

CHAPTER - III
THE OPEN AIR SCHOOL
 (TRANSITIONAL PERIOD I)

From 1917 to 1930

Certain new tendencies in art-expression were visible in Bombay around 1907 and these continued approximately till about 1930. This period showed ^eoverlapping of various trends. The personalities who were dominant in this transitional phase, were at the height of their achievements between the years 1921 to 1926, but their styles showed different qualities than those of the earlier painters. These qualities became apparent since 1907 onwards in the Bombay Art Society's exhibitions. It will be more appropriate to call this period a transitional phase. Two different schools were working simultaneously in this period and the new tendencies which were introduced paved way for flowering of the next period.

As mentioned above, this period is characterised by two schools. The first was the 'Open Air' school. The painters belonging to this school painted landscapes, street-scenes etc., in the realistic style. The style was similar to the earlier one, but the change was in the choice of the subject-matter and its handling. This school included chiefly M.K. Parandekar, S.L. Haldankar, R.D. Panwalkar, S. Ferⁿand^es and Mrs. Lucy Sultan Ahmed. Also M.R. Achrekar, M.S. Satavalekar, Adurkar Gondhalekar, Deuskar, Nageshkar and Ambika Dhurandhar.

The second was the style derived from the Indian traditional painting which developed in Bombay from 1919 in which year Gladstone

Solomon opened a special class for Indian Art in the Sir J.J. School of Art, Bombay. This included the painters like Jagannath Ahiwasi, Nagarkar, Ravishankar Raval, followed by Almelkar etc. We may call this tendency as the 'Indian Interlude'. In the first decade of 20th century, 'Indian Decorative style' was introduced as a subject of specialization in the syllabus of Calcutta School by Principal Havell and soon Gladston Solomon too introduced it at Bombay.

The reviews and the other literary references about this period show how certain important happenings have influenced the art-scene. The newspapers took a significant step and for the first time in 1907, in the history of journalism, the Times of India, a leading national daily started printing the photographs of different incidents, places and personalities. Before this year no photographs appeared in the newspapers, howsoever important the incident or personality may be. The telling example one may mention is that even when Queen Victoria expired, a full page covered the news in detail, yet no photograph of the Queen ^{had} appeared.¹ It shows that the printing technology had not reached that stage of meeting this challenge. As soon as the photographs of the paintings began to be printed in the newspapers this enabled the common man as well as the artists to be well-informed about happening in general and art-activities in particular. This also helped to give publicity to the painters.

Another noteworthy fact was the gradual dominance of water colour painting over the oil painting technique. The earlier painters handled both the mediums, but they showed preference for

the oil painting, especially Pestonji Bomanji, Trindade and Pithawalla were amongst such artists. Majority of the painters of the transitional period started using water-colour in a peculiar way. In fact water colour was not a new medium to the Indian painters. They were using it from ancient times. But a particular method which flowered in this period, was the use of water-colour without mixing white, thus keeping the purity of water colour. Taking the advantage of its transparency by addition of water in it was new to India. In the method of using transparent washes, the advantage of the brilliancy of white paper beneath the wash, was fully exploited. The flow of water colour was emphasized. Though the use of water-colour was age-old in India, the Indian painters used to employ the pigments found in nature and white was the main feature of their palettes. They applied colours in thick layers and never in transparent washes. The transparent water colour was a new thing and its introduction was mainly due to the training in western style painting given at the Sir J.J. School of Art. One of the chief personalities whose influence was felt was that of Cecil Burns, who was an excellent water-colourist. He was the Principal of Sir J.J. School of Art from 1899 to 1918. Cecil Burns' water-colour portraits and landscapes and his masterly handling became very popular and impressed the young students of art greatly.² The result was the growing popularity of transparent water colour painting over the oil painting in this period.

One more quality of this period was that the new generation of painters were more fascinated by the beauty of nature and their own environments than the mythological or historical subjects. This was

closely reflected in their landscapes, street scenes and the riverside ghats. Another important feature was that these painters recorded the scene mostly on the spot whereas the earlier painters sometimes painted it from the memory or from small sketches recorded on the spot. This change from the mythological or historical subjects of earlier paintings to the hill station scenes, river sides or street scenes was significant as it brought the painters closer to the outdoor atmosphere. This tendency was referred to by the critics as the 'open-air school'.³

In the western world, the term 'open-air-school' has been used with reference to the Impressionist painters of France who painted sun light and whose paintings naturally involved open-air subjects. Their style was bold and used broad, thick patches of colours, the paintings were painted rapidly to catch the proper effect of a particular time and gave a sketchy effect to their paintings omitting the unnecessary details. On the other hand the technique of the Indian painters of this transitional phase was different though the subjects were from outdoors. These painters showed minute details in their rendering. This quality was similar to the style of painting of the earlier painters. The departure from the old subjects which occupied the art-scene for twenty years was welcomed by the critics who ignored the ~~start-~~^{short-}comings of the new style and perhaps that is why the other aspects were not taken into consideration except the tendency of painting outdoor scene. The critics admirably referred to these painters as belonging to the 'open-air-school' or the 'direct' school.

