

Tantric Art: From Ritual to Visual

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By

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DECLARATION

I, **R. Lakshmi** hereby declare that this thesis entitled “**Tantric Art: From Ritual to Visual**” submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of **Prof. Y.A. Sudhakar Reddy** is a bonafide research work and is also free from plagiarism. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this university or any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma. I hereby agree that my thesis can be deposited in Shodganga/INFLIBNET.

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Part of the thesis have been:

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Chapter I

Introduction

To understand the man–universe relationship, one has to probe into the practice of *Tantra Sastra* which had its roots from very long historic periods of time. *Tantra* has its origin from Indo Arian roots with broad based thought as part of ancient Indian tradition. *Tantra* is called as- “to spread the knowledge-technical branch of spiritual knowledge” by N.N. Bhattacharya in his book. It evolved with the influences of the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Epics*, and *Puranas*. It fully developed during the Gupta period (early medieval period). Its comprehensive nature had its practical approach and the doctrines are significant. The practices of *Tantra* are concerned with realities of life to attain wisdom or liberation. This thought is having a method of meditative practices followed by Hindu, Buddhist and Jain traditions, having based on the primary religious literature and practices.

As per *Tantra*, whole of creation is due to the unison of *Siva* (consciousness) and *Sakti* (the power of consciousness). In the belief of *Sakti*, the decisive ‘Truth’ is grasped as the paramount Mother and she is the ‘Celestial Mother’ and is valued in all her revealed aspects. *Tantra* is extremely ritualistic and infers a reverential lifestyle. However, it is imperative to comprehend that the purpose of *Tantra*’s abundant rules and formalities is to achieve concentration of the mind, reinforce the motivation, and expand the dedication of the practitioner. Rites in themselves are not the ultimate objective. They are realized as apparatuses used to reach higher states of consciousness. One of the most stunning and philosophical Tantric rituals is *yonipuja*. In Sanskrit, *yonipuja* means “source,” “origin,” or “birthplace.” *Puja* means “worship.” In *Tantra*, the *yonipuja* is an intangible representation of *Sakti* or the Cosmic Devi. It is the ingenious force that creates and moves through the entire Universe. Thus, *yonipuja* is a ritual to honor and venerate *Sakti*, the Devine Mother. *Yonipuja* can be performed by using a sculpture, painting, image or sanctified natural object to represent the *yonipuja* and serve as the focus of worship. The ritual starts with reverence and salutations in front of the *yonipuja*. Those attending a *yonipuja* will usually offer five different fruits or other items to *Sakti* such as flower petals, cooked rice, milk,

ghee, water etc. Then, *mantras*, chants, and supplications will be articulated for the magnificence of the Heavenly Mother.

The art and architecture derived from *Tantra* philosophy manifests the fundamental principles of the craft of art like forms, tone, lines or graphics patterns, with tone and dominant cryptograms (signs) and symbolism reflecting personal and collective consciousness. In human minds, *Tantra* not only evokes but brings out the latent consciousness in the form of art. Such process is not an independent mental activity, but has an insightful meaning and interpretation. Besides the artistic significance, the crux of Tantric art lies in its text, the content – a system of signs that can be interpreted by the community of its users, texture, the way the text, i.e. the content is woven on the screen or in sculpting and context, the socio-historical and politico-economic milieu in which such art is produced. In this sense, *Tantra* art is not just art but becomes a visual metaphysics.

Their practices reveal great variation of art forms. The imagery has designs, symbols, and constructions having certain configurations. Which are simple to complex, those are mostly abstract. Their authors are unknown, which have a deeper meaning. They are not executed for aesthetic ends. The manifestations of *Tantra* art holds on to the inherent nature and set out to create visual response in psychological as well as spiritual ways. They are called *Yantra* or *Chakra*, *Mandala* and Cosmograms are very dominant spiritualistic. Gives assistance to meditate for self-existence, self-liberation and self-awareness with wisdom and peace as goals, as they are intended to be used only as a supplement to oral instruction and personal guidance imparted by a qualified teacher (*guru*). The details of it will be discussed in the forthcoming chapters.

In this thesis an attempt is being made to understand and to explain about the traditional art and as well as the contemporary art which is inspired by contemporary artists of modern times and generally termed as the ‘Neo-*Tantra*’. The ‘Neo – *Tantra*’ is an exploration that began in the contemporary art in 1960s in India. It was at that time, a major break from the work of the first generation of post-Independence artists who struggled to evolve a new style of visual work (paintings) based on abstract visual imagery streaming out of traditional tantric ideas.

Considering the context, the contemporary Indian painting appear from the historical context of heritage and literature that has a great visual value. This extended to become a segment of the international expression. In spite of regional accents influenced by different traditions, its basic language is understood universally. Modern art is reflective of this universal heritage of the international commerce of aesthetic values and processes of art. These Modern Indian paintings add a new dimension to the experience of India, and for the painters of this country, to speak a contemporary visual language. During late 1950 and 1960s, within a tradition of art that is thousands of years old have evolved a style under the name of *Neo –Tantra*, modern painting which is invigorating for being Indian yet international. The artists have worked for a number of years to develop an individual vision in their expression, having their personal experience or feelings about *Tantra*. These artists' works are inspired by tantric art yet they are not practitioners of the philosophy, but only reflect their heritage. This involves reinterpretations of traditional tantric visual manifestations.

Significance of the study:

The contents of Tantric literature can broadly be studied in (i) philosophical and (ii) spiritual contexts. The contents of *Tantra* work can broadly be divided into four heads, they are: 1.*Jnana* (wisdom) 2.*Yoga* (meditation) 3.*Kriya* (action) and, 4.*Carya or siddhi* (attainment). These are the general feature which does not apply to each and every *Tantric* work. The foremost aim of *Tantra* is to achieve deliverance and *siddhi* (mysticalpower). To understand its basic ingredients it's necessary to study its historical background which is very vast and having different schools of thought. The present study clears the concepts, there by its contents are known.

The metaphysical art of *Tantra* has variety of forms, showing different graphic patterns of vivid colours and tones. The reflections of Tantric ideology in the art forms- painting; sculpture and so on, have an aesthetic value besides being powerful in its symbolism, philosophy and worldview of its followers. For broader discussion, these images impart an extraordinary example of how the cognitive faculty of imagination was trained through the careful practice of visualization. These images mean evidential practice, but also finding the meaning of a particular civilization.

Some of the highly gifted modern Indian artists' recent artistic creations define the scope of *Neo-tantric* art. In the present study and analysis of the work of four renowned Indian painters are been selected who are from different regions. Understanding the socio, cultural contexts of their times. Finding the concepts and their sources, to their representations Methodology/evolution or productive process is studied. The variety of the expressions and the material is analyzed.

Nature and scope of the study:

The present study examines on *Tantra* which is a philosophy, consisting of a set of meditational methods practiced by sub-sects of all Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina traditions through its historical background. It proposes to examine how these esoteric teachings found in a special class of literature of *Tantra* which is written in a cryptic and symbolic form is majorly by oral instruction and guidance which is imparted by a qualified teacher (*guru*). The *Tantra* held high its head as a universal, all embracing, all inclusive, catholic way of seeking, without distinction of caste, creed and sex, marking a grand synthesis. The study addresses questions such as why and what are the concepts? What are the kinds of concepts? How are they been taught? What kind of methods of theritual practices been followed that lead the way for the realization of the self. Discussion of Symbolism in visual art- Images are effective because they provide detail information, or invoke a feeling that the viewer can comprehend quickly. Image usage is determined by many considerations; these will be examined and discussed as to what the desired impact is, who is the audience, what kind of function of the image will serve and how conservative the overall composition is?

Conception of an Image for drawing or painting or sculpting an art piece is very crucial for it emotionally influences the artist to realize on the canvas what he/she conceives in their respective mind with regard to the task. It gives an understanding by investigating the work of the modern Indian artists like G.R. Santosh, K.C.S. Paniker, S.H. Raza, and P.T. Reddy individually. Even though the Neo- *Tantra* artists began to work from ten years ago, they are foremost modern, sophisticated, talented, visionary artists of our time and are deserving of recognition as the master painters. Although none of these artists are tantric practitioners in the

traditional sense, their spiritual, emotional and even material lives have been filled with these ideas, practices, colors and symbols.

Area of study:

The expression of *Tantra* in art form emerged into different styles and schools of thought. Thus the art that imbibed Tantric ideology reflected the core of iconography depicting the images from concrete to abstract, and thence to figurative realms. During 1950s and 1960s, the Neo –Tantric artists of modern India emerged by using the symbolism taken from literary texts containing Tantric philosophy, relevant visual representations and material culture.

The study on *Tantric Art: Ritual to Visual* focuses on process of emergence of visual imageries in painting tradition basing on the theories of *Tantric* text in the contemporary times. In other words, the thesis brings into limelight on the visual images depicted in paintings designed on the paradigms of Tantricism to show the shift of its tenets from their actual context to abstract thinking. This study will focus by taking some examples of some artists work as case studies, how they have explored in something formerly hidden. This study consults the modern artists that produced paintings echoing the visual images of Tantric symbols, in texts, materials like worship *yantras*, *chakras*(circles) talismans etc, to understand that what made them to choose these symbols in paintings and whether they were aware of the ritual significance of the forms they used in their artistic expressions. And also how each one of them relates to tantric sources in a very different way. What kind of process of work they followed? What each one of them reveal in their personal statements? What motivated them to derive inspiration from traditional Indian sources? By these examinations of aesthetic variations, subtleties and nuances we can understand their personal visual vocabulary and its identity in the modern Indian contemporary art.

Literature Review:

There are various underlying layers of meaning in the visual language and culture of *Tantra*. The historical aspect of *Tantra* and the various concepts which are embedded in its philosophy have been chosen as a subject for study. The expressive and imaginative qualities of contemporary Tantric art during the 60's and 70's which

are executed by artists of India in modern times are termed ‘Neo-*Tantra*’ (A period in art history). For the purpose of comprehending this vast body of work the present study has been broadly categorized into four major sections such as-

- I. Works on the Philosophy of *Tantra*
- II. Works on different aspects of *Tantra*
- III. Works on Indian perspective about *Tantra*
- IV. Works related to visual art of *Tantra*

This is in the context of the Modern art scene in India at that time, its study and its different expressions are closely examined.

I. Works on the Philosophy of *Tantra*

Sir John Woodroffe and Pramatha Natha Mukhopadhyaya’s book depicts the *Tantra* from Indian perspective in terms of practice of *Tantra*. Its object, whatever be its effect, is not to prove the truth of this or any other system but to give an exposition of consciousness as conceived in the doctrine of Power (*Sakti*) and in such exposition to show that it is not a mere fossil in a museum of antique thought, but has practical utility today. It offers to Western philosophy a new conception of Consciousness and Mind, and brings to the controversies within the Vedanta schools a profoundly conceived contribution, in its theory of Power and in its doctrine of the unity of *Samsara* and of that super worldly experience which is *Moksha*.

The author, B.K. Goswami in his work embodies the results of a scientific enquiry, from the historical standpoint, into the genesis, origin, and psychology of the Bhakti cult in Ancient India. Here, one discovers the theological conceptions, the ascetic practices and the ritualistic details and the history of the Bhakti movement from A.D. 1100 to till the present times. He outlines evidences of *Bhakti* in its historic and generic aspects throughout the whole course of Indian religion and philosophy, which is a synonymous with religion in India. It is carefully verified information arranged in a meticulous manner with special reference to the speculations in the supplementary Vedas, Yoga and Samkhya philosophy. The basic concepts of Jainism, Buddhism, theism, pantheism, Vedanta cult, *Itihasa*, *Purana* and *Agama sastras* in relation to *Bhakti* is also discussed in this work. All of these proclaim the doctrine of comprehensive devotion. A philosophic doctrine system of *brhmasutras* placed in the period of the Vedic revival, approximately around the

Third century B.C. The Vedism, thus thoroughly revived, soon made its influence felt through a mass of sacred literature. The *smitis* are remembered afresh, the Vedic laws, the *puranas* once again supplemented the Vedic truths. The *Tantras* propagated a new the essential Vedic doctrines. According to the author, *Tantras* was a name associated with every recognized post-Vedic school of thought, philosophic or ritualistic, orthodox or heretic, it was another name for *sastras*. Accordingly the Vedic age - Hindu religious life is dominated by the elements of self-defense, self-assertion, and self –aggrandizement, and all characteristics of the first stage of life’s struggle for existence. This was not evident simultaneously, but subordinately, hankering for knowledge of the superior powers or a power that helped life’s struggles and a distinct and marked attachment towards the god or gods that stood by them in their dangers and difficulties.

Sir John Woodroffe (Arthur Avalon) in his book upholds that there exists an eternal and indefinable Supreme Reality, the Brahman who is an Absolute. He is always inconceivable, unknowable and ineffable. Such state of reality is represented in three terms; *Sat*, an absolute existence, a *Cit*, an absolute consciousness, and *Ananda*, an absolute bliss. Such composure of a Brahman leads one to self-revelation. The infinite being of Brahma contains these all which are brought out to manifest into a variety of plenitude of forms. With the ultimate power held in the infinitude of Brahman, Forms emerge out from the Formless depths of the Eternal. It is considered as *Maya*, the illusion. Her Lord is, *Saktirman*. A detailed examination of the contribution of the six major Systems of Indian Philosophic Thought, the *Sad Darshanas*, towards the understanding of the nature of the Reality, the Universe and the Individual is done in this work as part of the essence of *Tantra* formulation. It is shown how each of the systems, Nyaya, Vaisesika, Sankhya, Yoga, and the Schools of the Vedanta, lead step by step towards a spiritual Monism as the ultimate Truth of Creation.

It is noteworthy that Sir John does not deal with these thought-systems as things of the past but treats them as living stages in the progress of the human mind towards fuller and fuller Knowledge and relates them at every step to the march of modern Science. He is convincing when he discusses how most of the truths perceived by the *Seers* of old are now being confirmed by the progress of Science.

This is not to say that all that is being discovered by Science today is there already known in the ancient thought of India and in the same form. The fact is that the fundamental truths of the Universe which were seized upon directly by the fresh and intuitive mind of the *Seers* of the Veda and Upanishad are now being confirmed by physical and psycho-physical sciences from the other end. Their method--the experimental method -is necessarily different, but the conclusions at which they arrive are substantially and strikingly the same as posited by the Vedanta.

The author upholds that the whole universe and its constituents are of the Supreme Power and the *AdyaSakti*. Consciousness as force being spiritual and transcendent in its pristine state, it bursts forth in the Universe constituting or becoming several orders of creation by a graded self-formulation and modification of itself in solid and denser forms of existence. Matter, Life, Mind, are each of them different terms of the self-manifestation of the One Divine Consciousness and are found to be as such in their depths, when scrutinized with appropriate means. The reality of spiritual experience is the basic unity of origin that underlies all forms in creation. Hence the creation process manifests supreme consciousness as force and Divine *Sakti* in enjoyment of bliss. Arthur Avalon (the pen-name of Justice Sir John Woodroffe) appraised the *Tantras* at their true value. In his monumental work, "The Garland of Letters", he has familiarized the Indian public with the meaning and significance of both the esoteric and objective aspects of Tantric thought and meditation developed through Mantras and Yantras but culminating in an attainment not intrinsically different from the ideals of the Raja-Yoga.

According to Om Prakash's work, the Tantric religion and practices were firmly established in India in the seventh century. *Tantra* literature deals with five principle topics - creation and dissolution of the universe, the worship of deities, the attainment of certain superhuman powers and the blending of the individual with the universal soul. For the achievement of the last two objectives, certain yogic exercises were regarded as essential. By about A.D. 1000, the Tantric elements were found in all the religious sects of India. The Saiva and Vaisnava religious literary works agree on one point that a female principle representing the *Sakti* or energy must be associated with *purusa* (The ultimate reality or the source of power considered as male). The *purusa* is not only the cause of manifestation but is also

responsible for differentiation. A diversified world in time and space, including finite individuals, comes into being, because of the association of the male principle with the female one, as in the generation of the world of living beings. The human body was regarded as the seat of divine energy in every part thereof. In *sakta Tantra*, the technical word *kula* used in the tantric literature which has a two –fold meaning: One, on the philosophic side, *Kula* means the assemblage of three similar things namely soul (*jiva*), knowledge (*jnana*) and world. It is one and the same consciousness that takes these forms. In *KaulaJnana* the mind and the sight become united: the sense organs lose their individuality and *Sakti* becomes identical with *jiva* and the sight merges into the objective to be visualized. The other, on the yogic side, *Kula* is *adharachakra* connected with it is the *susumna* (the artery) through which psychic energy travels to *sahasraracakra*. From it trickles the ambrosia (*kulamrta*) which enables one to conquer even death. The *Paramasiva* is the ultimate reality into which merge the three aspects of *Sakti* namely *iccha*, (the will of self-manifestation) and *kriya* (the aspect which gives rise to the activity). When *jiva* identifies with *Siva*, getting free from limitations, there is *mukti* (salvation), Tantric practices are mostly connected with yogic processes which make *Sakti* merge with *Siva*. In the performance of *sadhana*, for the attainment of mystic power the accessory means were *mantras* i.e. prayers, *bijamantras* (mystic –syllables) and *mudras* (postures of hands and fingers). The two most important Brahmanical tantric sects were those of Kaulas and the Kapalikas.

While describing the scope and origin of the *Tantra*, the author, M.D. Ramachandran defines the word called *Tantra* which is spiritual knowledge of a technical nature. In his view, the *Tantra* held high its head as a universal, all embracing, all inclusive, catholic way of seeking, without distinction of caste, creed and sex, marking a grand synthesis leading the way for the realization of the self. This was a first attempt at a great synthesis of action, experience and even enjoyment in life and the world, *bhoga*, for man and for his attainment of the highest spiritual realization of the supreme as the one absolute. Its aim was to experience, like and act from his status of a positive affirmation of the *samaaikhyabhava*, the unity of the Divine, the pure undifferentiated consciousness, the *citas* *Siva* and the consciousness-power of the absolute being the *cit-Sakti*. For him the *Tantra* is

asruti. The *Vissvasa-tattvaSamhita* considers *Tantra* as the product of the mysterious science of the Vedanta and the Sankhyasastra.

Tantra enumerates the individual traits and dispositions the intrinsic nature, *svabhava* or soul-nature. This is to find out the class of person and choose for him the appropriate *sadhana*. He also mentions that there are various *sadhanas* suitable to different types of persons. Also the wise teacher offers graded types of *sadhanas*. Hence he discusses in detail the roles of the disciple and the *acarya* emphasizing that the *Tantra* is pre-eminently a *SadhanaSastra*. He also explains that the concept of creation in the *Tantras* is mainly metaphysical. He enumerates how *panchabhutas* constitute everything in the universe. And how they are elemental principles underlying all phenomena and are of great significance in *Tantra* as well as in all yogas. The Japa, the ritual repetition of the given mantra, the letters, words or hymns of power has a central place in the discipline of the *Tantras*. It is a mystic “Science of Sound”. The discipline, the *mantra sadhana* is of the greatest importance in the *Tantras*.

In common with all material substances, all objects sensed which induce pleasure or pain in man, the constituent principles- *tattva* of the gross materials used in this *panchatattva* worship of the Devi are also made up of the same original five elements or principles. This is the esoteric meaning underlying the rites of worship that he conveys. The disciple is directed to offer the *tattvas* through the corresponding *cakras*, the centers which represent the elements in his own subtle body. He also discusses of how important is the Siva and *Sakti*. It is because, wisdom (*jnana*) cannot move without dynamism, power, thoughts and ideas; can never be effective without the coordination of vital force. Siva is the processor of *Sakti*. *Sakti* is identity. One cannot be without the other. Siva as the ruler of the earth rides a bull i.e. he rules according to the *dharma* as consciousness. The *Tantra* says that by worshipping the divine mother as bountiful and blissful is surrendering to the real, that is, consciousness and power. Self-realization has always been held out as the one aim, the goal to be achieved.

Oliver Leaman describes theories, practices and techniques in philosophies of eastern and western worlds. He established the relationship between religion and culture from the perspective of philosophy. He interpreted esoteric state as an

amalgamation of thoughts and ideas for self-liberation through body, mind and spirit. According to *Tantra* philosophy, the universe is originated from the supreme. Every human being is composed of five constituents of nature that is, air, fire, water, earth and space. The author says about the universality of *Tantric* practices involving Guru's teaching to the pupil about a variety of ritual practices and spiritual chant, mantra, to recite in regular numbers for overcoming difficulties in life and also to impress upon oneself the presence of the deity in a total sense. He finds relationship between *Tantra* and yoga. Through proper thought, words and deeds one could unite with reality. A variety of practices were prescribed to achieve it. The *Tantra* practices got changed and the forbidden ones are given new interpretations and thus the entire tantric tradition may become obscure.

II. Works on Different Aspects of Tantra

Sir John Woodroffe (pen name Arthur Avalon) in his book on serpent power gives significance of *kundalini Sakti*, and the yoga in *TantraSastra*.

Arthur and Ellen Avalon in his book on the Goddess or Devi, depicts Devi, as God and an aspect of mother. The *Navaratneshwara* considers Devi as an existence, consciousness and bliss. Devi may be considered as a masculine or feminine power or pure for she plays a crucial role in the *TantraSastra*.

Philip Rawson opines that the *Tantra* is a set of beliefs and practices which combines eroticism, magic and metaphysics. The author deals with the unusual and overwhelming visual work the extraordinary spiritual and visual imagery of Tantricism and patterns of human expression in the form of symbols. For him *Tantra* is of not an illusion or fantasy but an expression of world's realities. He interprets *Tantra* as locus but not the pleasure of life. He suggests that people to raise their individual enjoyments to its peak and then apply it (*tantra*) as a fuel in spiritual journey. Sir John Woodroffe tried to erase the myopia with regard to the knowledge and ignorance that spread around the philosophical underpinnings of *Saktism* and its practices. Through his intense research on these aspects he advocated that the *Sakti* cult is based on a spiritual, rational and transparent philosophy and there is no mystique in the techniques of her worship. Hence, the precepts of *Saktism* uphold non-dualist, *Advaita* philosophy, akin to the Kashmir Saivism. In both the

philosophies the ultimate reality is Siva-*Sakti* where in both are not separate entities. Siva is manifested as consciousness, *cit* and *Sakti* as dynamic energy, *cidrupini*. Siva is the reality of all realities and influences the universe through his *Para Sakti*. He becomes the cause of the world through his feminine part. The doctrine of *abhyasavada* corresponds to the precepts of *Saiva* and *Sakta* ideologies. This view upholds that they are all different aspects of the Ultimate Reality. *Mantra sadhana* is an essential part of spiritual discipline. The most potential way of propitiating a *devata*, Goddess is through the recitation of the *bija-mantra*. An aspirant who recites *Om* (the *Pranava mantra*), the highest of all *mantras* to meditate, reaches eventually the goal of life, *moksa*.

Pushpendra Kumarsin booksheds light on Sakti cult upheld by different philosophical thoughts. He presents various aspects of Indian religion of which it is an important branch. The presents study deals the intriguing problems regarding *Saktism*. The ideology and practices of *Sakteya* School of worship is rooted in *Upanidhads* and *Vedic* chants. The concept of *Sakti* is a harmonious blending of both, one empirical and the speculative perspectives world. It is believed that union of male and female is imperative for creation. .

In India ever since the Indus civilization to till date down *Sakti* is being and *Siva* are being represented symbolically in *yonis* and *linga* forms. In world's traditional societies, women contribute for the cultural transmission across generations. In early human societies, the divine mother goddess is considered as a deity and the giver of life. Woman is considered as earth (*Mata bhoomi*, *Atharvaveda*, *Pruthvisukta* 12/1) for seeds were sown in it for raising crops. Thus the women emerged as metaphors of productivity and continuity. Women and earth are homologized in their nature and function. To bring natural productivity under control, the primitive people attached supreme importance to the human generative organs and employed sexual union or its imitation as a means to achieve an end. Her organs and attributes were thought to be endowed with generative power and so they were the life-giving symbols. It is substantiated by the prevalence of female figurines carved in bone, ivory and stone with exaggerated sex organs found in the excavation of Stone Age sites. He also brings in a point that the Tantric *Srichakra* is nothing but the representation of the female generative organ. Primarily, the *linga*

was the symbol of the act of cultivation while the *yonī* represented mother earth; this finds support in a statement of Manu. The aim of the *Sakti* worshipper is to realize the universe within himself and to become one with the goddess. It's free from all sorts of inhibitions. All the women are regarded as manifestations of Prakriti or *Sakti* and honored which respect and devotion.

Chandradhar Sharma opines that the cult of *RudraSiva* can be found in the Vedic period. The *SaivaSiddhanta* is impregnated in eighteen *agamas*. *Taittiriya Aranyaka* opines that the entire Universe is the manifestation of *Siva*. *Saivism* has several sects viz: *Virasaivism*, *Saktivisistadvaita* and *Saivasiddhanta*. The author advocates that the *Saivasiddhanta*. He considers the *ShaivaSiddhanta* sect as Southern and *pratyabhigna* (KashmiraSaivism) as that of the northern schools of *Saivism*. *Siva* being the absolute reality, he is aptly called as *pati* or the lord. He is manifestation of eight qualities, infinite self-existence, infinite purity, infinite wisdom, infinite freedom, infinite grace or love, infinite omnipotence and infinite bliss'. If *Siva* is the primary cause, his *Sakti*, energy is instrumental cause.

The tangible substance of creation is *Mahamaya* or *Bindu* or *Vidya*. Both *Mahamaya* and *Maya* (illusion) are the substance or material (*Jada*) power of the *Siva*. It is known as the *ParigrahaSakti* distinct from *SvarupaSakti* is the essence of the God. Since the lord is omnipresent (ubiquitous), omnipotent (all powerful) and omniscient (all knowing), performs and performs all the five functions of the universe, *srishti* (creation), *sthiti* (existence), *laya* (destruction), *tirodhana* (obstruction) and *anugraha* (benevolence for liberation) for the soul. *KashmiraSaivism* put forth thirty six *tattvas*, the nature of the manifestation of cosmos. It is interpreted as: 'Through the five important aspects of *Sakti* known as *chit*, *ananda*, *ichcha*, *jnana* and *kriya* arises *Siva*, *Shakti*, *SadaSiva*, *Ishvara* and *Shuddhavidya*, the five transcendental *tattvas*. That aspect of *Sakti* which makes the infinite appear as finite is the sixth *mayatattva* which gives rise to the five *kanchukas*, i.e., poset (*kala*), knowledge (*vidya*), attachment (*raga*), time (*kala*) and space (*niyati*) through this *maya* makes the infinite *Siva* appear. The *Saivas* made her the consort of *Siva*. *Sakti* is the power of existence, knowledge and bliss of Brahman and is inseparable from it, which is inseparable from the power of *Siva*'. The author interprets the mystic dimension for yoga. For him, *Mantra*, the chants for

attainment and *Tantra*, the route or strategy of attainment are auspicious, undisclosed and godly. To attain bliss, Kundalini has to be awakened and six chakras have to be practiced. The *SaktiTantra* has three branches, Kaula, Samaya and *Misra*. The crux of the practices, the *mudras* lie in their interpretative process. *KulaisSakti* or *kundalini* and *akula* is means *Siva* who could be a *kaula* that could unite with *Sakti*.

Sir JohnWoodroffe holds that the ideology of *Tantra* is an emergent spiritual thought in Indian soils that could negotiate diverse philosophical thoughts that emanated after Epic age. *Tantra* could amalgamate the philosophies of *Advaita* (monism)and *Samkhya* (dualism) and blend *Jnana* (knowledge) with the *rasa*(essence) of *Bhakti*(ardent devotion) to converge *prakriti* (Nature)with its *purusa* (Lord)that exists within the self of individual. Thus the *Tantra* synchronizes Spirit and Matter in human life. It redresses the essence of Vedic tradition that upholds nature of man, complements relationship between Nature and God on one hand and on the other hand mother (earth) and father (heaven). *Tantra* revolves round the precept of appropriation every channel to exalt the human consciousness to the level of Divinity. *Tantra* system is coherent and self-appraising knowledge system that transforms natural energies into their supernatural forms and there by leads its adherents towards enjoyment life in celestial world in spirituous consciousness, the *mukti* (liberation).The *Kularnava* is a crucial tantric text for its practice. It expects the practitioner to become conscious of birth as human being who had given an option to be in between faraway and nearer to the God. He warns about the consequences of being lost in one's own self, if one gets immersed in the circles of momentary excitements and pleasures. He made distinction between drinkers of wine and drinker of ecstasy. The pleasure of union occurs due to the mutual energies of Sakti and Siva, but not between the union of male and female. These restrictions warn the adepts to alienate sex and spirituality to reach higher ecstasy. The *Kuliirnava* up holds the process reaching the high quest by observing ethics, right way of life, right thinking and right meditation (*yoga*) to elevate human life progressively to the state of divine life. *Tantra* knows the complexity of men and leads them to the well-being of their mental faculties, cleansing of their emotions and passions, orientation of their physical abilities through ritual, *japa*, *mantra* and *upasana*. Meaning of the terms and concepts in *Tantra Sastra* are highly educative.

Katherine Anne Harper and Robert L. Brown focused on issues of origin, sources and emergence of *Tantra* in ancient Indian society. It is held, “*Tantras* are systematized compilations of elaborate mixtures of psycho-experimental speculation. She dates back its origin to 6th century B.C. The contents deal with definition of *Tantra* the most difficult aspect and its origin, important characteristics, sources, practices and its relationships to other religions. The essays emphasize on the history, development of *Tantra*, the art history and archeology of *Tantra* and its literature. It uses different disciplines and methodological approaches.

III. Indian perceptions about *Tantra*

T. N. Mishra’s book covers different aspects of Tantric religion, philosophy and art including development of the *Tantra*, and the basic ideas of the *Tantra*. The enormous impact of *Tantra* on Brahmanical Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, and the Tantric influence in art and architecture is discussed in this work. It is thematically arranged and they deal with the subject within the span of a wide composite. The Tantric religion is extremely interesting; it is mysterious. However, he had tried to explain some of its mysteries and point out certain misconceptions prevailing in the society about Tantric religion and its practices.

The author, Cintaharan Chakravarti has given a broad outline, a general idea of the subject with special reference to the literature and practices known in Bengal. This helps in studying more details about the subject. In this he notices that the division of *Tantra* topics is indicated by the four sections; for ex., *Matanga Parameshvari Tantra* has four *padas* or sections entitled *vidya*, *kriya*, *Yoga*, and *carya*. He also mentions that it broadly can be divided into two divisions; ex., *Kriya Tantra* and *yoga Tantra*. The literature of *Tantras* of various sects is mainly ritualistic which has got many interesting features. The reference is made here to the characteristic features of the *Tantra* worship. *Diksha*, or initiation which is the most essential preliminary of the *Tantra* form of worship, and also two important features of worship are *bhutasuddi* and *nyasa* which aim at the purification of the body and help the gradual realization of the supreme ideal of the *Tantra* form of worship, viz. ‘the identity of the individual soul with the supreme soul’. The *mantras* with which the deities are invoked consist of one or more syllables indicated by word symbols

which differ in different Schools and are explained in special dictionaries. Various rites are prescribed for making the *mantras* efficaciously. Of these an extremely important one is the *purascarana* which consists of five elements: the repetition of the *mantra* for a prescribed number of times, *homa*, *tarpana*, and *abhisheka* with the same *mantra*, followed by the feeding of Brahmanas. The worship is done on the image of the deity; it is offered to an image of the deity, an image is the preference in Bengal, and the diagram elsewhere. A reference may be made here to the *Tantra* system of *yoga* which provides a complete code of self-discipline. The elaborate rites of worship and *yogic* practices often go hand in hand. There are also rituals, especially in connection with *Sakti* deities, consisting of apparently revolting sensuous practices which are responsible for the disrepute in which Tantrism in general and *Saktism* in particular are usually held in modern times. These are ‘*satkarmas* (the rites) *dutiya* (appropriation of *panacmakara* to purify five *tattvas* i.e., natures of body; *madya* (wine), *mamsa* (meat), *matsya* (fish), *mudra* (fried or parched grain) and *mithuna* (sexual intercourse) and worship with a corpse’. Arthur Avalon in his work on principles of *Tantra* holds that the worship of a maiden (*kumari puja*) is an embodiment of all deities. Hence veneration of maiden drives away all the evils and brings prosperity to the worshipper. It is because feeding of one maiden gives the merit of feeding three worlds.

The forms of *Sakti* are numerous. A number of them are classed as the *mahavidyas* or *vidyas* and the *nityas*. One of the most important and popular of the *Sakti* deities, and rituals connected with her worship are described in the *nityasodasikarana*. It is said that gods gave her the name Tripura. Different aspects and forms of this deity are mentioned. She is stated to have primarily three varieties i.e., Bala, Bhairava, and Sundari. She has numerous votaries spread over different parts of the country. She is represented as full of beauty and hence she is known as by names like Tripurasundari, Rajarajeshwari and Sodasi. Kali is the most popular deities worshiped in Bengal. The deities Kali, Tara and Durga are very popular in Eastern India, especially in Bengal. She is worshipped on different occasions under different names and forms, all fearful and ferocious, manifesting the spirit of destruction which she represents.

Prema Saran' study focuses on the self-indulging nature of practices in Indian *Tantra* tradition. It ensures that sexual pleasure is the natural mean to attain ecstasy. The author treats the theory and practice of *Tantra* very convincingly and situates its space in Bengal and Assam in general and in Indian ritual life in particular. The author perceived the subject from the anthropological perspective. He holds that though *Tantra* is considered as heterodox belief unlike the Vedic traditions, but still it is an assertive dogma in ancient philosophical traditions. The author feels that content of *Tantra* is not eulogized because the people might have assimilated the ethics of missionaries and Britishers and its mystical and erotic way of propitiating god to attain liberation made the path secretive. The book has lacunae in the treatment of philosophy and reflections in its practices.

Pushpendra Kumar's another work gives an account of different dimensions of Tantra and Tantric practices that are existing in India. The book discusses the roots of Vedism in *Tantra* ideology and precepts like esotericism, worship of Sakti, practices and so on. The author says that the first deities in the *Tantras* were the Sun (*Saurasamhita*) and the *Saktis*, like Vageshwari (*Parameshavarimata Tantra*) where she is described as highest *Sakti* and Kubjika, a goddess of the potter class, which belongs to the same period i.e., A.D. 423-4. Based on the textual references of *Purva Tantra* assumed that Tantrism began in an age when the scythe-Kushana impact was still in force, as much as the Sun cult of the period shows Magian influence, while the Kubjika *Tantra* actually refers to the Magas (S. Chattopadhyay, *The Sakas in India*, 1967). An analysis of the *Tantras*, according to the author, shows that they contain the essentials of the vedic worship with its animal sacrifice, diagrams etc., the absolute monoism of the Upanishads; the yoga doctrine of Patanjali and the *bhakti* or the devotional elements of the Puranic texts.

The *Sadana* is acquiring of sublime knowledge which would make one self realise the real self within one's mortal coil. The distinct forms of *Sadana* include offering to God by Vedic methods of oblation and sacrifice; and Worshipping the deity by offering of flowers, leaf, water etc., with devotion and; the third form of sadhana which came from non-Indian sources like Proto-Australoid, Dravidian, and Mangoloid sources found their way into the Hindu religion which is a synthesis of all. *Tantras* also made a similar attempt in keeping up with age long Indian tradition

with the difference that it was less orthodox in attitude. There are two aspects to notice about *Tantra* - why the *Tantras* are so heterodox in character when an early work like *KularnavaTantra* extols the orthodox texts and secondly how far can we trace foreign influence in it. The study of tantric text reveals the fact that the majority of the *Tantras* centre round mother cult and that they are heterodox in nature. This is due to the fact that the cult of the Mother goddess, which more and more made an alliance with Saivism, flourished mainly outside unorthodox Brahmanical fold. And hence Sakta *Tantras* to the large extent, Saiva *Tantras* to some extent, show unorthodox influence. Again some *Tantras* like the *Rudrayamala*, showing the mixture of Siva-Sakti worship, betray unorthodox characteristics.

The most extensive exposition is found only in the *Tantras* regarding worship of goddess. It is called *Tantra* because it gives an extensive knowledge relating to the *tattvas* and the *mantras* and leads to salvation. It is significant to note that the tantric ideology is meant for all irrespective of caste and gender unlike the Vedic tradition where in all these matters.

Ideologically *Siva* is a 'divine energy' which is sedentary, inherent (with-in), still (cool without agony and agitation). But his consort *sakti* is a dynamic perspective of his divine energy. *Sakti* is considering as replica of divinity and its energy which contributes for the existence, continuity and protection of the universe from destruction. *MahaSakti* is an aggregate of *trigunas*, *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas* depicting her creative preservative and destructive dimensions. She assumes various forms. She is known as Kali, Tara, Shodasi, Bhuvaneshari, Dhumavati, Bangal, Bhairavi, Chinnamasta, Matangi, and Kamala. All this is to fulfill the desires of *sadhaka*. She is *ananda* itself, or a state of eternal bliss which cannot be conceived by mind or words. When Parabrahman or Mahakala is desirous of creating the universe, the objective world emerges from him through the centres of realization or Chakras.

