CHAPTER – 4

CONCEPT OF MYTHOLOGY IN MODERN INDIAN ART

In the Mythology, Ramayana and Mahabharata are the central point of the narrations. Many short stories are also included in both the epic so that the human can correlate themselves with the epics. As persons, situations, behavior has changed time to time and all human has faced these changes, whether good or bad. So all the human beings are different from each other but still get associated with the various situations of epics. With the inspiration of epics the artist has painted such topics.

Many modern Indian artists had illustrated the Ramayana and Mahabharata in their own style by using the beautiful imagination. Among them some artists has created artwork based on epic Ramayana i.e. Abindranath Tagore, Jamini Roy, K. Venkatappa, Asit Kumar Halder, Kshitindranath Majumdar, K. Sreenivasulu. Some artists has depicted artwork based on both epics are such as Raja Ravi Verma, Nandlal Bose, Ramgopal Vijayvargiya, Sarat Chandra Debo, Sukhbir Singh Sinhal, M.F. Husain, Amarnath Sehgal, Badri Narayan, M. Redappa Naidu. And artists Arup Das has created artwork based on the epic Mahabharata.

Abindranath Tagore (1871-1951) : Abindranath Tagore the great grandson of prince Dwarkanath Tagore, "questioned the validity of adopting the Western stylistic norm as the only viable one. Like Ravi Verma, he too belonged to the rich aristocratic
class of the landlords. The development of the *Bengal school* is closely linked with the art of *Abnindranath Tagore*."¹

He was an outstanding painter and a compelling story writer. He received formal training in pastels, water colour and life study under the private supervision of his Italian tutor, "*Signor Olinto Ghilardi, a Calcutta* based professional."² He wanted to become a great artist like *Rambrandt*, *Titian* or *Da Vinci*. *Abnindranath* had learned oil painting and portraiture from the "*English painter Charles Palmer.*"³ Further he studied Rajput and Mughal Miniature under the guidance of *E.B. Havell*. This study brought a remarkable change in his style and technique.

He freely synthesized the decorative elements of risk music sheets illumination, compositional elements of Indo-Persian miniatures and the literary sources of the medieval *Bangali Vaishnava* poetical works. His palette expressed the synthesis. He combined traditional Indian tempera with transparent water colour. "Further he has stimulated to synthesize the Japanese and the British water colour techniques for evolving a novel way of using the media. That came to be known as the wash technique, and became the hallmark of the *Bengal school*. This marked *Abnindranath’s* departure from the indigenous tempera method."⁴

The striking aspect of the Japanese influence in his work has a certain spatial quality, a breadth of pattern and an organic simplicity. The colour washes are repeatedly laid around sensitive outlines, in a synthesis of the Eastern and Western water colour techniques. The transparent pigment alternates with gouache to secure both luminosity and volume. Modeling and finish of figure
is rendered in impeccable decorative lines and subtle highlights are added to the delicately contrasted colour.

Allusions to myths, legends and stories down the ages have lent traditional Indian art figurative, narrative and literary substance. Abnindranath’s link with tradition was based on these conceptual elements and not a superficial conformity with any particular style of the past. His style was original and always remained tentative and evolutionary. His oeuvre reflects the dimensions of his personality, his creative ability, his sense of humor, his technical excellence, culminating in a wonderful style with a nationalistic flavor.

Abnindranath has selected the subject matter for his painting from the Hindu Mythology. He emphasized about the nativeness of the theme. For that he picked up the story of Ramayana. His painting Captive Sita and Banished Sita is much popular.

Captive Sita (wash technique on paper) (Fig. 4.1) : Artist has showed the intense mental condition of Sita through her expression. Artist has depicted not only the beauty of Sita but also the agony of the separation from the family. Artist has depicted Sita as a common lady surrounded the difficult situations. In the painting, artist has worked on the facial expression as he showed Sita with the titled eyebrows, awaiting eyes and silent lips.

Sita who can destroy Ravana by the power of her chastity, artist has depicted her in hurt and exasperated condition after an unforgettable insult. Artist has imagined an environment to explain the condition of Sita. He has painted Sita as a prisoner in a cell, peeping out from the window and waiting for the dawn in
her life. A unique voice of the Indian culture can be seen in the art of Abnindranath Tagore. Because of this, he had simplicity, effectiveness and materialism.

Abnindranath has depicted Ramayana in one of his favoured genre of Jatra-mode (the popular vernacular theatre mode of rural Bengal) for stage. He named it as Kuddar-Jatra.

"Khuddur Jatra is one such captivating play written and illustrated by Abnindranath Tagore in 1934-35". Writter has mention in the beginning that this text has written for the young boys and girls. "In all this creation Abnindranath took off from well-known tales of epic Ramayan." But the artist has played freely with the context that obviously brought some exciting new twists in the story and the play get some contemporary flavour.

The essay of Sankha Ghosh gave some details about Khuddar Jatra. It is not just a written play but a manuscript of 240 plus pages. In it artist not only used the drawings and illustrations but also created the complex collage with different materials as magazine cuttings, photographs, catalogue, advertisements, toffee wrappers, newspaper clippings, product labels, etc. By this "He (Abnindranath Tagore) enriches the experience of reading/seeing Khuddar Jatra with a polyphonic quality marked by the incursions of multiple voices in terms of dialogues, incidents, characters, visual signs often along with the original or reworked captions."

This is a thing that reader can take interest in the text as well as in the visuals or collages. Abnindranath Tagore has depicted a particular episode in which Ravana has abducted Sita whose face is like that of woman's face on a match box. Ravana is
the *Bahadur* on horseback from the advertisement for a Hindi film *Hind Kesari*.

"In 2009 Priyabrata Deb from Kolkata fulfilled a long standing demand by publishing *Khuddar Jatra*. This published book contains several important essays on the works of *Abnindranath Tagore* by Sankho Ghosh, *Ravananda Bandyopadhyay* and *R. Shiva Kumar*. It also contains the clear transcript readings of the original Bangali text in English."\(^8\)

**Jamini Roy (1887-1972)**: Jamini Roy has developed his contemporary style with the firm base of folk Art. In the beginning *Jamini Roy* also experimented with oil medium. But he was much impressed with the *patua kala* of *Kali Ghat*. Being attracted towards *Patua Kala*, he has left oil medium but he started working with indigenous techniques. "When he was 34 years old, he was influenced by Rembrandt and Van Gogh."\(^9\) He himself prepared the surface for the painting from paper, cloth, clay, lime stone powder and cow dung. Same as he prepared colours through the different material like clay, lime stone powder, red stone powder, metal and mixed that with seed of tamarind.

"Whether artist has applied the bright colours and bold, complex line but still the expression of peace, pleasantness reflects from his paintings. It seems that artist has taken interest in depicting moments rather then illustrating the whole story."\(^10\)

In *Jamini Roy*’s finished paintings two dimensional surface of colours establish the vision of the artist. By the use of contour artist has enhanced the expression of his thought.

"*Jamini Roy* has been eminently successful in showing figures in static posture and also in capturing the frozen moments of a figure in slow movement. Just by changing the
character of lines and shapes he has admirably portrayed movement in his sketches... Even when he refers to myths, legends and semi-historical episodes, the character and modeled after the character of Bengal’s rural agrarian life."11

*Jamini Roy* has emphasized to maintain the sensuousness of elements with the pictorial presentation in his works. The simplicity existed in his painting that originated from his own personality. Glimpse of child art can be seen in this work as he never entangled with the fundamentals of art.

"1950 UNESCO had organized an international exhibition in America. Where various artists had participated from 48 countries from India, *Jamini Roy* took part with some other artists. Writing the review about the exhibition *New York Time* had stated that among all the artists, *Jamini Roy* is the only one who does not have any influence of Paris or any other foreign art."12 Through his lifetime he has painted too many paintings with different themes and subject. Through this newspaper coverage *Jamini Roy* got recognition on international level. After that people started taking interest in his paintings in India too.

According to *Jamini Roy* his "Art (Painting) is like a child to whom everyone wants to take in his or her lap."13

An Artwork creates music and attraction in environment wherever that placed. In all over the world different stories and religious belief spread everywhere. "In 1935 K.C. Das, a leading confectioner of Calcutta, commissioned a major series of seventeen paintings, each 91 x 396 c.m. based on the epic *Ramayana*, for his sumptuous reception room."14 *Sita* and *Hanuman*, Exile of *Sita*, *Rama* and *Hanumana*, *Rama-Lakshman-
Sita are some of the important paintings from the Ramayana series.

**Fight between Ravana and Jatau to save Sita** (gouache on board, 1935) (Fig. 4.2): Artist has depicted Sita holding her veil, sitting in a chariot at the left side, Ravana is depicted at the centre and from the right side corner Jatayu is attacking on Ravana through his beak. While composing the painting, artists has emphasized on the balance and as well as on the expression. Artist has shown only the area of chariot where Sita is sitting and by depicting the four wheels he has made the chariot clear. By depicting ten heads and four arms artist has shown Ravana stronger and powerful then Jatayu. Artist has filled yellow colour in the skin of Sita and Jatau to show the pure will of both. Sita is wearing maroon saree with green border and on pallu applied white. In the chariot artist has applied yellow, red and maroon colour with the decoration of white. Jatayu has depicted here a colourful large bird trying to defeat Ravana. To show the ill will of Ravana artist has depicted Ravana in green and through yellow clothes artist has depicted his scholarly knowledge. In the painting Ravana has shown as feeling less devil. Through the large beak of Jatayu artist has depicted his wrath for Ravana and perturbation to rescue of Sita.

Artist has depicted a mythical story through the simplification of his style which was influenced by folk art and Kalighaat Patt paintings. Artist has created two dimension effects by applying flat colours and applied a strong black contour around every form. Here all the forms became more attracted by the depiction of large eyes. In the background artist has filled
maroon colour and decorated through the depiction of white little arrows.

**Sita ki Agni Pariksha** (gouache on board, 1935) (Fig. 4.3) :
In this painting artist has depicted *Sita* performing ordeal to show her chastity. For the purpose of study, this art work can be divided into three part, in the middle artist has showed *Sita* with folded hands sitting in the in fire-pond. Here artist has showed the mantel state of the society and its impact on the king *Rama*. Artist has alive the incident through the depiction of restless, perturbation mental condition of *Sita* because of the unfaithful behavior of her lovable husband *Rama* and unexpected reactions of society. *Sita* is depicted here yellow skinned in sitting posture with folding hands in respect. She is wearing deep red *saree* with green border and *blause*. She is surrounded by the flames of fire that are depicted by the red coloured painted triangles, outlined by yellow and then black colours.