It is interesting to observe that there was a parallel development in the literary field and specially in poetry in Maharashtra. The five poets who became well-known as the ⁴'Kavipanchak'; under the leading poet Keshavsut, liberated the Marathi poetry from the tendency of repeatedly expressing the love for past glory of India, and subjects from mythology or history. Keshavsut's poem 'Tutari' (Trumpet) metaphorically gave ^e the slogan of the revolting spirit. These poets expressed the feelings of nationalism, equality and humanity through their poems. A step ahead was taken by the 'Ravikiran Mandal', formed in 1920 by a group of poets under the leadership of Madhav Julian, including the other members B.R. Tambe, Girish, Yashwant, S.B. Ranade, D.L. Gokhale, V.B. Ghate, Diwakar and Mrs. Monorama Ranade. They met every Sunday (hence the name Ravikiran Mandal) in the open-air on the slopes of the Fergusson hill in Poona. There they discussed varied subjects and topics, also recited their new poems to each other. Their poems truly expressed the spirit of the age. They displayed romanticism, lyrical quality and love for nature. They also forcefully expressed the various facets of individual mind rather than generalising the type. They also used personification of nature. The intensity of the emotional expression in their poetry was distinct than the earlier poetry which was idealistic and restrained. Madhav Julian's 'Tethe Chal Rani' or '~~Prithviche Premgeet~~' represents the tendencies of Ravikiranmandal very well.

The painters of the open-air school reflected the romanticism and lyrical mood of the Ravikiran Mandal Poetry. Parandekar's and

Haldankar's paintings expressing their admiration for the beauty of nature, Achrekar's and Karmarkar's works treating the genre subjects and through them displaying the various moods of common man and the intense emotional expression, were parallel to the same spirit expressed in poetry. Keshavsut's 'Trumpet' finds its echo in Karmarkar's 'Victory' and 'Conch-blower'.

During the World War I the number of exhibits of the European painters became less and less. (Vide the newspaper reviews of the Bombay Art Society's exhibitions of 1917 and 1918). The review of 1917 in Times of India refers to, "the temporary stoppage of the activities of painters in England and to a lesser extent, in the colonies, the only effect of which ⁱⁿ India is the reduction of number of exhibits".⁴ In 1918, the review refers to "the absence of two types of exhibits: (1) by people who go to England for vacation and paint in leisure time and send them to the exhibition, and (2) by the professionals and amateurs in England who send their exhibits here"⁵ and that it had a mixed result as it created contrast, variety as well as greater range of themes. 'No previous exhibition held in Bombay Art Society has the water colour so essentially Indian as it is in the present exhibition'. The absence of the English paintings must have provided more scope for Indian painters and especially the landscape painters. As a result several landscape painters came forward to fill in the gap.

In 1915 the pattern of art education was changed and the former three Grade classes system was replaced by the two Grade Examinations, which ^{has} ~~have~~ continued upto now. Similarly higher art

examinations in Painting and Architecture, Drawing Teacher, Drawing Master and Art Master examinations were introduced. This pattern was more systematic and an improvement in the art education, attracting increased number of art-students.⁶

Among the painters of this period, S.L. Haldankar, M.K. Parandekar and Fernandes proved to be expert water colourists. Their water-colours showed skilful handling of the transparent washes, freshness and unusual purity. Panwalkar handled both water colours and oil colours effectively. Unlike other painters of his times, he was far ahead and showed a bold rendering with broad brushstrokes. Unfortunately he died a premature death.