Each of the goddesses worshipped by the saktas has a *Yantra*, assigned to her, which is sometimes placed in the centre of a lotus. The *srichakra* is the principle *Yantra*, which are mystic diagrams thought to be quite effective for salvation. According to *Siva Samhita* there are four *Yogas*: Mantrayoga, Hatayoga,

Layayoga, and Rajyoga, the *yoga* through the rousing of *kundalini Sakti* is *layayoga*, it means piercing by the *kundalini*, *Sakti* of the six bodily centres or *cakras* (also called *padmas*—lotuses). The *yoga* is a condition wherein the *jivatma*, the individual soul is merged with the *paramatma*, the divine spirit. But it is not same with the *dvaita*, and *Visistadvaita* dogma in which both (*jivatma* and *paramatma*) is not separate. The *saktas* and *Advaitavadins*, and according to them, identity of the two (*jivatma* and *Paramatma*) is to be realized by the *yogi*. The mysticism of *yoga*, has also been dealt with elaborately in the *Tantras*. The object of practicing *Yoga*, as conceived by *tantrikas*, is to acquire the power of visualizing the supreme soul within the limitations of the individual soul. One who longs for *mukti* is directed to think himself completely lost in the all-pervading soul, and to a *yogin*, the world of perception vanishes into the absolute. The *Tantra* school accepted the identity between *jiva* and *brahman* and have repeatedly stated in clear terms that the highest form of *yoga* is the attainment of unity of *jiva* with the supreme soul.

The *Tantras* have always insisted upon the supreme importance of *jnana*. Knowledge in its purest form is said to be the only way that leads to final emancipation. It has empathetically been asserted that *mukti* is attained only by *jnana* and not by any other means to attain all this tantric *sadhana* combines in it the elements of *yoga*, worship, prayer, and meditation on the identity of the individual and the absolute. The *Tantra* recognizes three distinct states of *sadhana* viz. Purification (*suddhi*), illumination (*sthiti*) and unification (*arpana*), corresponding roughly to *karma*, *bhakti* and *jnana*. The individual has to undergo various processes in order to purify himself. That also his purification is to be attained through both, *bhavana* (Meditation) and *kriya* (deeds), and through the harmonious working of both, mind and body. The achievement of the goal, *Tantra Sadhana* through *tantra*, begins with the *sankalpa*, the resolution which strengthens determination and will of the achiever, the *sadhaka*. It is an ultimate power which brings him success. *Tantra* conceives *atma* the soul as deity in temple, the body. Further it treats *atma* the soul as ‘micro aspect’ of *Siva*. The real worship of *Siva* is only possible by oneself, whose heart freed from all impurities. The last stage is complete surrender.

N.N Bhattacharyya dealt with the significance of *tantrism* in Indian religious thought across the ages. He holds that the *Tantra* literature has complex theoretical

(ideological) and ritualistic (sacred practices) knowledge that pervades socio religious life of the mendicants. However *tantra* and its practices are considered to be of low as they are connected with the black magic. It is considered to be a practice forbidden for a person of higher thinking. The contemporary writers highlight the issues connected with ritual sex and related aspects. But in reality the entire tantric religious text and practices these aspects receive less space than that of the other precepts of its philosophy. The author feels that several issues related to sex are being dealt with in the context of *tantra* and its practices. The traditionalist interpret the sexual elements of *tantra* as 'purely symbolic' and by the others as 'applied symbolic', that is used in different context other than for which it is meant. *Yuganadha* is a symbolic expression of the harmonious blending of masculinity and femininity because both the features are innate and inherent to human nature. Thus the sexual relationship between two opposites is an expression of intimate partnership. Thus it can be interpreted that for a man women is a focus of concentration, meditation and a symbolic reality for knowing anything.

Anyhow *tantric* ideology and its manifestations in mundane lives are said to have been located in 'primitive sex rites' associated with magico-religious practices connected to fertility cult. One should not fail to recall in this connection that such primitive sex rites contributed everywhere to the development of religious ideas and, in a broad sense, to the evolution of human thought as a whole. In India, under diverse historical conditions, these primitive elements survived and were given new forms and interpretations in accordance with the changing demands of time and taste.

In connection with the sexual elements of Tantrism, Debiprasad Chatopadhyaya has raised two important questions. What could be the ultimate material basis of tantric *dehavada* or body theory and the practices related to it and what was the course of development that this archaic outlook eventually underwent? For him the *dehavada* (doctrine of making the body strong) and cosmogony (origin of universe) in *tantrasadana* are the expansions of primitive religious beliefs. The *sankhya* materialist philosophy is an elaborated work of primitive materialism which in turn emerged as a core of tantric ideology. The homologation of women and earth and depiction of women as the locus of the

human fertility and related agricultural rites convey the way of getting materials of sustenance. It invariably connects the mystery of nature with that of the human body, from which it transpires that the birth of the universe is the result of the same or similar process as the birth of the human beings.

In primeval belief with regard to the origin of universe (cosmogony) women are depicted as mother and life giver and organs and traits are represented as life sustaining symbols. Par excellence, the concept of *Yoni* i.e. female organ or female womb, as the first principle (of the list of cosmogonical theories in the *Svetavatara Upanishad*) found its best theoretical expression in the sankhya concept of *PrakritiorPradhana*, the material as well as the female principle of creation, the substratum of the earlier *Tantras*. As time passed its original content was replaced by purely Vedantic accretions.

Tantrism was in fact an attitude towards life, a distinct outlook or view point, that had permeated all forms of mental, intellectual and cultural activities of the people of India throughout the ages, and as such its associations with different religious and philosophical ideas were natural. *Tantrism* is beyond religion and belief but it is intrinsically associated with different activities of mundane life like agriculture, extraction and technology connected to ores, scientific and medical knowledge related to body, mind and soul. It is a form of knowledge pertaining to different walks of life human activities, functioning as a parallel tradition with that of the dominant and sophisticated class and standing in reciprocal relation with the latter by way of influencing and getting influenced. Common people need a personal god, who is supposed to look after them, help them in their struggle for existence, ignore their lapses and bestow grace when it is needed. This popular sentiment gave rise to the cult of *Bhakti* or devotion to a personal god. This cult of *Bhakti* found expression through innumerable local and tribal deities no question whether it is crude or refined. In course of time, these deities were grouped according to their nature and temperament and became either identified or associated with the supreme beings of what came to be known later as *Panchopasana* or the five major forms of devotional religious systems, and also made their way into Buddhism and Jainism. A large number of such deities from the said systems and also from Mahayana Buddhism had a reorientation in Tantrism.

The present form of Tantrism is obtained from a variety of sources, reveals a combination of two aspects - popular or *laukika*, and the sophisticated, or that which is burdened with Brahmanical superimpositions. Category of *laukikaTantra* reflects the liberal attitude of the simpler peoples towards religion and society. In religion this attitude is marked by the negation of all external formalities and doctrinal intricacies in regard to spiritual quest and by the affirmation of the beliefs and practices which are regarded as the heritage of the primitive and unsophisticated, -undifferentiated way of life. In the case of society this attitude is marked by the rejection of the caste system and patriarchy upheld in the Brahmanical Smartha-Pauranic tradition, and by its insistence on regulating the practical aspects of life - like manual and technical labour, chemical sciences, medicine, metallurgy, and so on. This *laukikaTantra* was accepted in principle by the *Atimargika* (those who do not believe in the codified norms of spiritual realization) and the *vedabahya* (those who prefer to base their doctrines on anti-vedic and anti brahmanical ideas) sects. The sophisticated *Tantras*, on the other hand, are full of brahmanical elements since their composers consistently attempted to interpret the teachings of *Tantra* in terms of Smartha -Puranic ideals. The philosophical aspects of *tantrism* were brought in line with Vedanta. Its teachings were given smartha-colour.

IV. Works related to Visual Art of Tantra

Carl G.Jung theory of 'collective unconsciousness' represents dreams as symbolic manifestation of realities and are considered as solutions suggested to the conscious life by the unconscious self of the individuals. His concepts of personal and collective unconsciousness, complexes, dreams, persona, archetypes, anima and animus are very much connected much to the tantric perspectives of religion and human imagination. In his opinion understanding of one's own self (subjective consciousness) gives a wholesome and fruitful life. The *Tantra* and *Yantra* serve as the mediators between self and his/her goal of attaining the realization of one's own goal.

Ajit Mookerjee and MadhuKhanna connect *tantra* and its application in expression of art and rites. In other words, the applicability of the theory of *tantra* in the development of themes in art production is possible. He interprets that the source of human creativity is one's own psychic power from which a individual develops a

holistic thought process to develop desired techniques. They say that it is a beginning of a new outlook. Thus the author explored *tantra* to enhance human creativity for self-realization.

Karkel Werner's collection of papers are about inadequate definitions of symbol; one is ascribing the capacity of becoming a symbol to anything that has a meaning and the other one regarding the process by which a symbol comes into existence to be a matter of convention rather than of any intrinsic link between the symbol and the entity which it symbolizes. The author then examine, first the qualities which a symbol may be required to have such as being 'acceptable' and having an 'innate power' or what is called 'necessary character' and second the relation a symbol has to what it symbolizes: whether it represents that entity and somehow participates in it, mediates its deeper meaning or even integrates into human life realities not normally encountered in everyday life, a point particularly relevant to symbols in religions. He then examines symbols as used in religions discourse, the Tillich makes for symbolic language as pointing to truth if it adequately expresses man's 'ultimate concern' and Ludwig Wittgenstein's Picture theory of religions language – only to conclude that, symbols being the language of religion, we can never know the reality they point to: we can only elucidate the life which symbols have as a form.

Nigel Cowthorne's work sheds light on art and styles of tradition through the ages in India. In this book, the Hindu art tradition as revealed in religious structures and scriptures are dealt with from the times of *Mouryas*. The Buddhist, Jain and Islamic art traditions are also highlighted. India represents one of the oldest cultures of the universe having urban cultures around B.C. 2500. The author feels that Indian art tradition has tremendous consistency despite its subjection to local and foreign invasions and offending issues among different religious sects. They regarded the world as an illusion and through their art were endeavor to reveal the truth behind it. Indian art is full of symbolism drawn from one of the richest, most sophisticated cultures in the world. The meaning that animate that culture are now being understood in the west and Indian art can at least be seen and appreciated in its full glory.

According to Philip S. Rawson, religions are founded on sets of symbols which structure man's intuitions about his world and its meaning and about density, and proceeds to show how the language of symbols has been incorporated not only in the scriptures, myths and legends of the Indian tradition, but most powerfully also in Indian religious art and even in the structural complexity of the Hindu temple. He indicates from here there is a direct link to the 'Structural; or shall we rather say multi-dimensional complexity of the 'temple' of the human personality itself which ranges from the gross level of the physical body through the supersensory level of the 'subtle' body to the level of the divine energy, reaching even as far as the transcendental 'center' of being itself beyond the wasteful entropy of time.

"There are a number of gifted and talented painters slowly emerging on the map, intensely aware of the situation. The most remarkable cutting across generations but experimenting and seeking are K.C.S. Panicker, BirenDe, some of these are exploring the sources of Tantric art". Indian artists, perhaps have to perforce pass through a period of experimentation, of again and again questioning their precepts, before the break-through comes. Potentially, in the words of Philip Rawson, Indian artists may well make a significant contribution to the Twentieth Century art in solving the problem of what he calls the 'Numinous' image. This, however, will be possible only when the concept of inevitable trailing behind is thrown into the trash bin and Indian artists take the risky and taken by all artists worth the name everywhere, that of being in opposition to the ruling culture.

YashodharaDalmia, unlike the others who gave factual description on the styles of depiction in art, his approach is dynamic. In his book he traces the gradual development of styles of art from colonial period till date with a special emphasis on the contemporary trends. He dealt with the conceptual advancements upheld by different schools of thought with regard to the techniques of paintings, sculptures, installations etc. He holds that the ideology of multiculturalism influenced the Indian art tradition for it borrowed trends and techniques from neighbouring schools. The artists freed their mindsets from colonial influences and adopted pluralistic cultural themes including western world.

George Hagman holds that the aesthetic experience of the artist resonates in his artistic expression thus self of the artist is articulated. Value augmentation,

which is discussed in relation to the parent/infant relationship, also characterizes the artist's engagement with the artwork. In other words, the artist, through skill and vision, refines the artwork, perfects the expression of his or her subjective experience, and the sense of the object's increasing quality results in an enhanced vitality for the artist, who becomes further engrossed in the work and further motivated to perfect it. Creativity and aesthetic experience involve the idealization of self-experience as mirrored in the perfection of the object. The extent to which the appreciation of the beautiful object evokes actual or fantasized experiences of value resonance will determine the enhancement of self-experience. This accounts for the pronounced sense of inner vitality and goodness that we feel as we enjoy art or beautiful things in general.

The aesthetic experience involves the externalization of value affects. Specifically it is the creation of or encounter with an object whose formal qualities elicit value affect resonance or, more simply, aesthetic resonance. Aesthetic experience is most pronounced in relation to something that is felt to possess ideal form. By form, it does not mean simply shape or configuration, but rather all the inherent qualities of its being-that which makes it what it is, its essence. We feel excited by the appearance of this ideal form. We are entranced, in awe, fascinated by its perfection its balance, its rhythm, its color, shape, and texture. Its meanings are exquisite, complex and resonant with our most unconscious knowledge.

In the work, *Cognitive Science an introduction to Mind and Brain*, the idea of the representational theory of mind is discussed. The basic related ideas "Beginning concepts and the methods for their investigation are discussed in the chapter entitled, "Windows on the brain and mind." The remaining chapters are organized around the role of representations in main faculties of the mind. Sensory mechanisms transduce information into representations in perception. Representations are stored in memory and processed in reasoning, and ultimately inform our actions and emotional reactions. Representations figure heavily in our comprehension and production of language which itself constitutes a means for representing the world. Finally, mental representations structure our consciousness and ourselves.

Sthaneshwar Timalisina discussed the concept of *Tantra* and its pertinence to art production. He dealt with the process of construction of complex mental images

in human psyche, the techniques and functions of imagination, the emotive involvement and cognizance of concrete and abstract thinking, and purposive value of physical discipline. The *tantra* in this book are revisited to interpret its potentiality in philosophical understanding as provocative and thought generating. He meticulously applied the concepts of cognitive linguistics and interpretative role of metaphor and metonymy image along with the experiences with the observance of tantric practices. It throws light on new dimensions of image constructions by using *yantra* and *mandala*. The effect of *mantra* (chanting) in this process is also highlighted.

Sthaneshwar Timalisina attempted at merging the boundaries of the disciplines like 'psychology, philosophy of mind, phenomenology and semiotics' by appropriating visual and proprioceptive (the stimuli that an organism gets because of position and movements of the body) images. The author believes that the use of images of tantric observances would transform domain of the philosophy of mind and phenomenology (tangible and intangible perspectives) of imagination.

Tapati Guha Thakurta has attempted to recover the historicity of the categories, 'National' and 'Modern' from the canonical values they came to hold in the Indian art scene. It is a task that she sees as to how the Indian intelligentsia from the later nineteenth century, including the self-conscious category of artists, elicits from the colonial entanglement forms of empowerment that cut beyond the question of originality. The 'new' term that teases the imagination of those engaged in the question of originality. The 'new' is the term that teases the imagination of those engaged in art practice then as now,

According to Balraj Khanna and Aging Kurtha Indian artists in the 1965s and 1970s, as if out of a collective inner need to be in close contact with India's hundreds of millions, turned in a decisive way towards figuration, believing intuitively that their destiny lay in that direction; it is a path from which, in the main, they have not deviated. A painterly painter constantly experimented with texture and the play of light, which gave their oil paintings a certain depth and dynamic infra-structure layers, has since made their work atmospheric. The fluency of their personal idiom marks them out as a master of lyrical abstraction. The Cosmology in Jainism influenced many such above manifestations.

Susanne K. Langer leads considers art as an authentic science that emerges from cultural symbolism. She deals with the meaning and interpretation of terminology connected with the theory and practice of art. The terms like ‘expression, creation, symbol, import, intuition, vitality, and organic form’ were analyzed and interpreted in terms of art.

The literature survey helped me to see the essence of *Tantra* in the following points-

1. *Tantra* as a spiritual quest for liberation which was a powerful religious movement emerged out of the coalescence between primitive magic and highly evolved spiritual ideals. The Tantric by *Sadhana* by practice takes his body to the celestial level of cosmos. *Sadhana* consists, fundamentally of repeated rituals and carefully designed meditative activities. The *Tantras* have always insisted upon the supreme importance of *jnana*. Knowledge in its purest form is said to be the only way that leads to final emancipation. It has empathetically been asserted that *mukti* is attained only by *jnana* and not by any other means. To attain all this *tantric sadhana* combines in it the elements of *yoga*, worship, prayer, and meditation on the identity of the individual and the absolute. The *Tantra* recognizes three distinct states of *sadhana*. By using abundant variation of visual forms, having different colours and textures, graphically patterned with powerful symbols, these forms become vehicles of self-enlightenment. The essence of *Tantra* art is having content and the meaning showing the philosophy of life and its being, more than its aesthetic appeal its purpose is more ritualistic. This means they have abstract signs and symbols in geometrical design. They are similar to mathematical formula with pre-determined code. By combining with ritual, art assumes a social function. If the ritual changes these art forms also become as a history.
2. Contemporary professional artists of India when looking for indigenous expressions of what is accepted as the universally valid awareness of our times that they tried expressing in different mediums. Inspired by the vision of a more authentic modernity springing from a livelier instinct and cultural roots that is taking inspiration from *Tantra* some of the artists have explored in their own ways to express in their own style with their own experience.

3. Every image or painting is an arrangement of spaces and shapes, of lines, colours and textures. They demonstrate an internal systematic organization of visual forms to express specific concepts and emotions. It must be judged by their context. In both cases it involves one or other form visualization. Various terms like imagination (*kalpana*), memory (*smarana*), and meditation (*dhyana*) come in the context of bringing to the mental space. Imagination is a creative process that constitutes reality, and its ritualized application in the practice of visualization is crucial for understanding. What is focal point in this is finding the meaning of an obscure image. With meaning, these images become their own language, and are the field of hermeneutics. In both the aspects weaving every day experiences with the broader agenda of self-realization and instances of consciousness are viewed in this paradigm.

Lacuna

The above literature survey gives an understanding to find the lacuna: The art of *Tantra* is described only in the context of traditional ritual practices. As it has a scanty description of the aesthetic content related to *Tantra* art which will be studied. Relating to this the contemporary artist's works/images provide an exceptional example of how the cognitive faculty of imagination was trained through the painstaking practice of visualization. The practice of this visualization and expression is crucial for understanding, how the Images are made to convey the intended thought who are not religious practitioners, even then they could justify the same effect (spiritual expression) through aesthetics in the field of painting. This helps to link the symbolic or metaphoric meaning underlying the technique used to the system inherent in its language (visual language).

Hypothesis:

After careful analysis of the visual culture of *Tantra*, based on its available data through primary and secondary sources the following hypothesis is developed:

The primary cause of the diagrams originated from the rituals of *Tantra* practices lies at a deeper conceptual level. Culture as a system of symbolic forms

helps to express true unity of different expressive entities to indicate its identity. The Consciousness along with visual perception is competent to determine the meaning of the images and to recognize their significance for man. Artist's fascination towards the earth and nature determined the development of visual art. The symbolism impregnated in the visual imagery represents the cognizance of psyche and culture of the artist. It is a harmonious blending of the contemporary consciousness with that of the past.

It hypothesized that the influence of the *Tantra* in the Indian culture is so immense that it did not wither away with the times but survived even as a persuading factor for the arts of Modern times. It is the aim of the modern artist to give expression to his/her inner vision of life and the world. It is often difficult for the lay man to recognize. Visual work to understand has two sides. Firstly, it's physical presence of being or presented: The Second, the underlying emotional or mental ingredient; these are represented in physical form having a meaning constitutes, a common factor as culture. The two logical points which connects between physical entity and the meaning in symbolic form are: a) expression and b) representation of pure meaning. These two points function as logical corroboration of historically established typology of forms of culture. Expression as myth and art and representation as language constructs pure meaning. Therefore to find the meaning associated with aesthetic experience which is richer or valuable need to be realized. Thus such classification results to derive theoretical concept of artistic contemplation. Hence for the professional artists' space, size, line, shape, colour, tones, texture, rhythms and balance are their technical apparatus and fundamental ingredients in the productive process along with the cognitive formative process (Gestalt theory).

Objectives of the study:

- 1) To analyze variety of visual forms associated to Tantric philosophy, having powerful symbols with personal and universal significance.
- 2) To understand various cognitive and denotative meanings of tantric visual form from an aspect of a given culture.

- 3) To trace the historical evolution of the *Tantra* art in India in general.
- 4) To study the nature of Neo –*Tantra* art of modern artists of India (context) Its position in the Indian modern painting of India.
- 5) To understand the emotional, intellectual and artistic sensibilities (creative process) of an artist (painter) along with its technical aspects and its limitations.
- 6) To study the differences between rituals based visual form and modern art of Neo –*Tantra*.

Methodology and sources of the study:

The main objective of the study is to analyze the basic principles which govern the *Tantra* philosophy and its manifestations especially in art. To carry out of this task, two fold methods are followed; One, the historical Method and the other, Ethnographic method drawn from the accounts of the contemporary painters/artists and critics.

Methodology is a systematic and scientific way of pursuing a study guided by relevant methods and techniques to arrive at desired goals. The word method denotes the rational process of mind for gaining knowledge or for the demonstration of truth. Method signifies a logical procedure independent of particular contents of research and qualifies as intelligible. The process and the forms of perception reasoning meant to make the reality that is to be perceived. The first step in methodology is the collection of data. The data is collected from primary and secondary sources, but both the information is merged in the research process. The primary source for collecting the data for the study is based on the field work and the secondary source material includes the relevant published or unpublished written material on the issues linked to the study. To realize the above said objectives, in the present thesis mainly depended on the archival source material (primary) and secondary sources. The archival source comprise of government, LalithaKala Academy, Government museums and private museums and Galleries collections and catalogues. The secondary sources consisting of published books, articles, journals,

and unpublished works. These works help in formulating the conceptual and theoretical frame work that is necessary in this work.

The **Historical method** proposes to study the primary and secondary sources along with archival material to analyze and interpret the historical process and products in the form of narratives. The accounts of the past lies in identifying events and the causes for such events and eventually how the events themselves become causes for further events in a given chronological time frame. This method is used in the present research to study the history and tenets of tantric art in scriptures and visual arts.

The **Ethnographic method** focuses on the graphic description and interpretation of cultures and people's lives from the perspective of the participants (informants). This method adopts participant and non-participant observation in which roles of the researcher are changed as observer as participant and participant as observer. Such dynamics in the role of the researcher in the field reduces the chance of subjectivity in data collection and processing. Since the current research focuses on the shift of *tantric* art tradition from ritual to visual in the contemporary times, an extensive fieldwork is needed to collect data from several artists and their art productions. In this context the researcher herself is an artist there is need to take care for getting authentic data without getting into subjectivity in research process. Hence ethnographic method is best used in research process.

It is pertinent to mention here that the data on the two artists are based on the works of other art critics and authors of books. Being a student of art and art history, the data collection in the thesis grossly drawn from the archival sources and the two artists' data (G.R. Santosh and P.T Reddy) is from the field study. The digital data is collected from books, magazines, journals, exhibition brochures and Museums are categorized as per genres, mediums, sizes, year and will be studied through a statistical data analysis. Based on this data their artistic expression at different stages of evolution in their work will be examined.

Brief Chapterization:

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter deals with a general introduction to Tantrism in India. Apart from the basic concepts, significance of the study, nature and scope of the study, area of the study, review of literature, gaps found in the existing literature, hypothesis, aims and objectives of the study, methodology, sources of study and chapters in brief are also enumerated in this Chapter.

Chapter II: Origin and Development of *Tantra*- A Conceptual Frame

In this chapter, as the name indicates, it proposes to present a historical outline. Brief essential concepts of *Tantrism* in a historical sequence of origin and development are discussed in this chapter. The main aim is to find the exact position of Tantrism and its philosophical systems in Indian religion. Various religious Schools of Thought that influenced Tantrism are discussed. Tantra as a principle of dualism which adheres to the concept of *Prakriti* and *Purusha* as manifested in Siva-Sakti notion forms the basis of all creation is the core argument put forth in this chapter.

Chapter III: Tantra as Ritual Art and Practice

It outlines the practical application of the rituals and science behind it. A Clear understanding of the elements that comprise the *Tantra* is discussed. The experimental techniques to attain the unison of the *atman* with the *paramatman* with help of external objects which are considered as sacral forms the practice of *Tantra*. This external and objectified images and drawings have become fundamental to the Tantric Art. The aspect of Indian Tantric art in the context of theological and philosophical overtones present through its variety of forms is analyzed. These have varied inflections of tone, colours, graphic patterns, powerful symbols having universal significance is also discussed. These symbols which have deeper meaning governed by its content, the meaning, it conveys, the philosophy it represents are described in this chapter.

Chapter IV: *Tantra*as Visual Art - Contemporary Artists

This chapter deals with permeation of the Tantric Art into modern times as the Neo –*Tantra* and the contribution of artists. Their reinterpretation of space, light, colour, form has drawn from the traditional *Tantra* Art is also a noteworthy feature. The consistency of the work of the artists, who are the practitioners of art but not the followers of Tantric practices, contributed to this kind of emotional, intellectual and artistic sensibilities by adhering to the principles of art is discussed. This kind of special aesthetical approach is studied with collection of the data from primary and secondary data of works of different artists.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

General conclusions are drawn from the study is enumerated in this chapter. the *Tantra* Art demonstrates the ‘Indianness’ in the aesthetics of the art philosophy as this is the only art which continued as tradition without any interruptions despite facing the threats of modernism and globalization.

Chapter - II

Origin and Development of *Tantra*- A Conceptual Frame

Understanding of contemporary societies requires a basic appreciation of the historical processes such as socio –cultural, ideological, political and economic factors that have determined the course of successive changes which have affected people of India. According to classical belief and worldview, in India, each age is supported and directed by a ‘scripture’ which is known as ‘*yuga-sastra*’ which is believed to have governed and directed the people in the correct path. According to *KularnavaTantra*, for the ‘*Satya Yuga*’ (golden age) the scripture (*veda*) is *sruti*, the spoken word; the scripture for the ‘*Treta Yuga*’(silver age) is *smriti*, that which is remembered and promulgated by the *Rshis*; for the ‘*Dvapara Yuga*’(copper age) the scripture is found in the form of *puranas i.e.*, treatises which convey the dogmas of the *vedas* and *smritis* in a popular grab as mythos and tales; for the ‘*Kali Yuga*’ (Iron Age) the scripture is in the form of the *Tantra*. The *Tantra* is considered by their believers as the *sastra* which is supreme for the age of *Kali* wherein the mankind is filled with untruth and unrighteousness. For such circumstances the *Tantrasastra* offers the most attainable and indisputable guide for the accomplishment of the objective of life that leads towards not only liberation from the hold of ignorance (*mukti*) but also towards attainment of abundant gratification of its fundamental desires of self-existence, self-assertion and the pleasure of their self-actualization (*bhukti*). The concept of religion then is not about theology or the issues related to the nature and existence of divine but about the realization of the very consciousness of the ultimate reality¹. The philosophy of *Tantra* is embedded in this and specific ritualistic practices are enumerated to achieve the goal.

The *Tantra* is preeminently a *Sadhanasastra*, a practical discipline of methods and processes for performance. Stress is always laid on action and not on theoretical discussion and hypothesis. It is also an intricate occult science, representing also assortment of notions for attaining liberation through engagement of body, mind and spirit in unison. Its aim is for the realization of the known. “The result is an experience which is even more real than the experience of the objective world”. ‘What is here is elsewhere. What is not here is nowhere’ (*ViswasaraTantra*)².

Much intricate techniques are involved for the individual who wishes to accomplish perfection. Spiritual excellence can be achieved by a person by mastering the mental disciplines and by setting aside all mortal concerns. However, the process involved is very composite. One usually has to work with an image, and bring it to life in one’s mind; it is necessary to pray to it with what are called the eight limbs(legs, hands, chest, mind, head, tongue and eyes) by wholly surrender

¹ T.N.Mishra, *Impact of Tantra on Religion and Art*, New Delhi: D.K.Print World, 1945.p. 20.

² Sir John Woodroffe, *Sakti and Sakta*, Madras:Ganesh and Co, 2006,p. 34.

oneself to the image. This procedure will start with an elaborate veneration of the *guru*, and end similarly.

The *Tantra* and the *Yoga* are closely related and the latter is centered on mysticism connecting humanity and the divine. Through acting and thinking in proper ways, one is able to attain merger with ultimate reality. A range of observes such as worship, special postures, and breath control can be followed to this end and all these have become the part of practices of *Tantra*. That apart, the practice of *Tantra* has undergone some bizarre variations which were generally viewed as forbidden practices. This has brought the whole tradition under negativity and criticism. In Buddhist philosophy *Tantra* denotes originally to a series of texts intended to promote enlightenment through meditation. It is imperative to have a spiritual guide, a *guru* who shows the novice how to meditate on a deity, how to gain power of a specific text, and finally how to go about applying a text.

Definition of *Tantra*

The conception of the term “*Tantra*” has been derived varyingly and expounded in many ways. However, the efforts made by different scholars at different points of time often overlap. While defining, scholars have emphasized on universality, validity, and applicability of the term. In ancient literature, there seems to be no equal English term to “*Tantra*”, except for an expression “*Tantra*” from the manuscripts, in Sanskrit. Also found in some vernacular languages, its etymological meaning of the word, *Tantra* is a “*wrap*”. It is a series without a break or a pause in a figurative sense.³In the *Mahabhasya* the word “*Tantra*” signifies a branch of knowledge. The scientific treatises composed in India are generally known as *Tantras*.⁴The roots of the word has been traced as “*tan*”(to spread), “*Tattri*” or “*tantric*” (to explain) this is according to Prof .S.N. Das Gupta, “*Tan*” is the original form of “*tantri*” and the meaning ‘explaining’ is achieved by minimizing the sense of spreading. Thus, the real connotation of the term is called as any scientific discussion on any particular subject. ⁵

Most importantly, “*Tantra*” advocated for the ‘extension of self’ by following certain techniques, methods, practices and tricks to achieve blissful state. Hence, the expression of self means achieving the state of self-realization by use of skill or competence.⁶ In the *Vedas*⁷the term, ‘*Tantra*’ is assigned with the idea of a ‘weaving machine’ or a loom⁸.Panini derived the word *Tantraka* as a derivative of *Tantra*, and

³ Pushpendra Kumar, *Introduction to Tantras and their philosophy*, New Delhi: Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, 1998, p. 55.

⁴ N.N.Vasus, *Modern Buddhist*, Calcutta: Amit Publications, 1911, pp. 10-11.

⁵ ChintaharanChakravarti, *Tantras Studies On their Religion and Literature*, Calcutta: PustiPusthak, 1972.p. 2.

⁶ S. K. RamachandraRao, *Tantra, Mantra, Yantra, TheTantraPsychology*, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1979-2008, pp. 16-27.

⁷ *Rgveda* X.71.9; *Atharvaveda* X. 7.42.

⁸ R.L. Kasyap, *TaittiriyaBrahmana*, Bangalore: Sri AurobindoKapaliSastry Institute of Vedic Culture, pp. 11.5.5.3.

means a cloth taken from the loom.⁹ Thus, in *Vedic* texts, the word *Tantra* is used in the sense of a loom.¹⁰ The *Tantra* is like the shuttle that moves between the threads when weaving a fabric; this implies that *Tantra* can be a device or technology. The fabric itself represents that the universe which is made-up of all its elusive energies and all the innumerable permutations of consciousness. This fabric of reality is like an interconnected matrix, and *Tantra* then is the expansion of our consciousness wherein these interconnections are intuitively and experientially understood ultimately as one occurrence.

Etymologically, *Tantra* comes from the Sanskrit root words, ‘*tanoti*’ and ‘*trayati*’; the word, ‘*tanoti*’ means ‘to stretch’ or expand and the word, ‘*trayati*’ means ‘to liberate’ or free. Therefore, in general, ‘*Tantra*’ means ‘to expand the frontiers beyond the material into the more subtle dominions of perception’; and hence, through *Tantra*, one can attain spiritual knowledge (*jnana*) and liberation (*moksha*) by conscious increase of refined insights. *Tantra* is a practical system, though there is an exhaustive theory found in the *Agamic* texts¹¹ on it. It is called a *sadhanashastra*, which means that it is a practice. It is a life embracing system which embraces a vast numbers of practices to fit all kinds of activities of social life; sexuality, love and artistic pursuits are considered trajectories of spiritual evolution. *Tantra* is simultaneously a precise ritualistic science and a wildly celebratory and spontaneous expression of our innate human divinity. Spontaneity is encouraged during life and *sadhana*, however, there are certain rituals that require exact precision, otherwise, for the fear of falling victim to possession of dark spirits and madness¹². The *Srauta Sutras* use the word in the sense of a process of work containing many parts and in that of an act, serving the purpose of many other acts.¹³ According to an eminent authority, *Katyayan*, “*Tantra* is the co-occurrence of actions”, that is to say, it is asystemic behavioral act to achieve the unison; exactly the same idea is also purported by *yoga*. *Ayurveda* uses the word, ‘*Tantra*’ in the sense of body and another word, *yantra* in the sense of its machinery¹⁴.

The term *Tantra* has assumed different meanings in different historical contexts. Having an esoteric meaning with the number of Hindu and Buddhist texts, it refers that it’s literally meaning ‘weaving’ or ‘threading’. *Tantra* represents a loose collection of ideas for achieving liberation by way of uniting the body, mind

⁹ S.C. Banerji, *A Brief History of Tantra literature*, Calcutta: Naya Prokash, 1988, p.1.

N.N. Bhattacharya, *History of the Tantric Religion, An Historical, Ritualistic and Philosophical study* New Delhi: Manohar, 1982-2005, p. 19.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 20.

¹¹ N.N. Bhattacharya, *History of the Tantric Religion*, Delhi: Manor, p. 62.

¹² Translated by Arthur Avalon (Sir John Woodroffe) *Mahanirvana Tantra, The Tantra of the Great Liberation*, London: Martino Publishing, 1913, p. 25.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 36.

¹⁴ N.N. Bhattacharya, *History of the Tantric Religion*, Delhi: Manor, p.28.

and spirit to ward off imperfections and this is possible because the human being is a 'microcosm' which mirrors the universe as 'macrocosm'.¹⁵

Different lexical items are used to denote equivalence of meanings for *Tantra* such as, *siddhanta* (conclusion), *srutisakha* (a branch of *sruti* i.e., Vedas), *itikartavyata* (set of duties), *prabandha* (composition), and *sastravistara* (a particular *sastra*).¹⁶ *Tantra* when used as a kind of *sastra*, it stands for a set of doctrines, mystic syllables, metaphysical speculations, practices, and magic¹⁷. The *Ayurvedic* work attributed to *Agnivesa* is titled as *AgnivesaTantra*. *Tantra*, derived from the same root, is taken by some to denote a *Sastra* which ponders upon *tattvas* and *mantras*. According to H.P. Sastri, "*Tantra*" means 'shortening'; it attempts to reduce long poetic narratives to *mantras*, which would otherwise be very long, to something like algebraic forms. Some derive *Tantra* from *tanu*(body). *Tantra* is 'tra'i' (to save) because it 'saves' the body through *Yogic* practices; the *Tantrasastra* gives protection to its followers. Another way of deriving 'Tantra' is from the root *tantric* (to explain) or *tatri* (to understand). The word, 'Tantra' seems to be derived from the root to spread or from the root *tantric* meaning organization of knowledge. In a special sense it means the scripture by which knowledge is spread. '*TannotiJnanamanenaitiTantram*', a treatise on any sort of knowledge cannot be called a *Tantra*. It is the spiritual knowledge of technical in nature. Sri Sankara considered the *sankhyakarikas* of *kapila* a *Tantra*. A standard tantric text the *Kamikagama* defines 'Tantra' as a class of texts which promulgates profound matters concerning 'Tattva' and 'mantra'.¹⁸ Author Avalon in his book of *Saktha* and *sakthi* mentions that in *Ganapatha*, however, 'tantri' has the same meaning as 'Tan' to spread and it is probable that the former root is a modification of the latter. The meaning *vyutpada* is also probably derived by narrowing the general which is the meaning of the root 'Tan'. According to the derivation of *Tantra* from *tan*(to spread) and the suffix 'tra' (to save), *Tantra* is that (scriptures) by which knowledge (*jnana*) is spread (*Tanyate, vistaryatejnanamanena, itiTantram*) to save the mankind in the age of *Kali Yuga*. The *Kamika Agama* of the *SaivaSiddhanta* (*TantrantaraPatala*) says:

Tanotivipulanarthantattvamantrasamanvitan
TranancakuruteyasmatTantramityabhidhiyate

(It is called *Tantra* because it promulgates great knowledge concerning *tattva* and *mantra* because it saves.)¹⁹

Nevertheless, there have been a few trails in India to define *Tantra*. But ironically, these definitions are not only dissimilar, but even contradictory. The term

¹⁵ Oliver Leaman, *Key concepts in Eastern philosophy*, London: Routledge, 2004, p. 253.