Artist has again divided the area of left and right side in two parts as upper and lower section. In the left side upper section artist has depicted *Rama* and *Lakshmana* sitting and raising their left hand in blessing. *Rama* has depicted in green, wearing yellow *dhoti* and *patka*. *Lakshmana* has painted here in yellow skinned wearing red *patka* and *dhoti*.

In the lower section artist has placed two monkeys sitting with folded hand in respect of *Sita*. One monkey is painted here in deep red, wearing green cloth and other one is in blue skinned wearing yellow cloth. In the right side upper space two sages has painted. Both are in yellow skin wearing yellow *dhoti*, one is heaving red *patka* and other is having blue *patka*. Both sages have long mustache, beard and long hairs. One sage is holding
his *janeu* and giving blessings and other is folding both hands. In the lower section artist has depicted a sage in green colour with long hair mustache and beard wearing yellow *dhoti* and red *patka*. A monkey in blue colour is also depicted here wearing yellow cloth. Both sage and monkey folding their hands in pray.

All the characters painted with large eyes that attracted the viewer towards the painting. It seems that artist has painted all the characters around *Sita* as the witness of the great act. Artist has depicted all the monkeys and sages with folded hands before the strength of *Sita’s* devotion and chastity that reflect the sentimental aspect of the incident. To show *Sita’s* agony artist has painted the flames as the pin-pointed sharp forms.

Artist has created the two dimensional effect by applying flat colours. The characters have shown strong, muscular and strong. Strong, powerful and rhythmatic lines strengthen the composition. He has mentioned the religious values while depicting the inner most expression through strong and decorative style.

**Sita with Hanumana in Ashok Vatika** (gouache on board, 1935) (Fig. 4.4) : In this painting artist has divided the space in three parts. In the middle of the space yellow skinned *Sita* has painted, wearing green bordered maroon *saree* and holding her veil with one hand second hand placed on the left thigh. She has shown sitting in a cottage of deep yellow and light green colour.

In the left space of painting, artist has painted *Hanumana* and a female devil. *Hanumana* is sitting in front of *Sita* folded his hands in respect. *Hanumana* is painted in blue skinned, red face with yellow clothes.
Female devils has painted one in left space behind Hanumana and two in the right space of the painting. All depicted dark skinned had wearing floral yellow dhoti. All the females have holding a white weapon in hands.

In the background artist has filled maroon colour and floral designs to show the trees. Artist has drawn the large eyes on everyone's face except Hanumana. In this art work artist has explained different emotions through his imagination. Hanumana seemed very happy as he found Sita with so many efforts. Appearance of Hanumana became a source of hope for Sita in the darkness of thoughts that came in her life.

K. Venkatappa (1887-1965):

Born in the family of traditional Tanjore (1887-1962) painter, K. Venkatappa was one of the favourite of Abindranath Tagore.

"In 1912, he was sent to the Government School of Art in Calcutta, reputed as the leading centre of nationalist art under Abanindranath."¹⁵

"Before he went to Calcutta to join Abanindranath Tagore, he was a student of the Madras School of Arts where he showed exceptional talent and merit, which resulted in his being sent to Calcutta by the late ruler of Mysore."¹⁶

While study in Calcutta he started keeping a diary to record details of everyday life. He worked hard with patience. By seeing his devotion Abanindranath selected him "as on of the students to illustrate his booklet. Some Notes on Indian Artistic anatomy and Sister Nivedita's posthumous work myths of the Hindus and Buddhists."¹⁷
A skilled artist K. Venkatappa obtained a glittering brightness in his wash paintings. He was a colourist and use to make his own colours and brushes. Brightness of all his colours was noticeable. His colours were pure and clear which gave richness to his paintings. "In 1912 he had already prepared a chart of vegetable and mineral dyes that he may have inherited from his family." He made his own colour combinations which can be seen in his paintings.

K. Venkatappa never followed or supported any European modernisms. He showed his faith and loyalty to the culture and traditions of his country. To serve these traditions and culture of the country he devoted his life completely. He followed his teacher Abanindranath’s words. "Art is father, mother and God for artist and it is everything to him." Artist claimed to be married to his art.

During his study in Calcutta he visited major pilgrim sites of Hindu religion in north India. Though artist belongs to traditional Tanjore painter’s family but he not followed the same. He practiced the modern colonial art of India.

Artist studied the nature with its minute details. He made numbers of landscapes. Artist had painted different moods in his landscapes. His painted landscapes are having naturalistic approach. All landscapes looks like photographic image.

Artist had also practiced in the fields of sculpture. He also took up classes of classical music. While learning music his devotion to it was as same as it was for painting.

Artist’s dream was to build a studio where selected students of sculpture, music and painting can learn free of cost. But this
dream was never fulfilled because of his eight years illness. This illness led him to death.

*K. Venkatappa* gained popularity in India and foreign with his painting i.e. *Ardhanaarishwar* and *Chart Pakshi*. He also made many imaginative paintings i.e. *Mahrana Pratap Singh*, *Shankracharya*. Artist was also interested to paint mythological themes. He painted *Mahashivaraatri*, *Damayanti*, *Shishyon Ke Saath Buddh* and many paintings on the themes of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. "Many paintings on the themes of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* were sold by the artist till 1920."

From *Ramayana* artist has painted *Rama’s marriage*, the death of *Maricha*, *Ravana* fighting with *Jatayu*, *Rama* sending his signet-ring to *Sita*, burning of *Lanka*, building of *Rama’s bridge*, the return of *Rama*, etc.

**Building of Rama’s Bridge** (Wash technique on paper) (Fig. 4.5): In the painting artist has depicted the scene in which *Nala-Nil* and other monkeys are working hard to complete the bridge to *Lanka* very soon. So that *Rama* and his army can reach *Lanka*, fight with *Ravana* and bring *Sita* back to *Rama*.

In the painting artist has depicted two fair complexioned monkeys with golden headgear, carried heavy rocks on the shoulder. Among them one is wearing red garment and other is in grey. Both has described as the architects of gods.

One monkey in dark skin depicted in the lift side in the artwork. Artist has maintained perspective in the depiction of rocks, bridge and sea. All the three characters have portrayed
in a great hurry to complete the bridge. So the characters and sea has depicted in full motion. With the subject artist has applied bright and dark colour to enhance the artwork. The darkness of the background has created the mysterious atmosphere in the artwork that shows the challenges of tasks. But in the foreground, characters have depicted in such enthusiasm that shows the goodness of work. Artist has balanced bright colours and clarity in the work beautifully

**Ravana fighting with Jatayu** (Wash techniques on paper) (Fig. 4.6) : In this artwork artist has depicted the huge fight of *Ravana* and *Jatayu* with different causes, *Ravana* wanted to abduct *Sita* but *Jatayu* wanted to save her. But in the fight *Jatayu* lost his one wing and also his life. In the artwork artist has portrayed demon king *Ravana* in blue colour with four heads and eight arms. With each arm he is holding a weapon like mace, spear, sword, armour, axe, and bow. He has ornamented with golden crown, armlets and garland and with red *dhoti*. He has showed in a flaying golden Chariot of a birds shape. Artist has depicted *Ravana* with expression of greed, lust, cruelty and his eyes have depicted red with furiousness.

Artist has depicted *Sita* lifelessly bend at the corner of *Ravana*’s chariot. She has portrayed in yellow *saree* and red *blouse*, with loose hairs and heavy heart. She is throwing her ornaments on the ground to leave the clues for her lovable husband *Rama* and brother *Lakshmana*. Artist has depicted *Sita* as a helpless, hopeless, and piety creature.
In the right side space artist has depicted *Jatayu* as a huge bird in brown colour. *Jatayu* is fighting with *Ravana* with his strong and sharp claw and beak. His open beak, sharp eye and strong claw show his firm will to a good cause. In the composition artist has given more space to the *Ravana* rather the *Jatayu* to show the power of both warrior.

In the foreground at bottom space artist has depicted brown, white and grey clouds, above that *Ravana's* chariot is flaying. In the background artist has applied black colour to show the grief, darkness, unfortunate act of the evil. Artist has beautifully maintained the brightness of colours in the Wash technique.

Thus artist has presented himself as a colourist through his artwork in which he has depicted the epic with his creative vision.

**Asit Kumar Haldar (1890-1964):**

Artist of Bengal School and student of *Abanindranath Tagore*, *Asit Kumar Haldar* was born in Calcutta in the year 1890. Artist showed his talent at very young age. So "he was taken off school at the age of 14 and admitted to the Government school of Art, Calcutta."21 There he learned from *Abindranath Tagore* with some other students like *Kshitindranath Majumdar*, *K. Venkatappa*, *Sarada Charan Ukil* and *Nandlal Bose*.

Artist studied and copied *Ajanta* frescos paintings in 1909, *Bagh* and *Jogimara* caves in 1921. This study helped him to develop his own style. Artist’s imagination and creativity made his style unique among his colleagues. For his imaginative art works "his guru Dr. Tagore once said : 'Kshitin (Kshitendra Nath
Majumdar), you have mastered in depicting vaishavite themes, I have myself so far succeeded in Moghul subjects, Nandalal in Classical episodes but Asit seems to have no limitations." Artist never made any artwork to show his observations of outside world. But his artworks show imaginations with inner observation and meaning.

After completing his formal art education he was appointed as a principal of Kala Bhawan. He worked there for several years. Then he was appointed as principal for Jaipur school of Arts. "In 1925 artist was appointed as principal of Government school of Arts and Crafts, Lucknow." He thus became the first Indian to be appointed principal of a Government Art School." Artist played important role for the development of these art school. He selected good teachers to teach in these schools. He helped talented students to improve and develop his or her skills. Artist tried all the possibilities to enrich the level of Indian art in his art schools.

Asit Kumar Haldar always found himself on responsible positions. But with all such responsibilities his practice of art never faded. He kept on working for the progress and development of Bengal School. He was the true follower of Bengal School and Indian traditions.

Artist was strong at his technique. He worked in different mediums in painting. He used to choose his medium according to his mood and requirement of the subject. He worked in oil, tempera, water colour accordingly. He even discovered a special technique Lacsit- lacquered painting on wood. Artist also took lessons for sculpture and he worked in the sculpture medium too.
Portrait of *Rabindranath Tagore* is one of the works done by the artist in this medium.

Artist gained his popularity with his artworks especially with his paintings. He got appreciation for his art in India and abroad too.