M.K. Parandekar, born in 1877, hailed from Kolhapur, a small town which ^{has} contributed ^a number of skilled artists to the art field of Bombay. He started his career from nail drawings which were widely admired. In 1902 Major Lesly taught him leather embossing.⁶ In 1905 he designed a 'Manapatra' given to George V, the Prince of Wales. The Sir Dorabji Tata Prize which he won in 1911 for his leather work was the result of this training.⁷ He joined Sir J.J. School of Art in the year 1900 and stood first class first in the final year examination. After this he preferred to work as a free-lance artist rather than to accept the teaching job in the same school. He toured widely in India for painting landscapes. The landscapes showing the Ghats of Nasik and Wai became especially popular. Governor Lord Willingdon not only admired his work and bought several landscapes from him, but also gave him the title 'the artist by appointment to his excellency the Governor of Bombay'.

Parandekar also received patronage of the Maharaja Gangasingbahadur of Bikaner. He exhibited regularly in the Bombay Art Society's annual exhibitions and won several prizes, medals and honours upto 1923. He was also one of the founder members of the Art Society of India established in Bombay.

Parandekar's landscapes were published in various magazines. In the old issues of the railway magazines we find some of his charming stree scenes which show freshness of flowing transparent washes.⁸ Some of his landscapes also show an unusual view of perspective, as well as the figures and groups rendered with appropriate size. His paintings of Ambabai Temple, Kolhapur were much admired. They show pleasant morning light, skilfully painted effect of stone walls and the quiet mood. His paintings, 'Rainy Ooty', 'Walkeshwar Temple', 'Royal Departure on Jan. 10th, 1912 from Victoria Station' were appreciated wholeheartedly by the critics and people alike. His paintings in the Bhawani Museum, Aundh, present some of the best examples of his style of painting. A painting of Nasik Ghat, shows temples at a distance and the effect of bright light, while another shows the people climbing up and coming down the steps of the Ghat. His experiments with landscapes on tinted paper are also displayed. Two scenes from Mahabaleshwar show his fascination for the beauty of nature and his handling of washes of pure water colour. His skill in oils is also seen from his self portrait which reveal the depths of his personality. Though Parandekar's paintings show expert handling of water-colours, his landscapes and especially the scenes showing temple architecture are rendered in

cool light with bluish colour schemes which one feels, does not suit the Indian atmosphere with its bright sunlight. Perhaps this was due to the influence of the cool lighting seen in British landscapes.

S.L. Haldankar proved to be the most influential painter of this age. In the records of Bombay Art Society's annual exhibition, his name was often seen in the list of the prize-winners right since the year 1907. He was born in 1882 at Sawantwadi and spent his early childhood there. The beautiful surroundings of Sawantwadi inculcated in his mind the love for landscape painting right from his early childhood. His liking for painting was so great that he left his school training incomplete and came to Bombay to join the Sir J.J. School of Art in 1903. After completion of his training in art he established his own art institute under the name 'Haldankar's Fine Art Institute' and started to teach painting there.

It was in 1910 that he won the Governor's Prize for the best picture for his half-length portrait of a young man with a slouch hat holding the palette.⁸ He won the silver medal in 1913 for his oil painting 'Daily Task'. Again in 1921 for his 'At Study' and in Nov. 1923 exhibition for his 'On Tour'.⁹ It is interesting to see that Haldankar, who afterwards became famous as an expert water-colourist of realistic style painting of Bombay School, won the early prizes for his oil-paintings. From 1910 his name was found in the list of winners of awards continuously upto nearly 191⁴⁰~~4~~.

The year 1925 proved to be the peak period of Haldankar's career. He won the Gold Medal of the Bombay Art Society for his painting 'Mohamedan Pilgrim'.¹⁰ It showed an old man with henna-stained beard and heavily swathed head toiling at a hill, leaning painfully upon his peculiar bunch of staves. The painting was depicted in low key colours and especially charming was the way in which the evening light on the profile of the old man was painted. This painting was widely admired, and it created an unprecedented sensation in Bombay. It is said that people repeatedly visited the gallery to see this painting which brought him so much fame that this year was called as 'Haldankar's year' in the art world of Bombay. It is preserved in the collection of the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay. Another of his important paintings was purchased by the ~~Masore~~ ^Y Masore Museum and showed a woman holding a lamp in one hand and sheltering it from the wind, by the other one. The illumined face and the light seen through the sheltering fingers reveal a masterly rendering.

Haldankar's landscapes became equally popular as his figurative paintings. A critic rightly wrote about his paintings¹¹ "Mr. Haldankar - another artist of 'open-air school' exhibits cheerful studies of nature very happily interpreted in his 'Morning Khandala Hills' and his 'Ahmedabad Mosque'. His prize-winning landscape 'South of Banganga, Walkeshwar', which was exhibited in 1929¹² exhibition also depicted a charming mood. The Nawab of Cambay awarded it a prize for the best water-colour.