¹⁶ S.C. Banerji, *A Brief History of Tantra Literature*, Calcutta: Naya Prokash, 1988, p. 1.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 2.

¹⁸ Sir John Woodroffe, *Shakti and Shakta*, Madras: Ganesh and Co, 2006, pp. 18-19.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

Tantra refers to texts which expounds non *Vedic* doctrines, especially of the *Shakta* variety. In its wider sense, *Tantrism* stands for practices of a ritualistic, sometimes magical character (ex., *mantra*, *yantra*, *chakra*, *mudra*, *nyasa* etc.) that are used as a means to reach the goals of either spiritual emancipation (i.e. *mukti*) or of more mundane aims (mainly magical domination) in various Hindu and Buddhist sects.

Andre Padoux in his article outlines some of the basic features of Tantrism:

1. It is a belief and is recognized internally as different from *Vedic* system; it is not a concept that comes from within the religious system itself.
2. It is an amalgamation of practices and ideas from various sources scattered unevenly in diverse times, places and sects and among individuals. While the pieces of *Tantrism* (doctrines and practices) can be listed, none is exactly tantric, and all are components of other religious systems.
3. It can be mixed easily with other non-tantric aspects, such as *bhakti* (devotional) worship to the deity.²⁰

Therefore, according to Andre Padoux, “rather than a system, cult, or religion, *Tantrism* speaks of a *tantric* vision and includes among its characteristics, the use of ritual, manipulation of power, transgression of norms, use of the mundane to reach the super-mundane, and identification of the microcosm with the macrocosm”.²¹ Understanding the features that appear in various definitions of *Tantra*, one can consider the commonly accepted attributes which are as follows:

- 1) Enlightenment
- 2) *Shakti*-Worldly power
- 3) Dualism
- 4) Visual images
- 5) Realization
- 6) Imagination
- 7) Empirical
- 8) *Yoga*
- 9) *Sadhana*

The core teachings of *Tantra* is that unity is a reality, an undividable whole which is known as *Siva-Sakti*, a cosmic consciousness. That is, there is no difference from one another since *Siva* and *Sakti* creative power which joined together. This cosmic consciousness provides with a significant potential of self; the evolution of heart, mind and soul. The individual can realize and equate himself with knowledge and the *Tantra* purpose is to perceive this reality. This process of realization is self-fulfilling. It is an experience of totality becoming and being. To

²⁰ Sanjukta Gupta, Dirk Jan Hoens, and Teun Goudriaan, “*Hindu Tantrism*” (Leiden Brill, 1979), pp. 74-77.

²¹ Andre Padoux, *Vac, The concept of the world in selected Hindu Tantras*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990.

acquire a deeper understanding, comprehension of the relationship of the individual with the spiritual is necessary. The process is not so much an acquisition or recognition but more experiential, through yogic practice of the inner self (*or atmajnana*).²²

To sum up, by relating and understanding all these definitions said by many authors' parallels, one can come to a conclusion on *Tantra* as "the ability to change once reality through ritual manipulation of things into another truer, more powerful reality".

Dualism

Dualism is the basis for *Tantric* philosophy. In *Tantra*, *Purusha* (cosmic consciousness) is predominantly male and *Prakriti* (cosmic force of Nature) is a female concept. God is said as *Siva-Sakti* (awareness and its power). Sri Sankaracharya says in its opening verse²³ that Siva, when united with *Sakti*, diffuses and sustains the universe but Shiva is passive when separated from *Sakti*. This kinetic energy is the aggregate of the cosmos. This energy fundamentally creates movement in the galaxy from which the world emerges and is also destructed. This concept or underlying reality is expressed through the interaction of *Purusha* and *Prakriti*. The whole multi-facetted experience is this *Siva-Sakti* principle viewed as *Paraashaktimaya*. All prevalent in the whole universe, it is expressed in man as the *svayambhu-linga* of the *Muladhara* (yogic terminology) and the *Devi Kundalini* energy like a serpent that encircles the *Linga*; *Devi Kundalini* resides in the *Muladhara* and is measured as three and a half coils coinciding in number with the three and a half (*Mahanirvana Tantra*) mentioned in the *Kubjika Tantra*.²⁴ The two i.e., the *linga* and the encircled serpent being viewed as the union of poles becoming as one entity, *Siva-Sakti*. Joy (*Ananda*) is the ultimate result. This is the vitality; the energy of (*Shiva-shakti*) which is also called *Prana* and is present in man and in all *prani* (breathing creatures). This is the goal of *Tantra*. This line of thinking is subscribed to by both Hindu and Buddhist followers, the one difference being - the male is considered a kinetic aspect (*upaya*) and the female - a static concept (*prajna*) in which the principle of duality in non-duality exists in both. The end result is the achievement of perfection or the union between the two.²⁵ We gather from ancient texts that from the *Brahman*, along with *Shakti* (*parashkti Maya*) *Nada* emerged (*Shiva-shakti*) in the form of 'Word' or 'sound' and in turn from *Nada*, *Bindu* appeared.²⁶ As Raghavabhatta says, *Nada* exists in three states – *Sattva*, *Rajo* and *Tamas*, which is the underlying matter of *Prakriti* with *Siva*. When *tamogunais* prevalent *Nada* is merely a blurred sound like *Dhvani* Called *Niboddini*. When

²² Aurthur Avalon, *Introduction to Tantra*, Delhi: ShivalikPrakashan, 2005, p. 73.

²³ N.N.Bhattacharya, *History of the Tantric Religion*, Delhi: Manoharp, p. 242.

²⁴ ArturAvolon, *Introduction to Tantrasastra*, Delhi: ShivalikPrakashan, 2005, p. 45.

²⁵ Anandalahari of Shakaracharya (verse 8).N.N. Bhattacharya, *History of The Tantric religion*, Delhi: Manohar, p.99.

²⁶ AurthorAvlon, *Shat Chakranirupana*, Commentary on verse 49, Madras:Ganesh &Co, 1924.p.72.

Nada is in the form of *rajo-guna*, there presents a sound similar to a combination of letters. When *Sattva-guna* affects *Nada* it transforms into the form of a *Bindu*²⁷. Hence *Nada* and *Bindu* are aspects of *Siva* and *Sakti*.

Bindu is the minimum point “*sukshma*”, which the universe had to shrink at the time of which the world manifests itself progressively at the time of the first creation. *Nada* is not the gross sound heard by the ear. The whole sound heard by the ear belongs to the Buddha *tattva* categories and is only the *guna* or attribute of *akasa* (space). *Nada* is the first stress of *Sakti* in the process of creation. There is a theory that letters of the alphabet symbolize different *tattvas* in their qualitatively transformed capacity. It is said that the alphabetical letters are the *Bija-mantra* or underlying formula of worship and in *Tantra*, *mantra* refers to power (*Sakti*) through sound (*Nada*). In the Indian philosophical tradition sound (*sabda*) is the quality (*guna*) of space (*akasa*).

The *Siva-Sakti* in its dynamic form becomes *Maya Sakti* and makes the *nirguna* aspect of God and shines forth as the *suguna* aspect. It becomes also *Prakriti tattva* which is composed of the three *Gunas* (*Rajas*, *Sattva* and *Tamas*) and whose function is to realize the infinite consciousness and manifest the latter as the universe of matter and the universe of *jivas* endowed with life and mind²⁸. The Nature (*Prakriti*) is composed of three forces called *gunas*; *Guna* means quality. They are named as *Rajas*, *Sattva*, and *Tamas*, in Sanskrit. Nature is in a state of perfect equilibrium. A comprehensible force directed towards symbiosis and freedom is centripetal in an ascending manner called *Sattva* (essence). A revolving tendency which is a driving force to all creative one is called *Rajo* which is the kinetic energy. A force and mass have inertia. Thus enable resistance to the opposition, perish/decay is called *Tamas* (mass). All these three are invisible as own separate *gunas* in a cohesive manner in their un-manifested state. Their equilibrium is lost when this balance is disturbed. A new world is recreated as a part of the process of evolution. This process is the endless cycle. The force in resistance to opposing (inertia) is *Tamas*, the magnetic force, and the kinetic force which energy producing is *rajas*. While balancing force is *Sattva* between the two opposites. The essence of the principle of conscious manifestation is related to intelligence. When the balance of forces is still, no sign, no action or process would happen but only a still perception remains. In this state both the energy and matter are together this is as per *Sankhya* of *Tantra*. In the natural balance thus created forces are juxtaposed, cosmic evolution occurs, the universe may be viewed as akin to a sea of waves. This is the stage where the cosmos has the scope to be re-transformed to its primary state of divine balance and tranquility.

Classification

²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 30.

²⁸ N.N.Bhattacharya, *History of the Tantric Religion*, Delhi: Manohar, 2005, p. 4-5

In different ways the *Tantras* can be divided. The *Tantra* works of the *Vaishnavas*, *Saivas* and *Saktas* are known correspondingly as *Samhita*, *Agama*, and *Tantra*. They all mean a collection of tradition, a set of books, and doctrines. The main division is also called as *Agama* and *Nigama*. In *Agama* like a pupil, Parvati asks questions and Siva answers like a teacher; whereas, in *Nigama* it is questioned by Parvati and answered by Shiva. Again the *Tantras* are divided into *Vishnukranta*, *Rathakrantha* and *Ashvakrantha* or *Gajakrantha* in accordance with the place of origin. There are total sixty-four *Tantras* belonging to each region. The *Tantras* are divided into Hindu and non-Hindu; The Hindu *Tantras* are also classified as *Astika* (Vedic) and the non-Hindu *Tantras* as *Nastika* (non-Vedic). The works of the *Astika* are divided according to the presiding deity namely, *Sakta*, *Saiva*, *Saura*, *Ganapatya* and *Vaisnava*. The non-Hindu *Tantras* is Buddhist and Jain; The Buddhist *Tantras* are divided according to the three broad divisions of later Buddhism known as *Vajrayana*, *Sahajayana* and *Kalacakrayana*. There is a sectarian classification of Jaina *Tantras* too.

The *SaktaTantras* are divided into ten classes in accordance with the names of ten *Mahavidyas*, out of these *Sodasi-Tantra* is known as *Srividyā*. The other kind of division is into *Srotas*, *Pitha*, and *Amnaya*²⁹. There is another kind of classification into *Kadi*, *Hadi* and *Kahadi*. This classification appears to have been in accordance with the initial letters of *mantras*. The *mantras* having *Ka* as the initial syllable is *kadi*, that with the initial *Ha* letter is *Hadi*, and that beginning with the union of *Kadi* and *Hadi* is *Kahadi*.

There is yet another mode of classification of *Tantras* based on the mythological ages is also prevalent such as *Varahakalpa*, *Kalakalpa* etc. The *VarahiTantra* mentions a class of works called *upaTantras*. There is a tradition (*Brahmayamala*) of classifying *Tantric* works as *Dakshina*, *Vama*, and *Madhayama* which is also called as *Divya*, *Kaula* and *Vama* each being sub-divided as *Harda* (inner) and *bahya* (outer) *Tantras*. Out of all, *SaktaTantras* are well known.

Origin of *Tantra*

Some scholars have pointed out that the relics of the Indus valley civilization (C.3000B.C) contain *matrka-murtis*. They held that *yantras*, *mudras* (fingers-pose), the mystic monosyllabic *bijaaksharas* like *klm*, *krim*, etc., testify to the primitive pictorial writing and language consisting of single sounds. The black rites of *Tantra* have parallel practices in primitive times.³⁰ Among the relics of Indus valley civilization, there are terracotta figurines of *Matrkas* and male figurines in a sitting posture. Some scholars think that, even in those pre-Vedic times, Durga as mother of

²⁹ P.C.Bagchi, *Studies in Tantras*, Calcutta, 1980, pp. 3-4.

³⁰ S.C.Banerji, *A Brief History of Tantra Literature*, Calcutta: Naya Prokash, 1988, pp. 10.

the universe and Siva as father used to be worshiped. Robert B.Foote claims to have found phallic among the Neolithic remains discovered by him in Deccan³¹.

However, it is believed that *Tantrism* started in the beginnings of Christian era and gradually developed into an actual pantheon by the end of the Gupta period (late 3rd century CE to 590 CE). It had immense influence on the Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Sikh religions as well. In a wider sense the *Tantra* denote a cultural discipline, which is not known exactly when *Tantra* originated. In the *Purana* works (like the *KurmaPurana* as quoted in the *Tantradhikari-nirnaya*) elaborate descriptions of the origin of the *Tantras* are given.³² The *MarkandeyaPurana* and *LingaPurana* basically reveal the *Tantric* influence. The oldest part of the former according to Prageeta, may date back to the Third century B.C, or even earlier.

Some of the earliest *Tantric* texts refer to *Tantra*; the *Gandhāran* Buddhist texts are the oldest Buddhist manuscripts dating from about the 1st century CE contains literature on *Tantra*. The renowned work on Mathematics, *Lalithavistara* of about the third century A.D also referred to *Tantric* elements.³³ In Banabhatta's work, while the author describing the character of a south Indian *tantric* ascetic, stated that the ascetic had collected manuscripts of jugglery, *Tantra*, and *mantra* (which were written) in letters of red lac on palm leaves (tinged with) smoke.³⁴ By this it is a clear that the practice of *Tantra* prevailed in India by 7th Century A.D.³⁵ Some of the earlier *Tantra* characterized texts of *Pancharatra* may be dated back to fifth century C.E.³⁶ A manuscript of the *Nisvasa- Samhita* in the Durbar Library of Nepal is written in the transitional Gupta characters.³⁷ In the opinion of M.H.P. Sastri, this manuscript may be a century older than the Cambridge manuscript of *ParameshwariTantra* which was copied in 859 A.D. At the end of the *SauraSamhita*, in the Durbar library of Nepal, there are two leaves stated to be in Gupta characters giving a number of *Tantras* formulae.³⁸ Manuscripts of some *Tantras* reveal paleography of the Gupta age. The oldest of them is the *Kubjikamata* which is preserved in the Asiatic society, Calcutta.³⁹

It is a well-known phenomenon that *Tantra* consists of popular magical beliefs and practices, including the practices of *saktha* and *hatayoga* which are predominantly found in the regional traditions. By adhering to this fact, David N. Lorenzen concludes that *Tantra* began in the fifth century C.E and widespread by

³¹ Vide Foote, *Collection of Indian pre-historic and Proto historic antiquities*, Madras, 1916; K.R. Subramaniam, *Origin of Saivism and its History in Tamil land*, Madras, 1920, Iyenger, *Stone age in India*, Madras.

³² *Tantradhikari-Nirnaya* of Bhattoji Diksita (Chintaharan Chakravarti, *Tantras Studies on their Religion and Literature*, Calcutta: Punthi Pusthak, 1971, pp. 26-37.)

³³ S.C. Banerji, *A Brief history of Tantra literature*, Calcutta: Naya Prakash, 1988, p. 8.

³⁴ Lorenzen, *Kapalikas*, New Delhi: Lordson Publishers, 1991, p. 181.

³⁵ Katherine Anne Harper and Robert L. Brown, *The Roots of Tantra*, Albany State University, 2002, p. 32.

³⁶ The discussions by Goudriaan, *Introduction*, "History and Philosophy" PP. 9-11. (The Roots of Tantra)

³⁷ H.P. Sastri, *Nepal Catalogue*, I pp.; preference, p. IXXVII. 10 and 137.

³⁸ H.P. Sastri, *Nepal Catalogue*, p. 27.

³⁹ Vide H.P. Sastri, *Nepal Catalogue*, I, pp. 10, 85, 117.

the seventh century C.E. It was in the 9th century the prevalence of *Tantra* was seen in both Hinduism and Buddhism. By corroborating the historical evidences, David N. Lorenzen⁴⁰ pointed out that the *Tantrism* began in the North India and mostly rampant in Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Kashmir, Nepal, Tibet, the Punjab, and Rajasthan. David and Lorenzen⁴¹ also contended that most of the portions of *MarkandeyaPurana* have been written before the close of sixth century A.D. A classical enumeration about the *matrukas* is found in the *Devimahatya*, which is included as part of this *Purana* which is accepted as the earliest and most important text of *Sakta* religion.

Contrary to the above views, another set of scholars are of the opinion that the occurrence of *Tantisism* is of later origin. The first reference of *Tantric* literature clearly appears to occur in *BhagavataPurana* (according to some not later than 800 A.D). Based on this, some scholars conclude that *Tantra* had not originated not earlier than the fifth or sixth centuries A.D. The *Devipurana* of Bengal, which shows an influence of *Tantra* profoundly,⁴² could be dated tentatively to seventh century A. D. There are speculations about that Hindu *Tantrism* being slightly older than the Buddhists *Tantrism* though these earlier date sprecisely cannot be confirmed. The South Indian *Saiva Agamas* are mentioned in an inscription of *Rajasimhavarman*, dated back to the Sixth century A.D, in *Kailasanatha* Temple.⁴³

The oldest surviving manuscript, *Parameshawaramataha*, dated to 858 or 859.C.E as claimed by Gougriaan⁴⁴ is the earliest text of the *Tantra*. He also stated, though there is a mention of many other *tantric* texts “as venerable authorities” in *Abhinavagupta’s Tantraloka*, written sometime around 1000 C.E, it can safely be postulated that the *Tantric* literature existed already two more centuries before.⁴⁵

In the text, *Isanogurudevapaddhati*, *Tantra* is taken to denote the *sastras* which expounds the six categories of *Saivism*, viz, *pasu*, *pasa*, *pati*, *Sakti*, *vikara* and *kriyakara*.⁴⁶ One of the important *Pashupata* systems (culminated as *AgamaShaivism*) has a number of literature called as *agamas* which are eighteen to twenty-eight in number; many of these are preserved in manuscript form and they are dated to 8th and 9th century.⁴⁷ *Samkaracarya* (C.8th cent.) has accepted *Tantras* as authoritative⁴⁸. The six *cakras* of *Tantra* have been mentioned by

⁴⁰ *Ibid* p. 6.

⁴¹ David and Lorenzen, *The Roots of Tantra*, New York: State University of New York Press, 2002, p. 50.

⁴² S.C. Banerji, *A Brief History of Tantraliterature*, Calcutta, Naya Prakash, 1988, p. 35.

⁴³ S.C. Banerji, *A Brief history of Tantra literature*, Naya Prakash, 1988, pp. 73-76.

⁴⁴ Katherine, Anne Harper, *Roots of Tantra*, Albany, State of New York, Goudriaan, “*Hindu Tantric literature*,” p. 21.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 6.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 2.

⁴⁷ N.N. Bhattacharyya, *History of the Tantric Religion*, Delhi: Manohar, 2005, p. 53.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*- 56.

him⁴⁹.⁵⁰ *Bhavabhuti* of 7th or 8th century CE, refer to *Tantric* views and practices in his work.⁵¹ *Kashmiri Saivism* in terms of philosophical sophistication represents the richest development of *Tantric* literature. The greatest scholar of this time *Abhinavagupta* wrote *Tantric* works as *Tantraloka*, *Tantrasara*, and *Paratrimśikavivarana* which belong to early middle part of the eleventh century.⁵²

To conclude, it can be said that *Tantric* religion as a noticeable intricate beliefs and practices is first documented, in very hazy manner, in the fifth cent C.E. and quickly enlarged its sway in the subsequent centuries within both Hinduism and Buddhism. It became particularly strong in north India (accepting perhaps the state of Uttar Pradesh, but including Bangladesh and parts of Pakistan), in Nepal and Tibet, and in parts of southern India. *Tantra* reached the zenith of popularity in the period between the seventh and the twelfth cent A.D.

The *Tantric* practices, which are enumerated in the *Tantra* literature, were derived from very early times. With the advancement of civilization, erudite philosophical discourses got into this literature. As result, a curious combination of profound philosophy with the wildest fallacies created on one side, most chaotic occultism and wild orgies of extremely disgraceful morals and on the other, an immaculate social code of morality and rigid asceticism. This made *Tantra* to stay as a separate section of knowledge far outside the area of Vedic tradition. This is due to the reason of the ideological conflict between the two traditions, the Vedic and the *Tantric*. The *Tantra* had its own, though many of the theoreticians, mostly *Brahmanas* who belong to the elite class, secretly or openly supported the Vedic tradition and Created *Tantra* in the Vedic line. *Tantra* received a wide denotation and worked as a parallel tradition incorporating within itself most of the living system of belief from a certain period of Indian history.

As Vedas were looked upon as a symbol of spiritual knowledge, a very sacred tradition, it is taken seriously and also had a strong taboo for the ordinary people. The study of it and the interpretation were monopolized by persons belonging to the dominant class, who refused the existence of any empirical knowledge in them accentuated the illusions and extinguishes the realities. Thus the gap was created in the area of material knowledge, since the utility of which was denied in the *Vedic* tradition. This was naturally filled by the *Tantras* which emerged as a parallel tradition. It is more than the simple religious system for the working class. Knowledge meant worldly knowledge to them, that which guided them in their multifarious practical and productive works. *Tantras* are regarded as a store of information which supplied them the materials for attaining professional success and

⁴⁹ *Ibid*- 27.

⁵⁰ S.C. Banerji, *A Brief History of Tantra Literature*, Calcutta: Naya Prakash, 1988, p. 7.

⁵¹ P.V. Kane, *The Harshacharita of Bāṇabhaṭṭa : Uchchvāsas* Volume I, Bombay: 1912 pp. pp. 10, 25, 50 and *passim*; *Idem*, *The Kādambarī of Bāṇabhaṭṭa*, Bombay, 1911 p. 56.

⁵² Katherine Anne Harper and Robert L. Brown, *The roots of Tantra*, Albany: State University press, 2002, p. 32.

satisfaction. In spite of all kinds of *Brahmanical* influences *varnashrama* was clearly rejected. Since the *SmarthaPuranic* traditions are condemned, different attempts have been made to blacken the Tantric ideals.

The religion of dominant class which created a religion collectively in each system, in terms of existing society hierarchy with its supreme being as the acknowledged overlord and allied deities as subordinates, supported also by a philosophy of illusion. It had little to do with the greater section of the masses who subscribed to a different tradition: a tradition consisting of popular beliefs, cults, and rituals; liberal social ideals; and an ethics and philosophy that gave a real meaning to life. This tradition was enriched by a host of teachers and religious leaders in different ages and sometimes created new forms of religion which were basically protestant and liberal.

Tantra and Taoism

In Chinese Buddhist religious thought and practice, *Dhyana Buddha* of *Bodhidharma* the schools of Buddhism became important factor. It is believed that some later Taoist ideas and practices, which were relatively religious, to an extent magical, partly scientific and a little also in the plane of an erotic or sexual ritualism with mystic and philosophical implications came to India from China. Widespread and sudden development of tantric doctrines and practices, both among the Buddhists and the Brahmans, from the second half of the First millennium after Christ, is significant in India.

The more important alchemical and pharmaceutical inventions as part of *Tantra* emerge to enhance the sexual virility as *Tantras* advocated *Panchamakaras*. Taoist and *Tantric* alchemists maintained a closer relation and interchanged the results of their researches. *Rasiddhas* mention of *Bhoga* or *Boger*, a Chinese Taoist, who actually settled in India and headed a school of Indian Alchemists. *Buddhasutras* having the nucleus of Tantrism began to be translated as early as the 4th cent A.D. Buddhist Tantric Ideas were propagated in China by three celebrated Indian Monks. Bhattacharyya says that the prime localities associated with Buddhist Tantrism were in Assam. In the literature of *Tantra*, China occupies a very prominent place as being the seat of a cult *Cina-cara* which worshipped a goddess called *Maachina-Tara*. Sylvain Levi also holds, having an authority of the *TaraTantra* and other works described by Sastri, that the worship of Tara and the *Iantricvamacara* practices, involving the use of five *makaras* came from China.⁵³ In *BrahmanicalTantra*, it is related with Siva and Uma, and acquired a kind of spiritual or mythological an approved in later Hindu thought in general. In Buddhists traditions she saves or protects the fears of devotees. Her cult became very popular in India in the 6th cent A.D. She made her way into the Buddhist religion and came to be conceptualized as the *Sakti* or female counter part of energy of the

⁵³ S. Levi, *Nepal*, Vol. I Paris, 1905, p. 346.

Boddhisattva Avalokiteshvara. The ultimate reality of tantric Buddhism came to be regarded as the unity of *Prajna* (wisdom) and *Upaya* (means). The concept of *mandala* is also the same in the Hindu and Buddhist *Tantras*.⁵⁴ The later *Upanishads* such as the primitive kind of *Yoga Upanishad* composed in 1st century beginning of Gupta period which are the Hindu based primitive kind. But these mystical applications were so absolutely integrated with Buddhist philosophical tenet that it is difficult to separate out the various sources of the Buddhist *Tantra*.

The spread of Buddhism to East Asia and Southeast Asia, gave rise to the *Tantra* tradition in these regions of the world as well. The Buddhist *Tantra* induced a large amount of the mystical ideas and applications that have been passing in time in India from most of the times. Like its doctrine of monasteries it was constantly in the process of transformation. It became natural receptacle for containing various *Tantric* ideas and practices, especially after the arrival of its *Mahayanic* forms. Like Hindu *Tantra*, Buddhist *Tantra* preserved them in its own way. Both the systems had their own deviations with mutual influences.

Tantra and Jainism

In some of the canonical works in *Prakrit* also one can find the traces of *Tantrism*. In the *Sthanaga sutra* too there are traces of *Tantrism*. At the turbulent stage of Indian History, when the free tribes were being ruthlessly put to death by the expanding state powers, both the Buddha and Mahavira tried to model their *Samghas* on the basic principles of tribal society in order to provide the people at least with an illusion of a reality which was fast disappearing. At the same time, the Buddha and Mahavira had to face the dual requirements of their age, and gave moral support to the interests of the trading class and accepted the new social requirements. R.P. Chanda drew the attention of the scholars to the pre-Vedic elements revived by the Buddha and Mahavira in their own religious systems. The practices of meditation and disciplining of the body and mind, by which Buddhism and Jainism are characterized and which later became the basis of *Yoga*, are basically non-Vedic in character. *Tantrism* in the form of Mother Goddess cult, magical rites like the *sat-karmas*, curative spells, incantations, efficacy of *mantras*, etc., are also found place in Jainism.

Tantra and Vaishnavism

The concept of *Sakti* of Vishnu or Krishna has been influenced by *tantric* Ideas. *Vaishnavism* evidently derived its main impulses from the *sahajayana* of the Buddhists. The *Tantric* Goddess, *Ekanamsa*, was able to find her way into the *Vaishnava* religion as the consort of Krishna. In Jagannatha temple in Puri she is placed between Jagannatha and Balarama as their sister Subhadra. Jagannatha being tribal god, worship is done in primitive *Tantric* rites but eventually turned up into *Vaishnavism*, however, the *Tantric* rites associated with his cult continue to exist

⁵⁴ N.N. Bhattacharyya, *History of the Tantric Religion*, Delhi: Manohar, 2005, p. 97.

even today. In *Pancharatra* text, composed between the 9th-12th cent A.D, the doctrine of *Sakti* is holding high place. During this period major existing religious systems came under the influence of *Tantric* elements. In the philosophical thinking of southern *Vaishnavas* the belief of *Sakti* was able to make a place. later it became more influential that a need was felt to bring *Dasavataras* of Vishnu into corresponding ten celebrated Tantric *Mahavidyas*.(*GuhyasamajaTantra*)

Tantra and Saivism

In South India, Saivism received substantial inspiration from Nyanar saints who composed devotional verses in praise of Siva during 610-710 A.D. The Devotional tradition was made by them. Through the efforts of *Myekandadeva* (13th cent) it developed into religio-philosophical system called *SaivaSiddhanta*. This School believed in absolute devotion to be achieved through *Carya, Kriya, Yoga and Jnana*. The *Tantric* branch which emerged from *SaivaSiddhanta* was known as Agama Saivism. They did not believe in the caste system and *Brahmanical* tradition. They believed in the early *Pasupata* doctrine of *Pati* (God), *Pasu* (*Jiva*, Individual Soul) and *Pasa* (worldly bondage), and also believed in all *Tantric* rituals and ceremonies.

A rebellious form of Saivism called *Virasaivism* or *Lingayata* flourished in Karnataka region about the 12th century A.D. A *KanNadaBrahmana*, *Vasava* gave a concrete shape to the traditions of ancient period. His purpose was to expel away the Jains from Karnataka and to settle an ideal society. They worship only *Sivalinga*. They are into majorly social reforms. The importance on *Sakti* has brought *Virasaivism* very close to *Sakta- Tantric* ideas. The texts and traditions of the later *Sakti-Visistadvaitavada* of *Virasaivism* are held high.

Tantra and Kashmir Saivism

From the 9th century, Saivism of special kind flourished in Kashmir. This came to know by the authoritative followers of *Tantra* like *Vasugupta, Somananda, Abhinavagupta, Ksemaraja*, etc. It does not believe in *Vedas*, or in caste system. In this *Saivism* individual souls and the world is known as *spanda*. The *Pratyabhijna* is the means of realizing the experience Siva's identity with the individual souls. In *KashmiraSaivism*, *Sakti* is given a special importance. Here *Sakti* is called *Prakasha-Vimarsamaya*. As per *KashmiraSaivism*, the realization of identity with Siva is the way to become free from worldly fetters; there is no importance attached to ceremonial worship, disciplinary practices and rituals.⁵⁵

Tantra and Saktism

For the meaningful survival and development, *Sakta* religion, having the *tantric* ideas and practices, has found the most favorable ground. The important feature of the *Sakta –Tantric* ideas is that the Supreme Being is female and is

⁵⁵ N.N.Bhattacharyya, *History of the Tantric Religion*, Delhi: Manohar, 2005, p. 63.

worshiped under a variety of names. It is Dualistic and monistic in interpretation of *Vedanta*. Out of Many Schools *Srikula* and *Kalikula* are better known.

Regional Tantra

Tantra as a literary genre includes works of the *Saktas*, *Saivas* and *Vaisnavas*. In Bengal and Deccan, *Sakta* cult became predominant. Saivism developed chiefly in Kashmir. South India was stronghold of the *Vaishnavas*, through the number of *Saivas* and *Saktas* was not negligible. In northern and eastern India, *Sakta* devotees far outnumber the adherents of other faiths. There is also a Saiva sect in northern India. In Bengal and Assam, the *Saktas* are found in a very large number; the rest is *Vaishava*. There were three major Schools in India, viz., *Gauda*, Kerala and Kashmir. In the *Gauda* School, the *vama* mode was held in the highest esteem. In this school, the five *Makaras*, in their original form are used. The devotees of this School immerse the deity in their own heart. The Kerala School merely contemplates the *makaras*, and no substance is used. According to this school also, the immersion of the deity takes place in the devotee's heart. In the Kashmir School, substitutes of *makaras* are ordained. Besides these Schools, another, called *Vilasa* is also known. From the *BrhadGautamiyaTantra*, it is evident that *Tantric* preceptors were from different regions and different degrees of reputation. This work holds that those of the west are the best, those of the south are better and those of *Gauda* and *Kamarupa* are inferior and those from *Kalinga* are the worst.

Influences of Tantra among common people

It is not certain whether *Tantra* originated at the low class people and gradually came to be recognized by the upper classes or it spread from the upper strata to the lower strata. Nevertheless, we find *Tantric* practices, particular *Tantric* deities, among the non-Aryans. The *Harivamsa* states that Devi, as *Kirati* who used to be worshipped by the *Sabaras*, *Barbars* and *Pulindas*. There are references to the worship of Devi by the *mlecchas* and *dasyus*. Devi is often referred to as living in mountains and forests. The *Devipurana* may be mentioned in this connection and she is sometimes designated as *Vindhya*, *Vasini*, *Sabari*⁵⁶. There is an impression among some people that *Kamakhyā* was originally a non-Aryan matriarchal deity of *KhasisGaros*, etc.

The goddess, worshipped by the Chutiya Kings (13th Century CE) of Subansiri and Dihing Rivers, was called Kucaikhati or carrion eater before whom human beings were sacrificed. She was later made identical with Kali. This Devi came to be called Tamresvari who was believed to be identical with *Dikkavasini* of the *Kalikapurana*. She has two aspects *Tiksna* (fierce) and *Lalita* (graceful). In the fierce aspect, she is dark, pot-bellied and wears matted locks. Besides offerings of wine, meat, etc., human beings were sacrificed before her. Among the *Bhuniyas* of

⁵⁶ N.N.Bhattacharyya, *History of the Tantric Religion*, Delhi: Manohar, 2005, p. 249.

Bihar, a Devi called Thakurani Mai is worshipped. She is described as a blood-thirsty goddess, and is now regarded as a form of Durga or Kali.

Among the Dravidians of the South India, the worship of various mother goddesses is widely prevalent. In fact, among them female deities predominate. These deities are generally called *Sakti*. Whatever their origin, whether they had or had not any relation to the *Aryan Shakti*, in course of time most of them came to be looked upon as Durga or Kali. In the famous Minaksi temple of Madura, the male deity was called Cokkalinga. Gradually Cokkalinga was identified with Siva and Minaskhi with his consort. Kali Ankamman is popularly believed to be a *Sakti* dwelling in the cemetery. She eats corpses. Originally a rural deity, Candesvari is worshipped in Nandavaram in Kurnool district by the aborigines. Kali Ammen or Mother Kali is worshipped in some areas like, Tanjore, Trichinopoly etc. Mahakali is worshipped in some places for saving people from epidemics. She remains one of Raksakali of Bengal. Kali Puja has been in vogue in Kerala from very ancient times. According to the tradition, the *puja* of this deity originated among the aborigines. Bhadrakali is believed by common people to live in the cemetery. In Mysore, seven sisters called Mari are worshipped. Mari means *Sakti*. They are regarded as wives of Siva. Before female goddess goats, sheep, etc. Particularly buffaloes are sacrificed as before Durga and Kali in Bengal. The wide spread Tantric ideas, perhaps led to the introduction of the institution of *Devedassis* (temple girls). *Maithuna* (Sexual intercourse) became one of the five essential practices in a *Tantric* ritual. It was believed that gods are pleased with women. So to provide delight for them the *Devadasis* were dedicated. It was their duty to sing and dance before the deities. In course of time, however, the system degenerated into prostitution at first covertly and then overtly. This custom probably originated and spread in south India and to a lesser degree in some other provinces as in Bengal. As *Tantra* gave much freedom to the lower classes, it naturally found favour for them. *Svabhavavada* is the doctrine that advocates everything is produced by nature. Traditionally it is sometimes equated with Carvaka and Lokayata doctrines. Tantric ideas have much in common with this theory. The idea that *Bhutas* or gross elements underlie every worldly thing, occurring in some works, notably the *Svetasvatara* is found in *Tantra* also. The atheistic Carvakas do not recognize as an independent entity apart from the body. This has similarity with Tantric philosophy. According *Dehatattva* philosophy, the body is the microcosm of the universe and the preservation of the body in good health is an essential duty of a *Tantric* devotee. The Carvakas deny the existence of the other world beyond death. It may have influenced the *Tantric* concept of *Jivanmukti*, liberation of life. Even the Vaisnavas, who insist on scrupulous adherence to ethical norms, could not escape it. There is a considerable bulk of *FaisbnavaSahajiya* literature. The *Vaisnava* conception of Krishna and Radha is regarded as corresponding to Siva and *Sakti* of *Tantra* and to *Upaya* and *Prajna* of the Buddhist *Tantra*. It may be noted that *Tantra*, particularly the Sahajiya Idea, is found in all the religious systems of the medieval period. The concept of

Sahaja is found in Sikhism which is anti-Brahmanical and denies caste-system. The Sikhs also believe in the absolute authority of *Gurus*.

Sects and sub-sects of *Tantra*

Broadly speaking, Hindu *Tantra* was divided into two schools, *Saiva* and *Sakta*.

Among the *SaktaTantras* again, despite fundamental unity, there were differences which were mainly caused by the *Mahapurishya*. In connection with *Diksha*, the *Agnipurana* (Chaps 27,81-87,304) sets forth many *Tantricmantras* and rites. This *Purana* ordains (CCCL XXII-34) that the worship of the deities Vishnu and others should be in three ways: Vedic, Tantric and Mixed; the first and the third for the *Dvijas* and the second for Sudras alone. The *Brahmapada Purana* contains a portion called *Lalitasahasranama* which is clearly *Tantric*. The *KalikaPurana* devotes considerable space to the treatment of *mantras*, *mudras* and *nyasas* etc. From the *Puranic* quotations in *Smriti* digests and commentaries as well as from certain *Puranic* texts, it is clear that the *Puranas* are replete with *Tantric* elements. Tantric *Diksha* was much significant. Some other *Smriti* works also, like the *Dharmasindhu*, rely on *Tantras* for *Diksha*.