Artist’s art is very creative as well as expressive. All his painted characters have realsome emotions. Even a viewer can feel the same emotion after seeing his painting. Artist never focused on limited themes for painting. His range of themes to paint was wide. Artist was ever ready to work on any topic if it touches the inner core of his heart. Decorative elements and traditions are inter-mingled in his paintings. This combination creates a beautiful impression on the mind of viewer.

Artist’s colour selection for his painting was different. We have found his colours different from his colleagues. “His colour selection was of old Indian traditions especially influenced by Rajput and Mughal Schools.” Artist’s style was criticized in the starting. But soon critics had found his style rare, different and imaginative. So they all appreciated his art.

*Asit Kumar Haldar* was a good poet. He was equally active in the field of literature. His practice as a poet helped him to compose his paintings more aesthetically. His paintings have a poetic rhythm. This rhythm can be seen in his brush strokes which attract the viewer more.

Artist’s figures are curvilinear and having influence of *Ajanta* frescos in his paintings. All his painted figures look interesting and important in his painting. No matter if artist has painted common topic like festival, fair or laborer. All figures became interesting after getting touch of artist’s style.
Artist found himself interested in painting series. His painting series based on Omar Khayyam’s verses is very famous. He painted series of paintings on Indian history, Life of Buddha. These series of paintings has covered the inner values and thoughts. In his life he painted many paintings on mythological themes. From the epic Ramayan and Mahabharata artist has depicted paintings for example, Sita in Ashoka Grove, Meeting of Rama and Guha, Apsara, Damyanti, Krishna and Yashoda, etc.

**Manthara and Kaikayi** (wash technique of paper) (Fig. 4.7) : This is one of the artwork from Mahabharata series. Artist has portrayed a very important incident that caused a turning paint in the story of the epic. In which queen Kaikayi is listening very carefully to her special servant Manthara, while she is misleading her regarding the decision of the name of Yuvaraj. Artist has depicted Manthara in fragile, restless, cunning expression but Kaikayi in a state of unknowingness and unawareness. Because of the intimacy of the scene artist does not depict the complete figures. But Kaikayi has depicted on high space and servant Manthara sitting at lower space. Artist has not preferred so many colours in the composition but the curvilinear lines in the whole composition. In the background artist has used straight and curvilinear line to create decorative elements. Kaikayi has placed her right hand toward her chin and left on the pillow. But Manthara has used her hands to explain the matter to the queen. Thus it can be said that artist has captured the sentiments of the characters that leads the whole epic and in a manner this is a great achievement for an artist. This artwork is having influence of Ajanta frescos.
Kshitindranath Majumdar (1891-1975):

Artist of new Bengal School Kshitendranath was born in "1891 at Nimtita in Murshidabad." Artist left his school in very young age and decided to become the student of Abanindranath Tagore. From Abanindranath Tagore he learnt characteristic style and technique of Bengal School. Soon after he started teaching at Indian Society of Oriental Art. After some years he was promoted as a principal there.

Kshitindranath was a person to follow simple living. His life style was never affected by modern urban society of Calcutta. Even his personality was as if he is an ordinary man from the village. His art also looks inspired by rural and religious life.

He never liked experiments too much. He experimented with his technique on rare occasions. His paintings show his own expressions. He captured different mood of life in his painting. Artist's composition of painting was simple but different. His background of painting has been filed with interior or exterior of building or tree. Mostly like, it is visible in Miniature schools. This kind of background has given important to his figures. Most of his important figures seems sitting or standing on a stage.

Figures in the paintings of Kshitindranath Majumdar are one more stylistic feature. His figures are gentle in his paintings no matter weather it is male or female. His figures are tall. Hands of his figures looks like flower petals. He has painted features of his figures in a manner that give them tender look. Colours used by the artist are harmonious.
He always gave much importance to drawing in his painting. His lines are mature, strong and have flow. His flowing lines give musical impression to its viewer.

Artists followed Bengal School style with some of his additions. He had not blindly followed classical forms and old themes. He had also painted religious themes. His interest in religion was the reason for it. He used to go near by temples for kirtan. He always found time to listen religious discourses and visited various pilgrimage and sacred cities.

Artist painted on mythological themes. His various expressions were painted through Radha-Krishna theme. He had painted many paintings on Radha-Krishna and Sri Chaitanya. Kshitindranath followed Bengal School but with his own style and themes. His most painting based on mythological themes gives feeling of bhakti.

Being a personality of simplification artist has depicted many scenes from the epic Ramayana.

**Bharat with Rama's sandels** (wash technique on paper) (Fig. 4.8) : This is a monochromatic vertical artwork in which artist has depicted heights of devotion. Although Bharat is the leader of the kingdom but he has considered himself as a servant of Raja Rama, his elder brother. For this artist has depicted a scene of inside a palace. There a pair of wooden sandals placed on a low height, ornamented throne. Bharat is sitting at the side of throne, holding an umbrella with his both hands. Bharat has depicted in a side profile so his back is towards the beholder. Artist has applied many tones of dull colours but he has maintained the monochromatic colour
scheme. Through the colour scheme the inner conscience has reflected clearly. In the artwork Bharat has depicted in deep sorrow, melancholy that caused by his mother's demand of his kingship and Rama's exile even being a cause of all incident he cannot do anything except regret. So artist has captured his agony and depict on the paper.

K. Sreenivasulu (1923-1995): Born in the family of top maker in Madras in the year 1923. Because of father's profession, he was bought up in the creative environment of toy making. Even his primary school education had making of clay toys in its curriculum. Later on he supported his family profession. In his secondary education he was seeking food teaching of arts and craft. But it was not available in his school. So he decided to leave the school and go somewhere else. Then he joined Government school of Arts & Craft in Madras. There he studied arts in academic manner. "He soon made his mark as a landscape painter in the manner of Brangwyn whose sensitive water colours made a deep impression on him."27

After completing graduation he has joined the Adyar School as one of the staff member. The cultural atmosphere of Adhyar made him to think on his style. Soon he started search for his own new style. During this search artist got chance to copy murals of Lepakshi Temple. These murals effected the artist and he create a new style.

He made ornaments and design. Jewellery with minute details is also there. One can easily understood that all this
was because of decorative style of *Leepakshi Temple* murals. After *Leepakshi* murals we can see use of rich and dark colours by the artist. Increased flow in lines and sensuous beauty of female is also there. Later on he simplified his style more and used bold lines.

He maintained his interest in folk art. Folk toys, leather puppets and other folk elements played a significant role in his life as an artist. Later on all these folk element became principal motifs in his paintings.

Artist started experimenting with water colour and crayon around 1960. Artist developed a new style with the help of these experiments. Details were left behind by using this mix medium. This new style helped the artist to achieve more simplicity in his paintings. He always found attraction for folk art throughout his life. Walking on such way was artist's own liking. He chooses his motifs in painting by his interest. It is same with the choice of themes. He painted *families, day to day life*. He also painted on *Krishan Leela* and some paintings on *Ramayana*.

From *Ramayana*, *Lava-Kush* and *Aswamedha* are significant artwork.

**Lava-Kush** (Tempra, 1950, size 45 x 45 cm.) (Fig. 4.9): In this artwork artist has depicted *Rama’s sons Lava and Kush* sitting in the lap of her mother *Sita*. Both have portrayed in side profile, holding bow and arrows but *Sita* in front profile. In the artwork artist has depicted big eyes, spread from nose till ears. Artist has depicted the human form in very simplified manner like folk art with bold contours. Artist has filled the whole
surface with the forms. The main form of Lava, Kusa and Sita has ornamented with some decorative elements of straight, curve lines and dots, with that artist has symbolizes the headgear, necklaces, armlets, earrings. In the saree of Sita artist has created floral design with dots and lines. In between Lava and Kusha artist has depicted one in dark skin and other in light skin tone. In the background artist has applied dark colour that enhanced the beauty of composition. Artist has also created some decorative elements in the background also that has created the interest in the dark background. Artist has used tempra colour beautifully in the composition.

Aswamedha (Tempra, 50 x 25 cm.) (Fig. 4.10): In this artwork artist has narrated the story of Aswamedha yajna of Rama after the birth of his sons Lava and Kusa. In the painting Lava and Kusha have holded the horse of Aswamedha yajna released by Raja-Rama. On a horizontal surface at the left side artist has depicted Lava with bow. A horse with leaning neck, ornamented as royal creature but artist has used straight, curve, thick, thin, lines and dots for the ornamentation. The horse has seemed as of a wooden toy horse. In the foreground artist has portrayed Kusa with a side profile who is trying to stop the horse. Artist has depicted him quiver on the back and bow in the right hand. In this artwork also artist has depicted the large eyes. Artist has drawn all the forms with folk art like simplicity. Through the thick and curve line artist has created the rhythm in the composition. To enhance the foreground artist has applied dark colour in the background. Overall the
composition seems to be very bold as the artist has worked till the edges.

In both the artwork artist has used tempera colours and childlike simplicity to deal with the epic subjects.

**Raja Ravi Varma (1848-1906) :**

“*Raja Ravi Varma* emerged with his oeuvre- a large body of paintings, drawing, water colour and oleographs- that was western in style and technique and Indian in theme.”\(^{28}\) *Ravi Varma* has received the national acclaims for his mythological and historical art works. Artist has selected his themes from the epic texts like *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, which are lyrical and romantic in context. He has visualized the stories and executed them in the present with modern prototypes of the nation.

*Ravi Verma* has painted the series of painting in which he constructed the notion of modern in terms of mythological past. Artist was genius in portraying people with great historical accuracy.

“As a matter of fact, with *Verma’s* paintings, the viewer is made to witness the scene as if on a ‘proscenium’\(^{29}\) stage with only the draped curtain separating him from a theater performance. *Verma* largely modeled his scenes on the ‘Parsi Theater’,\(^{30}\) which he frequented in Bombay.”\(^{31}\)

By the influence of stage, artist had created a heightened effect, which enhanced the dramatic impact of his works.

“At any rate, he was, as his biographer *Venniyoor* claims, the first painter to break the bounds of regionalism and depict people from all over India; He (Ravi Verma) was the first Indian Artist to comprehend fully the oneness of the land, the first to
paint for all the people, the first to have his sittings located from the Cape to the Himalayas.”

Before execution of any theme in painting Ravi Verma used to visit different places and collect the experiences that he used in his composition. Ravi Verma transferred the wealth of stories and mythology in his painting so naturally with great resonance.