Haldankar's paintings in the Aundh Museum are fine examples

of his skill in handling water colours as well as oils. His self portrait in oils as well as his portrait of Agaskar and R.R. Velankar, show his excellence in portraiture. His historical picture 'Shahistakhan's Murder' in oils is rather indifferent and indicates that he was not much interested in figurative compositions of historical subjects as he ^{was} in contemporary subjects and landscapes. His four watercolour landscapes painted in Borghat displays utmost ease and simplicity in handling.

His paintings became popular due to their freshness, purity and flow of the transparent washes and pleasing colour-schemes. His subjects too were interesting and expressed his imaginative power. Haldankar's Art Institute near the French Bridge, Bombay was always full of students who came there specially to learn the water colour technique. Haldankar worked upto his last and often exhibited his paintings in Bombay. He has done a valuable service to the art-field by educating budding artists in his institute continuously from 1908 to 1968. In 1962 he was honoured by Lalit Kala Academy by conferring on him the fellowship of the Akademi and the copper Manapatra.

The third important person and painter of the open-air school was Fernandes. A contemporary of Haldankar and Parandekar, he expressed similar tendencies in his paintings. Like them he was an expert in handling both watercolour as well as oils. He painted big size murals in oils on subjects from Indian mythology and biblical subjects.¹³ He received his art training in Sir J.J. School of Art. After completion of his diploma in art, he was appointed as a teacher in the same school. Later on he was promoted to the post

Bishop of Bombay prize

of the headmaster. He won the ~~Gold Medal~~ in the year ¹⁹²⁵~~1925~~.¹⁴

Fernandes was one of the first batch of 4 students who appeared and passed the examination of Art Master in Sir J.J. School of Art. He was mainly interested in portraits and landscapes. He also won the First Prize in the All-India Competition in oil-portraiture.¹⁵ He handled both oil colours as well as water-colours with the same ease. His charming landscapes in watercolour show spontaneous handling of transparent washes with details ^{ed} shades and lights ⁱⁿ with subtle tonal values and pleasant colour-schemes. A critic wrote about his landscapes in the report of the 1922 exhibition, "His Gwalior scenes have the true eastern flavour and pungency of colour that is satisfying".¹⁶ His two beautiful landscapes are in Kolhapur in the collections of Dr. Kate and the Dalvi's Art Institute. His Kashmir landscape in Dalvi's Art Institute is especially worth seeing. It expresses a tranquil mood. The handling also reveals the mastery of the painter over his medium. A critic admired in his review of the year 1921 "....the daring colour-work and the emotional revealing in the reproduction of the effect of looking out from an interior against the bright light of Indian atmosphere...."¹⁷ His landscapes and other paintings revealed the same poetic qualities which were present in Haldankar's and Parandekar's paintings also.

Painters of the open-air school thus show certain common qualities. The first and the most important thing was that all of them have used pure water colour without mixing it with white. Though they handled the oil colours equally well their favourite

medium was water-colours. The second factor was that all of them were influenced by the western realistic style of painting. This factor was common and was borrowed from the earlier masters. The tendency of carefully delineating the details was also there. The only thing which showed distinctness was their choice of subjects. They deviated from the tendency of the earlier group of painting historical or mythological subjects reflecting the past glory. Instead they mostly tried their hand at contemporary subjects or landscapes. The liking for portrait-painting or using portraiture in figurative painting was also there. But they were more fascinated by the beauty of nature. The landscapes or even figurative paintings of Haldankar and Fernand^es revealed a lyrical quality and the sublime effect which was new. Though sometimes the painters like Haldankar painted imaginative paintings giving prominence to human figure. They used beautiful landscape for the background. Take for instance his 'Pilgrim' or 'On the Tour', where in both the cases the landscape is handled in such a way which adds to the mood of the picture and at the same time reveals artist's keen observation and expert rendering of landscapes.

All the landscapes of these painters were mostly painted on the spot (unlike the earlier painters who often recorded the sketches and painted the landscapes in their studios using their own imagination). Though the painters painted in realistic style their realism was not the rigid realism like the earlier painters. Instead they sometimes took certain freedom to emphasise particular mood. The contribution of this school to the next group of

painters i.e. the Indore Painters was their accent towards the contemporary world. This factor was taken up by the Indore painters. The Indore painters also maintained the interest in realism, but the handling of the colours and brushwork and the purpose of ^apainting changed considerably.