Some believe that these two are only another form of Siva-Sakti of *Tantra*. The *Pancaratra* works of *Vaisnavas* show a close relation with *SaktaTantra* in some respects. In *Tantra*, *AdyaSakti* is designed as the source (*yonis*) of everything. So, in the *AhimbudhnyaSamhita* (59.7), *Sakti*, as Lakshmi is called *yonis*. Like *Tantra*, this work designates (51.54-61) *Sakti* as Tara as well as Siva. Like *Tantra* again, it holds (10, 53) that Lakshmi, as the Supreme Energy (*Para-Sakti*), resides in *Muladhara*. The description of Vishnu and his *Sakti*, Lakshmi and of their adobe is found in the *BrahmaSamhita*, a highly authoritative work in Bengal *Vaishnavam*. *RupaGosvamin*, the famous scholar –devotee of Bengal, says that Radha is the essence of *MahaSakti* extolled in *Tantra*. *JivaGosvamin*, a famous figure in Bengal school of *Vaisnavism* and *KrsNadasa*, a well-known biographer of Chaitanya, have quoted a verse about Radha from the *Brhad-GautamiyaTantra*. These scholars try to establish Radha as *MulaAdyaPraktiSakti*. These terms are also used in *Tantra*. The Radha – *Tantra*, currently available in Bengal may not be authentic. Nevertheless, the fact remains that *Tantra* was so popular that *Vaisnavas* had to write *Tantras* on their cult to attract popular support.

How deeply *Tantra* influenced the *Vaisnavas* is proved *inter alia*, by an inscription (423-424 A.D) found at Gandhar in Malwa. One *Mayuraksa*, whose *Vaisnavic* creed is attested by the inscription (BhagavathSrimanMayurakshaksha) on the temple, erected by him in honour of Vishnu (*VisnohSthonam*). It is mentioned in the inscriptions, *Tantra* (*tantrodbhuta...*) and *Dakini* (*dakinisamprakirnam*) which are familiar in *Tantra*.

Vaisnavism also exercised considerable influence on *Tantra*. In the *IsanaSamhita*, regarded as a part of the *Kularnava*, attempt has been made to

establish the divinity of Caitanya. In the *Gudhavatara* portion, regarded as part of the *VisvasaraTantra*, there is a description of Vishnu incarnated as Caitanya. In the list of *Avataras*, contained in the *UrdhvamnayaSamhita*, the Buddha is replaced by Caitanya. An evidence of *Vaisnavainfluence* on *Tantra* is that of Radha who has been appropriated as the heading *Sakti* of Krishna.

Tantras of Kashmir are predominantly *Saivite*. From various works it is learnt that *Tantricism* crept into the practices of some sub-sects of the Saivism. For example, the *Kapalikas* adopted part of the *Panca-makara* worship, their practices sometimes resembling those of *Viracara* and *Vamacara* of *Tantra*. The Aghorins or *Aghorapanthins*, members of a Saiva sub-sect, are reported to resort to certain practices even more detestable than the worst of the Tantric practices. They are stated to feed on animal excretion, corpses collected from funeral grounds, and insects rolling in a dead man's skull.

Chapter - III

Tantra as Ritual Art and Practice

Basic philosophy

To understand a particular religion we have to look in to their basic philosophy, to relate with the basic philosophy first is to define the word called religion and then it is seen in relation to that aspect.

Tantrism is an offshoot of the philosophy, beliefs and practices of orthodox (Bahmanical) and heterodox (Buddhist and Jain) beliefs and religious systems. *Tantra* is a complex ritual performance based on Vedism and other wisdom oriented ideologies and earth centered rites of fertility and prosperity.

Realization of highest truth is the fundamental to Vedic philosophy. It is the *brahmanubhava* (intuition of reality), *brahmandarasana* (insight into truth) and *brahmansansparsa* (contact with the supreme)⁵⁷. *Tantra* depicts a happy and fruitful way of life. *Tantra* is an especial embodiment having Indian feeling, religion and art. It is understood well by people who are prepared to take up inner meditative action. There are many variations in practice and of belief. It has its own particular wisdom. This is positioned away from all other religious and psychological systems, especially those traditional to the orthodox Brahmins.

Due to these the heterogeneous set of ideas and practices are the characteristics of the religious fabric of India it is ancient, medieval, and even modern-is made its impact in all forms of religious system of India, which is orthodox and popular, it did influence but not in a uniform manner. Sophisticated Tantras in another way has Brahmanical elements since their composers consistently attempted to interpret the teachings of *Tantra* in terms of *Smarta-pauranic* ideals. The philosophical aspects of Tantrism were converged with that of Vedanta and thus it is given tinge of the *smarthacult*⁵⁸. That is the union of personal self (*svat*) with that of the universal (*virat*). The practice of such unification has to be done through the awakening of energy, *Kundalini* and pierce six chakras within the body itself. Practice of *Kundalin* is should be done through the mediation of guru, the teacher who is well versed in Vedas and Vedic literature. It aims at the unification of theory of the practice of tantric with its philosophy. *TantraSadhana* incorporates a series of repeated rituals till one attains absolute truth.

Ritual:

A ritual, be it sacred or secular consists of a series of actions performed as per the prescriptions of scriptures and traditions. Ritual is an expression of a

⁵⁷ T.N. Mishra, *Impact of Tantra on religion and Art*, New Delhi: D.K. Print world, 1945. p. 20.

⁵⁸ N.N. Bhattacharya, *History of the Tantric Religion, (An Historical, Ritualistic and Philosophical study)* Manohar, 1982-2005, p. 293.

religion. Every *sadhaka* (practitioner or attainer) should observe rituals till he/she attains *siddhi*, the attainment. But the ritual structure and process should suit and realize the spiritual needs of the mendicant.

Tantrasadhana (Practice of Tantra)

Practice of Tantra is often interpreted as process of converging body and soul (psyche) to exalt physical body to the realm of cosmic body level⁵⁹. *Sadhana* is a redundant observance of rituals performed through meticulously routed mediation which is done for *siddhi* (attainment, success)⁶⁰. *Sadhana* (practice) requires the perfection in *yoga*, union of body and soul, *Japa*, Prayer, *puja* worship, *mantra*, incantation and *dhyana*, meditation to attain *siddhi*. It also depends upon the self-realisation. *Sadhana* is done in three stages: *suddhi/Bhutasuddhi* purification, *sthiti*, existence and *arpana* dedication corresponding respectively to *karma*, *Bhakti* and (*Jnana*),⁶¹ Purification is attained by *bhava* (meditation) and *kriya* (action), and *puja*, worship done by merging body and soul. *Bhutasuddhi* is a citadel of *Tantrasadhana*.

Thus 'initiation' (*dikshaorabhisheka*) is made compulsory prerequisite for the practices. It is transmission of certain effective doctrines by transforming the recipient entirely. The process involves elaborate and careful preparation. The texts and manuals occupy a secondary role, the primary task being the ritualistic involvement with the teacher. It is already been mentioned that the importance given to the teacher in the *tantra* is very great; says a text: "there can be no salvation without initiation and there can be no initiation without a teacher"⁶² The ritual process is described below.

The place of worship should be ritually purified by sprinkling sacred water and mopping with cloth. It should be decorated with flowers and incenses may be spread. Object of ritual, deity is to be seated on a pedestal (seat) and sanctified by sprinkling sandal water. Then the deity has to be infused with life infusing life (*pranapratishta*) in it. *Bhutasuddhi* is the purification of the body elements. It symbolically represents the purification of internal and external self of the practitioner, the *sadhaka* before starting *sadhana*. The inner and outer sanctification is done respectively by *snana* and *anganyasa*, *pranayama* etc. respectively

Human body is composed of five elements, viz. They are Earth (*prithvi*), Ap(water), fire (*tejas*), Air (*vayu*) and ether (*Akasa*). A harmonious blending of these five is considered as *bhutasiddhi*. It is a mental process (*kalpayet*). With the help of a nectar that steams from the pineal gland⁶³, *sahasrara*, the *sadhaka* constructs an

⁵⁹ Phillip Rawson, *The art of Tantra*, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing, 1973, pp. 27-32.

⁶⁰ Rudrayamalatantra, *Kulanrmaavatantra*, 109. Pushpendra Kumar, *Introduction to Tantras and their philosophy*, New Delhi: Rashriya Sanskrit Sansthan, 1998, pp. 29-37.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, pp. 9.43.

⁶²

The pineal gland (also called the **pineal** body, *epiphysis cerebri*, *epiphysis* or the "third eye") is a small endocrine gland. It produces melatonin, a hormone that affects the modulation of wake/sleep patterns and photoperiodic (seasonal) function. Downloaded on September, 2018,

imaginary new body by passing through in different stages lord of nature –intellect-other-air-fire-water- earth-vegetable- food- semen, i.e.*purusha* ,the self (ego). This is self-realization. All this process has to be a mental performance done through the concentration achieved by observing austerities. It can be considered as *TrantraSadhana*. It is possible for a worshipper by transforming one's own self into deity (*DevoBhutvayajetdevam*) during which the *sadhaka's* consciousness rises into the divine realm. It should be a routine practice for a *sadhaka* to have therapeutic effect on the body. The painter is like a *sadhaka* who merges his/her self with his imagination and translates those imaginary forms on the canvas.

Depending upon the *guna*, nature (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) of the *Sadhaka*, the modes of disciplines are imposed. The *Sadhakas* with the feelings of animal (*pasubhava*), heroism, (*Virabhava*) and godliness (*divyabhava*), have different *acaras*, customary practices. By meticulous practice, one can ascend in their paths from *pasubhava* to *divyabhava*. Hence *Sadhana* is the synthesis of *Kriya* (action) and *Bhavana* (feeling). For achieving *brahma-jnana*, *sadhaka*, the practitioner should have control over his five senses, *Panchendriyas* and six emotions, *arishadvargas*. Like *Sadhaka* who realizes truth after his reaching his body and soul with the ultimate, an artist reaches ecstasy if he/she can be translate the mental image on the canvas. The art piece or painting is an experiential expression of the artist that reflects the process of his/her *sadhana*(practice) in his field.

Nyasa

The word *nyasa* literally means 'placing or depositing in or on something'.⁶⁴ It is a significant act in *tantric* rites. It is also a mystical and symbolic sanctification of the body parts like hands, feet etc., accompanied by chanting (mantras) that is *nyasa*.

Kularnava, tantra prescribes the way of creating awareness and sensitivity to the body parts by keeping once own fingertips and palms of the right hand on them along with *Mantras*. The sounds of the potential *mantras* recited during this process induce power of divinity into the body. The *tantriks* believe that this process awakens even the flesh of the body. The ritual after its completion permeates divine power in to different parts of the body. Thus the body is protected by obtaining divinity.

The *Jayakhya-samhita* (patala xi.1-3)⁶⁵ mentions six forms of *Nyasacan* be performed to the goddess like *Vidyas*, *Kali*, *Tara*, etc, In *Matrikanyasa* two dimensions; *anthah*(internal), *bahihi*(external) exists. There are several kinds of *nyasa* such as *hamsa*, *pranava*, *matrika*, *mantra*, *kara*, *anga*, *pitha*, etc.⁶⁶ *Sadanga-*

<https://www.google.co.in/search?q=pineal+gland&oq=peneal&aqs=chrome.1.69i57j0l5.6381j1j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

⁶⁴ S.C.Banerji, *Brief History of Tantra literature*, Culcatta: NayaPrakashan, 1988.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 43.

⁶⁶ *Saradatilaka*, IV.29-41; V.5-7, etc.

nyasa, is done by reciting chants. While doing this, different body parts are touched. The organs like heart(*aimhridayayanamah*),forehead (*omklimsirasivaha*), and head (*omsahuhsikhayaiva*) are touched with respective *mantras*.

The *sadhaka* infuses the body with the life of Devi through *jiva-nyasa/anga-nyasa*. The *sadhaka* by keeping his hand on his heart recites the chant *soham* (I am he) and identifies himself with the Devi goddess. The way a seed sown in cultivated and well watered soil becomes functional the *bija-mantra* when enters the pure heart of disciple will be showed with the mercy of the word.

Mudra

Is a ritual posture of the hand, having repetitive gestures and finger postures. This is connected to *nyasa* in tantric rituals. This is another way of nonverbal communication and also self-expression which stimulates the subjective reaction in the mind of the *tantrika*.

Performance of *Mahasrimudra* showers all her fortunate blessing fulfills desires and awakens wisdom among ignorance *saktimudra* manifests ultimate spirituality which gives self-contentment.⁶⁷

Kularnavatantra (xvii.57) etymologically traces the root of the word, *mud* (delightfulness) and *dravya* (causative). By observing mudra gods get delighted. It is also said that five elements of the universe are represented by five fingers. Having different gestural finger patterns, placed in specific nodal points of the body, can replace the spoken word.By this the concentration power of the *sadhaka* is heightened by inspiring the deity's idea in the mind.The finger movement compositions of the gestures are highly stylized form of communication. There are so many separating names, number and definition of *Mudras*.The tantric texts (I.p.46-f) contain a list of mudras with names and definitions.These hand gestures play a role in the elements of art as being shapes,(of hands) which are symbols used by some of the artists in their work as their expressive form.

Mantra is locus of tantric practices and god by itself.*Mantra* is the one which is recited (*Mananattrayateitimantrah*). It protects individuals from the cycle of birth and rebirth.⁶⁸The syllables of a *mantra* by themselves are lifeless but when pronounced with *susumna*, they conceive infinite power. It is held that all the mantra are the expressions of *kundalini* i.e., *sabdabrahman* or *sagunabrahman*.*Dhvani* resembles to the sound of black bee. *Sabda* after its origination moves upwards *kundalini* which is *Muladhara chakra* of the body.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Translation and notes with introduction by Sanjukta Gupta, *Lakshmi Tantra*, Delhi: MotilalBanarasidas, 1972-2007.

⁶⁸ S.C.Banerji, *Brief History of Tantra Literature*, 1988, pp. 116.

⁶⁹ Brown". . "The Saundaryalahari, or Flood of Beauty" by W. Norman Brown, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*. 22 (1/3) (1959), pp. 617–618.

The utterance of chants (*mantras*) is based on sounds which create psychosomatic vibrations in living beings. The *mantras* are embodied with joy, creative power and peace. The letters in the mantras are its *Matrikas* (sources). The guru lays the seed of *sadhana* (practice) through *mantra* in the soul of the disciple. The seeds of *sadhana* are planted in the being of the disciple through the vehicle of the chosen *mantra*.

The substance of all *mantras* is its *bijaakshara* (root letters) represented diagrammatically. *Brahman* is realized when the personal energy (*sakti*) of the *sadhaka* that is the practitioner unites with energy, *sakti* created by mantras (*mantrasakti*). From here the skilled ones enter in to the philosophy of *nada* sound which is locus of *mantrasastra*, which is optimized in the practice of *tantra*.

Mantra, composed of patterned letters makes a phrase that manifests an image. The patterning of letters and the sound they underlie matters in the realization of *mantra*. *Mantra* is a medium through which *sadhaka* performs *sadhana* for *siddhi* (attainment). In art production artist is *sadhaka*, *mantra* for art production is patterning of theme, frames, colour compositions, lines, motifs in visuals (sculpture, painting, graphics) and *siddhi* is attainment or realization of all the constituents of *mantra* (all the above elements of art production) in the visual product. Hence the artist should be perfect in composing the components of art making. It is the ultimate goal of any attainment.

Japa:

Japa is a process of meditation through the recitation of *mantra* to attain the power of concentration of mind. To achieve it, the *sadhaka* should sit in an auspicious time and place in a prescribed posture and chant *mantra* given by a guru (spiritual teacher) or verse of one's *istadaiva*. *Japa* is of three types. They are: *Vacikajapa* that emphasizes on audible utterance. *Upamsujapa* is done by mere lip movement without making sound. *In Manasika Japa* recitation of mantra takes place in prescribed numbers with higher concentration of mind. But any above form of meditation without faith, concentration and devotion is always futile.

Mandala

A *Mandala* is a spiritual circle composed of figural symbols. When viewed from the perspective of macrocosm and microcosm may represent the Universe. All motifs expressed in cognates with the psychodynamics of the individuals that are met in the process of purification and meditation. . In orthodox and heterodox religious practices *mandala* is given prominence. *Mandala* is a composition of complex pattern and derives iconographic images. They are also geometric diagrams to be drawn on the ground and there are many different infinite variations. It is one

of the items of worship along with Yantra. The Mandala is used in the case of any deity while the Chakra is specifically intended for a particular deity. It has got influences from classical Tibetan culture. Mostly they are formal having few elements of forms, remains constant. In *Manjusrimulakalpathe* Guhyasamaja which has basic tantric Buddhism mainly talks of *mudras* and *mandalas* connected with goddess and spirituality. It is similar to the cosmos indicating the focalization of wholeness. It is a combined form which reflects the cosmogenic process in the form of the cycles of elements which culminate into contrasting aspects like earthly and the ethereal; the kinetic and static. Nuclear motif of the self is symbolized as circle; it is a means for centering awareness.



Mandala (Tucci)

Mandala helps in developing concentration and brings to a state suitable to a mystical delight. Ajeet Mookherjee in his book says: "Each of the five component parts of the mandala—the four sides and the centre—is psychologically significant; they correspond to the five elements of the human personality and the five *Buddhas* of the Diamond Vehicle: *Vairochana*, the brilliant one; *Akshobya*, the unshakable; *Ratnasambhava*, the matrix of the Jewel; *Amitabha*, the Infinite light; and *Amogha siddhi*, the infallible realization."⁷⁰

Through meditation on the mandala, the adept can tap higher levels of assimilation and comprehend cosmic communication which results in the micro-macro unity i.e., the individual soul with the universal/ultimate reality. Thus, these five *Buddhas* are in one self and they are said to be the five constituent elements of the human personality.⁷¹ It is essentially a psychic intricate which conditions the

⁷⁰ Ajeet Mukherjee, *Art, science and Ritual*, Thames and Hudson, Delhi Publication, 2003.

⁷¹ Tucci, *The Theory and Practice of the Mandala*, 1961-2001, London: Dover publication, p. 51.

return of the psyche to its effective core. Therefore, the initiation process is often mentioned as a 'march towards the center' so that the expert can interiorize the *mandala* in its entirety; counterpoise the conflicting dimensions projected in its symbolism and finally be re-absorbed in the cosmic space signified symbolically in the core circle. The process of interiorization is a matter of orderly progression, wherein each inner circuit marks a phase in transcendent gradient. The outer border signifies a barricade of fire or metaphysical knowledge which burns ignorance. Next is the ring of Diamonds which suggest illumination or the quality of higher knowledge which is attained. In Tibet, the realization of this consciousness is known as liberation. The act of seeing, which is analogous to contemplation, it is in itself a liberating experience.

The followers from dark negative depths of ignorance are put to unfold the self and expand. In relationship of art to ritual it is evident that these forms become the mediators of self-enlightenment. It is a cycle taking us from art to ritual and back, thus making it as a social function and keeping the tradition going for the times to come. The other kind of the diagram which also demands certain set of meditative attributes is *Yanytra*.

Cosmograms

The origin of the universe descriptions are spread in the events of evolution of Tantra. They are in different characteristic features which are been represented in the miniature size to a mural forms. Principally cosmological, astrological charts, astronomical computations and observations in phenomena of nature are interesting. These images are world representations of philosophical constructions which become aids to *Sadhana*, a specific structure of solar and planetary visions. They are in concentric atmospheric zones and energy fields in which a sun shimmering in gold emanating primal flames is placed. And a small central globe along with some stellar orbs or a waning moon is also placed.

There are another series where there is a culmination of images in the spectacular conception of the cosmic man, *purushakarayantra*, whose body is filled with a checkered pattern resembling some of the most modern artist of the west. These are more mysterious and vibrating with pictorial symbols, which are the diagrams of Jambudvipa, which is the inner most of the island continents in the system of cosmology. These are the tantric cosmograms which are based on seeing into inner character or underlying truth.

Yantra

Yantra is yet an added indispensable element in *tantric* ritual. It is also called *cakra* which is a diagram or a figure engraved, drawn or painted on metal, stone, paper, or other material. The difference in application of *mandala* and *Yantra* is that,

while the *mandal* is employed in the worship of any deity, the *Yantra* is suitable for the worship of a specific deity or employed for a precise purpose. A literary text called, *Kularnavatantra* derives *Yantra* from the root 'Yantr' which means that it saves the worshipper from *yama*, the god of death and other perils. The *Kularnavatantra* equate *yantra* as a device to remove *yantran*as (pains) caused out of love and anger.



Yantra, Rajasthan, C. 17th Century Copper plate (Ajith Mukherjee)

The *Kaulavalinirnaya* holds that worship without *ayantra* is futile and *yantra* is a product of *mantra*. According to Zimmerman, "This diagram is a mathematical pattern, meant for meditations and serves as it is a purely geometric diagram without any figures involved. They are the images conceived as cosmos. Some are made/ drawn before the meditation which helps for identification to concentrate. Others are made during the process of meditation while the concentration evolves gradually which in corporate image till it's completed".⁷² There are different kinds of *Yantra* as which are embodied like *Siva*, *Vishnu*, *Krishna*, *Ganesha* and various other manifestations of *Sakti* such as *Kali*, *Tara*, *Bagala*, *Chinnamasta*⁷³. There are about 960 *yantras*, referred by *Tantrarajatantra*; out of these, *ShriYantra* is the most hounoured and considered as the deity, *YantraGayatri* itself⁷⁴.

In *Kamakalavilasa* and *Soundaryalahari*, *SriYantra*'s nature, significance, construction and application are explained. Its symbol as a pattern signifies *Sakti* (*swarupa*) and its power flow out of the form of the universe (*visvarupa*). It is a representation of the cosmic field in creation.

⁷² Zimmer, Heinrich, *Myths and Symbols in India art and civilization* (ed. by Joseph Cambel), Washington, 1946, p. 58-97.

⁷³ Zimmer, Heinrich, *Myths and symbols in India Art and Civilization* (ed. by Joseph cambello, Washington, 1946.)

⁷⁴ "Yantrarajaya Vidmahe, varapradayadhimahi, tannoyantrampracodayat". (Merutantra XXXIII.13.)

Sri Chakra

“*Chakra*” is a Sanskrit word which means a wheel. Etymologically the word suggests that ‘by which anything is done’ (*kriayateanena*). *Chakra* indicates the wheel of the potter, the wheel of the cart, the wheel-like weapon that is hurled against the foe. Its extended meaning denotes a kingdom; the wheels of the king’s chariot can roll on without any limitation; hence, the king of the land is known as a ‘*Chakra-vartin*’. It also implies an arrangement of amilitia (*Chakravyuha*), in order to strengthen its position and secure victory. To convey the meaning forcefully the Sanskrit poets used circular patterns of letters of words known as *chakra-bandha*. The prefix, “Sri” is the name of the mother goddess who rules over the universe; the expression ‘Sri chakra’ suggests that the instrument employed is propitious, beneficent, productive and conducive to prosperity⁷⁵. All living beings depend upon her for their existence, for happiness and for the sake of fulfillment of their destiny



Diagram of *sriyatesarva* (Ajith Mukerjee collection)⁷⁶.

The *chakra* is drawn in circular form which suggests comprehension; it comprehends all the parts and units in a compact and effective manner, so that the whole form becomes unitary and functional as it creates a power field to achieve the desired aims.

KundaliniSakti (Human body –a Microcosm)

There are several subtle channels in the human body, but the principle ones are fourteen in number. Amongst these, three are vital: *Ida* (to the left), *pingala* (to the right) and *susumna* (in the centre). Of these three, *susumna* alone is the

srichakra

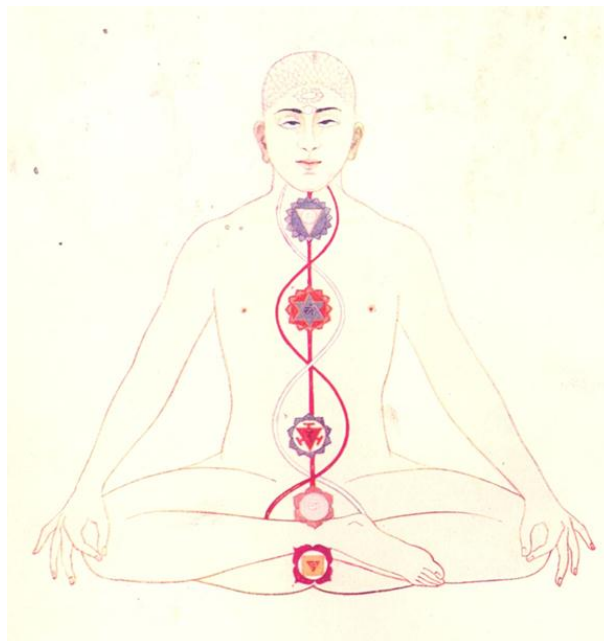
⁷⁵ “*tvamsristvamisvari*” (*Durga saptasati*, 1, 79).

⁷⁶ S.K. Ramachandra Rao, *The Tantra of Sri Chakra*, Delhi: Satguru, 1983.

paramount which is the most important one for the yoga practice; the rest of the subtle channels are subordinate to it. The nerve called *ida* is on the left side, twining around the *susumna* and also going to the right nostril. The nerve *pingala* is on the right side, twisting around the central channel and entering the left nostril. The person, who discerns this idea of microcosm of the body and experiences its secretaries, reaches the uppermost state.⁷⁷

Kosa

The body consists of five *Kosas* (sheaths), viz. *Annamaya* (made of food), *pranayama* (consisting of vital breath), *Manomaya* (made of mind), *vijnanamaya* (consisting of special consciousness) and *Anandamaya* (consisting of joy). First, at the base of the spine, is the center of the physical consciousness, *Muladhara*, which governs the physical being, a major root center of physical experience; it is conceptualized as consisting of four red petals inscribed in gold *V, Sh, S'* within a yellow square, depicting the earth element with *mantrabija- Lam*. Around the *svayambu-linga* unawaken three and half coiled mysteriously lying *kundalini*, in the inverted triangle is present. It is associated the element of smell and inertia. Brahma with the *Shakti Dakini* is the presiding deity. Next is the lower vital center, the *Svadhithana* below the naval and controlling genitals governing the smaller vital movements of petty desires, passions, greed and the like. It is a pleasant chakra having six vermillion petals with *b, bh, m, y, r, and i*. In the periphery the water element is depicted, and having with pure white half-moon with mantra *bija Vam*. On it is the presiding deity *Vishnu* and *Sakti Rakini* or *chakini*.

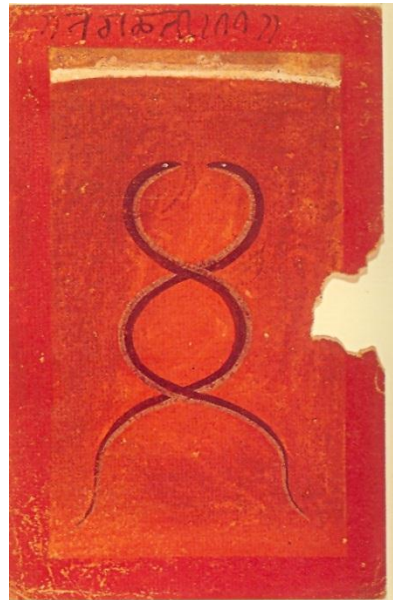


Kundalini –Body and Chakras (Arthur Avalon – Shadchakra Nirupana)

⁷⁷ T.N. Mishra, *Impact of Tantra on Religion and Art*, New Delhi: D.K.Publications, 1945.p.48.
S.C. Banerji, *A brief history of Tantra Literature*, Calcutta: Rashtriya Santhan, 1988, p.13.

It is governed by sense of taste. Above it is the naval region abdomen, is the chief vital center, the *Manipura*; originate the powerful movements of the vital force, mighty passions, ambition, drive for domination etc. This is gem site, having ten petals with blue colour written with *d,dh,n,t,th,np,ph*. The element of fire is represented in the Center of the lotus with a red triangle radiant like the rising sun. The *bijamantra* is *Ram*. The presiding deity is *Rudra* with the Sakti *Lakshmi*.

Rising higher in the region of the heart, there is the heart center and its control is by, *Anahata Padma*, which commands the vital psyche. Sanctification, submission, love, and harmony well-up from this center in the heart. It has twelve letters- *k,kh,g,gh,n,ch,chw,j,jh,n,t,th*, written on golden petals. There is a *Bana-linga* inside the lustrous golden triangle. This is within the interpenetrated triangles in smoky colour since it is associated with element of air. The presiding deity is just above the two triangles – *Isa* with *kundalini Sakti* (red in colour). The *mantra bija* is *Yam* and is associated with the sense of touch.



Symbols of Cosmic Energy in Basholi painting, c.1700

Next is the throat centre, *visudha*. It governs the movements of the physical part of mind which seeks to express in speech. It is with smoky purple having sixteen petals. The letters are *a,aa,i,ii,u,uu,ri,rre,li,lle,e,ai,o,ou,m,h*. In the periphery of white is, a white circle enclosing a triangle that is written with *bija mantra Ham*. *Sadasiva* is presiding deity in his *Ardhanarishwara* aspect. It is associated with the element of ether and controls the sense of hearing.

Yet higher is the center on the forehead between the eyebrows (a little above) which commands, *Ajna*, the inner thought, inner vision and will. It is the centre of dynamic mind radiating the inner will a force of creation. It is a lotus with two petals in white with the letter *h*, and *ksh*. *Om matrabija* and *Itara-linga* in white

are within inverted white triangle in the center. Its association is with all cognitive faculties connected to the mind.

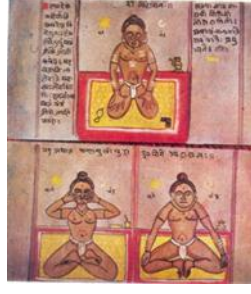
The highest and the last is one at the crown of the head, the celebrated *sahasrara*, the thousand petal lotus. It is in the head, above the brain as a center connecting the illuminated mind. The brain is a channel of communication between the *Ajna* and *Sahasrara chakra*. This is called as *sunya* it gives a sense of void, entry into the kind of stillness, a silence above all the activities. It is a place of pure consciousness where the *kundalini Sakti* meets. Here energized eighteen subtle centers encircle the *Sahasrara* region, finally to unite with *Siva* which is the act of yoga. The integration of all polarities are experienced here, which is a place for all sounds, all colours, integrates all cognitive and conative functions. The journey of *kundalini* ends here.

Yoga

The word *yoga* means “unison” or unity and is derived from the Sanskrit word, *yuj* which means “to join”. This unity is described in spiritual terms as the merger of the individual consciousness with the universal consciousness. On more applied level, yoga is a means of harmonizing and balancing the body, mind and emotions⁷⁸. This is done through the exercise of *asana*, *pranayama*, *mudra*, *bandha*, *shatkarma* and meditation. The science of yoga begins to work on the personality, the physical body, which for most people is practical and familiar starting point. When imbalance is experienced at this level, the organs, muscles and nerves no longer function in harmony, rather they act in opposition to each other; for instance, the endocrine system might become irregular and the efficiency of the nervous system decrease to such an extent that a disease will manifest. Yoga aims at bringing the different bodily functions into perfect coordination so that they work for the good of the whole body.

From the physical body, yoga moves on to the mental and emotional levels. Many people suffer from phobias and neuroses as a result of the stresses and interactions of everyday living. Yoga cannot provide a cure for life but it does present a proven method for coping with it. Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh explained yoga as an “integration and harmony between thought, word and deed, or integration between head, heart and hand”. Through the practices of yoga, interrelation between the emotional, mental and physical levels can be achieved.

⁷⁸ Swami Satyanandasaraswati, *Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha*, Bihar: Yoga Bharati, 1966-1997, p. 1.



Simhasana ,Bhadrasana,and Shanmukhimudra(manuscript illustration,
19thcent,Gujarat , Author's, coll

There are many branches of Yoga: *raja, hatha, jnana, karma, bhakti, mantra, Kundalini* and *laya*, to name but a few, and many texts explain them in detail. Each individual needs to find those *yogas* most suited to his /her particular personality and need. In the last half of this century, *hatha yoga* has become the most well-known and widely practiced of the systems. In the ancient texts, *hatha yoga* consists of the *shatkarmas*, cleansing practices, only. Today, however, *hatha yoga* commonly embraces the practices of *asana, pranayama, mudra, and bandha* as well. ⁷⁹

Samadhi

The practitioner of the yoga hold that it is higher than any other system that *Samadhi* (ecstasy) attained hence there is more perfection. The *Samadhi* of *laya-yoga* is said to be *savikalpasamadhi*, and that of *Raja-Yoga* is *Nirvikalpasamadhi*.⁸⁰ In *Mantrayoga*, Worship and devotion predominate and in the *Samadhi* of *Mantrayoga* the state of *Mahabhava* is attained, marked by immobility and speechlessness.⁸¹ For liberation *Mantrayogi* and *hatayogi* make use of the *Kundalini yoga*. The other two *Rajayoga* or *Jnana yoga* are termed as *Dhyana yogas*.⁸² In *Hatayoga*, when *Samadhi*, called *Mahabodha* is attained; respiration ceases and the yogi is without any sign of animation. In *Layayoga* the *Samadhi* called *Mahalaya* attained, there is no outer consciousness but the yogi is immersed in the ocean of bliss. In *Rajayoga* *Nirvikalpasamadhi* is attained, there is *Nirvikalpa* or detachment (*Vairagya*) from the world.

Sakti

The researches of primitive people, which include the tribes of India, reveal the domination of females. This seems to bring the concept of mother goddess which is prominent as *Sahkti*. In India, the excavations of Indus valley civilization reveal female figurines which, probably testify to the idea of *sakti* as the supreme deity. It is clear that the *Sakta* religion developed in a female dominated society where rituals

⁷⁹ Arthur Avlon (Sir John Woodroffe), *Readings of M.P. Pandit, Sanskrit text Taranatha Vidyaratna* Delhi: Motilal Banarasisdass, 2010.

⁸⁰ Pranatosini p851-857. Cf Bosc and Haldar, *The Tantras*, Calcutta: Oriental publications, 1956, p.184.

⁸¹ John Woodroffe, *Sakti and Sakta*, Madras: Ganesh and Co, p. 410.

⁸² Pushpendrakumar, *Introduction to Tantras and their philosophy*, Delhi: Rashtriya Sanskrit Samsthan, 1998, p.21. Cf (Gheranda Samhita VI.17.)

based upon the fertility image played a very significant role. *Saktism* is a direct offshoot of the primitive mother Goddess cult which was a prominent feature of the religion of the ancient agricultural people. This concept would have developed in course of time. The concept became diverse in nature depending upon the degree of culture attained by separate communities at different times. Evidence to this is the various types of the goddess cults still prevailing in different regions and among diverse people.

It can be said that the contemporary civilization was mainly based on pastoral economy, patriarchal social organization, natural gods and sacrificial cults; all these are on the basis of the Vedic texts. Only the female figure dominated – inherited from the pre-Vedic way of life.⁸³ To secure the fertility of fields, many rituals were designed. Mainly sexual in character, found their way into Vedic texts and became the visible portions of the tantric iceberg. The evidence relating to sexual rituals and their connection with agriculture and the mother Goddess cannot be completely brushed aside and it is interesting to note that in almost every period. The Vedic literature shows traces of sexual rituals and a pattern of sexual behavior that differed from accepted norms. Reference has been made to use five *makaras* (*panchamakaras*) in Vedic rites.⁸⁴ It is a fact that the Vedic texts contain many tantric ideas and practices. Even the vedic sacrificial cult was not basically different from those of *tantras*. In the *Brahmana* literature sexual union was not only regarded as the means of achieving spiritual happiness, but it was also identified with the sacrifice itself.⁸⁵

The doctrines of *Bhuta*, *Yoni* and *purusha* are mentioned in the Upanishads⁸⁶, with the term *Prakriti* being used later as a substitute for *bhuta* and *yonis*. These four concepts denote the earlier stages of the evolution of the tantric ideas. The creation of the world was viewed in terms of human procreation and that is why supreme emphasis was laid upon the concept of *prakriti* of female principle of creation. In spite of the recognition of the role of the male in the process of procreation, we come across the development of the concept of *purusha* or male principle where this male element is still inactive and passive. The doctrine of *bhuta* suggests that everything in the world is created by the combination of five material elements, viz., earth, water, fire, air, and space which are also known as the five *mahabhuta*. The first four have colour and touch ability whereas the fifth, space is the container of sound. These figures in all forms of ancient Indian thought including the *Tantras*. During 500 A.D. the *sakta* philosophy and cult had their roots made firm among the masses. They called their cult quite Vedic as they identified the supreme

⁸³ P.C. Bagchi, *Pre-Dravidian and Pre-Aryan in India*, Calcutta, 1929, pp. 10-14.

⁸⁴ Rgveda, VII.59.12 (fish); 122.20-21 (mudra); 1.152.2 (meat) IV. 40.5. (Wine); XI.184.1-2 (maithun). (T.N. Mishra, New Delhi, D.K. print world, 1945-1997, p. 47.)