*Rama-Sita-Lakshmana crossing the Sarayu, Rama-Swayamvaran,*
*Sita- Swayamvaran,*
*Rama Breaking the Bow, Jatayu Vadha, Sri Rama Sagar Darpaharana, Victory of Inderjit, Lava- Kush chanting the Ramayana,*
*Release of Ahilya,*
*Sita in Ashoka Grove, Pregnant Sita Abandoned in the forest,*
*Sita Bhumipravesh* are some paintings that artist had depicted from the Ramayana.

*Ravi Verma* has followed the story of *Valmiki Ramayana* in his paintings as he made the illustration of story through different scenes. These scenes became the pearls in a thread to complete the garland. *Rama* breaking the sacred bow of *Shiva* before his marriage with *Sita,* *Ravana* dressed as a mendicant arrives with the intention of abducting *Sita,* *Ravana* carrying off *Sita* and opposed by Jatayu, *Rama* threatens the ocean god *Varuna* on not making the way for him and *Sita Bhumipravesh* are the events depicting in each painting creates a sequence of storyboard for the next painting; the story unfold itself in each painting and covered the process not only the major moments but the entire story of *Rama* and *Sita.***

Artist has given emphasis on the facial expression of the characters by that art work become interactive before the spectator.
"In 1888, Sayajirao Gaekward who had been lavishing so much attention on the Laxmi Vilas Palace had commissioned Ravi Verma to make fourteen mythological pictures for the Durbar hall." The meeting to discuss these pictures took place at Woodstock, the Maharaja’s residence at the hill station of Ooty.

Paintings of Krishna, Kamsa Maya, Krishna Drishta, Radha and Madhav, Shantanu and Ganga, Shantanu and Matsyagandhi, Keechaka and Sairandhri, Arjuna and Subhadra, Harish Chandra and Chandramati, Nala and Damayanti were all adapted from the stories of the Mahabharata.

“In 1904, Ravi Verma had commission work of Nine Puranic painting for the rear walls of Darbar Hall of the New Palace at Mysore.

Among all these Puranic paintings five out of nine are from the Ramayana and rest four from the Mahabharata. i.e.

1. "Rama Breaking the sacred bow of Shiva before his marriage with Sita (Rama Breaking the Bow, Breaking the Shiva Dhanush, Sita Swayambara.)
2. Ravana carrying off Sita and opposed by Jatayu (Jatayu Vadha)
3. Rama threatens the ocean God Varuna on his not making way for him (Sri Rama Sagar Darpaharana)
4. Indrajit presenting to his father Ravana the trophies of his conquest of Swarga (heaven) (Mahabharata and Bhagavata). (These are two sources specified by Ravi Verma as opposed to any other epic; Victory of Meghanath (Indrajit).
5. Kusa and Lava accompanied by Valmiki and chanting the story of Ramayana in the Yagashala.
6. Krishna freeing his imprisoned parents after killing Kamsa. *(Sri Krishna and Balarama Releasing Their Parents from Prison).*

7. Krishna’s embassy to Duryodhana *(Sri Krishna as Envoy).*

8. Draupadi taunting Bhima for his cowardice in proposing peace.

9. Bhishma’s real self-sacrifice. *(Matsyagandhi).*

All these names of the paintings have given by Ravi Verma as he was closely connected with the images and themes.”

Some of the paintings from Ramayana series are such as

**Sita in Ashoka Grove** *(Oil on canvas, 40”x30”, 1894, Private Collection) (Fig. 4.11)*: Ravana has brought abducted Sita in Lanka and leave her to stay in Ashoka Grove. Artist has painted her sitting under a tree and surrounded by demoness. Fair skinned Sita has covered herself with red saree. Here Sita seems like a virahni far away from her loveable husband Rama. Artist has showed helpless, hopeless, agony in the expression of Sita. In the painting Sita is looking as idol of divine thoughts, piousness, faithfulness and loyalty.

It seems that the Ashoka grove has enlightened through the personification of her divine existence. Other side female demoness has painted in dark complexion, wearing white clothes. These demoness were excited by the arrival of Sita and attracted towards her. Those horrible females are constantly forcing Sita to forget her husband Rama and marry with the king of demon, Ravana. Alone and terribly frightened Sita remains unmoved by the ferocity of their threats yet confident that Rama will rescue her from the custody of Ravana.
Artist has composed the figures beautifully as *Sita* is surrounded by threatening and fearsome demoness in a semi-circle. One demoness has shown sleeping on the foreground in the painting. Among all demoness, one has covered herself with clothe, rest of three has covered their lower body only. Artist has captured the intense environment of the scene in his painting.

“This painting was illustrated in the *Bengali* version of the *Ramayana* published by *Prabasi Press* in 1946, edited by *Ramananda Chatterjee* and translated by *Kritti Das*, early 15th century.”

**Rama Threatens the Ocean God Varuna on His not making way for Him (Sri Rama Sagar Darpaharna)** (Oil on Canvas, 60”x84”, 1906, Collection:-Srikanta Datta Narasimharaja Wadiyar, Chairman, Sri Jayachamarajendra Art Gallery Trust, Joganmohan, Palace, Mysore) (Fig. 4.12) : The theme of this painting is lord *Rama* wants to reach *Lanka* to rescue *Sita* from *Ravana*. But to reach *Lanka Rama* has to construct a bridge at the southern tip of India for his army to cross over, to that island. *Rama* prays to the ocean god *Varuna* to allow him to cross the ocean, but the ocean god does not respond. In anger, *Rama* shoots his fiery arrow into the ocean. *Varuna* appears immediately before *Rama*. Then the bridge has formed and the army crosses over.

In the painting artist has divided the space in four parts two in vertical and two in horizontal. Horizontally he has shown the sky and ocean and in vertically he has depicted *Rama* at the left space and *Varuna*, the god of ocean with his queens at the right space in the painting.
Rama has shown standing on a rock at the sea shore. Furiously Rama is holding his bow and arrow, his upper body is unclothed and wearing dhoti on lower body. Artist has presented the determined, bold, furious, gaze of Rama through his posture and gestures. On the other side Varuna the god of ocean has painted in hurry to asking the forgiveness for his (Varuna’s) disrespectful behavior for Rama. Varuna has depicted with ornaments and jewels on upper body and wearing red dhoti on lower body. His both queens accompanied him to Rama and asking for Rama’s generosity. Artist has worked with colours and strokes to express the environment. Here it shows that generally human being bow before the power not before the generosity.

Pregnant Sita Abandoned in the forest (Oil on Canvas, 36”x40”, undated, Collection:- Travancore Royal Family, Kaudiar Palace, Thiruvananthapuram) (Fig. 4.13):

The story about this painting is, after becoming king Rama used to receive feedback from his ministers about kingdom, people, their conduct and thoughts. In the sequence once Rama came to know that the people in the kingdom have objection about the acceptance of Sita by king Rama. People have doubt about the chastity of Sita as Ravana has abducted her, she has spent so much time in Lanka and still how the king Rama has accepted the queen. After knowing all the views "king Rama has called brothers Lakshmana and asked to take Sita with him and leave her on the bank of river Ganga near the hermitage of sage Valmiki. So with order of a king, Lakshmana leave the Sita on the same place."^43

In the painting artist has depicted Sita alone in the forest. It seems that after a lot lamentation she is stunned with the
rotation of misfortune. Although in pregnancy she left alone through her loveable husband and king Rama for the sake of society and to established the idealism of a king for kingdom. As it is said what the king do, kingdom has to follow the same.

Artist has depicted Sita sitting on the floor surrounded by trees, grass and loneliness. She has put her one hand on the head. She is wearing blue blouse and yellow saree that symbolizes the piousness and priority.

She has ornamented with pearl and golden jewellery like earring, nose ring, necklaces and bangles. Artist has depicted her as a cultured Indian wife, a symbol of loyalty, dedication, obedience.

**Krishna’s Embassy to Duryodhana** (oil on Canvas, 60X84, 1906, Collection – Srikanta Datta Narasinhara Jr Wadiyar, Chairman, Sri Jayachamarajendra Art Gallery Trust, Jaganmohan Palace, Mysore) (Fig. 4.14) : In this artwork artist has depicted the most significant incident of the epic Mahabharata. In which fate of both families (Kaurav and Pandavas) has decided regarding the Kurukshetra battle.

In the story Kauras has denied to give Pandavas the share in ancestral property. Then Pandavas asked Krishna of help them during the inter-familial dispute and requested him to find a peaceful way out of the impasse between to two opponent families. Krishna went to the court of King Dhritarasrtha, as an envoy towards Pandavas but Duryodhana, the eldest son of Dhritarasrtha and other Kauravas were greatly incased by Krishna’s placatory attitude. After behaving furiously they tried hard to manipulate Krishna unsuccessfully.
Artist has projected this incident after conceive the intensity of environment in the royal court of Dhritrashtra on a vertical canvas. With the beautiful interior of royal court artist has focused on the main discourse between Kauravas and Pandavas in front of Dhritrashtra, Krishna and other nobles. Kauravas raised their swords and pointed finger at Pandavas while Krishna has holded the hand of Pandava when he raised his sward. In the painting Krishna is depicted in blue, wearing yellow dhoti, red parna around his upper body, sitting on a royal Chair, feet on the pedestal and seemed to be very peaceful and clam appearance. Dhritarashtra as an obscure person, Kaurav and Pandavas in fierce gestures, scenario nobles in deep sorrow and other court men were stunned with the incident on the debate of good and bad, of creation and destruction. In the painting artist has depicted all characters barefooted, some in sitting and other all in standing postures. Artist has maintained the perspective in this artwork and given the theater like impact in the painting that enhance the sentimental expressions in the artwork.

**Bhishma's Real Self Sacrifice** (Matsyagandhi), oil on canvas, 60 x 84", 1906, Collection: Srikanta Datta Narasimharaja wadiyar, Chairman, Jayachamarajendra Art Gollery Trust, Jagmohan Palace, Mysore) (Fig. 4.15):

In this artwork artist has depicted the historical incident that transform Devrata, son of Ganga and Shantanu into Bhisma. In Mahabharata everyone wants to be happy with other’s sacrifice. Santanu, the Kuru King of Hastirapur, went to the forest for hunting and mesmerized by the musk-fragrance
emanating from the fisher girl satyavati. Allured by her, Shantanu followed her and reached at her house. Being fall in love with her, he asked her father, the fisherman chief, to allow him for the marriage with his daughter Satyavati. But fisherman made a condition before king Shantanu that if his daughter would marry a king than only her sons would inherit the royal throne. On the condition king Shantanu has dejected and denied for approval, as he had a lovable, obedient only son Devvrata. But soon after Devvrata has also distressed with his father's condition and learned the whole story. Immediately, he rushed to the fisherman and gave approval on his condition on the behalf of his father. Even for his father's happiness, Satyavati's security he took an oath for self sacrifice that he will follow the celibacy throughout his life and protect Kuru dynasty under the rule of Satyavati's sons. On this confirmation fisherman allowed Satyavati to marry with king Shantanu. But this oath has transformed Prince Devvrata into a noble Bhishma.