The personality whose paintings anticipated, what was to come in the future and who heralded the qualities of the open-air school too was a foreigner. The lady artist Mrs. Lucy Sultan Ahmed, the former Miss Relling, had married an Indian officer. Lucy was an European and came to light as a painter when she exhibited her paintings and won the esteem of the critics in 1914. Her paintings in the Bombay Art Society's annual show were described as 'either done in solid oil or wax media, first introduced by Signor Raphaelli, the well-known French impressionist painter. These appeared different from the ordinary oil paintings but showed the effect closer to the drawing with pastels. The technique gave the advantage to the painter of working upon a dark ground. Lucy soon got married to Mr. Sultan Ahmed who was a Minister in the Gwalior State. She took keen interest in Indian life, toured widely in India and painted several landscapes. It also seems that she was keeping contact with the art-world, of England. In 1918, her sketch of 'a fisherman casting a Net' showed simplicity and directness. In the same year she won Society's Silver Medal for her water colour 'Sweet meat shop, Gwalior'. In 1919 her oil painting 'Sun-set on Jhelum' won the Gold Medal in Bombay Art Society's annual exhibition. It was executed on a dull low toned canvas with rendering of 'small spots of bright colours thickly laid'. This was a new technique in

India in those days. It sounds like neo-impressionist or pointillistic technique from the above description. The critics always appreciated these new experiments and that is why when in 1920 the Judges gave prize to her 'Autumn Solitude', which was painted in her usual style, instead of her more daring 'Bazar Scene' which was "impressionistic and on the verge of being non-representational and one of the few really emotional pictures in the exhibition" and critics retouted that the judges were 'Catholic' in their judgments. Her Gold Medal winning painting 'Jodhpur Bazaar' was mosaic like in its patterned lights and darks, and had a strong decorative composition. ^{uc} ~~Lady~~ Sultan Ahmed's paintings showed a new trend, though the physioplastic element (realism) was still at the base which was never totally absent.

Baburao Mistry, popularly known as Baburao painter was the only painter in this group who was not trained in any art-school. He was born in 1890 at Kolhapur. In his childhood Baburao did all types of works. Baburao proved to be a versatile genius in his mature life. The knowledge essential for his later career was gained through the experiences which he attained in his childhood. In his later career he became wellknown as a pioneer art-director, editor and technician in the film world, while as a good painter and sculptor in the art-world. Kolhapur was a state in Maharashtra. Its ruler, Maharaja Shahu Chhatrapati, patronised artists and craftsmen liberally. Baburao's career got its flowering under Chhatrapati Shahu's patronage.

In 1917 Baburao founded the Maharashtra film company, the oldest in Maharashtra. It was he, who introduced the technique of using artificial light for the shooting of a movie. His silent movies, 'Sati Padmini' and 'Kalyan Khayina' were admired at Wembley Exhibition at England. His picture 'Simhagarh' won the Gold Medal there. Baburao introduced several new techniques in the film-world as the art-director, editor, and director of the films. Under him several pupils were trained. Many leading personalities like V. Shantaram, Chandrakant Mandre and others admit his debt and respect him as a 'Guru'. Baburao produced a series of movies in Shalini Cinetone from 1933. His film 'Sairandhri' started a new era in the film-world. His film 'Simhagarh' broke all records at the box office. Crowds of people went to see it. Baburao fabricated the first movie-camera in India. To know the inner mechanism, he opened the camera of 'Bell and Howell Co.' worth Rs.12000/- at that time, and from its parts prepared the first movie camera. He also was the first to introduce the use of big cinema-posters for popularizing the movies. In 1928-30 his gigantic posters on Novelty cinema, brought crowds of spectators towards the theatre. It is said that even Principal Gladstone Soloman came specially to the theatre and stood hours together to watch the posters painted by Baburao.

Baburao's place amongst the painters of that period is unique because his knowledge about photography is revealed in his way of expression. He was the one who experimented in various ways. He photographed his models against particular landscapes and then

painted that subject in his studio. His paintings therefore reveal the correct perspective and the source of illumination. His painting 'Jalabharan', preserved in the Kolhapur Museum, is the evidence of his highest technical skill as well as the spontaneous rendering, (Plate 19; fig. 39). The way the woman is standing carrying the water jar, her facial expression with a slight smile, the texture of her plain white saree, together with the background, are painted with a masterly hand. He painted another version of the same picture, also which is now in the Rajyayan collection at Hyderabad. In it he painted the same lady with dark saree, facing against the light. This awareness about the qualities of light as well as the proportions and unity of the background with the subject, were probably the result of his experience in the film world.

