by aping his methods which brought satisfaction to both”.²⁹ This idea of a school and shared style of manner was the accepted concept – this was the traditional of continuing cultural pattern.

Baroda’s Faculty of Fine Art was more modern – in fact it was based on internationally progressive methods of art education.

From the pre independent days, the attempt to make Indian art modern, was discernable in the efforts of various artist. After independence, this concern became more

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Souvenir of Exhibition in 1975 to Celebrate the Silver Jubilee of M.S University of Baroda.

²⁹ Ibid

obvious. In every attempt there was a try to internationalise art. Art Institution were one way through which such an effort could be manoeuvred at a certain level. To fight the adverse circumstances such as public apathy, official neglect or destructive criticism was felt to be necessary. Art was not the main concern of the public – in an age when national building and resurrection of national identity was the main motto, art was not the focus of interest. Therefore, the fact that the fine arts college of M.S University became the first institute to be a part of a multi disciplinary university is of importance. The faculty got established in 1950 and it offered courses in art training in studio practices as well as theoretical instruction at graduate and post graduate level – bringing it to the status of other liberal art. Kalabhavan was established in 1891 at Baroda, as a workshop where industrial art offering course in drawing, dyeing, calico printing and carpentry and later architecture and pure or applied photography inclined students to perfection. It also had art courses on portraiture , landscape, design in oil and water colour. Commercial artist could train for publicity firms, process studio or the cinema industry. It's unique features were combination of theory and practice and teaching in Gujarati as well as English.

Later the entire art department was transferred to the newly established faculty of Fine Arts in 1950. N.B. Joglekar who used to teach there, continued in the Printmaking department in the Faculty.

Baroda's ideal and objectives were modernistic. It did not confine it's art education to a comparison to Traditional verses Modern. Nor was art just a skill to be acquired to imitate perfectly, and also the strict 'Gurushishya' tradition which was

followed in most institutes was not encouraged. Rather each student was exposed to a number of facets such as technical perfection, aesthetic discourses, criticism, comparative study, international trends and an overall sensitivity to his surrounding and he was allowed to make his individual choice.

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Zainab
1945



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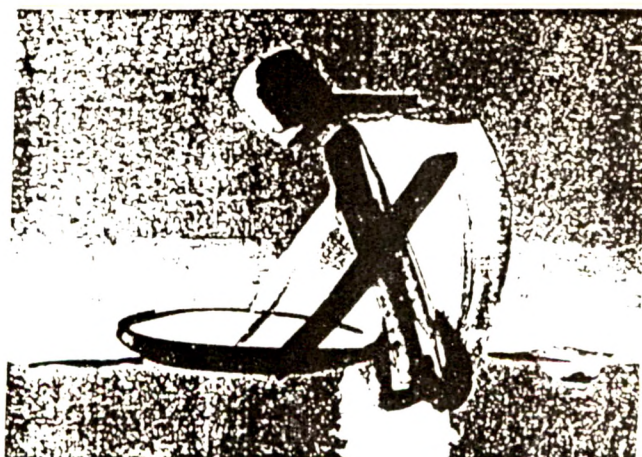
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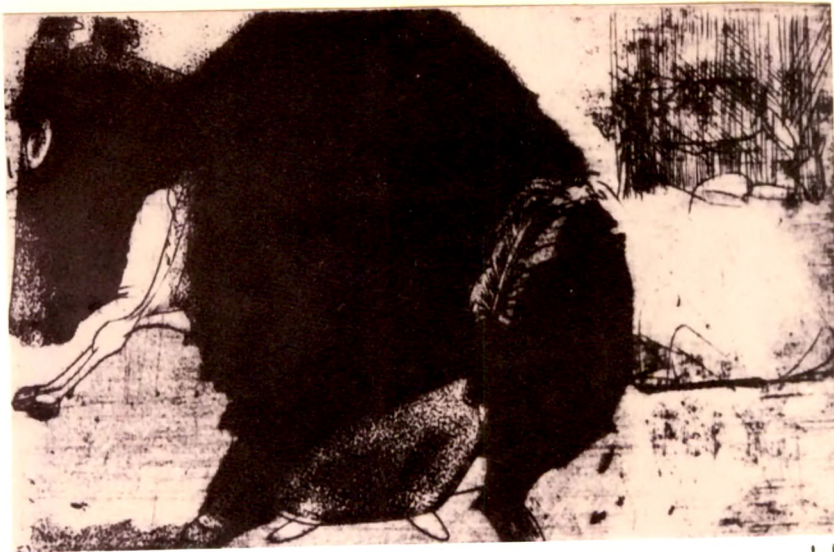
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