So this is one of the important artwork from the story of epic Mahabharata. Artist has painted this artwork with a beautiful landscape in the background. Bhishma is standing with a servant and the family of Satyavati standing infront of a hut under a tree on the bank of a river. Bhishma has given his turban to the fisherman and hold his hand while taking the great oath.

Nandalal Bose (1882-1966) : After Abnindranath Tagore, Nandalal was one of the major artist of Bengal School. Nandalal has represented a more classical phase of Bangal School with his
versatile, hardworking and clear vision about the function and aims of art. "As he well said that like coin, art also has two aspects, one which gives pleasure and second, which gives meaning that also called Lalit Kala and Shilp Kala."44 The balance of both is necessary to develop the creative vision. He was versatile to cover a wide range of subject matters and techniques for the paintings. Artist did his early paintings in wash but later he preferred temp para technique for his art works.

"His versatility is seen in the vast array of techniques and mediums he experimented with from painting on wood or silk to mural and posters."45 He worked as "the bridge that spanned the gulf between the traditional and modern art. Contemporary art......could not have arrived without this path leading forward out of the past. In building such a road Nandalal Bose must be considered one of the pioneers of the modern art. He is honored in our country for showing a forward path."46 During his journey in art field he has painted the series of paintings on Ramayana, Wedding of Sita-Ram, Ahilya deliverance and Shabri are some famous paintings from the Ramayana series.

**Ahilya Uddhar** (Tempera on paper) (Fig. 4.16) : For this painting artist has selected the story of Ahilya Uddhar from the forty eight chapter of Baal Kaand in Ramayana. Artist has illustrated the incident when Rama, Lakshmana and sage Vishwamitra reached in Mithila and saw a beautiful but old and desolately hermitage.

Long time ago sage Gautam lived in this divine hermitage with his beautiful wife Ahilya. Both performed here their holy-spiritual ceremonies and the place became divine abode. But once god Indra changed his appearance and disguised himself as sage
Gautam. Indra got involved in intercourse with Ahilya, the wife of sage Gautam. When Indra was going back sage Gautam has recognized him and cursed Indra and Ahilya too. Because of that curse Ahilya became a stone. Then sage Gautam stated that when Rama will touch that stone only then she will regain her human body.

So the artist has depicted the scene when Rama has come to Mithila and sage Vishwamitra has showed him the stone of Ahilya that was placed in a old architectural building. In that huge stone of Ahilya has shown in sitting posture with folded hands in prayer and waiting for Rama. In front of that architecture, where the stone of Ahilya was placed artist has shown Rama, Lakshmana and Sage Vishwamitra. Sage is leading both brothers Rama and Lakshmana towards the Ahilya stone. They are seeing the Ahilya sitting inside the stone. Vishwamitra is telling the story of Ahilya to Rama and Lakshmana.

Artist has composed the figure of Rama, Lakshmana and sage as a group in the centre of the surface. Sage is shown here in a white beard and white hair, wearing orange dhoti and parna. He has peaceful, pleasant expressions on his face. Rama and Lakshmana are ornamented and dressed like royal princes. Rama has dressed in yellow parna, red dhoti and blue patka. He is wearing headgear, earrings, necklaces, armlets, wrist band and belt in gold. Rama is holding a pot of water in his hands. Lakshmana is depicted here as a fair skinned boy wearing red parna, yellow dhoti and red patka and also ornamented with headgear, earring, necklace, armlets, wristband and belt. He is holding a basket of flowers and stand behind his elder brother and sage.
Ahilya has depicted here in line drawing sitting in the stone. She is wearing blouse, dhoti and patka. Her well managed loss hairs are ornamented with maangtika. She is also wearing necklace, armlets and bangles. It seems that she is in deep silent pain and meditating in the wait of Rama’s arrival. It the foreground artist has painted grass and two small stone.

Shabri (Tempera on paper) (Fig. 4.17) : For this painting artist has inspired from the seventy fourth chapter of Aranya Kand by Valmiki– Ramayana. This is the story when after abduction of Sita by Ravana, Rama and Lakshmana reached Pampasarvar to searching the way of Sugriv’s abode in mountains. At pampasarvar, Rama and Lakshmana found the beautiful, pleasant and divine environment all around. There they saw a glorifying hermitage of devotee named Shabari.

From a long time being a devotee to Rama she is waiting for their arrival. After the courteous welcome, she gave them her tasted berries and guide about the way of the cave where Sugrive live.

Artist has focused the scene when shabari is plucking berries and adjusting that in her saree’s pallu. In the painting artists has depicted dark skinned old lady Shabri wearing white saree covering her upper and lower body. Her hairs are white well managed and lose. She is wearing armlets and bangles. In one hand she is holding long stick.

Instead holding a long stick in one hand, she is plucking barriers with the help of both hands. With full concentration she is selecting the berries for her loveable god Rama. Not even from the epic Ramayana but also from the epic Mahabharat artist has
painted so many paintings such as Parthasarthi and Kurukshetra.

Parthasarthi (Wash technique on paper) (Fig. 4.18) : Here artist has composed painting in the manner that he focused on the portrait of Parthasarthi (Krishna). Krishna is preaching Arjuna to fight in the battle field in front of the loved ones. When Arjuna has denied to fight with the familiar faces and known characters of the opposite army. This painting has the influence of Ajanta paintings. The meditated eyes and calm expression of Krishna has explained the depth of his preaching. Krishna is explaining the Dharma to Arjuna, the Dharam that is lead by the Laws of the Forest i.e. if the small fish will not work out for itself the big fish will eat the small. Same as if he (Arjuna) will not fight for his survival and respect, the opposite army will abolish him and his army. In the painting, from one hand Krishna is holding the chariot and from other he taught Arjuna. In the background artist showed the hands of Arjuna holding bow. This painting is remarkable where artist has illustrated a story in a symbolic composition.

Thus artist has inspired from both epics, the Ramayana and Mahabharata and has depicted the elevation of sentimental in his artworks.

Ramgopal Vijayvargiya (1905-2003) : "Born in Baler Village of District Madhopur in Rajasthan in the year 1905." He was attracted towards art since his childhood. His was fought up in traditional cultured and prosperous family. He took up basic education at his home. Earlier his family was not in favour for his art education. He was forced to do other works for his earning. But gradually he made his way to study art. At the age of 19 he
took admission in art school. There he was shifted to final year because of his level of study. His teacher Shailendrnath Day has played important role in his art career.

"Artist's first painting published in the year 1925-26 in Modern Review magazine." Artist contributed for Bengal School's development in Rajasthan. Thought he followed Bengal School but his own style of painting never got affected.

Colours were symbolically used by artist Ramgopal. His colours have softness due to wash technique. He used many colours in his paintings but not always. Sometimes he had finished paintings in two or three colours and even sometimes artist finished his painting in a single colour. He used blue, yellow, green, brown and red colour in most of his paintings. He also worked in oil colour medium. Artist has also worked for idols in wood, ivory and silver. These idols were made on the bases of drawings and directions by the artist." Though these idols were only directed by the artist, but having his stylistic lines.

Artist's lines are controlled and having naivety of folk art. He paid much importance to lines. Softness of lines is visible in artist's paintings. These soft lines gave a delicacy to his figures. All figures in paintings are slim, no matter if it is a male figure or female. His figures have slim waist. A long hand with long fingers is his stylistic feature.

All figures in compositions have equal importance like main figure. He had never differently painted his main figure to create a focal point. Yet eyes of viewer travel through whole painting and find its point of attraction. His compositions have narrative depiction and have many divisions. But still having continuity and never lost its subject.
Artist worked on many themes in his life time. City life and village life found equal place in his paintings. He has painted every possible theme, he was attracted for. His paintings can be seen on daily life, social issues and reasons, fair and festival themes. As artist is not only a painter but also Hindi a poet and also story teller so he found his source of inspiration and Sanskrit classes text like *Meghdut*, *Abhigyan Shakuntalam*, *Hritusanhaar*, *Raghuwansh*, *Kadambari*, *Geetgovind*, *Bihari Satsai* etc. Religious theme was also an important theme for artist. Before start painting on any religious theme he used to study the religious text thoroughly. In his religious theme *Buddha*, *Bhagvat Puran*, *Ramayan* and *Mahabharata* are main subjects.

Exile of *Rama*, Resting *Rama-Sita*, Death of *Jatayu*, *Lakshmana* and *Surpnakha*, *Rama-Lakshmana* with monkeys, *Sampati* locates *Sita*, *Hanumana* meeting *Sita*, missing *Sita* are some of the painting based on *Ramayana*.

*Dhritrashtra* and *Gandhari*, *Krishna-Sudama*, *Descending of Ganga*, *Arjuna* and *Urwashi*, Dancing *Uttra* are some of the painting by artist based on *Mahabharata*.

From *Ramayana*, *Sampati Locates Sita*, *Hanumana meeting Sita*, *Missing Sita* are some of the renowned artworks.

**Sampati Locates Sita** (wash on paper 21.5 x 29.5) (Fig. 4.19) : In this artworks artist has depicted vulture *Sampati* surrounded by a group of monkeys. They are on a mission to find the location of Devi *Sita*, whom *Ravana* has abducted. While reaching to the sea shore, group of monkeys met with *sampati*, an old wingless vulture, brother of *Jatayu*. But he can see beyond the sea then he told to monkeys that few days
before he has seen the demon king, who forcefully abducted a lady and bring her to his kingdom, Lanka, may be lady is Devi Sita.

Artist has depicted Sampati sitting on a high rock, at the entrance of his cave, with open beak. Sampati has depicted in blue, yellow, brown and grey colours, and rests of the monkeys are sitting on the small rocks all around. Every monkey has deeply involved in the discussion. All the monkeys are in red garment at lower body and have parna on the shoulder.

Artist has carefully captured the expressions and gestures of all monkeys. Among all, artist has depicted one monkey with mace to note the presence of Hanumana. In the background artist has painted rocks in grey brown, yellow and black colours. In this artwork artist has created a colourfull environment with the application of so many colours in wash technique.