His another well-known painting, 'Vata Purnima' is preserved in the Bhawani Museum at Aundh. This painting depicts a lady in the temple courtyard going towards the tree for worshipping it. The scene of temple of Mahalaxmi at Kolhapur is used here for the background and the bright sunlight is effectively painted in this picture.

Baburao's experience of painting the cinema posters in gigantic size as well as painting the draps (curtains) for the theatre also must have trained his eye to catch the general effect of the painting at the first glance. Baburao mostly painted oils and rarely painted water colour landscapes.

He was a successful sculptor too. His sculpture (full-size) of Shivaji and giant size full figure of Mahatma Gandhi in Kolhapur are the best examples of his skill in modelling as well as bronze casting. In his own foundry at Kolhapur he did the casting of several portrait statues as well as some big sized statues. He died in 1954, due to severe heart attack, few days after completion of his giant-size sculpture of Gandhiji.

The painters of the open-air school were followed by a slightly younger generation of painters whom we may classify as a separate though related group. These included M.R. Achrekar, M.S. Sâtavlekar, G.Deuskar, Adurkar, J.D. Gondhalekar etc. All these had an opportunity to go abroad for their higher training. They were trained there in the rigid realistic system and so acquired a high technical skill. Their drawing, rendering of the portraiture and figure drawing was superb. After coming back from Europe, they painted figurative subjects or the commissioned works of portraiture.

M.R. Achrekar was born in Bombay in 1907. In his early childhood his scribbling on walls showed his inclination towards drawing and so his father put him in 'Ketkar's Art Institute' in 1917. Achrekar acquired the technical skill in painting so fast that when he reached the Advanced painting class, he was appointed as a junior teacher in the Institute. At the age of 17, he left the school and started a litho-press. He also learnt photography and did a lot of work in designing and printing posters and other allied activities. Unsatisfied with his own progress, he joined Sir J.J.School of Art

where he was granted admission directly to the Diploma class. In his short period in J.J.School, he won several awards and prizes for his landscapes and figurative compositions. He got his first major recognition in 1929, when his painting 'Concentration' won the Maharaja of Bhavnagar's Prize at Bombay, an award at Bangalore and a Gold Medal at Nagpur. This painting was afterwards exhibited and highly praised in London. It depicted a female figure engrossed in her thoughts, standing near the idol of Ganesh. The entire picture created a mystic mood. The next year another of his paintings, 'Prayer', won the silver medal in Bombay. In 1931, his picture 'Repose' won the coveted gold medal in Bombay Art Society's exhibition. His skill in rendering the female figure and especially the delicate hands and feet, as well as the spontaneous rendering of various textural surfaces displayed in this painting was superb. In 1932, his 'Young Water Carrier' won the bronze medal at the Simla Fine Arts Exhibition. Some of his other paintings of this period include 'Grief' (1930), 'Devotion' (1932), 'Sad News' (1932). These paintings marked his place amongst the leading painters of Bombay in those days.

In 1932, he took an ambitious step in visiting England for painting the inauguration of the Second Round Table Conference. He managed to get a special permission of Lord Chamberlain to paint the actual scene of the event from the Royal Gallery of the House of Lords. Achrekar found it a thrilling experience to study the formidable personalities present and to witness the magnificence of the occasion. He completed the painting at an amazing speed and

it was highly praised all over England. Achrekar joined the Royal College of Art, London, for higher studies. He exhibited several of his paintings at the India House, London. Prominent art-critics in England admired his oil-painting as well as water-colour rendering.

After his return to India, he received an important commission to paint the portrait of the Viceroy as well as the former Viceryos, to decorate the walls of the Assembly. Achrekar was the first Indian to get such an opportunity. In 1935, he made his second trip to England to be present at the King George V's Silver Jubilee celebration in order to paint and sketch the memorable event.

In Bombay film-producer and director Kardar persuaded him to accept the job as art-director for his films. For his first film as an art-director 'Shah-Jahan', he designed aesthetically pleasing setting on a lavish scale. This started him on a successful career in which he designed settings for more than 30 films including Mehboob's "Aan", Guru Dutt's "Kagaj Ke Phool" and most of the films by Raj Kapoor. His design for the setting of the dream-sequence of 'Aawarah' was much appreciated. He profitted from this experience when he designed the magnificent Maharashtra Pavillion and the sculptures of Panch-Ganga (Five sacred River of India) at the International Tourist Fair, at Bombay. While busy in his career as art-director, he painted several portraits, landscapes and murals including portraits of film-stars. He also published a series of books, which included Rupadarsini (1948-49), Sky-scrapers and Flying

Gandharvas (1954), 'The Apostle of Peace' (1955) and 'Female Nude' (1960) illustrated by his masterly rapid sketches and written in a vivid style. In Rupadarsini he vivified an Indian approach to human form.