⁸⁵ Satapata Brahmana, III.2.1.2; IV.6.7.9-10; V.1.3.10; VI.5.3.5; XI.62.10; Jaiminiya Brahmana, II.285, Kausiki Brahmana, XV.5. (T.N. Mishra, 1945)

⁸⁶ Svetavatara Upanishad, 1.1-2; Kundaliniyogais been seen in its rudimentary stage in the Upanishad. The central duct (nadi) is indirectly referred to in Chandogya Upanishad (VI.16). The term yoga in its technical sense first occurs in the Taittiriya Upanishad (11.12) as also in Mandukya Upanishad, 2.6.

philosophical entity of the Upanishads viz, the *Brahman*, with *Sakti*, the supreme power, of which the popular deities *Vishnu*, *Devi*, *Siva* and others were manifestations. During this period there were some Upanishads composed such as the *Tripuropanishad*, and others which mainly include the doctrine of the *Sakta* cult. The doctrines of the *sakta* system of philosophy can be said to be a sort of consensus of the important tenets of the various orthodox systems of philosophy prevalent in those days, and had a large no of followers. The Brahman of the *Upanishads* is *sat, cit, ananda*. The *saktas* take *sat* as the highest entity called by the name *parasakti* (the highest energy) which by its very nature , gets a sort of throbbing which is called *citor vimarsa* and the result is the exhibition and realization of the nature of the *parasakti*. Analogy here is the ordinary knowledge of things in the world when the element of consciousness in objects like *ghata*, by virtue of the throbbing of consciousness in them results into the knowledge of those objects. These *sat, cit, and Ananda* elements of the highest energy correspond in a way to the *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* elements of the *sankhya* philosophy which constitute the *mulaprakruti* according to them.

The fundamental doctrine is the one practicing the highest concentration , realized the energy of the divine self, which remains ordinarily always hidden by its own natural properties viz. *sattva, rajas, and tamas* and the highest energy of this self is stated to be manifold; knowledge, power and action are only its natural constituents. The concerned *sakti* is called *Parabindu* which, when distributed, is called *Aparabindu* of *sabdabrahman* from which the creation proceeds. The knowledge of a thing is not false; only the thing is , in a way , false or *pratibhasika* as it is called technically. The realization of the highest principle is achievable by a full practice of the *Astangayoga*. Faith enables a person to perform penance or *tapas*, which results by pursuit of the highest yoga, into the realization of *sakti*. The Upanishads and the ancient sutra works from the basis of the *sakta* philosophy and rituals. Like *Taittiriya, Svetasvatara* and *Prashna Upanishads* form the gist of the *Sakta* cult. The prominent printed sutra works of *sakti* are *Parasuramakalpasutra* and the *Paranandasutra*. The *saptasatithe lalita-sahasranama*, the *devisuktha* and the other works form a part of epic works also contribute to the philosophy of *Saktas*. The *sakta* religion is based on the Agama literature. The agama works keep before them *bhoga* or enjoyment and *Moksa* as the two aims. The ritual side of the *sakta* philosophy consists of the worship of different forms of the universal energy, *sakti*. This Sakti was known by the general name *Devi* who was given different individual names by different worshippers at different places in accordance with the legendary importance which the worshippers had in their minds. The method of worship also, in course of time, differed in the different items of worship and the recitals of the different formulae. The original *sakta* scholars are Lakshmidhara, Bhaskararaya and others.

Shakti-Saktha

Sakti is the supreme deity of the Tantras, who is inseparable from Siva that is but one and the same. These are the two⁸⁷ modes of manifestation of the eternal and infinite Brahman, as *Purusha* and *Prakriti*. In Tantras it is described as mother and spirit, whom the *Tantras* describe as *siva* and *sakti*.⁸⁸ Dikshitar, in the Lalitha cult says, in *Tantra*, *Siva* and *Sakti* are inseparable like heat from fire, whiteness from milk, and weight from natural bodies. *Mahanirvanatantra*(1.16.) it says that the *Sakti* is the main cause to bring this universe into existence. She governs the universe and overwhelms all of us with wonder and awe. She denotes his divine energy and *Brahman*, glorifying the mother aspect of the god.

1. The concept of *Sakti* is as said divine energy in its dynamic form. And it is the creative and preservative energy of Brahman. Since it had brought the universe into existence and it's that preserves it from disruptive forces. *Siva* who is called as *stanu*, and immovable, It is also a divine energy in the form of static aspect, motionless, inert, and without agitation.

2. *Siva* is the symbol of the destructive forces that lie dormant in the Universe.⁸⁹ Goddess *sakti* is the conception of Brahman in all its aspects, i.e. as creator, preserver, and destroyer of the universe. Creation is the way of existence, and divine energy sustains the universe that binds the atoms with atoms. Thus the creative, preservative and destructive forces are three aspects of divine energy that exists in Brahman. *Mahasakti* is the complete perception of *Brahman*. With three *gunas*-*sattava*, *rajas*, and *Tamas*.⁹⁰ In *Tantra*, *Sakti* is also called *Vidya* or *Mahavidya*. The same *sakti*, who is second to none, has been conceived in ten aspects. So, they are collectively known as *Dasamahavidya*. The names differ in different works. In the *Chamundatantra*, the names are as follows: *Kali*, *Tara*, *Sodasi*, *Bhuvaneshwari*, *Chinnamasta*, *Dhumavati*, *Vagala*, *Matangi*, and *Kamala*.

Kali

Another face of goddess of creation and bliss is also with name called Kali the black one, A central deity of time. She brings man into this world. She is the destroyer of him, the war, disease and famine. Tantric ritual that involves hedonism some of them sexual, carried out among the corpses in real (or symbolic) cremation grounds in the red light of funeral pyres, which forcibly is practiced by some primitive sects of *Tantra*. Therefore many icons show her as the black faced and terrible Kali, by showing her tongue lolling and her fanged mouth dribbling blood.

Prana

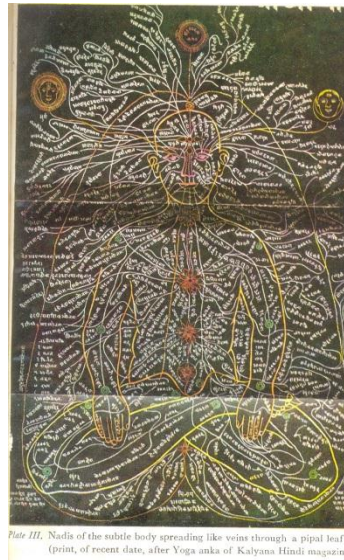
⁸⁷ Chakravarti, Chintaharan, *The Tantras – studies on their Religion and Literature*, Calcutta: Pusti Pustak Mahal, pp. 19.

⁸⁸ Woodroffe John, *Shakti and Shakta*, Madras, Ganesh & Co.

⁸⁹ *Mahanirvana Tantra*, 4.10-11.

⁹⁰ D. N. Bose & Haldar, *Tantras*, Calcutta: Oriental Publications, 1956, p. 86.

The central thought of Hindu thought of an ultimate energy known as '*Prana*', in a great deal influenced the *Tantras* which is the source of all the expression of various forces. All existing organisms, from a speck of protoplasm of plants to tiny genes of animals, are animated by the mutual activity of *Prana*, the life force and matter. Though all systems of Hindu thought recognized the potency of *Prana*, the practitioners of Tantra yoga elaborated the whole science of metamorphosis of *Prana* and applied it as an instrument to arouse the latent psychic force in the human body.**



Nadis of the subtle body spreading like veins through a pipal leaf

- Swami sivapriyananda secret power of Tantrik breathing, Delhi, Abhinav Pub, 1983, p.33.

It is a derivative of an universal reality. The essential proposition of Tantrism is that though the universe evolves out of the interacting forces of two principles, in the ultimate analysis, both these emanate from the one. Behind the entire phenomenal world i.e., matter and thought, there is the 'Eternal One', without a second. This monistic principle is all-pervasive: all things, physical and biological, are finite versions of the 'Eternal One'. The real nature of the 'One' is un-definable yet omnipresent, and at best it concedes only of approximate expositions. It can be summarized as an eternal continuum of externally ultra-subtle cosmic reality which gives rise to the grosser elements in nature. In Tantra it is termed as *Para-Prakriti*. The quasi-monistic form of *prakriti*, or *sakti* which appears in rich ritualistic imagery, but its real nature is more than empiric existence. Though it embraces everything, it transcends all.

Moksha

The true ultimate end is called *Mukti* or *moksa*. It means liberation or loosening. *Mukti* means the act of loosening from the bonds of the *samsara*, the sequence of death and rebirth to which life in the material world is bound. *Mukti* results in a blending of various degrees of wholeness which ultimately incorporates

spirit (*jivatma*) or individual life with the supreme spirit (*paramatma*). Through spiritual knowledge only, liberation can be achieved (*atmajnana*). It is essential that such knowledge must be preceded by and associated with the conscious acts of freedom from sin and initiation of right actions adhering to Dharma. The idealistic system of Hinduism postulates that the nature of mind is the ultimate reality and viewed as intellectual nature as opposed to ethical. This ethical nature is subsidiary and powerless of itself to achieve the modification of energy of consciousness which is known the supreme *mukti* known as *Kaivalya*.

Liberation is achieved while the body is still living, where it is stated as *jivanmukti*. Freedom from desire, non-attachment, is the only way to liberation; all evils are born of attachment. And becoming a man is to pursue the truth which is object in life, acquiring knowledge (*jnana*) of the supreme truth. Which is the divine and it is within oneself. *Jnana* is received through the word of *Guru*. The truth lay in the realization of the maxim that 'knowledge alone is life giving'. In this context John Woodroffe says "Be minded in all pursuit, in all conditions, with all effort. Take to the shade of the tree of liberation, on whose branches flower *Dharma* and *jnana*, the right law and the true knowledge, and whose fruit is the world of bliss. In a word, the way of liberation lies in the Kula-Dharma, the Royal road of Shakti. This truth is the secret."

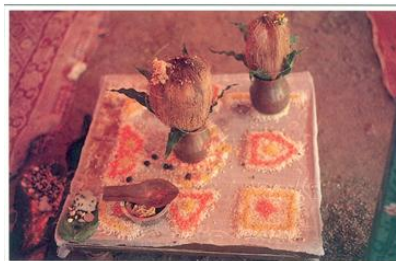
Tantra—Socio cultural aspect

Indian traditions of spiritual realization tend to assume that spiritual practice is an ascetic process of one or another kind, as one has seen the amount of specific guidance as to a technique varies from little, in the early period, to extremely elaborate internal visualizations and mind-body transformations, in the later tantric traditions. Hence the Indian spiritual traditions assume that one understands or perceives something as a result of the successful accomplishment of spiritual practice, and that the understanding or perception cannot be separated from the inner transformation brought about as a result of the practice. The liberating insight is both understanding and inner transformation. *Yogic* and meditational procedures are taken more seriously now than they were in western societies even half a century ago. It shows that Indian techniques of yoga and meditation, including the various internal *yogas* of tantric practice, can indeed affect the functioning, and so the health and vitality, of the organism, and that the special awareness and sensitivities that are trained by these techniques do have real correlation accessible to modern scientific investigation. In the world of body of traditions and techniques that claim to detach the practitioner from excessive emotion, and to purify his or her consciousness, is worth taking with some seriousness. If we regard the techniques of yoga, meditation and Tantra as tools that may still be worth investigating as of use in today's global society, then our ability to make sense of them and use them constructively can only be assisted by an understanding of the historical context within which these practices developed and out of which their imagery and language was born.

Tantra has a special appeal for millions of Indians. A.S.Geden refers to the view of an eminent exponent of tantra who asserts that two-thirds of our religious rites are Tantric and almost half our medicine is also from Tantra. He also refers to a passage, quoted by H.H. Wilson from one of the principal Tantras, which claims that most of the major religious sects have secret followers of Tantra. Tantric saints have a place of honor in Indian society. Moreover, *Tantra* is committed to certain moral values, the excellence of which even the critics of this system are forced to admit. According to Sir Charles Elliot, apart from ceremonial which they include, the general principles of Tantra enumerate as: caste restrictions are minimized; travelling is permitted; women are honored; they can act like teachers; the burning of widows is forbidden; girl widows may remarry and the murder of a woman is peculiarly heinous and prostitution is denounced. The all-pervading influence of Tantra in Indian life and its misinterpretation by the leading scholars did not escape the notice of the upholders of the neo-tantric movement, launched in the beginning of this century.

Influence of *Tantra* in Art

Considering the data collected related to our culture and heritage, it brings back to the concept that art is a kind of “communication”. The historical record tells much more about how art is an expressive form. Art is a public possession, because the formulation of life experienced is the heart of any culture, and moulds the actual word in for people.⁹¹ According to Susanne K. Langer, “Symbol simply means an expression which suggests more than it says”⁹². In this context a symbol is an abstraction, the bearer of an idea, which is the real power of imagination. An image, something that exists only for perception, which is abstracted from the physical world a combination of sensory elements. The symbol should be seen in totality/holistically that understands the work of art starts with an intuition of the whole presented feeling. Viewing it then gradually reveals the complexities of the image. Even today the drawings of *Tantra* are in regular usage in everyday rituals of the Hindu folk of India; as an illustration a contemporary ritual based diagram drawing with rice grain and on top placed with *Purnakumbha* along with specific ritual objects is given below:



Source: Ritual based geometry- newspaper clipping.

⁹¹ K.Susanne, *Langer feeling and form*, RoutledgeKegan Paul, 1953-1976, pp. 76,409

⁹²*Ibid*, p. 36

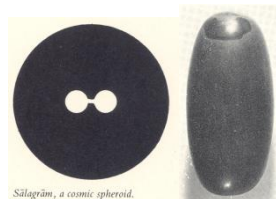
In the humdrum of the worldly distractions the traditional symbols are the means to recollect and function as reminders of the forgotten reality of that moment. There are varieties of visual images used as supporters for concentration. The variety is from regularly used absorbing visual objects to simple graphic signs, dots and concentric circles, to complex structural powerful–diagrams (*Chakras*, *Yantras* and *Mandalas*).

Architectural forms

Broadly *Tantra* is the Indo-Aryan origin. It is a part of the ancient Indian tradition. It covers the philosophy and art including the evolution of the *Tantraas* noticed in the previous chapters dealing with the fundamental concepts of the *Tantra* and various aspects of *Tantric* religion. The *Tantra* had an immense impact on Brahmanical Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, and eventually influenced the art and architecture in the Sub-Continent.

Many specimens of different kinds belong to the pre-historic and proto-historic ages, have been found. Clay figurines burnt in the fire discovered in large numbers, and they represent the early attempts of Indian sculptors in the field of plastic modeling and composition. Artistic activity turned soon to the harder materials like stone and bronze. Partially preserved figurines of the early excavations of the sites testify to the gradually advancing skill and efficiency of the Indian sculptors of those days.

Many of the symbols are very old and can be traced back to the *Vedic* period (c.2000bc). As *Tantra* specific characteristics of *Vedas*, in the *Rigveda*, the creative principle of life are understood as a ‘Golden embryo’ or *Hiranyagarbha*, the womb of energy from which the universe develops. The same symbol crystallized in the conception of the *Siva-linga*, or cosmic egg in the *Tantras*.



- (1) *Brahmanda*, the cosmic Egg, used in ritual as manifesting a realization of wholeness. The entire universe symbolized as oval form. From the Narmada river–based, western India, stone.
- (2) *Salagrama*, a symbol of lord Narayana or Vishnu, in his aspect as Sridhara. Banaras, contemporary expression of traditional form stone.

Ritual symbols of *Tantra* are found in the form of *yogic* postures, mother and fertility cult, in the Harappan culture (Indus Valley Civilization, c3000BC). “In Mohenjo-Daro excavations, the figures of *linga* and *yonis* are seen which are probably used as life granting amulets”⁹³. At Harappa, many conical *lingas*,

⁹³ J. Marshall, Mohenjodaro and the Indus civilization, London, 1931, pls.XIII.I, 7; XIV. 2.4, etc.)N.N.Bhattacharya, History of the Tantric Religion, Delhi: Manohar, 1982-2005.p.17.

representing the male principle and large undulating rings of stone, thought to symbolize the female principle have been recorded.⁹⁴ The style of the sculptural remains of Harappa belong to the second half of the third millennium B.C. shows that plastic art practiced by the people and had magico- religious practices.

The *Tantric* cult of *Srichakra* can be historically traced to the ruins of the Harappa culture.⁹⁵ For the act of cultivation, primarily the *linga* was the symbol, while the *yoni* represented as Mother Earth. It should be remembered that the word *langala* (plough) philosophically associated with *Linga*.^{96,97} Later on, the dualistic aspect came to interpret when spiritual values attributed to *linga* and *yoni*, with a philosophical outlook.



Source: Sculpture c. 800 B.C from auritaEarth Goddess plaque–NandagarhGold.⁹⁸

Svetavatara Upanishad (4th -5th cent. B.C.) Proposes a monotheistic idea of Siva one who is equated to Brahman. The system having chief god as Vishnu, or Siva, or Sakti, or Ganapati, or Surya, as the Supreme Being came into existence. The same time doctrine of bhakti or devotion and self-submission was popularized by Bhagavatgeeta through this process it quickened.

From about the 3rd cent B.C *Saivism* appeared in India as a religion of the masses and therefore, had the highest potentiality of absorbing the *tantric* elements. Moreover, it was in *Saivism* that the *Tantric* ideas found a ground most favorable for their expansion. According to N.N Bhattacharya, many of the seals and seal amulets of steatite, faience, etc., unearthed in Harappan sites bear traces of *Tantrism* and that of *Pramatta* and *Ganas* who are attendants of *Siva*.⁹⁹ One of the Ujjaini coins, belonging to c, 3rd -2nd cent B.C has the figure of three faces Siva carrying a *danada* and *Kamandalu*.

⁹⁴ M.S.Vats, *Excavations of Harappa*, Delhi, 1950.pp.51, 53,55ff., 140

⁹⁵ R. G. Bhandarkar, *Collected Works*, Pune: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Vol. IV, 1929, p. 209.

⁹⁶ P.C.Bhagchi, *Pre –Dravidian and Pre-Aryan in India*, Calcutta, Asian Educational services, 1929, pp. 10,14.

⁹⁷ N.N.Bhattacharya, *History and religion of Tantra*, Delhi, Manohar, 2005, p. 57-83.

⁹⁸ AjitMookerjee, *Kali The Feminine Force*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1988.p. 47.

⁹⁹ J.A.Benarjee, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, Madras: Ganesh & Co.1956, p. 161.

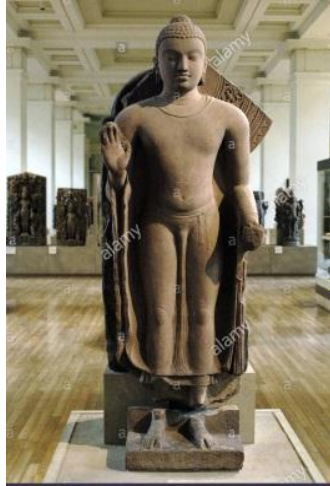
Early art in India has almost a similar form all over the land. The *Sungas* and Kushanas in the north, the Kalingas in the east and the Satavahanas in the Deccan were the inheritors of common traditions from the Mauryas, and striking similarities in the Sunga, Satavahana, Kalinga and Kushana art strike the eye of connoisseurs. The fan-shaped head gears of the *toranasalabhanjika* at Sanchi have its counterpart in Mathura and Amaravati.

After the Sungas, the Kushanas were the most powerful rulers in North India. Their empire extended far beyond the known normal frontiers of India. In fact, having moved on to India from central Asia, they had their empire extending from central Asia through the current territory of Afghanistan, Pakistan and beyond Mathura in India. That is how the distinct school of indigenous traditions with its centre at Mathura, and another in the north western frontier, with a commingling of Indian, Graeco-Roman and Iranian elements, which with Chinese influences made up a strange and exciting school of art, offering fascinating facets of culture for studies. It is incredible how various Indian motifs have found first expression and interpretation in central Asian sculpture and painting.

The next group of sculptures belongs to the Mauryan period. Metal and sand stone was used, which are primarily religious. There are figures in high and low relief resting on the abacuses. In the following phase, there occur bas-relief carvings on sections of the railings and gateway as of the Buddhist *stupas* at Bharhut, Sanchi. The funerary monuments of Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati contain scenes fascinatingly depicting spiritual themes. Indian artists generally filled the space on their religious structures depicting mythological themes connected with Buddhism, Jainism and *Tantric* /Brahmanical Hinduism. The “Gandhara art” term reminds of a mixture of Hellenistic and Buddhist forms. This art developed from the first century B.C. under the patronage of the Kushan rulers (c.78-200 A. D) continued until the fifth century A.D. Gandhara was genuinely cosmopolitan due to innovations and foreign influences. This Hellenistic character in art soon became more Indianised as the artists tried to reconcile Greek and local ideas and to create an art suitable to the Buddhist creed. The most important contribution of the Gandhara School was the creation of the Buddha image.



Ca. 12 cent C.E Buddha flanked by skull tappers, Gandhara, Pakistan.(courtesy of the Russek Collection)



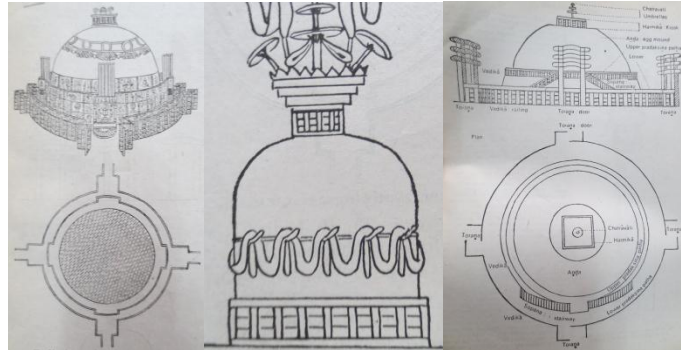
Source: 5th century AD. Gupta period. Standing Buddha. From Sarnath, India. British Museum, London, England, United Kingdom; 2nd-3rd century, Gandhara. Standing *Bodhisattva* (Fr. *Bodhisattva* Debout). Gandharan art, Pakistan site of Shahbaz-Garhi.

The Buddhist figures there are images of *Yakshinis*. On rail pillar, Mathura museum appears half covered and half revealing the contours of the body. All these *yakshinis* have large breasts, narrow waists and wide hips, emphasizing their connections with fertility spirits. The body bends along its axis. The ornaments are many, including many bangles. The heavy anklets emphasize the slimness of the legs.

So the work is merely titled “standing *Bodhisattva*”. The representation is of a standard *bodhisattva* of the *Gandhara* style, displaying the fearlessness mudra. No clear indicator identifies the figure as one *Bodhisattva* or another. The Musée Guimet suggests that it may be Gautama or *Avalokiteshvara*.

The Ikshvakus (ca. First quarter to end of 3rd cent A.D) (*Matahariputravirapurusha*) Female members of the family favoured Buddhism) Amaravati, Jaggayyapeta, Nagarjunakonda. The great *stupa* at Amaravati is the most outstanding artistic monument represented. The *stupa* evolved from simple prehistoric burial heap or tumulus under which the ashes of the dead are buried. Besides being a symbol of the Buddha’s *parinirvana* (death), the *stupa* itself became an object of worship. The *stupa* consists of a solid hemisphere or dome called the *anda* (egg-mound) and stands on a *medhi* (circular or square base). On this flat top rests a kind of kiosk, usually called *harmika*. Initially, an umbrella was firmly implanted into the brickwork of the dome, with a little railing or *vedika* around it. The supporting mast was called the *Yasti*; the umbrella, the *chatra*; and the whole, the *chatravali*. A wooden fence surrounds the *stupa*. The principle *vedika* surrounded the structure and enclosed the lower *pradakhina-patha*. Another *rvedika* surrounded the *medhi*/ base. It included the upper *pradakhina-patha* and was reached using the

sopana(staircase).Amaravati had a largest of the big *stupa*. Moreover, the most excellent example of a Buddhist *stupa* in south India, Eg.Nagarjunakonda.¹⁰⁰



Jaggaypet. Stupa structure

The 6th century Chalukya capital, Badami or Vatapi where both rock cut and structural temples beckon. There are four caves in Badami and the first one is dedicated to Shiva and his pantheon of Gods. This 18 armed Shiva carved in the caves, probably an early depiction of *Nataraja*.

Stone, Gupta period, 6th cent A.D, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi.



Source: 8th cent Mandala based, Rock-cut Kailasanatha temple at Ellora caves, Cave 16. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ellora_cave16_001.jpg.

The *Tantric* cult in Tamilnadu in Pallava and later times. The *Sakta* culminates during praised as the embodiment of *mantra* and *tantra*; *mantra* stands for *Vedic* hymns and *Tantra* for image worship. Later the word *Tantra* is said to stand for *Shakti* cult and its associated philosophy. After the 16 - 17th century the cult concepts exhausted themselves and what we get later is only a repetition.

¹⁰⁰ Edith Tomory, *A History of Fine arts in India and the west*, Bombay: Oreint Longman, 1982.p.25.



Shivalinga Andrapradesh

These are the essential figurations in the symbolism of *Tantra*, expressed in abstract form. Who is inseparable, the same. Mother and spirit, whom the *Tantras* describe as *Siva* and *Sakti*. *Saiva Sidhanata* had a branch called *Agamasaivism* which flourished from 11 century. As per *Skandapurana*, *linga* means, all spreading in space in which the whole universe is in the process of formation and dissolution.

Dunhaung in northwest China, representing an altar prepared for the recitation of the *Ushnishavijayadharani*, At the heart of the central lotus is written Buddha. The surrounding small dishes, lamps and vases with their offerings are accompanied by the characters of water incense, lamp. In each direction are the names of the four *lokapalas*.

The symbolism of *Tantra* expressed is an anthropomorphic manner. It reveals in the form of *Ardhanarishvarabaring* male and female attributes, combined, which signifies psychic totality.



The yoni at the feet of the Devi(goddess), one of the images in the Sixty-four Yogini Temple, representing adya-sakti, the primal energy. Bheraghat, MadhyaPradesh, c. 12th cent. Stone

12th cent. Adoration of *yoni*, a scene carved below the image of a goddess at the sixty-four *yogini* temple, Bheraghat, MadhayPradesh. Triangle, or *trikona*,

represents the tree *gunas*: The neutral-*Sattva*, the positive-*Rajas* and negative-*Tamas*. The triangle with its apex downwards indicates the *yoni* – female organ, the seat of Sakti, the female energy or nature (*prakriti*). It represents the great mother as the source of all life, the cosmic womb.



Source: 13th Century, Goddess Saraswati (The Hindu Goddess of Learning). "Halebidu Museum, Hoysala Dynasty, CE. Karnataka, India.

The eight handed figure holds the musical instrument in the right and left hands. She dances resting on the leg, slightly bent, while raising the left. The line of the body seems to move with the tilt of the head, the gesture of the arms and the end of the raised leg. Saraswati's *svahana*, the *hamsa*, near her feet, is so highly stylized that it resembles a decorative motif more than a life-like representation.

The temple as an institution

The Hindu temple is been built by devotees as a work of dedication in order to secure merit in this world and the next. Throughout the centuries, the Hindu temple played an important role in promoting the social, religious and cultural life of the people. It was the centre of religious and cultural education. Schools were attached to the temple for imparting education in the Vedas, Vedangas, Itihasas and Puranas. In addition to this, it provided religious education relating to Saiva, Vaisnava and Sakta and dispensed spiritual solace and enlightenment through recitation of texts, festivals, processions, music recitals and dances. The sculptures and paintings that adorned the walls of the temples and the icons in the corridors attracted the masses and practically imparted audio-visual education. The temple was an ideal autonomous institution free from any lay or secular control. Temple

maintained several auxiliary institutions like *mathas*, choultries, maternity homes, sanatoria for the convenience and well-being of the pilgrims and of its own staff.

Temple and its associated Symbolism

It has a peculiar symbolism. The supreme anxiety of the Hindu is *moksha* or release. There are two ways of release: The former is realization of the supreme through contemplation, the other is realization through devotion and worship. The latter method requires a concrete symbol. One of the symbols is temple itself. The supreme spirit or *Purusha* is originally in an un-manifest condition. He is made to manifest himself in a particular shape and form for the convenience of the devotee. The supreme that is considered to have been manifest in the shape of the temple is known as *Vastupurusa*. The word *Vastu* is derived from the Sanskrit root *vas* or dwell and *vastu* means a dwelling. *Vastupurusha* means thus means the supreme spirit that dwells. Before the temple structure is raised a magic diagram or *mandal* is drawn on the ground. The *vastupurusha* or the supreme spirit accompanied by attendant deities is localized in this square which comes to be known as the *Vastupurusha-mandal*. The most important part of the temple is the *Garbhagruha* which actually means the house of the womb. The spirit, thus localized, is developed in the *garbha* or womb and has its birth in the shape of the image enshrined in the *Garbhagrha*. It goes up step by step and ultimately reaches the pinnacle or *kalasa* from which it passes into the original un-manifest condition. Thus the temple is the embodiment of *Purusha* or the supreme spirit¹⁰¹. For this reason, it is something to be seen and worshipped. The numerous mythological sculptures found on the walls and pillars are so many aids for concentration. Thus the Hindu temple is God himself to be felt and realized.

The ground plans of Hindu temples and the layout of the cities are influenced by *Yantras* and *Mandalas*. During early of 3rd century B.C, the shape of Buddhist *stupa*, originally a monument over the relics of the Buddha, was based on the circle and the square. It indicates that ground plan of later temples were based on a regular arrangement of squares on a strict rigid plan. The three principle geometrical shapes, square, equilateral triangle and circle, on account of their symmetry were related to each other as in a *Yantra* diagram. In one of the earliest references in the manuals of architecture, the *vastu-purusha* mandala is depicted and

¹⁰¹ A.Suryakumari, *The Temple in Andhra Desha*, Madras: Gian Publishing house, 1988, p. 2.

can be drawn in thirty-two ways. As per Tantra treatise, the orientation of space in the temples served to create a microcosm in the image of the macrocosm and its governing laws. This is the example of the tantric influence in Indian holy architectural forms.

Tantra and Associated Images:

Tantrism was powerful religious movement which emerged out of the combination between primitive magic and highly evolved spiritual ideals. The images developed were based on these points

1. A conscious approach to self-discovery: Through Sadhana the hidden treasure of physical, mental and psychic powers are opened. Sadhana starts from the physical sheath (*Annamayakosa*) represented by body. In *Tantra* body is highly esteemed as temple of the deity known as *Atman* which is micro –form of lord Siva or ultimate reality. Though the body is subject to decay, it should be therefore consciously kept pure. This is the superiority of the doctrine of *Tantra*. In this process images like Mandala, Yantra and Chakra are used for meditation.
2. Positive view of life: Prepare the body and mind to the extent that, it can endure any disturbance of outer and inner world. Though the body is fragile, it can be made more and more powerful and strengthen like a rock through *Hatayoga*, *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *satkarma* etc. Everybody can utilize this for healthy body and mind. Energy is crude manifestation of consciousness. Consciousness is the supreme reality. For this the images of Asanas, Chakra in Kundalini yoga, Pranayama are used.
- 3.

Influence of Saktism in Indian art also immense. From the ancient times of 1st century A.D. onwards, till the present day a good number of sculptures and miniatures of goddesses are found. The earliest sculpture of the goddesses Mahishasuramardhini was found from Naagarain Rajasthan and now preserved in Amber Museum. It belongs to 1st cent. A.D. Six statues of the Kushana age, preserved in Mathura Museum, could belong to earlier representations of the Goddesses. In the Gupta and post- Gupta period we have a number of fine pieces of art also corresponding to the description found in the *Devi Mahatmaya*. The work shows a great deal of devotion and dedication of the both, makers (master craftsman) and the masses. There are literatures which are also full of the grace of the Goddess. Even if we look at our country India is named as ‘Bharat Mata’. Modern Hinduism

cannot think of devoid of saktism. Its indigenous ideas and theories have greatly influenced the mind of the people and their thought.¹⁰²

The splendor and diversity of India's ritual arts are, a door to a new dimension of existence. The great gods and goddesses of India Siva, Durga and Lakshmi, and the countless classical deities and forces worshipped in the countryside, all have their icons and symbols, their ceremonies and rites. Each thing that is offered, each object used for a ritual, must be the finest and purest of its kind. Forms and colours are not arbitrary, but a distillation or concentration of meaning. That ritual is art of revelation, just as from classical icons with their complex and sophisticated iconography. The ritual art of India has deep historical roots. Underlying all Indian ritual art, there is a unifying purpose. It represents a quest for harmony and wholeness, for an awareness of the "oneness" of the universe.

¹⁰² Dr. Pushpendranathkumar, *Principle of Sakti*, Calcutta: PustiPustak, 1986, p.3.

Chapter - IV

Tantraas Visual Art - Contemporary Artists

In this chapter, it presents the analysis of individual artist's works, who belong to the contemporary times and who are not the practitioners of the *Tantra*, but the practicing professional modern painters of the period between A.D.1960 and A.D. 1980. The five essential Indian artists work chosen as an individual study to understand the following:

1. Factual History of their *Tantra* based work—chronology
2. Individual artist work-data related to *Tantra*.
3. Their influences
4. How the artist has interpreted
5. Aesthetical interpretation of the work

The Neo-*Tantra* movement emerged in India reflects a distinct movement in the contemporary history of Indian art. In the sixties, many avant-garde artists were drawn to the concepts and development of global trends of modern art and experimented with a new 'style' of expression. A group of artists in India began a search to reclaim their indigenous identities. They led by the desire to find their personal forms of expression inspired by the esoteric and metaphysical religious traditions of India. There was an international exhibition held in which some of the artists had participated.

Origin of the name Neo –Tantra

The title had been chosen very carefully and deliberately. Neo-*Tantra* and contemporary *Tantra* were examined and discarded because they did not reflect both the integration and ambiguity that these paintings represent in Indian culture. It is enthused by *Tantric* art and reflects the way many Indian artists are working even in modern times without rejecting their heritage entirely. Though none of these artists are *Tantric* practitioners in the traditional sense, their spiritual, emotional and even material lives have been filled with these ideas, practices, colours and symbols. They are modern artists who are influenced by the world that they have experienced and inherited.¹⁰³

Each of them relates to *Tantric* sources in a very different way, as they reveal in their statements. Some artists and critics in India feel that attempting to make any direct correlations between traditional *Tantra* and this work is problematic. In this

¹⁰³ Neo- *Tantra*, contemporary Indian Painting Inspired by Tradition, exhibition catalogue .Fredrick S. Wight Art Gallery, 1985.

context, the term Neo –*Tantra* seems to be especially suitable. It is intended to give Western viewers a direction for understanding this art without holding on any one-to one comparisons or traditional interpretations. In the beginning, chapter traditional *tantric* images, and added to this a more straightforward matter to some fundamental tantric concepts are written. An understanding of such an idea, as the relationship between the microcosm of the physical world and the self, also the macrocosm of the universe is also conceived by the modern artists. The emotional and spiritual undertones that colours and shapes can project and the significance of personal experience in developing a cultural aesthetic or world view are common to all of them. The earlier chapter content about *Tantra* will be helpful, as a guide to the environment of these paintings than to the paintings themselves. To understand the variety of the works produced by these artists will be understood by analyzing the works in the various stages as described:

- i) The objective data
- ii) The sensory and the mental image
- iii) Their combination to gather in a particular form
- iv) Their mental responses of the pre-existing, sub-conscious or the conscious mental data
- v) The emergent creation of the aesthetic state with its new feel or intuition designated by aesthetic feel may produce happiness, which we call the artistic joy. (Jagannatha)

It is this special aesthetic status, which emerges from the combination of ordinary mental state as induced by works of art, or nature, that must be regarded as the basis of the beautiful. The careful observation required drawing, the understanding of elements required for painting, and the craftsmanship required for it can increase awareness of ourselves and our world. On a personal level, making art heightens our attention, engages our emotions, and provides a sense of accomplishment. Creating images is engrossing and exhilarating. These personal rewards make art most one of the most popular activity. In this activity it translates our personal insights into public communication. This ability to communicate visually is developed through years to study plus relentless practice. Artists develop their visual awareness, create new concepts, and master various techniques. They spend hours in the studio, refining their ideas and inventing alternative solutions to each visual problem. Creating the most powerful image is their compelling goal.

When there is a full co-operation between inner thinking of the self and the outer elements as a visual language for the production of a perfect aesthetic state, then the aesthetic state is complete. Artist can impress upon any kind of inspiration. The arrangement of his spirit, and manifest the essence of his intuitiveness upon it, which leads to his production becomes genuinely artistic.

An artist gets inspired with specific issues which lead them to research it and explore more till he gets satisfied. An artists' style is related to imagery. Sometimes

an artist works with an idea in different media and in different styles, yet the theme is constant. The theme is the result of a stylistic consistency, and the imagery is changed from piece to piece. A list of some variables by which it is examined and analyzed will help in deciding the thematic series is as follows:

- Subject matter, imagery, or motif
- Media or material
- Technique
- Style
- Compositional concerns, such as placement on the picture plane
- Use of space (determined by how you use line, shape, colour, texture, and value)
- Scale.

All those artists whose Neo-tantric works of art are almost abstract G.R.Santosh,Biren De,P.T. Reddy,K.C. S. Paniker, Om Prakash, K.V. Haridasan, Prafulla Mohanti Viswanadhan M.Mamtani and Sohan Qadri are represented in the exhibition.

The four significant Artists G.R. Santosh,P.T. Reddy,K.C.S. Paniker and S.H. Raza who have contributed to the artistic expression of Tantra inspired are selected as a case study.