Hanumana meeting Sita (wash on paper, 19x26) (Fig. 4.20): In this artwork artist has painted Sita surrounded by female demons at the ashoka vatika. Sita is sitting under a tree in yellow saree and white blouse, listening astonishingly to Hanumana. In the artwork artist has depicted Hanumana in two forms, one is a small ordinary monkey sitting in front of Sita and second, a huge, wise and powerful monkey with mace standing in front of Sita. Artist has depicted Hanumana such as to show his extraordinary powers so that Sita can trust him.

In the artwork two female demons are sitting in the right side at foreground and two are hiding herself behind the tree.
All four are frightened by Hanumana. Artist has focused on the expressions of the characters as Sita has appeared with peaceful state of mind after receiving the massage of Rama from Hanumana. She has found a ray of hope with his presence. In the background artist has created different trees and plants to create an environment of garden, Artist has applied green, yellow, blue, grey, red colours in trees and blue and yellow colours in the sky. The hope of Sita reflected through the environment that artist has created in this artwork through wash technique on paper.

From the epic Mahabharata artist has depicted many subjects like Dhritrashtra and Gandhari, Krishna-Sudama, Descending of Ganga, Arjuna and Urvashi, Dancing Uttra and Mahabharata in his artworks.

Mahabharata (Wash, 21.5 x 29.5 inch) (Fig. 4.21): In this artwork artist has depicted a man creating some drawing on a stone. He is sitting with folded legs, in yellow dhoti and red parna. A lady is standing near him around a tree, in red saree and blue blouse. She has placed her right hand on his shoulder and holded a lotus with left hand. Artist has depicted a river and some deers in the surroundings. Both characters are involved with themselves and not interacting even with each-other and as well as with audience.

In the background artist has created stones in yellow, brown, red and grey colour and tress and plants in yellow green and blue colours. In between the trees artist has depicted a hut. In the sky some birds has depicted at the right side corner and light blue clouds in a curvilinear rhythm. Over all, the
artist has maintained the brightness of colours and the colourfull environment has created the environment of joy and happiness in the artwork.

**Sarat Chandra Depo (1911-1973)**

A great painter, an art educationist Sarat Chandra Debo was born in Royal family of Chikitigada, of Bihar (Now in Orissa) in year 1911. His bought up was in a luxurious environment. He took his basic study at home. Cultural environment of the family made him admirer of the culture and traditions of the country. He attentively cared for heritage of the country.

After completing his basic education at home, he started taking interest in artistic activity. He painted curtains for Drama Company. He helped his cousin in administration. For this work he rapidly traveled a lot across his state. During the travel time he observed people, village and nature in Resulting he stated making sketches of all what he see. But such kind of activity no more liked by his royal family. So he was sent to London for the study of law. This was the time in which he understood his interest in art and denied to study law. "Low proved to be too rigid and colourless and did not interest him. He preferred fine arts to Law and joined the Heartherly School of Arts.\(^{52}\)

Though artist has studied western art in a European country. But he never left behind culture and traditions of his own country. After coming back to India he decided to make his own style with the help of traditional symbols. This style of artist Sarat Chandra Debo had Indian touch.
Artist took his topics from near by places view of village, cultivated field, trees found place in artists early phase of painting. He also painted seascapes, his family, monumental scenes and portraits of royal personalities. All these topics were mostly made by the artist in oil or water colour.

He worked in tempera and wash technique also. Application of dull colour near bright colour is common in his painting. This way of colour application has made it characteristic feature. While creating a focal point, he followed the technique of wash painting. His focal point having fresh colorus and rest of the area is dim.

Artist also established himself as educationist. "He organized the Utkal Art Association at Cuttack in 1945. From the meager grant he received after the abolition of Chikiti estate, he managed to organize the first art school in the state in his palace Chandraprabhashram at Berhampur. This was the Utkal School of Arts."53 With this school he had sincerely spread art education. He paid his time, energy and money to the school for its betterment. He nurtures talented students. "In 1957 he was appointed as first principal of Government School of Arts and Crafts at Khallikote."54

Meanwhile artist made many paintings. Classical influence can be seen in these paintings. His symbols became narrative. He painted on religious themes. Not being specific to any one religion he had painted themes of Bible, Bhagavata, Mahabharta and Ramayana etc. Painting based on these religious themes have fresh, fold and bright approach.
From *Ramayana* artist has depicted many stories among them *Rama’s Pratyavartan, Rama and Lakshmana in Shavari’s hut* and *Maya Mriga* are much popular.

**Rama and Lakshmana in Shavari’s hut** (Tempera, 1948) (Fig. 4.22): In the artwork artist has depicted the scene of the hermitage of Shabari in the forest. *Rama* and *Shabari* both are sitting in the verandah of a hut. *Lakshmana* is standing as the guard behind *Rama*. Throughout her life *Shabari* has waited for the arrival of *Rama* so that she can rejoice his visit. *Shabari* has depicted in dark skin, wearing a short garment on lower body and ornamented with earring, garland and bangles. Before giving the fruits to *Rama*, she has tasted every fruit by herself and only sweet fruits are giving to *Rama*. Motivated by devotion towards Lord *Rama*, she do not want that her Lord may not taste sour fruits.

In the artwork artist has depicted *Rama* asking for more fruits with modesty and giving respect to her devotion, love and care. In the artwork *Rama* has depicted as the idol of simplification and greatness. And *Lakshmana* has become witness of the relation of devotee and god.

Artist has depicted a deer in landscape in the background and two baskets full of fruits in the foreground near *Shabari*.

**Maya Mriga** (Tempera, 1952) (Fig. 4.23): In this artwork artist has depicted *Ram-Sita* and *Lakshmana* in the verandah of their hut. *Sita* is pointing finger towards the golden deer and showed that deer to *Rama* and *Lakshmana*. *Rama* is sitting with *Sita* to see that deer and at behind *Lakshmana* is preparing
himself to shoot that deer with his arrow. In the background artist has depicted a beautiful landscape with perspective. The long, straight trees and movement of water has become more interesting part of the artwork. But in this artwork the most interesting thing is this that artist has not painted any deer in the artwork. He has just symbolically showed the presence of a golden, magical deer as he named the artwork *Maya Mriga*. Here artist has depicted *Sita’s* innocent desire and brave efforts of *Rama* and *Lakshmana* to chase the deer. Artist has worked on the sentiment of human in this artwork. Artist has beautifully deals with colour to enhance the artwork.

**Sukhbir Singh Sinhal (1914-2006)** : Artist with philosophy Sukhvir Singh was born on 14 July, 1914 in Muzaffar Nagar. He done diploma in Art from *Kala evam Shilip Mahavidyalay, Lucknow* in 1936. He participated in art activities. His regular participation made him a founder member of *U.P. Artist Association* in 1936. He also started a Institute named *Kala Bharti* in 1938. This Institute was to give education about *Indian Traditional Art*.

Artist used wash technique for his painting. It was his favourite medium. Artist’s lines, colour scheme and symbols in paintings show Indian tradition. He never followed any selected or restricted colour scheme in his paintings. Colour scheme had always choosen according to the subject of painting. He had used medium tone of colours. Figure are according to Indian Iconography.

Artist joined *Kala evam Shilip Mahavidyalay, Lucknow* for teaching. He was awarded by AIFACS for his beautiful works in
1937 & 1944 among them birth of Rama (194) is from the Ramcharit series of Ramayana epic. He was awarded by several awards in his life time. He never compromised with his principle in art. He died in the year 2006 at his home in Lucknow.

As an artist he chooses subjects from the society or related to society for his paintings. In his paintings main subject has full details. Background, other elements and figures have equal importance and detailed like main subject.

Artist has painted many series of painting in his life. Vivah, Jivan Avasthaein, Jiwan Sarita, Mahatma Gandhi, Manav, Bhartiy Jiwan are some series of paintings by the artist. He had shown thoughtful approach for every series. Jewellery, hair style, dress, atmosphere, flowers and their colours has been chosen very wisely by the artist. Such details play significant role and support the main subject in the painting. His lines have such flow which can mesmerize any spectator.

Some of the paintings by the artist are in the collection of National Museum of Modern Art and other important institutes in India and outside. But most of the paintings are in artist's own privet collection. With some social themes he also painted on religious themes. Ramcharit is a series of painting from Ramayana and Manav Rup Arjuna is a series from Mahabharata.

In the Ramcharit series artist has emphasized on the different aspect of Rama's character like a king, son, brother, husband, friend and a divine human being.
And in the series *Manav Rup Arjuna*, artist has depicted six artworks. In which he has depicted *Arjuna* as an ideal lover, indifferent for lust, a student, a teacher, a loser and a winner. Infect artist has depicted *Arjuna* in six different Characters.

In one artwork artist has depicted *Arjuna* defeated from a *Bheel* and in other involve with *Uttara* in a love affair. Along with this artist has created many artworks as.

**Lakshyabadha Arjuna** (wash technique on paper) (Fig. 4.24) : In this artwork artist has sincerely captured the posture of warrior *Arjuna* and *guru Dronacharya*. With the instruction of *guru Drona*, *Arjuna* has aimed his arrow at the eye of the bird. So artist has focused on the target. Artist has depicted a bird sitting on the tree at the left side top and *Arjuna* with *guru Drona* at the right side. Artist has keenly observed and depicted the posture of *Arjuna* and *guru Drona* as both have focus on the bird. *Arjuna* is in sitting posture while *Drona* is standing. In the artwork *Arjuna* has depicted in blue skin and yellow *dhoti*. Artist has created tonal gradation in the background with black, red and blue colours. Through the artwork artist has manifested the focused mind and body.

Thus artist has beautifully composed the subjects with decorative style.

**M.F. Husain (1915-2011)** : One of the most iconic Indian artist *M.F. Husain* needs no introduction. It is true that "One can hate Husain or love Husain but can never ignore Husain." M.F. Husain the Picasso of India was born in 1915 at *Pandharpur, Maharashtra* in a poor bohra Muslim family. He
could not spent much time with mother as she died when his was of 4-5 months baby so he spent his childhood at Indore with his father. At the age of six he lost his father so he had to move to maternal relatives. But at the young age he again went Indore. He studied at Indore college of Art and used to travel near by through his cycle with a umbrella and lamp to point outdoor scenes. In 1936 had had finally reached Mumbai and made posters and hoardings for livelihood.