Madhav Satavlekar's is the case of an artist who, though trained in European realism, in his own way represents an artist in transition. Born to S.D. Satavlekar (whose work has been discussed in Chapter II) at Lahore in the year 1915, he had his early lessons in painting from his own father. He finished his training at the Sir J.J. School of Art where he proved to be a brilliant student winning the Mayo gold medal. In 1937 he left for Europe and studied first at the Florence Academy in Italy, then at the Slade School of Art, London, and finally at the Académie^e Grand Chamiers in Paris. Madhav Satavlekar was more influenced by the post-impressionist painters and especially Gauguin. His paintings after his tour to Europe showed now the bold outline and the structural solidity of the form. With these qualities, the brilliancy of the colour was maintained and the colour was applied in ~~the~~ thick broad patches. The forms in his paintings became more and more simple.

After coming back from Europe he toured widely all over India and in 1945 and 1947 he held one-man shows at Taj Mahal Hotel in Bombay, which were much admired by the critics. In 1949 when Appasaheb Pant was the Indian High Commissioner in East Africa, he invited Madhav Satavlekar to work there. Satavlekar painted several pictures including the figures, head-studies as well as landscapes. His portrait of an African lady gives evidence of his high technical skill in rendering the head with its structural form and simplicity.

Satavlekar held several one-man shows in Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika and Zanzibar before returning to India. Due to his involvement with Fine Arts education the Maharashtra government appointed him as the Director of Art, and during his career from 1969 to 1975 on that post, he introduced the new Basic Course and made various changes to improve the pattern of art-education in Maharashtra.

Considering his total output, it may be noted that his paintings include subject-pictures as well as landscapes. But he is mainly interested in painting the customs and the way of living of the people, his favourites being the people of Rajasthan. He never turned to total abstraction but his paintings showed more and more simplicity in the form as well as rendering. He applies ~~the~~ flat tones of bright colours. The figures show prominent outline or sometimes they are separated from the background by tonal values. He is more interested in the structure of the objects, their colourfulness and the whole arrangement is conceived as a design pattern. His painting of the dyers at Ahmedabad or on the Mandu Series are the evidence of these qualities. His paintings fit well in the romanticist approach to the chosen theme.

In V.P. Karmarkar's sculpture we find^d the same kind of lyrical quality that was expressed by the painters of this period together with exceptionally high technical skill. Karmarkar was born in 1891 in Sasavane in Kolaba District in a family who practised the hereditary tradition of making Ganesh idols. Side by side, his father and grandfather were also Kirtankars. In his childhood Karmarkar painted on the walls, and tried to mould figures from Hindu

mythology and historical episodes, especially he had a special interest in drawing the figure of Shivaji. When Otto Rothfield, the Assistant Collector of the district visited the village Sasavane, he recognised the hidden talent in those wall drawings and persuaded Karmarkar's father to send him to J.J. School of Art and offered a monthly amount for his education there. Thus Karmarkar entered J.J. School of Art in 1910 and soon he proved his talent by winning several awards. After completing the course he went to Calcutta. There Surendranath Tagore helped him. Otto Rothfield and Col. V.N. Bhagekar, a well known surgeon of Bombay thought that his talent should not be confined to the studies in India, so they arranged for his higher education in Royal Academy, London, which he joined in 1920 and studied for two years rounding it ~~off~~ with a tour of Europe. First hand acquaintance with European sculpture of that time no doubt widened the horizons of his talent.

He returned to Calcutta with unbounded enthusiasm, however, he found himself in a very difficult position, because it was hard to obtain commissioned work. Somebody had sarcas^stically commented, 'Now blow the Conch' as a last resort. Karmarkar with a mind full of disappointment and rage, created his life-size sculpture 'Conch Blower', a female ~~nude~~ ^{nude} blowing conch, and sent it to the exhibition at Bombay. Ironically enough this sculpture won the award with cash prize solving his initial difficulties. This also proved to be a lucky incident as subsequently he never fell short of commissions. Soon he got the most significant commission of equestrian statue of Shivaji for a memorial in Poona, which he did successfully. This

was cast in one-piece and was the first of this type. Karmarkar received patronage from Kolhapur, Baroda, Gondal etc. He also made bust-statues of various Indian leaders. Special mention should be made of his bust of Mahatma Gandhi for which he was fortunate enough to get a sitting from Mahatma himself. Raja of Gondal built for him a ~~specimens~~^{spacious} residence and studio. In 1949 he went to America to give demonstrations and lectures in Milton College, Wisconsin. He did a statue of the Dean of Faculty, which is still preserved in its collection. So also is the marble tablet of President Daland which he sent to the faculty and is still displayed in its library.