To begin with the information about their life and experiences are collected as a data which are the facts, through primary and secondary resources. They are demonstrated in a sequence which outline and describe its key features, causes, process or timeline. In first place identifying and providing a detailed explanation of the work, could include its features or answering like Form, Theme, Context (what, when, how and why). This will draw conclusions about what painting -visual work of an artist means.

Ghulam Rasool Dar (G.R. Santosh) and his work

Kashmir is the place having full natural surroundings with strong religious beliefs. Ghulam Rasool Dar was born (1929 lived until March 10,1997)in this place, in the Shia Muslim family having modest means in the Chinkral Mohalla Habba Kadal neighborhood of old Srinagar. After his father's death, he discontinued his school education. Then he took up small jobs like writing and painting signboards, weaving and white-washing walls. (Kashmir being with craft culture especially during winter people there work on silk weaving and paint on hand made papermache objects).¹⁰⁴During this phase S.H.Raza the artist found his talent of painting the land scapes of Kashmir in water colourand encouraged him to join to

¹⁰⁴ Contemporary Indian Art, An exhibition catalogue of the festival of India, The Royal Academy of Art, London, 1982, pp. 3-9.

study at M.S University Baroda under eminent painter N.S.Bendre. At this place, Santosh got trained under N.S. Bendre in the city of Baroda, Gujarat. He got a scholarship to study Fine Arts in 1954. (Other Artist-Faculty members such as K.G. Subramanyam came from Calcutta), and still others came from Europe, including Gulam Sheik. Their teachings were the amalgamation of modern abstraction and Indian aesthetic. Looking to indigenous roots, different media, and international styles of painting from other non-European regions the artist of this period are Jyoti Butt, Jerampatel¹⁰⁵ About the same time, he married his childhood best friend. Santosh, who was a Kashmiri *Pandit*, and later associated her name along with his own. This was considered unusual and radical in conservative Kashmiri society. (Opposing both, patriarchy and religion, that time in Kashmir marrying out of their own community was unacceptable) This proves that how secular he was and bold in his thinking. This was told in the personal interview in 1996.

He was trained in the figurative tradition which was prevalent in Baroda, Santosh gained a name as a figurative modernist. In his early work from 1957 his native place Kashmir figured repeatedly in his works. Figurative works showed a cubistic influence in several of the abstractions that followed this phase(employed a cubist-inspired distortion)

G.R. Santosh made the transition as a figurative painter with ease. Trained in the figurative tradition prevalent in Baroda, Santosh gained name as a figurative modernist. His native State, Kashmir figured repeatedly in his works from 1957. In his figurative works and in several of the abstractions in this phase, Santosh employed a cubist-inspired distortion of limbs, perspectives and planes, to create compositions had an integration of the elements.

In Kashmir, Santosh found inspiration in the tantric cults of Hindu and Buddhist thought that had co-existed with the regions *Sufi* mysticism¹⁰⁶ for centuries. Santosh is also known as a mystic poetry in Kashmiri language and a writer in Urdu. His Urdu novel “*Samandar Pyasa Hai*” enhanced his reputation and Sahitya Akademi awarded him for his collection of poems in “*Kashmiri Berukhsuk*” in 1979. He attained eminence as a writer and poet in the Kashmiri language. He did costume designing for stage.¹⁰⁷ This was told in a personal interview during 1996. Santosh built his pictorial and poetic world around his transcendental philosophy, by writing on the philosophy of English and as well as his poetry and fiction in Kashmiri and Urdu languages.

¹⁰⁵ Sheik, *On the Art School in Baroda*, Baroda, M.S. University. 1997.

¹⁰⁶ By the 14th cent of the Christian era *Sufism* was completely absorbed in Indian soil. It was assimilated with prevalent *Tantric Shajiya* ideas. The *Sufi* insistence on *guru –vada* –the essentiality of preceptor in spiritual exercise –and on the human body as the microcosm of the universe is shared alike by the *Tantrics*, and most of the medieval religious sects which based their creeds on liberalism. In Sufism emphasis is laid upon the mental entity of man.

¹⁰⁷ Contemporary Indian Art, an exhibition catalogue of the festival of India, The Royal Academy of art, London, 1982, pp .3-9.

The spiritual experience at the Amaranath cave in Kashmir changed him towards *Tantra*. In 1964 driven by an esoteric world view had a mystical experience. He took extreme interest to read the original philosophical texts.¹⁰⁸ From here onwards he explored with a number of visual vocabulary of signs, symbols, and sacred geometry. He Expressed his assimilations of his experiences with the philosophy of *Tantra* through visual elements in his works. In his own words as he defines:¹⁰⁹

According the data collected, four broad categories are made as per the treatment of visual elements inspired by *Tantra*.

- Drawings
- Semi Abstract use of figures and symbols-Curved shape compositions, Geometric compositions
- Nada, Bindu, Bija series
- Architectonic compositions-Geometric compositions
- Prakriti series

It has the diffused form of standing human figure in a semi abstract manner. By placing in the center bisecting the picture plane giving a raised effect by using the red colour as defining the feminine form with tints of blue against contrast of black back ground. In the centre of the human form is a suggestion of an upward moving snake suggesting *kundalini sakti*. The whole space around is mysterious with light tones which gives an effect of upward movement of air. The repeat of red triangle on top in space suggest as if it is on a head. Moreover, an outline defining the human figure makes a rhythmic composition expressing the cycle of fresh breath of air.

¹⁰⁸ This was mentioned in his personal interview in 1996 on 16Feb at his residence.

¹⁰⁹ That which activates the body (*shareera*) by the exhalation and inhalation (*pranaapanas*) of breath is *tantra* (*tanutrayateitantra*), Sound centralized as a point (*naadbindu*) is the primeval visual perception and is self-illuminated (*atmaprakasa*), and is the abode of the male-female phenomenon (*Shiva-Shakti*), the pristine geometrical concept (*sabdabramha*). When this folded universe of subjective reality unfolds itself, it takes limitless, complex forms as Nature (*prakriti*) - the materialized world of sound -light energy perceived and related to the senses. The universal mind (*Brahman*) manifests itself by its own will and when transformed in an artist's mind, becomes self-creative. The individual mind of an artist has the potential to transform the visual concept into the materialized creative expression: a world of art. The formless subjective experience becomes through the process of creation and recreation in the framework of time and space a work of art, reality manifesting itself in myriad shapes and forms in time and space. My own self is preoccupied with the same universal concept, Therefore, *soham*, I am He. My paintings are based on the male –and-female concept of *Shiva* and *Shakti* It is an integral part of my "being", my *svabhava*, my *karma*.' Mentioned in his interview.



1968 ,Oil on Canvas ,50" x 36",1968 ,Oil on Canvas,51.1" x 27.1", 1968,Oil on canvas, 42.2 inx42.2

He created forms that fused the spiritual realm and union of (*Siva* and *Sakti*) male and female aspect in the early *Tantra* works.



Prakruthi Oil on canvas, 34x84

In a flat dark red background space, Semi abstract curvaceous form of a female *Sakti* figure is seated on a semi abstract *Siva* symmetrically. *Trishula* symbolizes Siva in red and white as a divinity by placing in the top. These forms treated in three dimensional manners by using the colours in a gradually molding. The divine combination of these forms emerge with illumination as a creation in the sharp geometric form of square having a contrast in shape emphasize, with the high contrast of white colour as divine mother earth. As a reference from the artist himself from his interview:“Therealisation1970, Oil on canvas50x40came to me that mine is not a tradition of visuals but a philosophical one. There are same universal values behind all these visual traditions. “The realization came to me that mine is not a traditional of visuals but a philosophical one. I was influenced particularly by the left-hand practice present in our Kashmiri tradition. Specifically, I base my works on the *maithuna*¹¹⁰ facets of the *panchamakaras*. “It took me two-three years to throw

¹¹⁰ *Maithuna* is a Sanskrit word (Devanagari) term used in Tantra. Generally in a ritual context it is known “Sexual union”. It is said as the important of the five *Makara*. It is the main part of the imposing Tantra ritual. It is known by different names as *Panchamakara*,*TattvaChakra* and *Panchatattva*.

away the thick colours which I used to. Also, in the beginning I was avoiding the symmetry and geometry of the figures. Kashmir Shaivism has influenced me, the *prakashvimarsha* and considers colour as a form of light. So I do not treat colour as colour but colour as light. Of course, the orange colour dominates my paintings due to its connection with *tantra* in the form of *sindoor*.”



Shiva Shakti series early period, oil on canvas 50x40 Shiva Shakti series, mixed media, 1968, 12.0/9.0 in

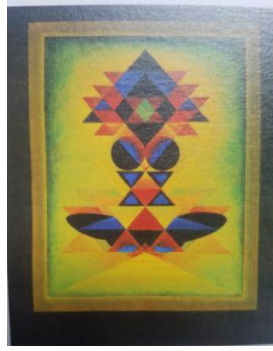
The Mantra is the conglomeration of pure sounds. Yantra is the simple formalization of mantra –geometry. Kashmir *Shaiva siddhanata* (Shaiva principles) and the concept of *prakash* (light)and *vimarsha* (self-contemplation of *Prakash*) *Prakash* and the nature of light in the being of *Prakash*; in other words , light and luminosity. He understood colour as light and that a pigment is the illusion of its colour. Hence illusion gives the pigment surface its transparency. In these works the light –illusion defines and marks out space illusion

Kamala Devi the Eastern Way of Love, pp. 19-27, Simon & Schuster, 1977 ISBN 0-671-22448-4.

Though some sects, schools and writers e.g. *Yogananda*, think about to be a purely mental and symbolic act. There is a contrast of thought (and translations) of the word *maithuna* shows clearly that it refers to male-female couples and their union in the physical sense and is synonymous with *kriyanishpatti* (mature cleansing). It is same as spirit or matter is dominant over the other, or is effective without one another. But both working together make harmony so is *maithuna* effective. Only then when the union is sanctified. The couple go well with for the time being divine: she is Shakti and he is Shiva. The scriptures warn that unless this spiritual transformation occurs the union is carnal and sinful.

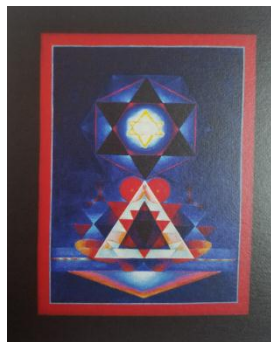
Omar Garrison Tantra: the Yoga of Sex, p. 103, Causeway Books, 1964.

Still it is possible to occur as a form of *maithuna* without physical union. This gesture can exist on a metaphysical plane without physical union. In such way the shakti and shakta through their subtle bodies alone transfer energy. It is during this transfer of energy arise that, the couple are embodied as goddess and god via diminished egos, tackle ultimate reality. And experiences bliss along the union of the subtle bodies.



1982,20.0/16.0, Private collection, NewDelhi

The architectural, symmetrical motif like pattern is a semiabstract form. The each unit of the triangle is flat filled with triadic colours. It is like an interlaced woven translucent pattern with giving a harmonious effect. The effect is emotional because it results in color schemes which are fresh in feeling and placed in the bright glowing back ground. Though he is as a Muslim, was committed to the impact, emerging of the *Yantra* and its interpenetrations of Devi as singular unit. The arrangement of red triangular geometrical shapes suggests the energies of seated Shakti a female figure as semi-abstract curvilinear form stably seated like an imposing structure. The placement of the triangular symbol below signifies *yonī*¹¹¹ the inner pattern of *yantra* which he commonly used in these series of paintings reflecting the inspiration. The direction of the triangle leads our eye upwards to complete and focus on the pattern on top to give an effect of bliss. His conviction as a painter made a mark through his work by exploring in many ways by understanding the meaning of principles of the *Yantra* of ascending and descending triangles combine with the circles, to create images of a transitional energy field. *Sakti* a notable feature, *prakashavimarshamaya*.



1978,24.0x18.0,published Tak. Ashraf M, ed.Shareeza:Urdu-(Srinagar/Jammu: j& K Academy of Art , culture and languages , 2010)p.64.

The most notable feature of the *sakta* –tantric ideas is that the Supreme Being is female and is worshipped under different names and forms. Running parallel

¹¹¹ According to Lakshmidhara, there are two sects of kaulas ,Purva and urrata.Thepurvakaulas believe in Siva-Shakti equilibrium while the Uttara kaulas insist solely on Sakti .The Kaula worshippers consider the triangle of the Adhara chakra as the seat of the Vindu . The triangle or yoni is of two kinds, the symbolic triangle of the Srichakra and the actual female organ. The former is worshipped by the purvakaulas and the later by the Uttara kaulas.Com .on *Saundaryalahari*, vv.23, 33, 34, 41. N.N. Bhattacharyya, *The history of Tantric religion*, Delhi: Manohar, 2005.

to Kashmiri philosophy was another influential school of thought for Santosh, the *Shri Vidya* School of goddess *Tripurasundari*¹¹² who is worshipped in the *Shri Yantra* and her fifteen-syllable *mantra*. He strictly followed the central principle of the philosophy and achieved the desired effect. Here *Paramshiva* is the essential *Tatva* or reality of all creation, *Prakriti* and its thirty six elements. The numeral thirty-six inherently represents geometry and geometrical forms .Six times three is eighteen, half of thirty six, symbolize the eighteen formalized attributes of *Shakti*-her arms. Six and three add up to nine, which is the quarter of thirty-six. This quarter is the *nav* or nine *yon*i *mandala*, the inner enclosure of the *Shri Yantra*. The geometrical configuration represents it as three triangles.

In his words, he said “I don’t sketch, “I divide the Canvas down the central Axis to create colour as Light, the painting is built slowly, “The process and the resulting call for a greater identification of insight between the spectator and the creator. The details become significant only then and the overall picture more meaningful. The sinuous texture, the overlaid mass of paint, the rare colour and the juxtaposed space and mass-all contribute to lightening this micro magnification on a very subjective level, indeed, of an image transformed by deep vision” as said by S.A Krishnan. Lait kala Academi -36•



1970, oil on canvas, 69.2x69.2in, LalithkalaAcademi , New Delhi.



Devi series DAG

The dark background as an empty void space, having red coloured mother earth with emerging white and green convex double layered form having an bordered with red triangle signifying the three *nada*, *vindu*, and *bija* are the three

¹¹² The name Tripura has been used to explain all the three fold tantric abstractions like trikona (triangle) , trisakti (three forms of sakti –iccha,jnana, kriya), trivindu (three vindus-rakta , Shukla, mishra), tripitha(kamarupapurnagiri and Jalandhara) , Trilinga (three lingas-vana,itara, para) Kamakalavilasa, 13-14.

angles forming a triangle. The glowing white linear form around the triangle indicates the female seated figure. The top red oval form which denotes the seat of creation and the inner orange coloured drop like shape denotes *Shakti*. The mystery of *mantra* is equated with the principle of creation. In the theory of *mantra*, *nada*, appears in the 1978, oil on canvas, 50x 40 in first stage as a developing, and in the second stage as *vindu* and *vija*, as two orange circles draws the attention. A woman is *sakti* incarnate, and she is *brahman*.¹¹³ The essential preconditions for the complete manifestation of *sakti*. Santosh claimed on many occasions that the source of his inspiration was centered on the profound philosophy of Kashmir *Advaitavada*, expounded by the philosopher *Abhinavagupta*, one of the greatest exponents of Kashmiri *Shaiva tantra*.¹¹⁴ The fundamental concepts of Kashmiri *Shaivism* became a precious source for articulating his expression. Several personal assertions clear this: "My canvas represents a projection of *shunya*, the *Void*, which is incalculable in time and dimension, *Aadi* and *Ananta* [without beginning or end]."¹¹⁵

Santosh's Evolving work

The first thing to observe is that the pictorial space is vertically bisected and the shapes on either side of this imagery divide. It's the exact symmetrical reflections of each other. Each composition is a combination of twin mirror images. This symmetrical balance is a suggestion of the concept of the universe as a reflection of once own self as an expression of work and its reflection as a complete composition as a unity in itself. He tried to show another aspect which one can notice is the presence of a multiple border indicating the meaning of enlightenment or vibration.

¹¹³ N.N. Bhattacharyya, *History of The Tantric Religion*, Delhi: Manohar, 2005. pp. 247-248.

¹¹⁴ A special form of Shaivism flourished in the Kashmir region from about the 9th century A.D. The exponents were *Vasuguptha*, *Somananda*, *Abhinavagupta*, *Ksemaraja*, etc., were reputed in *Tantric* tradition. The Kashmir *Shaivism* do not believe in *vedas*, nor believe in the caste system. There are three principles of Kashmir *Shaivism* - *Trika*, *Spanda*, and *Pratyabhijna*. *Trika* is based on the three concepts known as *Siva-sakti-Anu or Pati - Pasa-Pasu*. These three concepts also occur in other forms of Saivism. In Kashmiri Shaivism individual souls and the material world are identical with *Siva*. The process through which *Siva* is manifested in the form of the individual souls (*Siva* is the self of all beings, immutable and ever perfect. And the world is known as *Spanda*. *Pratyabhijna* is the means of realizing the experience *Siva's* identity with the individual souls.

The Kashmir Saivism point is that God is an independent entity and the world is his reflection, the difference being due to false knowledge. So also the universe as his reflection does not stain him. The manifestation of the universe is effected through the *Sakti* of *Siva* which is not different from him. The important modes of this *sakti* are *cit* (intelligence), *ananda* (bliss), *iccha* (Will), *jnana* (knowledge) and *kriya* (action). With opening out of *sakti*, the world appears, and with her closing, it disappears. This *sakti* is conceived of as a Female principle inseparable from *siva* like fire and heat. *Sivadristi*, III.7. In Kashmiri Saivism *Sakti* is given a special distinction. Here *Sakti* is called *Prakasa-Vimarsamaya*. *Vimarsha* is vibration, and this term is used expressively in the case of *Sakti*. *Siva* is called *Prakasha*. *Prakasha* and *vimarsa* are two aspects of one entity, but *vimarsa* is characterized by the consciousness of the self.

¹¹⁵ *Yatri*, the language of paint in India, A newsletters of Indian tourism, and a supplement on Gallery tours.



Oil on canvas, 79.7x60.2, Temple of the divine, 1992, 1992, Acrylic on canvas, 53.0x42.0 in National gallery collection 80.0x60.0.

We rarely see the use of the rectangle in his works. Moreover the quadrilateral is seen as the oval representing *hiranyagarbha* or the celestial ovum-is seen commonly in the work. These geometric shapes are intertwined or in braided manner in two dimensions. Their construction and placement suggests the third dimension by the use of tonal values and treatment of gradation in colour which are radiant and reflecting creating tranquility. Thus, the triangle becomes a pyramid, the square is treated as cube, and such three-dimensional effects are shown. The polygonal structures become more complex look like crystal like glowing forms. This treatment of glowing or shininess conveys the expression of fulfillment or enlightenment. The depth created through contrast colour in the central portions indicate meditative absorption with equanimity as a more profound state of awareness. The segmentation or the overlapping shapes at every level indicate reflection within at each moment.



Acrylic on canvas, 60x60 Element –Air, 1990, 18.0x18.0 1992, Acrylic on canvas. 36.2x36.2 in Published: Singh, Kishore, ed., Masterpieces of Indian Modern art 2016, p.386.

Curvilinear forms make an appearance in his later works, giving rise to cloud-like formations showing the influences of “*Tibetan Thankas*”. Majority of the basic shapes /forms of Santosh’s Neo-Tantric paintings have a stylized form of female form, seated in the yogic pose of *padmasana*, the lotus position. The asana in *Tantra* indicates circuits of *pranic* and *psycic* energy. There is a clear suggestion of the female torso in the placement of geometric elements within the composition indicating the five earth elements. These are systematically arranged in phases

to depict. To this stylization hovers between the iconic and the aniconic, and is symptomatic of Santosh's devotion for *Shakti*, the divine mother. It is interesting to note here that in 1980, Santosh wrote a long poem *Shakti Vichara* in the hallowed tradition of the epic *Bhavanisahasranama*, dwelling exclusively on Shakti in her various manifestations. Considering five *makaras* (*panchamakaras*) and using them as a realization he constituted the images to stylize the *purusha-prakriti* union in its pure form which has symmetry ultimately. The *Yantras* started incorporating.

Visual compositional elements

Imaginative space and illusionism

It is called as creative expression (as in times of renaissance period of Raphael). It has a great deal to do with the treatment of light hence it also affects the use of space.¹¹⁶ He created deep space at a sharp angle flow from below. He created compositions and then worked on his lighting effects like a lighting designer in the theatre 'painting with light'. The light picks the figures out against a dark background to see form communicating the spirit of the Shakti principle as a narrative. Perspective is concerned with illusion showing depth. Here, the picture plane is taken away, and whole groups of foreshortened figures appear to float suspended in space. Space appears to recede endlessly with luminous lightness of sky¹¹⁷ (learning to look at painting-page 39). The vanishing point of such a carefully constructed space communicates as if it is in the heavens. This type of architectural painting is known as quadrature, and its effect is called *di so to nisu*, meaning from below upwards similarly as our *prana* is raising from below to upwards while meditating. Visual sensation is much more active. One feels as though one is being drawn into picture. It feels like it is drawn within. All embracing quality is expressed. Finally we are made to realise that space exists behind and we are gazing into idealized world of geometrical organization and abstract ideas. Through the subtle use of forms in pictorial space, Santosh has visualized the intellectual realm of philosophy.

Tone used to create atmosphere

The tonal qualities in the pictures are used to reconstruct the forms as if they were in front of the picture plane. Having a combination of sharp and blurred shape, emphasis is in between the foreground and the background. The shapes are very simplified but remain powerfully three dimensional. There is no single light source; instead one can see light coming from the right and left and from behind, as well as in front. This enables the artist to use subtle gradations of tone to express solidity. They are also monochromatic semi naturalistic use of tone which makes the painting so powerful.

Colour treatment

¹¹⁶ Mary Action, *Learning to look at Painting*, London: Routledge, 1996.

¹¹⁷ Mary Acton, *Learning to look at painting*, London: Routledge, 1997, p. 35.

His works are in contrast of colours. His competence in handling colour with varying degrees of delicacy or vigour is in evidence right from his earliest work, regardless of the medium. He was comfortable with water colours and oil, and later, acrylic. The early works also show his attempts at depicting light, which he gained a mastery over the fusion of the structural aspect with the chromatic content. His palette incorporates the assigned colours of tantric practice, vermillion and black, spanned a wide spectrum. Greens and yellows coexist with crimson and vermillion in perfect harmony in santosh's paintings at any level of saturation.

As far as the research is done the most advanced and perhaps complex color effects are seen in his works. He has combined the principles of luminosity with colored mist, attempting to put together two unusual phenomena in one overall scheme. In such compositions, it is necessary for the artist to mix hues of strong Chroma. For example transparent blue were used for the screen,

Such colors as red, yellow, green on his basic color chart turns to be extremely rich and probably stronger than any paints. The effect turns out to be a blue scheme to which bits of purple, red yellow and green had been added .It is a dramatic color effect .The effect is with refreshing experience. Moreover, the artist has made pigments comply what he commands. Here brightness, concerning the surrounding area, may have a high ratio. From the view of perception, this physical fact does not seem to apply. Light striking the eye tends to create haze and blur which fogs the field of view and appears to reduce contrast. Here the way perception interprets luminosity. The misty effects owe their existence to a quality of grayness and pale and middle values. Their essential "softness offers an excellent opportunity to establish an atmospheric field and then push in luminous areas. The artist knew what he is about the strategy of achieving luster, iridescence, chromatic light, chromatic mist; he worked in the region of spectrum he desired to express as far as his imagination lead him.

Each painting was done with colors which were, intermixed. The general illumination is a yellow-green showing ethereal nature. There is considerable invention and imagination in these two exhibits. With colour under perfect control, the luminous result would be a credit to a great artist .The overall effect (in color) is highly original, luminous and has tremendous emotional impact. Striking colour effects are more dependent on mastery over illumination than on adeptness in the arrangement and harmony of colours themselves. The sense of what colour in painting could communicate is almost mystical or religious.

Using of Shape

The most importantly the focus of his compositions is distinguished by the précising edges and mathematically consistent curves. They appear as structures and growth patterns. Having non-objective shapes, such as circles, rectangles, and

squares, are pure forms showing similar geometrical architectonic group like *Yantra*. A large number of his works represent tantric symbols as experiments with a formalistic geometry. Artist used these shapes to embody elusive emotions or express universal meaning. He used abstract shapes (reduced the resemblance to the original source). In various permutations, his works may be categorized thematically: his early works are dominated by transitional forms that reverberate between naturalism and geometrical abstraction. As his search into *Tantra* deepened, there was a transition to achieve a geometrical abstractions and symbolic forms. And also said by one of the Art history Professor's research article as: Santosh's work seeks out the modern and the universal in a specific religious tradition of the subcontinent. Much like modernists in Europe and elsewhere who tuned to the art and philosophies of cultures their own, Santosh too turned to a source outside of his own experience and family history. REBECCA M. BROWN

A sizable number of recognizable deities and iconic figures of *Shiva* and *Shakti*, *purusha-prakriti*, begin to appear with several individual variations. Sometimes the dominant theme is the female deity *Kali* or *Shakti*, at others, the potent symbol of Lord *Shiva*, the *Shiva linga*.

Santosh internalized the traditional meanings of these symbols and created evocations of a totally personal nature. It means his works are inspirational and expressive of an archetypal imagery that is part of a collective memory of the Tantra tradition. From there on he continued, with an assimilation of traditional knowledge that dominates his works until his death. The change in content from his former works was gradual but grounded on a firm foundation. Santosh explored the theories and principles of Kashmir Shaivism and the esoteric vocabulary it embodied, reclaiming what constituted the real as opposed to unreal.

The conventionally meticulous and autonomous pattern finally combines into a wide variety. Figures integrate with the sacred *Yantra*. These are depicted using combinations of the star hexagon, triangles, the five pointed star, set within a rectangular format. The most notable is the *Yantra* configuration, which imitates the famous sacred symbol of the *Shri Yantra*, strictly controlled by the centrality of an invisible centre, the *bindu*, and a composition of interlacing triangles. In some, he depicts the image of lotuses as an expanding biotic form, as an evolving form to represent evolution of consciousness or as its first bloom. The geometrical configurations set within the archetypal symbol of the square and the circle, which represents the five elements and other gross categories of nature. In Santosh's works, these symbols are combined in infinite ways to form compositions reflecting the innate order of creation. He accepts that his works are based on set beliefs, intentional and for aesthetic purpose.

Here there is another quote by him in his own words as- "Tantra was not an intellectual exercise for me, but an internal urge, a call to understand the truth that is

the source and underlying principal of everything , that truth that fashions the contours of our creative expression.”

One of the art critiques in the newspaper had written as: The Seventies and the Eighties, thus, were the most creative years for the contemporary guru who laid the foundation of neo-tantric art in India, who refused to accept that painting could be anything else but spiritual.

K.C. S.Paniker's Painting Analysis

Kovalezhi Cheerampathoor Sankaran Paniker (May 31, 1911- January 15, 1977) was Born in the city of Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu in the year of 1911. His early school education was in Kerala.) Paniker was a child prodigy who began painting at eleven. He was impressed by the water-logged landscape of Kerala and its life, carried his memories of local crafts arts, and their philosophy when he moved out in early childhood. His art education was in Madras at the government college of arts and crafts. There are three distinct periods in his career as a painter. Beauty of rural Kerala was depicted in water colors in his early paintings. The colors are treated as luminous: areca nut farms with the sun-dipped coconut and, green wavering fields, sunlight and shadows creating patterns. In these human figures are parts. Sandy plains with rivers, ponds, and village scenes, painted in dusk colors, are visual treats. In the second phase, the humanscapes were with a distinctive Dravidian stamp marked with rustic people. In his final phase a visual language obtained from symbols and motifs from Kerala's arts and metaphysics. He joined as a teaching member in the year 1941 of the same college where he studied. He became the principle of the same college in 1957. Over the span of two decades Panikar became a very influential and well known academician in the field of art. He established the progressive painters association in 1944. And just before his retirement he formulated the Cholamandal Artist village, a very unique artist's society on the out skirts of Madras at the Mahabalipuram seafront, with a provision of residence-studios for about 30 artists.

To understand reasons behind his urge to paint, we have to go through his early parts of his life. In his own words Panikar said “starting from my childhood what has haunted my imagination was a sense of some deficiency and a sense of inferiority. I used to tell dare-devil imaginary stories to my friends and elders. A youngster joined our school he was a gifted artist with skills of executing in simple style, drawings and paintings. I was bewildered by his innate gift. I started drawing the pictures of coconut groves and villages with which I was familiar. I started to paint continuously from then. Initially I painted canals, paddy fields and coconut grooves. This type of work I could do without any supervision. It gave me self-confidence. In the later stages as a qualified artist shifting of goals took place for four times, though the emotional response from painting remains constant. “I was influenced by the works of Ravi Varma, Lady Pantland, Cotman, Brangwyn, VanGogh, Gauguin, Matisse, and Fauves. One day I happened to notice a page from the mathematics note book of a young student; Arabic figures, Latin and other symbols of algebra and mathematics and the linear and other forms of geometry - all helped to arouse in me a new idea. I had been familiar with these in the past. But only as a student of mathematics, but now this opened out a vista of creative art .With renewed order I plunged

into the new phase, in 1963. By the time my lines had begun to assume the essence of words and symbols.

As my interest turned more and more traditional Indian symbols, astrological charts and astrological tomes I began to discard the roman letters to adopt the Malayalam script which was more acceptable to me.¹¹⁸

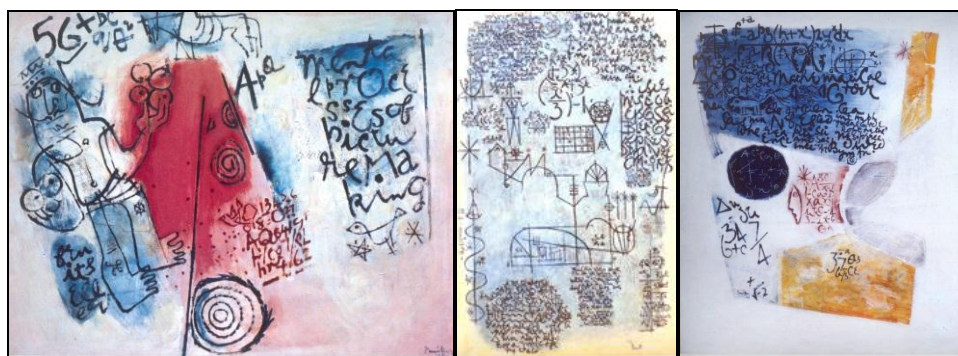
The analysis of the work is made based on the four categories

Bright colours with letters and symbols

Earthy effect with letters and tantric symbols

Bright colours with figures and letters

Bright colours with milky figures and letters



The fruit seller oil on board, 55x44, 1963. Words and symbols, Oil on canvas, words and symbols, Oil, (words and symbols series), 42x26", 1964 Oil on board, 48"x38"-1964 Panikarmuseum, Tiruvananthapuram, Kerala. Panikarmuseum, Tiruvananthapuram

By looking at these works of Paniker framing a picture separates an image from its surroundings to suggest that it is a world of its own. It seems that it is a detached representation of the world. These images look like they are added to the world as embellishments or comments. This relates to Rudolf Arnheim's writing as: "These gives an impression of the way graffiti are scribbled on a wall. Typically such additions cannot be said to be composed; they obey no centricity other than their own. An animal painted on the wall of a prehistoric cave is essentially unrelated to what occupies the space around it, although in a purely visual sense the Paleolithic artist may display some sensitivity to the distribution of shapes on a surface."¹¹⁹ In these works of K.C.S. Paniker we see the big patch of colours which do not resemble anything in particular, but are seen as blurred rectangular shapes. Visual weight is created by red in the centre and cobalt blue patches distributed at the corner. The scribbling with some writing and with a kind of mathematical

¹¹⁸ Krishnan, S.A. (Asst. editor), *Contemporary Indian art series*, Paniker: Lalit Kala Academy series, India, 1961.

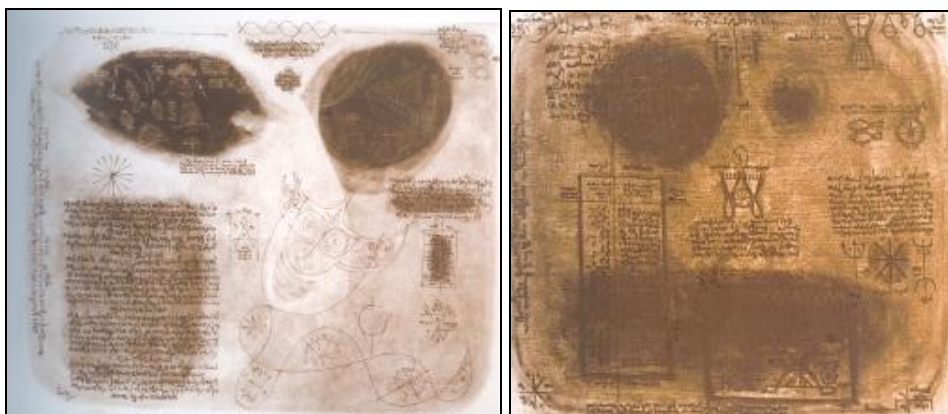
¹¹⁹ Rudolf Arnheim, *A study of composition in the visual Arts*, London: University of California Press, 1988-2009, pp. 234-236.

calculations and associated scientific formula are shown distributed in groups. These are distributed rhythmically on the surface of the picture plane against the coloured background. This adds texture having spaces in between group of writings the *bija*-letters. Relating to *Tantra* origin of 'jnana' knowledge from the sound principle is from *bija* therefore, they are in space. They appear to float in some places with subtle and luminous in themselves just being in space. Shapes in different tonal value indicates the means of the vast areas leading us to relate to time. As time is relative have no objective reality, a precursor and sequence. Therefore by using darker coloured lettering against lighter coloured squares and lighter coloured letters against darker coloured shapes indicates this expression of relativity. This indicates the forces ordering the cosmos on the macro-level which govern the individual in the micro-level. As per *tantra*, the individual and the Universal beings are one and have a utilitarian value as these formulas and calculations are used to determine auspicious times for rites and rituals. They play a role as indicators to man's destiny in relation to the varying positions of the planets. These shapes build strength into the structure of the composition. Shapes also create various illusions of depth, dimensionality and engage the viewer through their expressive celestial nature with careful placement and translucent treatment. These express a celestial relationship of cosmos calculations; by abstract interpretation of shapes create depth and movement in the picture space. Having letters used in the form of the script and symbols floating all over it, adds texture to the surface creating rhythm to the composition. He brings in the inter-relationship and their underlying unity through the texture. This way he brings the way to fulfillment through recognition of the wholeness linking man and the universe.

He used spiral motifs in small and big way in his compositions to create a movement in the picture plane which gives an impression of having inspiration of *Tantra's* supreme force in the human body, Kundalini sakti.¹²⁰ The *Tantra* concept of using astrological calculations has inspired the artist to use them as symbols to create texture.

¹²⁰ According to Tantra, the coiled energy remains hidden within us which is a concealed reservoir of psychic power. By initiating it exceeds above our limitations. N.N. Bhattacharya, *History of The Tantric Religion*, Delhi: Manohar, 2005, p. 308.

Earthy effect with letters and tantric symbols



Words and symbols, Oil on canvas, oil, 66x60, 1964.

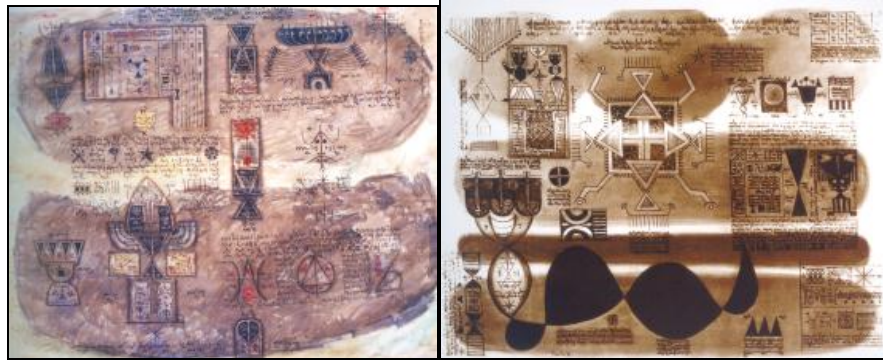
Words and Symbols, oil on canvas, 66x59-1964.

L.K.A. Exhibition, Catalogue.

By using the group of letters considering as divine mother, Matrukavarna (Malayalam script) equated with Saraswati, as organic linear shapes as drawings of symbols from religious subjects are distributed on the surface plane creating a decorative pattern. This forms a texture on the surface, drawing our attention and interest. This gives a visual expression of mystical calculations. The essential aspect of *tantra* is well represented by using space beyond and around showing the cosmic plane of *Tantra* in an abstract manner.