After some time he has associated with progressive artists group and in 1950 organized his first solo show in Mumbai. According to Ram Kumar, "He never considered financial crisis as a hurdle. Even when he started earning and comfort he never surrenders before it. He never tried to hide his weakness and limits." Husain used to do work day and night. Gradually Husain has moved further in art field from expressionist to quite delicate and decorative cameos and "inspired by the folk/popular generes of Rajput/Pahari miniature, to mural-size paintings with a compartmentalized structure resembling pat paintings."

Through out his life artist has worked on many subjects in series painting such as Zameen, Men, Indian Village, Between the Spider and the Lamp and Farmer's family. M.F. Husain's painted narratives have captured the essence of Indian culture in a modified cubist style. His subjects have crossed all religious, ethnic, social and political boundaries. During his stay at Indore he was attracted by Ramlila performances. "In the late 1960s Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, the socialist ideologue, advised Husain to stop painting for Tatas and Birlas and start
painting for the common men.' Paint Ramayana' he said. That is the best way to penetrate the popular psyche and reach the masses." Husain has set the systematic study of Ramayana and then has created the Ramayana series (1968) of paintings over several years. This was followed by a series on Mahabharata (1971) a more complex epic then the Ramayana.

From epic Ramayana artist has painted "150 artwork and bought by Mr. Badrivishal Pitti." Except 150 paintings artist has painted the book caver for the dairy of Ramlila Committee and Jain Ramayana trust.

**Autobiography XXI** (water colour on paper) (Fig. 4.25): In this artwork artist has depicted a scene of Ramlila. Rama, Sita and Lakshmana are standing on stage in front of a read curtain. Many headed Ravana descending from the stairs at the backside of the curtain at the left side in the space. At the right side two men are pulling the curtain and at the upper space, flying Hanumana with mace has depicted.

Rama and Lakshmana has depicted in yellow face and black body in white dhoti. Sita has depicted in yellow skin and white saree. Artist has not created features on the face but created a red dot on the forehead of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana. The Composition is very colourfull and dramatic in depiction.

**Cover for Ramlila Committee Diary** (mixed media on paper) (Fig. 4.26) : In this artwork artist has depicted Rama, Sita and Lakshmana sitting on the back of flying Hanumana. Rama has depicted in blue skin and Lakshmana, Sita in yellow
skin. *Rama* is wearing white *dhoti* and *Sita* in green *saree*. Artist has not created features again in this artwork. But artist has created *Hanumana* with features, yellow face and red body. Artist has also created a half circle behind the head of *Rama*, *Sita* and *Lakshamana*. In the artwork *Hanumana* is holding a small mountain in his hand. Artist has again created a colourfull environment in the artwork and creatively composed the subject.

Except these artist has depicted many artwork. From *Mahabharata* artist has depicted artwork such as.

**Draupadi on dice** (Acrylic on paper, 1971) (Fig. 4.28): Husain painted a lady form half covered in the center of the surface. He showed as if she lost her balance and drawn in the water. The posture of lady shows that all the situations of life are out of control of her hands. Her hair flows against the direction of her drapery that creates the great movement in the painting. *Husain* has painted this lady *Draupadi* in white, as he wanted to show her piousness and powerful character. *Husain* depicted some square boxes to symbolize the game of the dice. This game proved as a turning point of the story of *Mahabharat*. He put different colours on these forms of dice as if he wanted to show the variety of evil thought of the *Kauravas* to ruin the existence of *Pandavas*. He has created a mysterious environment by applying the black, brown and grey colours in the background of the painting to show the darkness of the environment where *Draupadi* had to bear everything alone.

**Bhishma 10th day Kurukshetra** (Acrylic on paper, 1971) (Fig. 4.27): *Husain* again depicted a human form but now it is a male form that is of *Pitamah Bhishma*. Artist depicted him lying
horizontal on arrows in the bottom on canvas. In the upper area of surface artist composed Sun in two rows of five squares. To shows the changing position of sun from Dakshinayan to Uttarayan. It seems that artist has depicted different phases of human life through these colourful squares and the say of hope through the depiction of red and yellow Sun. Artist has depicted Bhishma with dark skin and wearing cloth on lower body. Husain has printed this painting in the lithography medium in 1983.

Husain depicted some other paintings i.e. "Draupadi on Dice, Battle of Ganga and Yamuna, Bhishma and many other paintings from the Mahabharata. Husain has used his skills of dynamic figure, composition, simplification of from and speed of execution in this series of painting on Mahabharata."60

Husain wrote about the Mahabharat, “For all the Mahabharat paintings I think a question from Gandhi’s massage on the Gita goes well, ‘I regard Duryodhana and his party as the baser impulses in man and Arjuna and his party as the higher impulse. The field of battle is our own body. An eternal battle is going on between the two camps and the poet seer has vividly described it. Krishna is the dweller within”61. So the artist has raised and enriched with ancient tradition derived unique dynamism from the ethnic narrative tradition.

Amarnath Sehgal (1922-2007) : A renowned Indian sculptor, painter and poet Amarnath Sehgal was born on 05 February 1922 at Campbellpur (Now in Pakistan). After completing a course in Industrial Chemistry from Banaras University in 1942, he moved to Lahore. There he worked as an engineer, meanwhile he also studied arts. In 1950 he completed his master degree in art education.
Artist's most of the artworks are based on contemporary themes like socio-economic problems of his time. He also worked on international themes. He had made a sculpture as a tribute to Nelson Mandela. This sculpture is situated at Robin Island in South Africa. He has done numbers of commissioned works. One of them was a mural at Vigyan Bhavan. The size of this mural was 140 feet by 40 feet and it was made in bronze depicting rural and modern India. He also created many works for world organization like Untied Nations.

Artist was honoured by UN Peace Medal in 1985 and also a recipient of Lalit Kala Palna Award in 2004. He was the one who established Indian sculptures on international level.

With sculptures, artist also had interest in doing painting. He worked on several different topics from social, political life and events from country and outside. He then attracted towards myths and legends. He had choosen painting as his medium of expression, and made series of paintings based on Ramayana and Mahabharata.62

Artist has depicted many characters and scences from the both epics. From Ramayana artist has depicted the artworks i.e. Portrait of Valmiki, portrait of Rama, the spirit of Sita, Portrait of Dashrath, portrait of Kaikayi, Kaikayi the conniving one, portrait of Ravana, Lust for power, Kaikayi – with a shocked Dashrath, the agony of Dashrath, the god, Sita in sorrow, farewell-towards exile, nature in agony, the Sacred forest (Chitrakoot), Sita taking a dip, Rama and Sita in harmony, returning together to their hut, Dandaka forest, the evil ones, the evil, away from evil, the trap that decieved Rama, Ravana
reaches Sita’s hut, how dare you, Sita hijacked, Jatayu crying for help to save Sita, Nature in rage, foliage with Hanuman form, Birds carried and beasts groaned, Rama’s night mare, Rama and Lakshmana discuss how to locate Sita, Rama calls to Gods, the search for Sita, the demons’ dream, Vanar sena, Sita found, nature blooms on Rama’s return to Ayodhya, ecstatic welcomes.

The epic Mahabharata has also depicted by the artist differently and entitled i.e. bhagvan Vyasa in his ashram, Krishna the master of cosmos, homeward bound, sound of music, Krishna relaxing in the woods, the river of life, an abstract portrait of Arjuna, the greatest warrior’s Bhishma, tigress with the five Pandavas, Draupadi seeks a boon, to war or not to war, Krishna giving sermon to Arjuna, the five Pandavas, Bhishma’s advice, vidura, Farwell towards Exile (Fig. 4.29), Sita taking a dip (Fig. 4.30), Bishmas advice (Fig. 4.31), To war or not to war (Fig. 4.32).

Artist has depicted all the artworks with mix medium and on different size of paper. Artist has exhibited all artworks at Indira Gandhi National centre for the Arts and entitled his exhibition as Epic Episodes. Artist has composed the forms in figurative, semi-figurative and abstract style of depiction. To depict such creatively, artist has conceived the essence of the epics and transform through his vision. Artist has applied stocks, hatching, criss-cross to narrate the incident. Artist has worked on the sentiment of the character and created his own iconography for each character. Thus artist has successfully represented the both epics before viewer. And attract the viewer of every age group.
Badri Narayan (1929-2013)

A self-taught artist Badri Naryana was born in 1929 in Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh. An artist, illustrator, author and storyteller Badri Narayan had taught art at the Bombay International School at Babulnath for several years. With painting he had also did works with etching, woodcuts and ceramics. Beside a long list of honours and awards, he was honored with Padma Shri in 1987.

He used water colours, ink and pastel for his art work. Most of his works had been done in smaller size. Artist had his own style and sense of aesthetics. His works are narrative and have two dimensions.

Artist had meditated with his paint brush. He has painted himself as mank in some of his paintings. In his own words "Painting is not only a self-expression, it is a sadhana, it is a religious exercise... with a blank paper you are thinking 'how did this come up?' This constant sense of wonderment, I am always wondering, every little thing is great and everything has really been greeted."

Artist had painted still life and as time passed he was inspired from Indian mythology. He had painted Hindu good-goddesses most in his paintings. He has chosen his colour wisely for his composition. Tones which has been used in painting, creates a calm environment for its Viewer.

With paintings he also did illustrations, but his illustrations for Ramayana and Mahabharata are like lyrical Visuals.
From the epic *Ramayana* artist has narrated the scences *Birth of four sons to king Dashratha and his three queens, Rama-Lakshmana with Vishwamitra in the forest, Sita swayamvara, conversation of Kaikayi and Mathara, Ram-Sita-Lakshma’s exile for fourteen years, coming of Surpanakha, Rama killing the golden deer, abduction of Sita by Ravana, fight between Jatayu and Ravana, Rama and Lakshmana searching for Sita, meeting with Shabri, meeting with Hanumana and Sugriv, Death of Vali by the arrow of Rama, meeting of Rama-Lakshmana with Hanumana-Sugriv and with other monkeys, monkeys went in search of Sita, monkeys with vulture Sampati, Hanumana crossing the ocean, Sita in Ashoka grove, burning of Lanka, formation of bridge, fight between Rama and Ravana, Sita’s tests of chastity, returning to Ayodhya.