Though Karmarkar displayed mastery in rendering the portrait statues of personalities like Gandhiji, Tilak, Vallabhabhai Patel, Chittaranjan Das, Rabindranath Tagore, more significant and touching are his subject sculptures and especially his depiction of women. He represented woman with her child, or woman busy with some daily chores or those displaying different moods. Especially his sculpture 'A Young Girl with a Lamb' is superb in its expression. Here he has shown a young nude girl carrying a lamb on her shoulder. The modelling of both of the forms not only reveals the technical mastery but also expresses the subtle expression of attachment between the two, rendered very powerfully. His 'Traveller' is the best example of the figure-type which one will come across amongst common Indian people anywhere. Thus his representation of women from amongst the common people is more like a general statement of the arch-type. His sculpture 'Watch' of a mother monkey clasping

her young one with watchful eyes, is a charming example of his keen observation. Another sculpture, 'Ward', also shows mother and child, the child is sucking the breast, and his pose, as well as gaze and the happiness on the face of its mother reveal a rare emotional expression. This is the best example of a Vanjari type of woman, as the Vanjari women are from working classes and usually carry their children whenever they work. His female statues representing the 'Seasons' are equally touching. Especially the 'Winter' depicts a woman with a very significant standing posture who is pressing one foot over the other due to the cold, while with one hand she is holding her paloo over her mouth. Karmarkar's 'Trumpet Blower' and his 'Fisher Girl' too became particularly famous. His 'Fisher Girl' not only won the award but also was bought and preserved in a private collection abroad. His sculptures in later period like 'Struggle' expressed his concept about human life. His statues of his servant Moru as well as his clever dog Nisha, are the evidences of his affection towards them. Prof. Amberkar has rightly put in the catalogue 'Indian Sculptors' (published recently by Ram Chatterji), the multi-dimensional quality in his sculpture will not be dated in any period. Karmarkar, through his work, exerted a considerable influence amongst the young generation of sculptors as well as painters.

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3. Review, Times of India, 24 Jan.1922, p.11, col.4.
4. Review, Times of India, March 14, 1917.
5. Review, Times of India, March 16, 1918, p.8, col.4.
6. From M.V. Dhurandhar's 'Kalamandiratil Mazi Ekkechalis Varshe' (Marathi), 1940.
The drawing for this 'Manapatra' was reproduced in a small pamphlet published by the painter M.K. Parandekar on his leather embossings.
7. See Review of Bombay Art Society's Exhibition in Times of India, dated 1st March, 1911.
8. Review Exhibition B.A.S. in Times of India, dated 2nd March, 1910. p.9, col.last.
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10. Review Exhi. B.A.S. Times of India dated Jan.15,1925, p.8, col.5.
11. Op.cit., f.n. no.3.
12. Review Exhi. B.A.S. Times of India dated Jan.21,1929, p.5, col.3. This painting was reproduced on the 'picture-page' of Times of India dated 23rd Jan.,1923, p.16.

13. From the book 'Rapan' (Marathi), by P.A. Dhond, the ex-Dean of Sir J.J. School of Art.
14. The ^{review} catalogue - Bombay Art Society, year 1935
15. An information received from the interview with B.N. Adarkar, the Ex.Director, Maharashtra State and Ex.Dean of Sir J.J. Institute of Applied Art.
16. Review on 'Water Colour Paintings' B.A.S. Exhibition in The Times of India, dated 24th Jan. 1922, p.11, col.4.
17. Review, 'The Times of India' dated 30th March 1921, p.11, col. 1. This painting received the prize reserved for the best composition by the Student of Sir J.J. School of Art, donated by Messrs. Joshi & Co.
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20. From the catalogue of Achrekar's retrospective Exhibition.
21. Ibid.
22. Karmarkar's own narration about the casting of this statue was published in the 'Manohar' Marathi magazine from Poona.
23. Op.cit., f.n. no.20.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
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