Paniker has intricately developed the motifs like a cosmic plan and arranged them, representing the interaction of these little coloured decorative shapes. In such an organization of shapes in space it is necessary to discuss about the spacial limitation. Here by drawing a simplest shape the space acquires a distinct spacial function that is it becomes a 'ground' as per gestalt theory¹²¹ the front shape drawn becomes 'figure'. Relating this to his work the ground is seen as continuing unbroken behind the figure. Therefore here the pictorial space of this picture does not simply stop at the frame but continues underneath it. The background is bare and does not penetrate into much more into depth beyond. Therefore this tends to relate to the craft heritage of Indian textiles which has a quality of continuity.

¹²¹ Gestalt psychology is a school of thought that believes all objects and scenes can be observed in their simplest forms. Sometimes referred to as the 'Law of Simplicity,' the theory proposes that the whole of an object or scene is more important than its individual parts. Observing the whole helps us find order in chaos and unity among outwardly unrelated parts and pieces of information. Some of the other basic laws of perceptual organization include: Proximity, Similarity, Closure, Figure vs. ground, Simplicity.



Words and symbols, Oil, ,24x24-1964

Words and Symbols series, Oil on canvas,66x59,1963.

L.K.A.Exhibition Brochure.

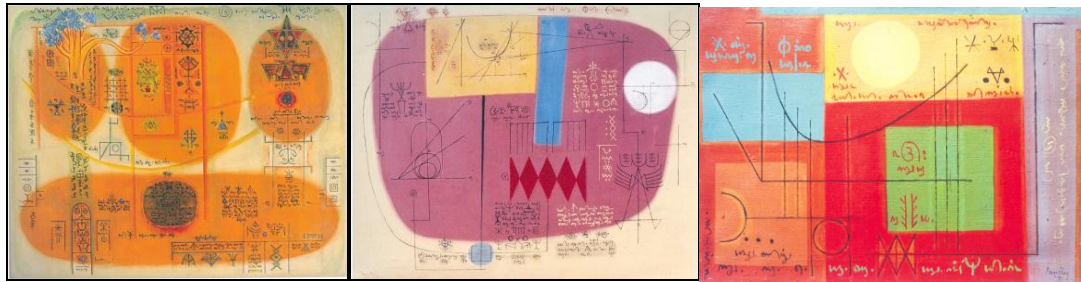
Mostly, the writings are like astronomical equations, relating to unit of time. It blends with astrology the various symbols represents the energised unit of the vast macro cosm. some are like zodiac signs prepared for the rituals. The *purusha* and *prakruti* as the symbols for fertility which are auspicious symbols representing female divinity drawn with colours. There is a stylised human figure as a *purushakarayantra*¹²² in Jain *tantras*. The square *mandala* like motif is in the centre dominantly placed which is leading the eye in all directions. The snake like figure which is dark and dominant indicates the importance of the inner energies *Kundalini*¹²³ of *Tantra*. The treatment of colours are in layers which give diffused perspective and by building the bright colour over inside the motifs give the woven effect. All these figures are like the drama of the universe. This is like the forces governing the cosmos on the macro level governing the individual in the micro-level. As per *tantra*, the individual being and the universal being are one. The colours used are earthy, raw sienna, and burnt sienna, raw, burnt umber and yellow ochre. Pigments made generally are found in soil. These are usually warm in temperature, analogous¹²⁴ harmony is achieved when they are used together. A great degree of unity is achieved. The colours chosen are similar to our historic mural paintings of Ajanta. In one of the books in his own words he says from 1953 to 1963, I was under the influence of combination of Ajanta and Van Gogh, I was aware, that unless one was able to grasp and assimilate the fundamentals of western modern art, it would not be possible to contribute anything worthwhile to the art of our country.”

¹²² Ravi kumar, *The Jain cosmology*, New Delhi: Harmony Books, 1981, p. 54.

¹²³ S.K. Ramachandrarao, *Tantra, Mantra, Yantra, The Tantra Psychology*, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, p. 40.

¹²⁴ On the colour wheel adjacent colours are used to get analogous harmony.

Semi-geometrical compositions



Picture in orange, oil on canvas, 60x48-1970 Geometrical order, 60x73, 1971. Reds and greens, oil on canvas, 33x23-1971

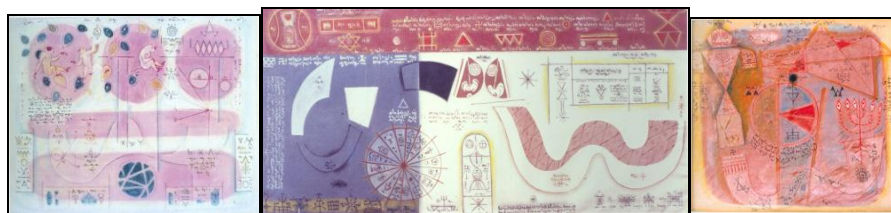
Coll. Sumitra Menon. Collected from the Panikers Museum.

Do.

The dominant feature here is the colour, which captures our eyes. It is an organization of the complex associations of geometry along with detailing of pictograms and the use of *yantra* diagrams. He also adopts organic curves to reduce to its simplest element; it seems for him a visible expression of the absolute; for a moment he has arrested the flux of existence and hence he made solid and stable coloured blocks out of time to create space, and he had defined this space with a geometrical line, and under the stress of his emotion this outline has taken on an expressive shape. This has become an order, a unity, a formal equivalent to his emotion. Therefore, the artist geometrizes every thing. He makes every thing as unnatural as possible. This geometry he has used as abstract therefore, very agitated it is mechanical but still has a rhythm. Therefore, he is making the work dynamic which arrests the viewer, by drawing organic details which brings liveliness to his work. He fused both organic and geometrical principles. Like in past history, both Gothic art and Oriental art, in their general aspects, represent a fusion of the geometrical and organic principle.¹²⁵

He had used the primary academic learnings of modern School traditions like the use of mathematics and its related formulas and the constructions of geometry as the expressional elements.

¹²⁵ Herbert Read, *The meaning of art*, Penguin books, 1972, p. 81.



Monkeys Words and symbols, Oil on c, 48x38, 1974, L.K.A. catalogue.

Mathamatical Order in astrology, oil, 68x35, 1971, Paniker museum.

Words and Symbols, Oil, 51x47, 1970, Coll-Sumitra Menon.

The picture looks like continuing beyond the limits of frame but still possesses a clear completeness, it possesses within the picture. Here the use of light is through colour which is fluid. Therefore, the effect is light and ethereal. The triadic colour like tints of red and blue are used to get the impact of variety in composition. The colour is slowly built in layers hence the effect is in translucent manner. The shapes used are drawn in monochromatic colour of red, in this the white pigment is applied to bring the shape above the surface to give an overlapped effect giving a mist kind of atmosphere. The dominant colours of red tints add to psychological impact. Moreover, certain areas outside of the shape the gradation of tone is applied in order to accent edges which gives effect as standing out in the space of time. The shapes are expressed mainly by line, through which alone local tone of each object is also given by means of pigment spread over its field in the painting. Some times shapes merge in space like the past memories or our dreams. The dark circle like a globe draws our attention due to its dark blue nature. *Tantra* also absorbed and elaborated the sum total of traditional scientific knowledge that is in mathematics, astronomy, biochemistry, alchemy. The invention of numeration decimal, ancient Indian discovery of Zero is the greater knowledge of humans and equilinear motion of planets. Tantras notions concerning time and space are borne in mind by the artist and these were based on intuitive and intense observation of natural phenomena.



Crows, 59x48, 1973 Monkeys, 1973, 48x36 Rivers, oil, 71x69-1974 Tombstones (words and symbols series) oil on anodised aluminium 38x15-1975, Museum collection, Oil on board

The use of colours are dominant bright filled after the drawing is made. The form is expressed mainly by line and the method of applying colours in the shape is interestingly adding texture to the surface plane. Like a Chalk filled effect, white shapes are standing out against the red colour background. By leaving some areas of the background spontaneously and uniformly along the edges of the outline drawing to see through the background colour makes a unifying composition. This commonality brings the variety of shapes used together. There are different shapes

or figures used to tell a story; some are recognisable shapes and some are curvilinear shapes which are big, medium and small size making a movement through out the picture plane create interest by having variety in shapes with different orientations.

Paintings of Sayed Haider Raza (R.H. Raza)

Sayed Haider Raza was born in Madhya Pradesh (Babaria) on February 22, in the year A.D. 1922. His parents are Tahira Begum and Sayed Mohammed Razi. Raza's father was a Forest Officer in the state's Narsinghpur district, Madhya Pradesh. He grew up here, surrounded by forests and in proximity of the river Narmada. The Village of Babaria where he was born and brought up had only seven houses. He grew up as a loner when young. In his primary school he remembers Nandlal Jharia as his teacher. Indeed, says Poet, friend of many decades, former bureaucrat and Lalit Kala Akademi head Ashok Vajpeyi, "Raza, on a daily basis even now, remembers his school teachers", who made a marked influence on the artist.

Raza's Father Syed Mohammed Razi's next posting was in Damoh and it was here that Raza completed his school education from the Government High School. He began his drawing when he was twelve, and had proved good also in geometry. Raza says his school teachers, Beni Prasad Sthapak, Gouri Shankar Lahari, and Daryav Singh Rathore had a profound impact on shaping his mind, and it was Nandlal Jharia, the headmaster, who taught him to relieve his restlessness by concentrating on a point which he drew on the wall. But its effect on Raza was tremendous and would remain in his sub-conscious to surface and develop a few decades later as the *bindu*, the leitmotif of his artistic style since the Eighties. 'I met teachers in Babaria, Mandla and particularly in Damoh who changed my life,' he told Ashok Vajpeyi. It was the peaceful environs of Madhya Pradesh, that resulted in his appreciation of Indian plurality, gaining him the exposure not only of the faith he was born into - Islam - but also of the tenets and richness of Hinduism as well as the original language of the epic texts: Sanskrit. "He always refers to the Narmada as Narmadaji in reverence", Vajpeyi says, and grew up with a sense of beauty in its nature, but also of fear for when she was in spate. After passing the high school, he studied further at the Nagpur School of Art, Nagpur (1939–43) and followed by Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay (1943–47). In the year A.D. 1947, his mother died.

At the same time, he co-founded the revolutionary Bombay Progressive Artists' Group (PAG) (1947–1956) along with K. H. Ara and F.N. Souza. This group has set out to break away from the influences of European realism which was prevailing in the Indian Fine Art academics and bring Indian inner vision (*Antargyan*) into the art. The group had its first show in 1948. Raza's father died in the same year in Mandla.

In 1930 or 1931, Raza cannot remember the exact year, he came to hear Mahatma Gandhi addressing a gathering at Mandla about the struggle for freedom from the British yoke, and was impressed by his vision for a Ram Rajya as well as his belief in the country's composite culture, something that he had naturally imbibed as a way of life in the Central Provinces. That liberal environment shaped his consciousness, but more importantly, Raza was encouraged to study art. When India was in the Thirties, education was seen as the key to professional success. He opted out to study Fine Arts and it is an indication of his parents' faith in his abilities that he was allowed to enroll, in 1939, in the Nagpur School of Art, Nagpur. Raza's early works hint at a Western academic style, which must have been the way the course was patterned. Certainly, there was little that was either contemporary or Indian about it, though his landscapes were clearly of the forests and fields that surrounded his early years in Madhya Pradesh. He talks about being confused about what was being taught and how it was divorced from any Indian reality, whether traditional or modern, but that he was able to see beyond it to create his own language even then, and which is how he was able to stand fourth in an all-India competition organised by the Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay.

In a strange turn of events, the J. J. School would be his destination, but his life in Madhya Pradesh was not yet done with. Raza's father had retired as a result of which the artist needed to bring home an income and found himself a job as a drawing teacher in the regular Government School in Gondiya, another small town in the Central Provinces. A traditional marriage was arranged for the young Raza, and in 1942 he married Fatima, a cousin, in Damoh, 'of my own choice', he says. Unfortunately for the young couple, 'after a few years together, differences in views and temperament came to the surface' because she could not understand 'my life as a painter', Raza says. Finding little in common and after Raza left for Bombay, it led to a breach that was never filled. Fatima too migrated to Pakistan with her family, after Partition, and Raza may well have forgotten about her till the wish to marry again, in France, required him to seek her out for a divorce, which was granted in 1959. The provincial government of the Central Provinces had granted him a scholarship to study at Sir J.J. School of Art, Bombay: he wished to get trained further in the career of an artist, so when the J. J. School closed his doors to him, he signed up at the Mohan Art Club to study in the evening classes, because by day he worked as a designer at the Express Block Studios. The Mohan Art Club had M. Y. Kulkarni as director. "I had known him as a senior artist along with Bendre, Hebbbar, Reddy - a generation of Indian painters under the direction of Charles Gerrard, the then director of the J. J. School of Art".

He enrolled at the country's premier arts institution, J. J. School, first as a private student and in the fifth year as a regular student. By then, he was already taking the first cognitive steps towards building a reputation for himself. Raza's first solo show was held in 1946 at the Bombay Art Society, which was not only prestigious but also a very formal body that was governed more by Western

standards but at the same time was making at least a little place for Indian modernism. Amrita Sher-Gil too had exhibited and been awarded by the Society, and in 1946 it had given Raza a silver medal for his work.

If Raza was responding to the creative energy around him, his personal life was proving less than desirable. In 1947 his mother had died in Bombay and in 1948, his father died in Mandla. His family was uprooted and migrated to Pakistan during Partition of India. Raza's pain and sense of rootlessness at the uprooting of people and communities can be experienced in a painting he made in 1948, *Baramullah in Ruins*. 'It was the filmmaker and writer Khwaja Ahmed Abbas who asked him to go to paint in Kashmir, recommending him to Sheikh Abdullah there. When he exhibited what he had painted there, by a coincidence the photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson was present and he commended Raza on his work but said he lacked the vitality that a study of Cezanne would teach him,. It was the reason Raza started learning French when he returned to Bombay, though he had no idea how, if ever, he would make it to Paris. As early as 1943, Raza's work had been noted by von Leyden, who was the art critic for the influential, "The Times of India", as 'a new talent that revealed itself modestly yet with a convincing air of certainty and determination'. Having won the silver medal in 1947, Raza got the gold medal at the Bombay Art Society in 1948 for his work on Kashmir's landscapes. He continued to paint landscapes for the next couple of decades.

By 1949, the Progressive Artists' Group exhibited together for the second and last time and soon after that the motley group got dissembled. Souza was the first to leave, for London, and Raza followed him to Europe, in A.D. 1950 to enroll at the Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts, Paris on a scholarship extended by the French government. Usually offered for one-year programme, they made an exception in the case of Raza for three years on account of his excellent French, which he had learnt after enrolling at the Alliance Francaise in Bombay. A new phase was beginning in Raza's life, and it would define him and his future. In A.D. 1959, he renewed his pledge for everything France had given him by marrying Janine Mongillat.

Like most Indian artists, he too started as a water colourist but switched to oil; In America, he discovered acrylic with its endless possibilities, and it would be his medium of choice from now on. When in 1959, BalChhabda organised an exhibition of Raza's works in Bombay, the artist and his wife took the opportunity to return to Madhya Pradesh to see the small towns and countryside of his childhood, and also toured to Indore, Gwalior and Damoh, where he was given rousing receptions, and endeared everyone with his ability to speak in chaste Hindi. Raza found himself a role model and a star. 'I never saw anything like this in Paris,' he would recount later of the poetry *mushairas* held in the morning. Going on to Mandla, he was able to remember the simple point of meditation his teacher had drawn on a blackboard for him to concentrate his mind on. Its impact on him was now profound. The *bindu* became the defining point and focus of his work when in 1980, I realized that I had to imbue my work with something deeper'. That 'Indian'

flavour is now his leitmotif. 'My works began with a point (a *bindu*, the source of energy) and fanned out into triangles (*tribhuj*) in vibrant shades. There was a point (bindu) below, signifying the female energy source and a point at the top symbolising the male entity. "The *bindu* challenged me on both the geometrical plane and the philosophical one," Nadkarni quotes him in an article. 'From the "point", which was part of Klee's visual grammar, emerges the circle, then the chromatic square, with its bursting fourth of five coloured elements (namely earth, water, fire, wind and sky); and finally a metamorphosis of living, swarming, luxurious forms in infinite profusion are conjured up by the forests of Madhya Pradesh. In an interview in 1988 to Geeti Sen for the Times of India, he told her, 'I am continually involved in my work, unconsciously or consciously - right through the working hours of the day, and the night. Consciously, the ideas take a precise shape in the morning when I face the canvas.'

S.H. RAZA Paintings analysis



Landscape Oil colour, 30x30, Safron Art



Bindhu series 20x20 Oil on canvas

The shadow cutting through space causes the space to appear dark. It seems to be filling the space, while the areas around appear distinctly brighter. The division of areas here creates geometrical shapes which draws deep in to the space. The repeat of colour of blue and orange shapes creates the mellowness in the picture. The major field of composition establishes a certain illumination quality; bright, dark and grayish. From this established quality, the artist is able to make his incidental touches of hue to appear lustrous, iridescent and luminous. Here he combined the principles of luminosity (Mixing strong hues of strong chroma) with colored mist. Over all canvas is covered with rich hues. Hence the quality of illumination is the personal creation which is beautifully served to create the effect.

Prakriti

The square space division is based on triangular shapes ,a concept evolved from *prakriti*¹²⁶. Triangular shapes are arranged in symmetrical manner but colours are filled in a asymmetrical way to create variety and interest. These triangles make a pattern with bright primary hues of yellow, blue and red having spiritual quality. The dominant symbol of square signifies the earth element (filled with different tones of browns) which is the material quality of nature. The geometric shape circle in the centre is seen frequently in Yantras and Mandalas of tantra based diagrams. This circle signifies the movement of the Purush Prakriti 1, 900 × 897. revolution of planets and the wholeness or totality which Raza has used. He was obsessed with the five elements of nature and expressed in different ways in his compositions. The last shape in the centre signifies the *bindu*,¹²⁷ having full bliss, and full of joy, and *bindu* itself is light, which is beyond all colours, it represents as colourless.



Bindu Series in Oil colour

The character of this painting shows having a vertical central axis disposed with strong symmetry which roughly coincides with the axis of the principle deity its spine. Showing several crossing points with yellow lines. As the practice of meditation demands visualization in layers (of multiple deities), here the parallel lines are continuously arranged horizontally. And the space is defined by a frame in dark colours adding a contrasting effect. This expresses the confinement of the flowing mind to focus while in meditation. This clear geometrical pattern in space is forming like the whole mandala which aids as a mental support. (In case of Mandalas which are made of coloured powder –sprinkles them on the flat 1987 | Mandala, Yantra Tantra art ...236x236 surface). To break the monotony of repeated horizontal lines in *sindur* tones red colour is overpowered by big circular dominant blue with the sparking yellow lines are seen between the reds. This gives a spiritual and ceremonial effect by expressing the sound effect of vibration of mantra. This gives us an idea that he was inspired by the sources of mandalas and the yantras. As

¹²⁶ The concept of a material *prakriti* evolved from that of a material earth mother supposed to represent the forces that stimulate the generative powers of nature. Fertility rites, originally performed by women, to ensure the process of nature. N.N. Bhattacharya, p.157.

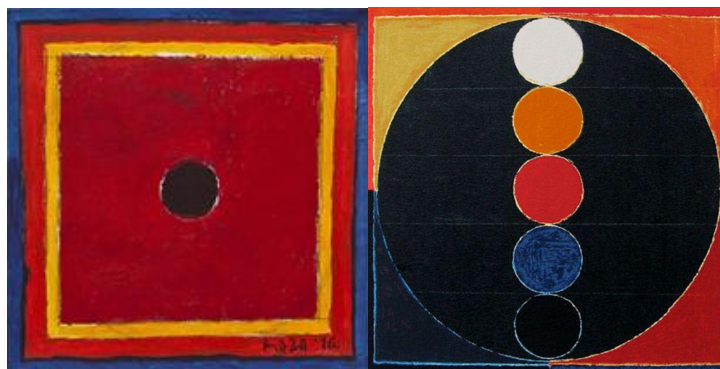
¹²⁷ Tantric language it's the all-pervading serpent power or serpent like *kamakala*. Bindu is the symbol of Siva, *Ossakti*. Saradatilaka, II.108-11. Mentioned in N.N. Bhattacharya, p.301.

he said in one of his interviews :The Bindu is full of potential .It is the seed , the very beginning.Which is the nature of hindu religion .S.H.Raza.



"Gestation," 1989, acrylic on canvas, 39 3/8 by 78 3/4 inches. "Dharti, 2005, 80X80 cm acrylic

The subdivision of the spaces by horizontal line and the triangular shapes are filled with shade of neutral colours asymmetrical grid. This is created through a series of intersecting lines increasing continuity in and compositional unity. This effect expresses contemplation and introspecting feeling .Which is appropriately expressed the essence of Mandala, Yantra/chakra. Here the compositional forces are formed by the size, value , triangular shapes, texture , location and orientation .The visual weight is with the inclination of shapes to float or sink .The dark colours tend to sink and the light colours stand out. These represent earthy colour of earth or the universe. The unifying power to this composition is the dominant unconventional mandala-like shape placed around a big black bindu ,the circle tends to stand out when placed in a square format since it fits together easily . The placing within the format affects visual weight. The diagonal placement of the square is visually dynamic. The black dot brings in the oneness, togetherness , or cohesion as the concept of five cosmic elements. As per Ajeet mookherji's book mandala is a psychic complex which conditions the return of the psyche to its potent core. This dot in this painting unifies the composition .



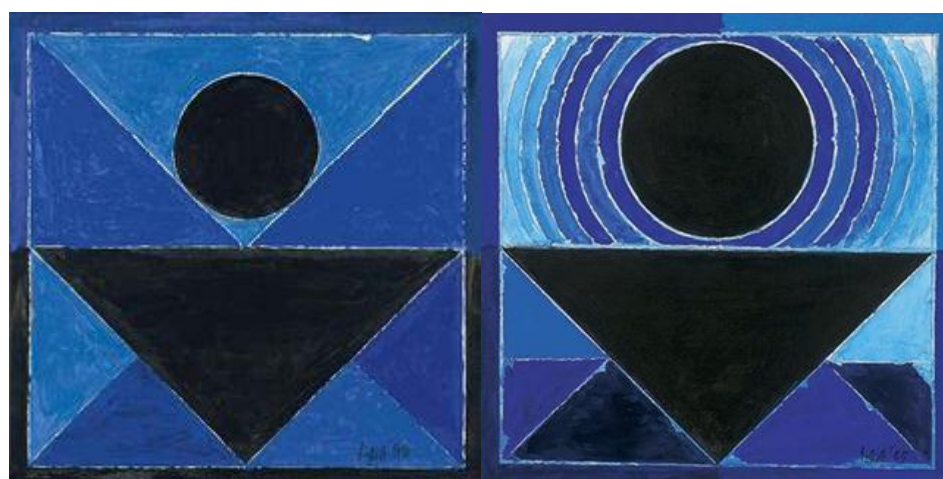
Prakriti oil colour

Similar composition at the side having the spiral, represents growth and the creative feminine energy current of mother earth as kundalini sakti. N.N. Bhattacharya.



Bindu The same arrangement of colored spheres, 500x508. 22 in x 43 in 480 x 480

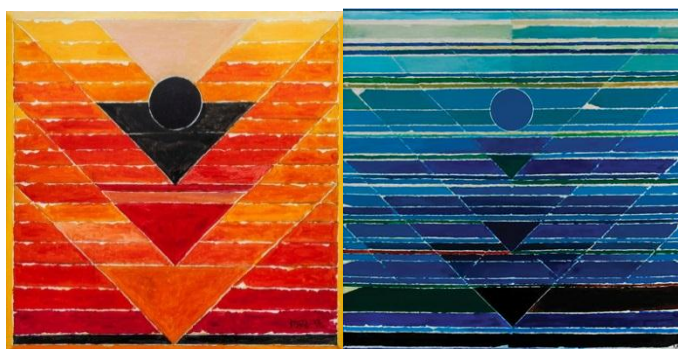
The big space created in the picture by adding layer after layer which is like building or creating a form the basic matter. Within the circle are five repeated variety coloured circles create cohesion. This is arranged in a vertical row adding visual tension and energy to the composition. This is to break the monotony of the horizontal lines of the circle, these bright primary colours add variety to the dominant black circular shape in the centre. As mandala indicates the idea of focalization of wholeness and relating to cosmos will justify the expression. Ajeet Mookherjee in his book says, the circle also functions as the nuclear motif of the self, a vehicle for centering awareness, disciplining concentration and arousing a state conducive to mystic exaltation." Therefore, the effect of the composition gives a feeling of completeness.



Bindu and Yoni (1988), 236x236. "Germination" by S. H. Raza, 301x300,

The inverted black triangle sets a stage for circular black *bindu* placed on it in the centre of blue void space in the background which is like cosmic nature. The triangle signifies three forces called *satva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. In state of perfect equilibrium like the black triangle in the blue composition, similarly *gunas* balance

each other perfectly the way it is placed in balanced integrated state. Here the *bindu* is signifying as a unified force. The effect is still and stable and calm when the forces are in balance, there is no motion. Raza in his own words said "My work is my own inner experience and involvement with the mysteries of nature and form which is expressed in colour, line, space and light".- S. H. Raza



Uttarang, 1579x1600A Lifetime of Art. At 91, S H Raza.

The general analysis of the Raza's work

The most appealing and dominating aspect is the colour element in his work. He uses triadic colours this essentially creates variety and a strong impact. The variations of colours he uses bring energy to the compositions. He uses colours as effects that transcend and overflow indicating space and solidity. He finds beauty in colour which gives most eloquent expressions as per his desired effects.

Paintings of PAKALA TIRUMALA REDDY

Image making of any kind requires the use of representational concepts. The representational concepts furnish the visual concepts one wishes to depict and they find their external manifestation in the medium of pen, brush or the chisel. The formation of representational concepts, distinguishes the artist from the non-practitioner of art. The artist experiences the world and life with deep concern and impressed by his experiences. With his wisdom, he finds significance in individual occurrences by understanding them as symbols of universal truths. The artist's privilege is the capacity to apprehend the nature and meaning of an experience in the terms of a given medium and thus to make it a tangible piece of art. As an artist during those particular moments, he finds a form for the bodiless structure. The sense of pleasing relations that the artist makes is the sense of beauty.¹²⁸

India among major trends of fine arts, relatively young in print making and now has become one of the serious and popular artists' activities. Print making was being practiced intermittently by few artists in different parts of India. After Independence only that print making came into mainstream. It was a period of development in the making of a new India and readjustment in Indian art and technology during 1950s. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations was established

¹²⁸ Herbert Read, *Meaning of Art*, London: Penguin Books, 1968-1972, pp. 54-55.

in A.D. 1950 as a cultural bridge between India and outside world. In A.D. 1954 the Lalit Kala Akademi was opened and started functioning as an active centre for promoting contemporary art as well as preserving its living traditional art. As a cultural exchange programme original works of art including graphics of foreign countries began to be displayed in major cities in India. Indian artists became aware of the latest print –making activities of foreign artists through these exhibitions.

During 1970s print making history started with a workshop at Delhi Under the aegis of the USIS of New Delhi and the Smithsonian Institute of America. American print maker Paul Lingerin was in charge of this. One hundred and three artists from various parts of India were invited to participate. P.T. Reddy was one of the members invited from India. Paul Lingerin demonstrated various modern techniques, specially the use of power tools in intaglio process. This way the Indian artists came in direct contact with the modern methods and materials. This year of 1970s is demarcated as a serious step ahead for print making in India. By this time many other artists also became aware of print making and several centers for print making became active. One of them was Lalit Kala Akademy regional center established the studios. The demand was fulfilled and a large number of artists were able to continue their work. This context evolved a new technique in his work.

From 1969, P.T. Reddy has been involved in Tantric Art and in 1978, the Department of Culture, New Delhi awarded him a two-year fellowship for research in this area interpreting the mythological, scientific and erotic aspects, exploiting with precision and skill uses in drawing the geometric forms. The artist in his own words said; “Indians have strong traditional rituals, customs and conventions, from birth to death. An industrialized society may criticize them, but all the rituals have a tantric concept and it is this philosophy which has given it a new maturity”. The entire set of his *tantra* based works offer evidence on structural features that appear in the practical approach of compositions which can be broadly divided into three categories.

- 1) Free disposition of forms (non-geometrical) as compositions-having mythological symbols.
- 2) Interminling of mandala and conceptual diagrammatic elements related to a) Social b)political c) cultural.
- 3) Nature/creation, environmental and microcosm and macrocosm (Prakruti purusha).

P.T. Reddy used his own symbols and designs, with a new style to convey the message in a more simple form. And used squares, circles, triangles, stylized petals. All these exist in the universe and he used them. The paintings are graphic symbols of religious, social, political and even erotic. It seems that Reddy has made free use of iconography for creating fresh combinations of imagery, comprising motifs of gods, people and places and giving them a symbolic significance relating it to our

own times. He weaves certain accepted symbols with symbols of his own creation. Their truth or meaning, however, is meant to lie in the subjective insights. The works vary from diagrams of world-image to illustrative symbols of mythology, events, and ideas and executed with a remarkable linear fluency.



Moon and man, lithograph, 46x36, 1970, P.T. Reddy Museum, HYD.

This is evoking by using a picture which is poetic and imaginary world. Making an image as face of the planet in reality, of how the Indian folk stories revolve around moon personified as male is depicted in his work. The background is in a textured reddish brown dream like atmosphere created by scribbling lines. The figures or shapes are placed in different planes and in diminishing size, they appear to recede, and so an illusion of space is created. Creation of illusion of three dimensions on a flat surface is done by placing shapes in parallel lines drawn across at intervals which get smaller as they get nearer to the vanishing point. The figures are made in detail with the expressive features and their layout and organization lend themselves to a many layered sequence of associations. The larger face in the foreground is drawn in greater detail and the smaller ones in the background are made more blurred this creates a feeling of space enhancement. The tonal variations through use of light by the use of colours of yellow and red with shimmering white shows an association to the cosmic world. The shapes of the figures are in a linear form overlapped similar to a *yantras* of *Tantra* ideology. The outer frame, the shape in oval form, encloses the three shapes within. The dominant fierce full looking, hot, yellow glowing Sun God, the central energetic solar power in the centre, suggesting the human facial features. The iconic representation of white moon with the shapes of the foot prints overlaid on it indicates the scientific discovery of landing on it. This is a discovery of stepping on a divine form in reality. This creates a pattern with a drawing of a human figure imposing on the surface. By making a secular scientific discovery event as a pattern he explores the intersection of science and Tantric understanding of the cosmos. Both relate to humanity, merging the universe and the individual. This substantiates by the article of Rebecca Brown wherein she stated that, “In his most successful images , Reddy allows the ambiguity to rise to the surface , depicting the tension between sacred and secular rather than dictating one or the other. His moon landing works claim the landing from the world not only by illustrating cosmic events , but by drawing them into an Indian context , so that

touching the moon reverberates throughout our relationships o the cosmos , creating links between the micro and macrocosm” .¹²⁹

Medium is a Lithograph.



Seed and Germination, Etching, 27x27cm, 1970.

The symmetrical pattern corresponds to *mandala* and *yantra*. The primary outer frame of *yantra* with a secular combination of symbols he experimented to make it universal. The organic quality is shown through the element of growth. The *bindu* /*bija* are the original core of *Yantra*¹³⁰. He used the central circular form of *bija* transforming into a new plant as a creation coming out in to the universe by using negative and positive space in yellow. The grain (*canaka*)cotyledons are comparing to the Siva and Sakti the duality¹³¹. The shape of these used on either side of the centre gives a decorative effect which, John woodruff personifies as Maya. This equation with the shape of *yonis* of tantra symbol is the seat for divine creation (*srishtikalpa*). This also is interpreted in Tantra as creative thinking or imagining. Here he expressed the creative energy in form of divergent lines as roots emerging as a pattern from the center of the seed- *bija*. As energy is the physical ultimate of all forms of matter. This way the artist is manifesting the infinite power of –Mahasakti the real power of being in the form of mind and matter.

This can be interpreted like the *Srichakra* form by giving a square concept representing the circular form of universe. It suggests progression of consciousness in horizontal and vertical manner. It is seen as a chain of interdependence to comprehend things, till to the intention for taking action. It represents the natural forces are in equilibrium and harmony with each other. The interconnections of five elements that are manifested in five layers as *chatur bhujacircle* with three layers of flower petals are drawn. Touching and overlapping one another makes the overall form as dense accumulates mass. The growing consciousness as a being is shown through the use of blossoming lotus flower petals in layers which are laid out in a symmetrical manner in a circular manner. This way artist defined the space to

¹²⁹Artjournal, “College of Art Association”, Vol 64, No.4. (Winter2005).

¹³⁰ Sir John Wooddroffe, *Sakti and Sakta*, Madras: Ganesh & Co.2006.p.71.

¹³¹*Ibid*-p.27.

establish the balancing centre with compactness, which brings together and also gives it a more visual weight.



Brahma, water colour, 6x8 inches, 1984. P.T. Reddy Museum, HYD.

A cluster of repeated form of a *kamala* a lotus flower petal shape makes a complete and round shape. This centricity brings dynamic tension to the composition by placing the swan at the bottom to give visual gravity with more stability by keeping the head at the side and spreading of the wings of swan giving a support. Brahma's vehicle (*vahana*) is *ekahamsa* (swan). The centre is with the *Om* a form of Sakti, evolves *nada* (*apara*) from *nada* arises *bindu*. Sakti is also *para* –*sakti* who is conceived as *sabda-brahma*¹³², the first God in the Hindu Trimurti. The four heads arranged in four directions facing towards the centre are known as Kumaras, the sages (*rishis*) who move around the universe of materialistic and spiritualistic aspect without any desire but with purpose to spread the knowledge. The pink coloured lotus having its petals arranged in circular manner spreading in all direction symbolizes the knowledge. The artist used the opening of each layer of the flower is equating with the self-awareness. The lines used are intertwined meticulously and continuously to form the pattern which expresses the pure world of knowledge produced from Brahma¹³³.

¹³² N.N. Bhattacharya, p.83; The garland of letters, Sir John Woodroffe, Madras, 1974. pp.119&259.

¹³³ *Ibid*, p.29.



Origin of sound, 148x131cm, Oil on canvas, 1970. P.T.R. Museum.

The centre is charged with visual energy, with round enclosure within a square. Usually the square is considered inferior to the circle. Therefore, symbolizes the earth and the circle expresses Heaven or eternal existence. The basic duality which is complimenting by nature is seen in the traditional symbolism of the Indian or Tibetan Mandala. The circular composition is well composed by the interaction of the two shapes. The goddess is represented in the form of pink lotus against the yellow background. The mother Sakti and the wife of Padmanabha¹³⁴. Tranquility is represented by the use of harmonious colours as circular yellow orange back ground in that blossoming pink lotus is subdued. The white symbol of *Om* is the expression of sound. All the letters *varnas* and sound *dhvanis* are derived from this letter.¹³⁵

The light blue calligraphic symbol of *trishula* is placed in the four directions. By overlapping both the symbols of Siva and Sakti the union is expressed by the artist, as per *Sakta Tantra* from the union of Siva and Sakti rises creative ideation denotes by dominant colour red *Swastika* (signifies Ganesha) shape bisect the circular shape and leads to a rhythmic movement.



¹³⁴ Sanjukta Gupta, *Lakshmi Tantra, A pancharatra Text*, Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1972. p. 88.

¹³⁵ Sir John Woodroffe, *The garland of letters*, Madras: Ganesh and Co, 1974, p. 55.

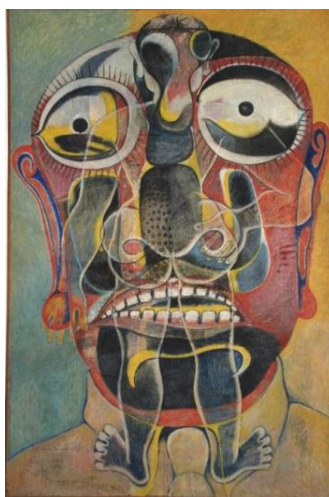
Having the sixteen circular placed yellow petals-a secret chakra ¹³⁶ called Soma –cakra. With centre smoky fire along with the yellow dots in last pint in circular shape ‘bindu’ of Tantra of nectar (*amrta*) in the pericarp draws our attention. The hand is generally associated with an ancient female entity who offers protection from evil; the two feet on both the sides signify Siva and Sakti. The “*hamsa*” the swan, signifies *jnanamayawhichis* placed at the centre. At the background plane is with imposing sculpture forms of figures treated in naturalistic way with symbolic deep red flat filled colour indicating the kinetic energy of quantum of the cosmos. The natural human forms showing the undifferentiated unity of Siva with nature Sakti (female energy) the world is born and into it also dissolved. Though it is clear in their opposing qualities, the Tantras aim is to realize this integrated polarities becoming Siva-Sakti of Hindu and *upaya –prajna* in Buddhist *tantra*, the state of union of the two the ultimate goal. The artist has paid attention to bring the different shapes mostly gently flowing shapes. The thought and action are controlled by *Dharma*. The *trivarga* of life are *dharma, artha, kama*¹³⁷. Dharma is shown through the symbol of *hamsa* which is to keep up the law, morality, custom, religion equity, duty that are the marks of *dharma/achara*’ the principle which supports and holds people together. By creating harmony through colour of yellow and red and balance is brought by repeating similar white shapes by controlling its placement in different parts of a composition. This is for well-being. *Kama* is called as desire for, success, family, position, wealth or other forms of happiness for self which is the characteristic of soul. This regulates *Dharma*. Whether the desire is higher or lower kind, must be lawful, subject to *dharma*. *Artha* stands for the means through which the life may be maintained. The desire must be right one. *Moksha* is called *mukti*, the ultimate liberation. This means those who recognize that the world resulting from actions which are imperfect, reject them. The modification of energy of consciousness establishes in its own real nature¹³⁸ and cause liberation while being alive. This is expressed through showing full bloom golden lotus below the picture plane in a smoke coloured *banalinga* (*hiranya garbha*).