And from the epic *Mahabharata* artist has depicted seventeen artworks i.e. *the noble prince, The unhappy princes* (Fig. 4.33), *the birth of Karna, the Pandava Princes* (Fig. 4.34), *the great archer, a woked plot, Ekalavya’s training, Karna faces Arjuna, Duryodhana plots again, a silent city, Draupadi’s Swayamvara, imperial Indraprastha, the Gambling Match, the Pandavas in Exile, the year in hiding, the besieged city, the exile is over.*

In both the series artist has used water colour on paper. Artist has created artworks in the narrative style rather then illustrative. Artist has used blue, red, yellow and green colour majorly and created variation with different tint and shades of the colours. In the artworks characters has seemed like the puppets or the clay idols yet artist has worked on their features
and gestures. The artworks from both epics have a great impact of Indian miniature paintings as he has created the minute details, space division and nature depiction etc. In some of the artworks artist has created the mysterious environment through the application of dark hues. To ornament his form artist has used craft like designs. The narratives that artist has painted conveyed the sentiments of the artist regarding epics, its stories and morals.

**M. Reddeppa Naidu (1932-1999):**

He was born on 10 October in 1932 at East Godwari district, Andhra Pradesh. After completing his formal education at Kakinda, Andhra Pradesh, he went to Madras for art education. In 1960 artist had done his diploma in painting from Government College of Arts and Craft, Madras. There he learnt impasto technique.

After completing the diploma he got scholarship for painting. This scholarship had been given by Government of India for two years. Next year he joined the Weaver's Service Centre as art designer. He continued his practice in the field of painting even after joining at Weaver's Service Centre.

In early 1960s artist had used sensitive lines which shows modern expression in it. He also used dull colours with bright patches. In his early works, artist had painted day-to day life of people. Later on he moved towards mythology, "when a classmate told him about Tripati Balaji, saying that it is worshipped by lakhs and lakhs of people, isn't it a worthy topic for you.... So he painted the abstract face of Balaji." His next theme for painting was Durga. from 1972 to 1974, *Mahabharata*
a series of painting had been done by the artist. He had painted 18 large paintings in the series, one for each parva in the epic.

From the epic Ramayana artist has depicted many painting among the Ravana shaking the mount Kailasha and Ramayana, Sita in the garden of Lanka are more popular artworks.

**Ravana shaking the mount Kailash** (oil on canvas, 1977, 107X85 cm) (Fig. 4.35) : In this artworks artist has depicted huge Ravana with many heads and hands holding the mount Kailash on his head. The upper body of Ravana has depicted in red and lower body in white dhoti. The mount Kailasha, the abode of Lord Shiva and goddess Parvati has depicted in blue, grey, brown, and white colours. On the space of mount Kailash artist has portrayed Lord Shiva, Parvati, Nandi, birds and the followers of Lord Shiva in line drawing but artist has applied blue and yellow in Lord Shiva and red in Parvati. In the background artist has created some mysterious environment with the stones of blue colours. Artist has created a border of chrome yellow colour to enhance the brightness of surface. In the whole artwork artist has symbolically depicted the incident. Artist has carried fresh and soft colour tones with fluid and free lines that is the main attraction of his depiction except the subject.

**Ramayana** (oil on canvas, 1990, 107x85 cm) (Fig. 4.36) : In this artwork artist has depicted Rama Sita, together in the middle of the surface in front of a hut. Lakshmana is behind them at the left side of the surface and a golden deer with blue
background at the right side space. In the upper space artist has depicted green, yellow leaves of some tree, Blue, grey and white sky in the background. Artist has depicted the incident of golden deer in a landscape symbolically. Artist has visualize \textit{Rama} in blue skin with yellow \textit{parna} and orange, yellow \textit{dhoti}, \textit{Sita} with fair skinned in white \textit{saree} and \textit{Lakshmana} with folded hand in yellow skin, white \textit{parna} and orange, white \textit{dhoti}. Artist did not detail the feature of all characters except a line as nose.

In the background of \textit{Rama}, \textit{Sita} and \textit{Lakshmana} artist has written some \textit{shloks} of \textit{Ramayana} in red colour. on the surface artist has created patches for the colour application and somewhere a mysterious environment has created in the artworks.

During 1972 to 1974 artist has depict \textit{Mahabharata} series of eighteen large canvases, one for each parva. On the suggestion of a friend, admirer, patron and art gallery onwer \textit{Mr. Deendayal} and his wife artist has depicted mythological paintings. He used to read \textit{Mahabharata} for the artist and requested him to make one painting on each \textit{parva} of the epic.

"He gave me complete freedom... for each parva, I choose the incidents and episodes to be painted.... His faith in my talent saw me through the \textit{Mahabharata} series... I felt, that was the right age to get to know the great epics as I have collected some experience of life... I realized that there was immense material in Hindu iconography waiting to be exploited by a serious and responsible artist."\textsuperscript{65}
For the depiction of *Mahabharata* artist has referred the Telugu translation of *Mahabharata* by *Sri Mantri Lakshmi Narayanan Sastri*. Thus artist has used his personal experience, all talent to explore the both epics and visualized them on the canvases.

**Arup Das (1927-2004)**

Delhi based artist *Arup Das* was born in 1927 in *West Bengal*. He is known as figurative painter and a noted muralist. A graduate from the *Government college of Arts and Crafts, Calcutta*, *Arup Das* shifted to New Delhi for working and living.

In his artworks human figures can be seen easily. Composition of the artwork has given importance to figures. In paintings his figures passess most of the total space and attract viewer. He had stylized his figure with plenty of expression. Artist had complete control on oil colours as well as water colours. But mix media had been liked by him the most. He used to experimenting while using mix media and produced different, innovative textures and colour applications. Artist had used vast range of tonal gradation in his artworks.

He was honored by many awards from *Lalit Kala Akademi, All India Fine Arts and Crafts society* and also did some commissioned works. A mural for the Indian Exhibition organized by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting had been made by him in New Delhi as a commission work.

Artist had tried to be informed of social, cultural and historical events of his surrounding. This information can be seen easily in his works. His stylized figures have social and
historical identity. Beside social events, artist has also found his interest in mythology and because of that he painted *Mahabharata*.

From the whole series artwork *Mahabharata* is well known.

**Mahabharata** (Mix media) (Fig. 4.37) : This is a very interesting artwork from the complete series of *Mahabharata*. In this artwork artist has composed the essence of different sections of the epic together. On a single canvas artist has depicted so many figures from the different incidents and sentiments of the epic like blindfold of Gandhari, blindness of Dhritarashtra, unveil of Draupadi, Golden deer, Bhisma on the bed of arrows and battle of Kurukshetra etc. Artist has applied a monochromatic colour scheme for this artwork. With yellow, red, brown black and white colour the artwork seems to be a burning canvas. Through this artist has depicted the sentiments of the character from the epic.

From left to right in the artwork, artist has showed faces of human pierced with arrows, a deer, hopeless Draupadi urged for justice, faces of the nobles of royal court, Dhritarashtra place one hand on Gandhari's shoulder, Gandhari with crossed hand facing the beholders and standing in front of Dhritarashtra, Dusshasana holding Draupadi's saree, a face pierced with arrow, upward facing a standing figure starching his arms and Bhishma, the protector of Kuru clan laying on the bed of arrows. On one side artist has depicted a shamefull act of the history that caused the oath of Draupadi and Bhima so
the battle of Kurukshetra become the consequence. In which Dhritrashtra and Gandhari indirectly played a great role.

In the artwork some faces with closed eyes and some with frighten expression. Artist has selected realistic and semi-realistic style to depict forms and all the forms jumbled but composed with overlapping and have created perspective in the compositing. In the background artist has applied black colour that shows the darkness of the heart of mankind. Artist has created texture through colours and patch work according to the subject of artwork. Yet artist has justified with subject through his depiction.

Artist K.K. Hebber, Georg Keyt, Shardachandra Ukil, Manoj Mitra are some of the artists who has also depicted Ramayana and Mahabharata in their artworks. Thus many artists have inspired from both the epics and have presented the visual transformation of their imagination.
References:

1. Mago, Prannath, *Contemporary Art in India – A Perspective*, p. 27
9. गोयल, जवाहर, जामिनी राय का पुनरुल्लाघिक, समकालीन कला, नवम्बर 1986, मई 1987, नं. 8 and 7, पृ. 5
10. मित्तर, अभिनेता, चार, विक्रम राजकविल, 1975, पृ. 55
12. भट्टाराज, नैन, जामिनी राय की कला का मर्याद, समकालीन कला, फरवरी 2003, अंक 24, पृ. 12
13. अग्रवाल, बालेश्वर, चित्रालय अवनीदनरादयकनद्वालाओ और जामिनी राय, समकालीन कला, अंक 28, नवम्बर 2005 ‘दक फरवरी 2006, पृ. 30
19. सीतारा मैत्र, वी., वेंकटेन गोपालाणार, पृ. 1
20. बंधी, पृ. 2
23. जोशी, योगी, आधुनिक भारतीय कला, पृ. 57
25. गैरेला, बाच्चपति, भारतीय चित्रकला, पृ. 263
26. Appasamy, Jaya, *Kshitindranath a Majumdar* (Monograph)
29. *Proscenium*: The proscenium arch supports an invisible fourth wall which separates the viewer from the actor, making them invisible to each other. In actual fact, this wall is merely notated by the arch and the platform of the stage. Kapur, Geeta, ‘Ravi Verma’, Representational
Dilemmas of a Ninetieth Century Indian Painter, Journal of Arts and Ideas, Nos. 17/18, June 1989


40. Madras Year Book, 1923, Part I, p. 292


43. Valmiki, Ramayana, *Uttarkand*, pp. 716-727


45. Appasamy, Jaya, *Nandalal Bose – A tribute, Lalit Kala Contemporary-4*, p. 31

46. *Ibid*, p. 31

47. बापू, नन्दलाल, 1923, Part I, p. 292

48. बापू, नन्दलाल, 1923, Part I, p. 292

49. चतुर्वेदी, ममता, *रामायण* विज्ञानवाच्य : बीसवीं शताब्दी के कलाकार, शेषीय समकालीन कला, अंक 2, पृ. 51.

50. भारती, भीशम, शास्त्रीय विषयों में में से रूचि अधिक रही हैं, समकालीन कला, अक्तूबर–जनवरी, 2002-3, अंक 23, पृ. 25

51. सुमेहूद्र, जीवन की परिभाषा है कला, समकालीन कला, नवंबर 1987, मई 1988, अंक 9-10, पृ. 11


54. जोशी, ज्ञोतिला, आधुनिक भारतीय कला, पृ. 138.


56. भारती चित्रकला, बृहद आधुनिक कला कोश, पृ. 86.
59. जोशी, ज्योति, *आधुनिक भारतीय कला*, पृ. 165.
61. Nadkarni, Dnyaneshwar, *Husain Riding the Light*, p. 15
62. Raju Ravi Verma (Mahabharata).