¹³⁶ Kalas –are called *kripa*(mercy), *mrduta*(gentleness), *Dhairya*(patience, composure), *vairagya*(dispassion), *dhrti*(constancy), *sampat*(spiritual prosperity), *hasya*(cheerfulness), *romanca*(rapture, thrill), *vinaya*(sense of prosperity, humility), *dhyana*(meditation), *susthirata*(quietitude, restfulness), *gambhira*(gravity), *udyana*(enterprise, effort), *aksobha*(undisturbed by once emotions), *audarya* (magnanimity) and *ekagrata* (concentration).

Aurtur Avolon, *Introduction to Tantra Sastra*, Delhi: Shivalik Prakashan, 2005, p. 56.

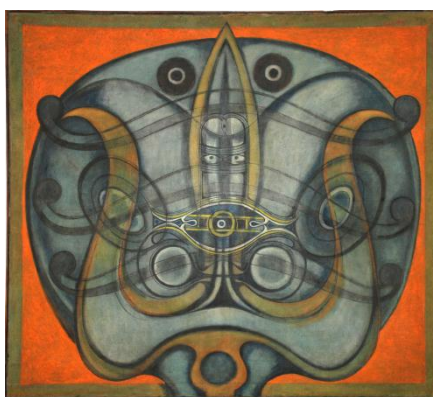
¹³⁷ *Ibid*, p.154.

¹³⁸ Sanjukta Gupta, *Lakshmi Tantra*, Delhi: Motilal Banarasi Das Publishers, p.39; Bhaskara Ray’s commentary on Lalita Sahasranama, sloka .125.



The man, oil on canvas, 183x122, 1970. P.T. Reddy, Museum.

The forms visible are representational having human figures. The dominant exaggerated enlarged contemporary human face is with all his dynamic energies gazing at the world. The female human figure is drawn over the plane of face with soft edges to define the female figure. The images are seen through another. The size varies in the use of figures and the treatment appears to pass through each other. Both the images are brought into a harmonious relationship not only by the common location but by the physical depth of the space indicating the level in control of mind and senses; as per *Tantra* the man who has control over his senses is the real truth seeker. The woman shown in front is not to be considered merely as an object of enjoyment, but as a goddess (*grahadevata*)¹³⁹. The space itself pulls various images into a visual harmony; this way artist interpreted expressing that the controlling the perceptive senses through use of colours and size of shapes and its treatment. By the use of interpenetration of shapes the unification of composition is made.



Shiva Cult, 148x131, oil on canvas, 1971, N.G.M.A., Delhi.

A club of symbols makes the composition to attract the attention to look for more details within. The ellipse has a stabilizing symmetry of its own. It serves to round off the corners and thereby to fit subject more compactly. The dominant snake hood at the background in dark blue stands up giving a relief effect on the surface

¹³⁹ Sanjukta Gupta, *Lakshmi Tantra*, Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers, 1972-2007, p. xxxII.

which holds rest of the symbols' shapes within. Lord Siva is symbolised with the snake(Vasuki), worn on neck; this represents ego, when it is controlled' can be worn on the neck as an ornament. The centre portion of the trident form of *trishula* the weapon of Siva is in front of the hood of the snake as if stopping it in coming forward. This dominant shape of trident is colored in a gradient manner by having orange at the edges and tips along with metallic blue inside. The curve of the shape of trident and the colour treatment adds to the rhythmic effect to the composition. While two curved lines on both the sides add a sinuous energy to the centre of the design. The symbol having three raised points signifies Siva as creator, preserver and destroyer at the same time it represents as the balance of three *Gunas* of *tantra* principle as "*sattva, rajas and tamas*". The functions of these *gunas* are to make active and also to suppress.¹⁴⁰ To achieve a quality, these principles are attained by *Sadhana*. Here the artist with his experience of visual knowledge expressed the quality of *divya bhava* into his work. A combination of size variation of symbol shapes of eyes and shading, suggest volume and increase the illusion of space. The *Linga Purana* conveys the notion about the nature of the creative aspect of Siva. That it says *Jnana, Icchha, and Kriya* are the three eyes of Parameshawara; he is addressed by the name of Sadasiva¹⁴¹ image with symbols brings in the experience of Siva's identity with one self (individuals soul). By keeping the *tilak (nama)* having three horizontal lines at the back superimposed and treated in a translucent manner. The combination of the shape of vulva the female Sakti is placed horizontally and the phallus shape is placed vertically in the middle of *Trishula*. This technique of merging or interpenetrating of shapes indicates the union of Siva and Sakti as per *Saiva Siddhanta School* of Tantra.¹⁴² The use of line and its organization provide the framework for elaborate composition. A quality of infinite subtlety through colour treatment is reflecting the personality of the artist.



¹⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p.19.

¹⁴¹ M.C.Chaoubey, *Lakulisa In Indian Art and Culture*, Delhi:Sharada Publishing house, 1997, p. 16.

¹⁴² N.N. Bhattacharya, *History of the Tantric Religion*, Manohar, 1982, p. 244.

More mysterious and painterly (if the expression can pass muster) are “*Sri Chakra*” in the form of intaglio print. The combination of red orange and violet and its arrangement gives meaning to the expression. A unified pattern is achieved with repeat floral concentric layers applying dominant colour of red orange in having asubdued double line drawing of symbolic yoni placed in horizontal manner and vertically shown Anthropomorphic image of *Sivalinga* relating to esoteric worship of Tantras. Within these there is centrally placed red glowing calligraphic sacred letter Shree drawing our attention to give depth to the picture space like piercing the six *chakras* (*satchakrabheda*) the most important subject dealt with Tantra.¹⁴³



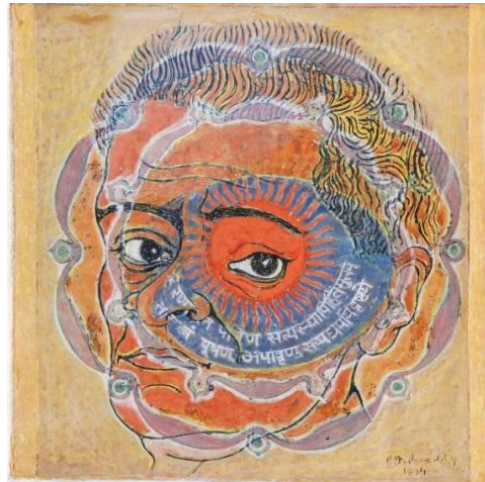
Vishnu, 40x40, Mixed media.1972.

The space is given a limitation by giving a frame at the two stages like the *mandala*; this enables our eye to draw towards the centre. The centre circular form is represented like the *chakra* of Tantra. The two rows of open flower “*Padma*” the seat of goddess Lakshmi is treated with decorative curved petals having white out line with red within to show the three dimensionality. The shape of the shell is oblongform placed on the fore head in the center as a focal point. In the oblong form, it has a protuberance in the middle and tapered at end; these details add a decorative pattern to the shape. *Shankha* is a sacred emblem of Vishnu as a giver of fame, longevity and prosperity, the cleanser of sin and the abode of goddess Lakshmi. Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth and consort of Vishnu¹⁴⁴ and also a symbol of water, it is associated with female fertility. Conch shell is a ritual based and has a religious importance in Hinduism and Buddhism. While in bottom is placed with *Chakra*, disc like," having serrated edges having spokes radiating from the centre. The symbol signifies wheel of time and also as an auspicious vision. The

¹⁴³ Sir John Woodrofe, *Introduction to Tantra Sastra*, Delhi: Shivalik Prakasan, 2005, p.140.

¹⁴⁴ T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol part I, Delhi: Motilal Banrasidass, 1914-1997, p. 3.

form of Vishnu is shown in a semi abstract way by emphasizing decorative shapes of wide opened proportionately big eyes placed in the a horizontal plane of the composition, to counter balance this, the vertical red line *tilaka* (It is generally worn on the forehead by the followers) is used along with the letter U shaped broad *tilaka* pattern in white vertical lines which commonly represents the foot of Vishnu. The white background enhances all four shapes grouping them all together on a same plane adding a spiritual yellow colour in a diagonal shape. Though the symbols are reorganized in a new way by the artist the colours bring the spirit of divinity effectively.



Self portrait, Water colour, 22x22, 1974. P.T.R.Reddy Museum.

Several images like the self-portrait as a drawing at the background as a self Svarupa-is the nature of anything as it is in itself , as a distinguished from what it may appear to be. This blissful consciousness is the ultimate and real nature¹⁴⁵ indicated by illusionistic space created by overlapping of different shapes having jointly shared edges placing the shapes of lotus petals corolla in two layers adding a decorative pattern. These are shared extended edges provides commonalities to distant shapes, thereby harmonizing the areas. The use of blue pallet shape depicts the self as a painter artist expressing after knowing the truth of the world around. The vermilion radiating red sun indicates the power Sakti of light helps which in perceiving (*jnana*) things through senses is the real truth which he believes in, and depicts the same. By repeating similar shapes, rows of lotus petals are an excellent way to bring visual unity to a composition. The repetitive practice in visual expression brought his life integrated with.

¹⁴⁵ Aurthor Avlon, *Serpent power*, Madras: Ganesh & Co, 1924, p. 28.



Power of chair, water colour, 31.5x31.5, 1984, P.T.R. Reddy Museum.

The symmetrical composition in monochromatic colour of blue takes us back to the memories of socio political events. Here the artist has used the symbols in a new combination like *Yantra*. The outer picture plane *Mandala* (Buddhist) like geometric shape called rectilinear shape ¹⁴⁶is enclosing a curvilinear shape in a strong statement through drawing the form of Nehru's head who was the first Prime Minister of our country, is given a prominence through the line drawing with ink adding a relief like effect. This is treated in a subdued manner placed in the background. The symbolism is playing a greater part in making the composition. The chair which signifies the power is the main attention to the politicians/public figures. The shape of the chair is well used to build the composition in making the content more effective to the subject matter. It's used in lighter tones to darkest to emphasize the shape to convey the related to the subject. The favorite symbol of Nehru as Rose flower corolla also relating to *Padmam* lotus petals of Tantra *chakra* in four layers is placed on the surface of the picture plane. Within the outer wider row of white delicate flower is overlapped with the shape of a chair signifying the political post is treated in a delicate white showing its purity above it is a jewel like delicately drawn crown symbolizing the power. The pink rose corolla stands as a central circular area by having darker blue, within it are the two more white coloured rows of circular decorative petal forms, enclosing translucent national tricolor flag above it is the shape of fire emerging symbolizing a spirit of patriotism. All these shapes through their curving nature, suggest movements into depth. The shape of the eyes which sparkle from behind draws our consciousness deep within. By the use of size, color, value, and Texture contrasts to these planes can even more establish an impression of depth.

¹⁴⁶ Whose boundaries consists of straight lines appear flat when lying on the surface of the picture plane.

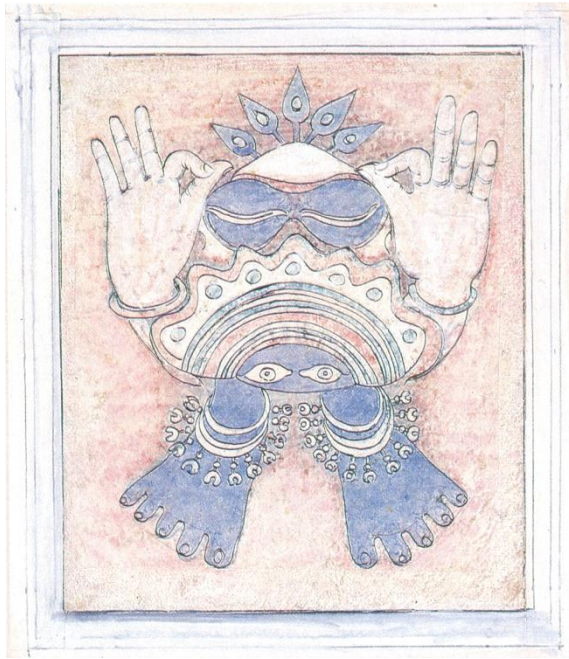


Seed and growth, 180x180, Oil on canvas, 1989, P.T.Reddy Museum, HYD.

The square symbolizes *bhupura* of *srichakra* and also like in *Dhara Mandala*. The swirling lines in orange indicate the movement of sperm in the mother's (or universe) womb adds rhythm in the big vermilion red circular form of the central portion. The dominant red signifies *Devi* with abstract lines having monochromatic reds and yellows with variation in thickness attributes volume to the circle. Transition in levels created by lines adds depth to the space giving an illusion. Placing two overlapped triangles upside down a small six petals *Chakra* is placed within the composition. Called Mula chakra shines like Sun. Inside the triangle is the Dhara bijathe child Brahma who is red in colour.¹⁴⁷ Symmetrical composition to start with the framing the space is very well balanced through subtle asymmetrical rhythmic lines in the centre gives the effect of depth in the center as well as energy showing the moment like the sperm in the womb. In the center overlapped triangular shapes with yellow colors is *Srichakra*, which is the macrocosm as well as the microcosm, is the body of the two in one, Siva Shakti. *Chakras* are considered as consciousness and also subtle vital force.¹⁴⁸ Having a seed in the centre added decorativeness to the composition. Starting from the outer side of the picture frame, the space around is given depth. By using yellow frame and with blue background as complimentary to the centre spherical form of red.

¹⁴⁷ Aurthur Avlon, *The serpent power, Shat-chakra- nirupana and paduka -pachaka*, Madras: Ganesh & Co, Publications, 1924.p. 27.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 6.

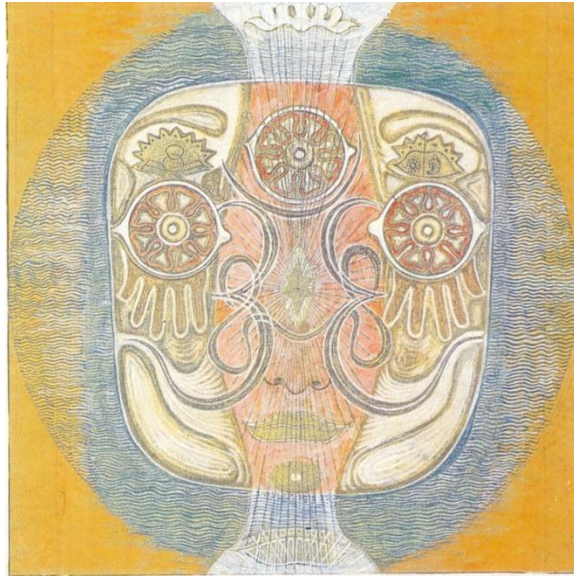


Srichakra, 43x43, 1972, Intaglio. P.T. Reddy Museum

It is an open biomorphic composition the artists used the shapes of human hands and legs a making a composite unit, by extendedness of corresponding symbol shapes on the picture surface.¹⁴⁹ A symmetrical arrangement of symbols related to Sri Krishna, the peacock feathers on top with diverging pattern makes our eye move down to the little feet of dancing Krishna. The feet are placed in a diagonal way on both the sides making our view to converge our eyes towards the Krishna's symbolic face with semicircular crown. The two hands with dancing *mudras* (hand gestures) add a rhythmic decorative pattern to the picture space. Jagannatha of puri was originally a tribal god, he is considered as a one of the Vishnu incarnation. His rituals are based on Tantra.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Extendedness- in order to specify the relative extensions of picture in space, which is the most basic of all shape properties .Willats John, *Art and Representation* New Principles in the Analysis of pictures, Princeton ,New Jersy.1997, P,78.

¹⁵⁰ . N.N. Bhattacharya, *History of the Tantric Religion*, Manohar, 2005, p. 285.



Origin of Siva, Etching, 1972, 50x38. Saint Maries College of Maryland, U.S.A.

To begin with it is an iconic, human divine attribution having semi abstract composition. When viewed the field of forces become focal point of energy from the center of the circle. The Placement of three eyes symbolizing lord Siva the creator and also signify the planets. Along with is a rhythmically superimposed mirror image unit of letter “Om”, constitute a field for equilibrium, establishing energy emitting center. This is actually objectifying the non tangible sound into a visually physical form. The organic curved calligraphic lines are harmoniously placed in the focal point emphasizing the importance of sound to once own self. The lines visually seen coincides the sound energy emitted by the chanting of *Om* which vibrates and spreads in the space of universe. Shape of the square enclosure and its internal structure between shapes firmly determine anisotropy¹⁵¹ of space which express the concept of the artist. Visually the space around in yellow and the horizontal wavy lines symbolizes water within the circle shape as earth creates an environment as universe. The geometric shape, having the circle produces which lies on top of the square, the result is three levels. The central oblong shape indicates the space within as compressed in concavity by lines converging symbolizing dynamic way in creation. As said by Arnheim “Artists apply these rules intuitively or consciously to make depth relations visible.”¹⁵²p. 234.

The images treated on two dimensional planes create more planes extending the space parallel to the front plane, which is showed at different levels.¹⁵³This speaks of the evolution of universe and as well as the origin of sound. As per Tantra,

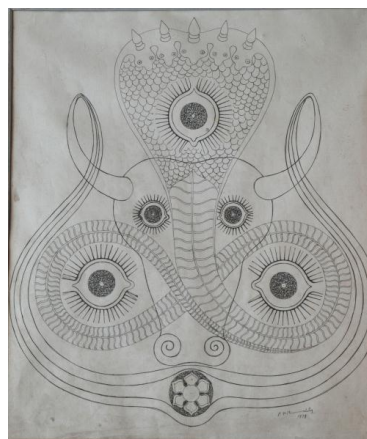
¹⁵¹ Antropy- A square having geometrically correct dimension. Our vision over estimate distances in the vertical. It is a phenomenon that in principle affects all shapes. It has no power over circles. Circle has its own inherent strength. Hence the structure of square and its visual proportions are more than its geometric measurements. Geometrically correct square looks too long hence one has to shorten them a bit in the vertical dimension to get the appearance of a square correctly proportioned. Arnheim Rudolf, *Art and visual perception*, University of California press, 1954-74.

¹⁵² Arnheim Rudolf, *Art and visual perception*, University California Press, p. 234.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, p.228.

Mantra-sadhana has the union of the *Sadhana sakti*, the power of the individual worshipper and the *Mantra sakti*, the power of the mantra itself.¹⁵⁴ The power is generated by the chanting of *Mantra* syllable *Om*. Lines originating from the shape of mouth depicted at the bottom of the picture, like the echoing, spreading all through the space of universe, equating with rays of light from the Sun. As also Rebecca said in her article: “Reddy employs the concept of sound in several of works; compositions with the *Devanagari* syllable *Om* the *mantra* par excellence, when used by an initiated *tantrika*, represents the root –vibration, affecting body and the cosmos on the cellular level. Again we see the relationship of the macrocosm to the microcosm, merging the universe and the individual. Sound is one of the ways this concept is represented. This print represents the sound in visual form. The opposite on top is the *akasha*, the sky at a different plane indicating the space of universe. The emergence of divine form having sun and the moon in the form of lotus blooms as his eyes; and the hands *hastha* as open palms as a gesture of protection, from the natural emergence of light and sound, depicted as the divine human attribution to the composition. On top are decorative symbols of Brahma (book and a pot) and Vishnu (*chakra* and *shanku*) above the eyes as the principle gods who are the originators of the macrocosm. This brings visual experience as dynamic having figures but yet an abstract effect.

The Artist in his own words said about the work in his statement in the portfolio document 1979-80: “The picture is based on Siva purana. Accordingly everything was water; there appeared a spark of light growing like a huge pillar of brilliance. When earth and sky were separated, the other two powers Brahma and Vishnu were emerged and wanted to know the origin and end of the light. So they started in disguise of an arrow and a bird. But they could not succeed. Finally they agreed the supremacy of Eshwara. This concept is visualized by Abhaya and Varada Hastha mudras and Surya and Chandra as his eyes.¹⁵⁵



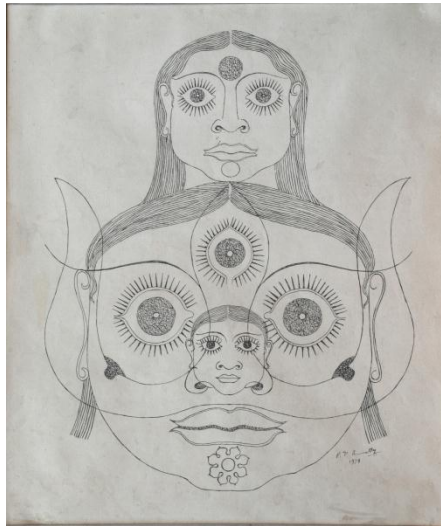
Naga Bhairava Siva ,ink on paper ,47x54,1978.P.T.Reddy Museum

¹⁵⁴ Woodroffe Sir John, *Sakti and Saktha*, Madras: Ganesh & Co, p. 290.

¹⁵⁵ Swami Harshananda, *Hindu Gods and Goddesses*, Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 2005, p.59.

It is a composition depicting Shiva cult of Shaiva Agamas of Tantra¹⁵⁶ gracefully having a snake with its hood, a bull's head and three eyes personifying Lord Siva. The Glistening serpent (Vasuki) form dominantly sits up with subtle curve the symbol of Siva. Its horizontal curved form of eight is placed

Shiva Parvati with Kumara-Again it is symbolic representation of Siva and Parvati with their son Kumara, all the symbols are designed in a single form. The bulls head denote the *shiva's vahana*. Kumara is designed in a four petal lotus (a new born is as delicate as a flower) surrounding the two glowing eyes forming a decorative shape with a pattern adding texture to the composition creating a depth to the surface. The weapon of Siva the symbol is placed as an enclosing form around the vehicle or *vahana* of Siva, the bull. The treatment of darkness of eyes-(*trinetra*, the three eyes) play a dominant role as his grace, manifests as *Ikca*, *Jnana* and *Kriya saktis*.

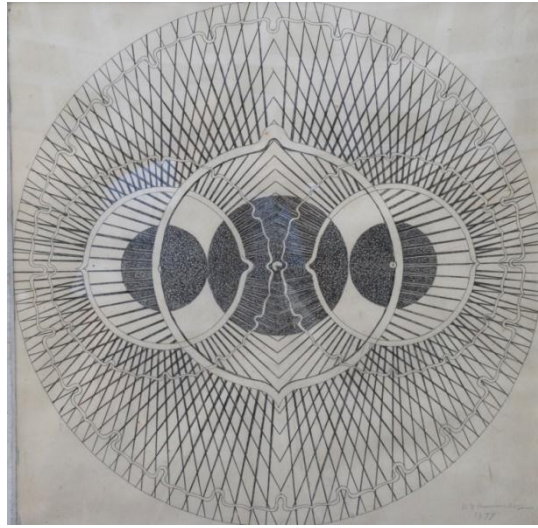


Shiva Parvati, Ink on paper, Drawing, 48x54, 1978, P.T.Reddy Museum.

The consort of Siva is Parvati shown with mild and with peaceful expression with Siva. The prime concept of Tantra is Sakti as Parvati, the power goddess and the image of Parvati in realism shown on top through simple line drawing. The representation of Siva in his large sized figure overlapping with the bust of mother Parvati, and in between newly born Kumara is gently enclosed in between her breasts and the wavy lines of eye brows of Siva. The construction of the whole pattern is made possible by the union of several simple ones. A transition from isometric perspective, the convergence towards the small face of the baby Kumara represents a symmetrical arrangement along a central vertical axis. The effect is dynamic which is like stroboscopic¹⁵⁷ motion, suitable to the concept of Shiva and Shakti.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p.91.

¹⁵⁷ Stroboscopic motion happens between visual objects that are integrally alike in their appearance and function in the whole field, but change in some perceptual features –location, size, or shape.



Trinetra-Portrait of Shiva, Ink on paper, Drawing, 48x48, 1978, P.T.Reddy Museum, HYD.

This is a circular complete design with three eyes in optic visionary forms. The divergent lines emerging from the shape of the eyes in layers interlace with one another in different directions. The combination of the two movements results physically in a wavy path¹⁵⁸. *Tantra* also is related to time and space; gravity and magnetic attraction which have a similarity to the ideas of modern science. The tonal values in these lines add a vibration/illusionistic effect creates a rhythm or movement in the space. The concept of Siva in *Tantra* is for his efficient cause, Sakti for its instrumental cause and *maya* for its material cause. The dark round eyes are the focal points of the picture space. To break the monotony, the central eye is slightly bigger and the direction of the eye is vertically placed on top to give a depth to the picture space. Their similarity is enhanced by common application of value tone and texture. The representation can also be said as Sadasiva; the wide spread lines denotes his pervading nature as manifested forms as Rudra, Vishnu, Brahma each with its respective Sakti.¹⁵⁹ At the same time it is also interpreted as Siva and Sakti unity to produce the *Bindu* that is the seed for the creation of universe. The symmetry is very well achieved. Perception through vision is well depicted through no of emerging tapering straight lines within a circular format. It is very simple expression through a basic geometrical shape, circle with its repetition in various ways in tonal value, texture and size emerged as a highly modern treatment.

Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception*, London: University of California, 1954-74, p. 435.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p.383.

¹⁵⁹ Avlon Aurthor (sir john Woodroffe), *Introduction to Tantra Sastra*, Delhi: Shivalik Prakashan, 2005, p.10.



Saraswati Devi, Watercolour on paper, 21.5x19.5, 1975.P.T.Reddy Museum,HYD.

This painting is an open mass of forms having *veena*, the musical instrument as her symbol indicating that she is the personification of arts, crafts and skills showing the hand gestures (*mudra*). The rhythm of line showing female form represents Saraswati as ‘the flowing one’ in Rgveda she represents a river therefore in light blue, she is connected with fertility. Hence Saraswati depicted with breasts symbolically clad with white indicating purification. The central focal fire shape depicts symbolically *Jnana*-spiritual wisdom which is like the fire burns up all actions. Around it is the fully blossomed lotus as her seat. *Ichha* is represented in treating whitish tones like moon, which is the prerequisite for creation. *Kriya* is like sun through its light shown through open eyes (light makes the things visible); She represents power and intelligence. These triad energies knowledge, (*jnanasakti*), will (*iccha-sakti*), and action (*kriya-sakti*), Sakti as Mahadevi exists in different forms, one of them is Saraswati.¹⁶⁰



Folk Krishna ,Tribal God, Acrylic on paper,25x24cm 1985,P.T.reddy Museum,HYD.

¹⁶⁰ John Woodroffe, *Sakti and Sakta*, Madras: Ganesh & Co, 2006, p.15. Devi Purana and Saktananda – Tarangini(chap,iii)

Frame as a compositional structure provide centricity and its uncommon coordinates like the symbols of *Vishnu nama* or *Tilak* and weapon symbols are placed in the four corners as *mandala*, *shanku chakra*, coordinating with vertical axis and horizontal axis in the frontal plane. The lines are closed on one inside and opening out on the other side in the middle of each side (as four portals) are known as *bhupura*, the earth-stretch in *Buddhist Mandala* like shape. According to S.K. Ramachandra Rao, the temple plan is principally a mandala and it is spiritual and deals with several aspects of individual and collective worship.¹⁶¹ Through these portals, one enters the limits. Immediately, inside the square are eight petals arranged in the form of blossoms of lotus (*padmas*); next are the eight petals arranged in a similar fashion. As Lotus is a flower symbol for female goddess. This symbol has caught the Indian imagination not only by its beauty and delicacy by its large multiple layers of petals, vitality, and purity. The element of imposing fruitfulness it symbolizes by placing the square within the circular form of petals. The central circle of white signifying enlightenment, against it is the shape of Sri Krishna image placed in a balanced manner, signifying the spirit of the god having the hands shapes placed as decorative motifs *Abhaya hastha* and the feet. The artist had replaced with his own symbols in the traditional mandala giving the impact of folk element by ornamenting it with the symbols to the Composition using minimum colours of red and blue signifying the god Krishna. N.N. Bhattacharya mentions that how Tantra was able to greatly influence on *Vaishnavism* a composite religion, the tribal cult of the *vrishni* idol is *Vasudeva* and *sankarsana*.¹⁶²



Gaja Lakshmi, 1984, water colour on paper, 23.5x19.5.

¹⁶¹ S.k.Ramachandra Rao, *Vastu Silpa Kosha - Encyclopaedia of Hindu Temple Architecture and Vastu*, Bangalore, Divine Books3 Vols. 2012.

¹⁶² N.N. Bhattacharya, *History of The tantric Religion*, Manohar, 2005, p. 282.

The above painting is an open auto-morphic symmetrical composition. The sculptural female torso symbolizes Goddess Lakshmi with delicate light pink in colour. The important feature of the ideas of Sakta-Tantra is Supreme Being is female and worshipped under different names and forms. One of the eight forms of Lakshmi are identified in the works related to iconography. One of these most popular is Gajalakshmi. The symbolism of female is represented by depicting her breasts with the peaceful meditative eyes as a decorative element. The eight pedaled lotus born goddess is redesigned by the artist by using two layers of lotus petal form, placed like the *anahata chakra* replacing with the shape of an eye the symbol of *Shakti*, having dot *Bindu* in the centre denoting creation representing Siva and Sakti also the first throb. As per *Sakta Puranas* great goddess created from her own body, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva.¹⁶³ In addition to this is the focal point drawing all the visual forces together. The superimposition of lotus petals in two layers enclosed in concentric circles gives the depth as concavity to the picture plane. Using this method, the artist expressed the transcendence effect. The *gaja*, the elephant is bearing the composite unit of symbol on its head symbolizing as the vehicle of Goddess Lakshmi. The front view of elephant head shape is gracefully depicted by using rhythmic lines. As the Vishnu's concert the symbols of *chakra* and *shanku*, the shell are placed to make a harmonious composition. The curvilinear shapes of the symbols create decorative use of planes, suggest movement into depth. The harmonic colour relationship of whitish blue and pink combination along with its placement of colour expresses content aptly.



The Sun Acrylic on Paper, 42x43, 1980.P.T.Reddy Museum,HYD.

Sun believed to influence life of the individual and also the course of evolution/history. The image of Surya is always placed in the centre of the planets, with the outer boundary is treated like the Buddhist *Mandala* having the four sides

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, p. 249.

open up in the middle of each side of the square¹⁶⁴ frame and symbolically earth as square being depicted as a yellow denoting solidity and perfection. Her name, Prithvi or Prthu (nourisher) is the 'Earth' which is a support of all life. The energy that moves life on earth is fire a divinity *agni* the first born son of brahma¹⁶⁵. Surrounding this earth is shown in the space having a blue boundary as frame heavenly body. The vibrating energy is the wind *vayu* represented in light blue thin lines, the life breath. *Vayu* was born from the nostrils.¹⁶⁶ The essence of speech is *Vayu* shown as a syllable *omkara/ pranava*, the friend of fire depicted bright orange. The stage next is represented with the (white with blue outline) milky white row of lotus petals, inside it is the circle; furthermore is the five petal plane having floral patterns embedded with the symbols. The top one is the *mantra* syllable *Om* and depicted with wide open eyes of Surya and the *Abhaya hastha*; the hands Soma has two hands as per the *Agni Purana* (51,11). Repeat of *Om* in *devnagari* script with black flower on top and bottom creates rhythm in the composition. Like the *grahas* placed around him with having different direction. The next further in another layer of lotus flower is enclosed with the brilliant circular luminary source of all the solar system in yellow colour having in the center orange that illuminates our planet and therefore, he is called as the eye or *viswachakshu*; the Sun is the centre of all cosmic forces. Swami Sivananda said that the power that keeps the sun shining is regarded as the deity, and was worshipped by many ancient civilizations throughout the world and it is known as *Savitha*, supreme symbol of maker of the day *Divakara*. The core central area is with a combination of triangles and rhombus making a yellow delicate motif like *chakra*. In the esoteric cult of Tantra, moon is depicted as a female (Sakti) and the sun as a male (Siva). With the union of them, night and day are born which is the life time measurement.¹⁶⁷ The generative and creative principle of Sun is well represented by the artist.

¹⁶⁴ Tucci, Giuseppe, *The Theory and practice of the Mandala*; with special reference to the modern psychology of the subconscious, (tr.by Alan Houghton Broderick), London, 1961.p.134.

¹⁶⁵ Sivapriyananda Swami, *Astrology and religion in Indian Art*, Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1990, p. 42.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p, 41.

¹⁶⁷ Sivapriyananda Swami, *Astrology and religion in Indian Art*, Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1990, p. 71.



Vigneshwara, swastika om Ganapati, zdr, 33x33 1979, P.T.Reddy Museum, HYD.

Gaja, the Common word in Sanskrit denote the elephant therefore, *Gajamukha/Gajanana*. Attempting to look at semiology, *Gana* is called category. The *Pancharatra Samhitas* are associated with Ganesha.¹⁶⁸ Through our senses whatever we perceive is grasped through our mind which can be expressed in terms of category. The principles from which all such categories have manifested themselves are Ganapati, the lord of categories *i.e.*, origin of whole creation.¹⁶⁹ An amalgamated form of an Elephant and human is represented with its simplified physical features. The Elephant head is symbolical represent for the macrocosm and the human body for the microcosm, the part of elephant has been given considerable importance by making it as the head. The interpretation of other factors involved of this god is the ears which are large enough to listen to the appeal of everyone. The two tusks, one that is whole represents for the truth, the broken or unfinished represents manifest world with inherent imperfections. These symbols juxtaposed in such a way that it forms a unified decorative form. The composition is a figurative in nature. Ganesha, who is same as Vigneshwara is born to Parvati and Siva and he is identified as *parabrahma*. Ganapati meaning as *ga* stands for wisdom and *na* for *moksha* or the salvation of soul emanation. The *pati* or lord of these is *Ganesha* the *Para brahman*.¹⁷⁰ Vigneshwara is represented as sitting in a *padmasana*, has four arms and the head of an elephant. The trunk carries wood apple. The hands carry the *pasa* (it is a nose of ropes employed in binding), stands for *raga* attachment. The *ankusha*, (a sharp weapon made of metal hook attached to a wooden handle, goad) for *krodha* anger. The concept is the attachment binds us, and the anger hurts like the goad. It means that it is safer to surrender our attachment and anger to him, when they are in his hands we are safe. The wood apple *jambu* fruit and the *danta* (tusk of elephant) indicating strength therefore *Eka* in *ekadanta* denotes the only Supreme being. The two other hands are held in *Mudras*, the *Abhaya* protection from fear and *varada*, granting wishes. The generous proportion is the belly decorated with a

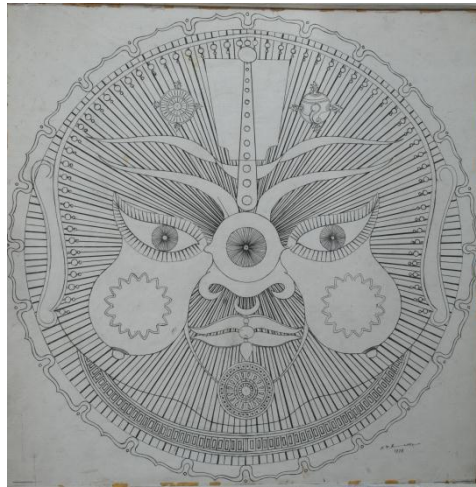
¹⁶⁸ N.N.Bhattacharya, *History of Tantric religion*, Delhi: Manohar, 2005, p. 54.

¹⁶⁹ T.A Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Iconography*, Vol. one, Part I p. 61.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 45.

snake-belt. There is also a sacred thread *Yagnopavita*, either of thread or of serpent. He is seated in *padmasana*, the right leg is shown bent as per his belly permits and rest on the seat. The trunk is turned to the left or to the right adding asymmetric balance to the composition. A form of a mouse *mooshika* is seen in the painting; the word *Mushka* (mouse) derived from the root *mus* meaning to steal. A mouse secretly enters into things and destroys from within. Same way egoism enters unseen manner, into our minds and quietly destroys all our commitments. The mouse stands for sharp intellect therefore *vigneshawra* chose as is vehicle.¹⁷¹

The drawing form of *Vigneshawara* gives the impact of a sculpture; the artist has achieved the volume and strength through simple line drawing. Giving the form an animated figure kept against the dark dense back ground having the shape of lotus petals like *chakra*. The shape of lotus petals is well defined by leaving the background as white in two concentric layers, which gives circularity to the composition. The background is densely textured with lines (through fine scribble) creates a depth giving the transcendence effect. The movement is created by repeating a dark thick shape of *swastika* in the frontal plane below it is as another layer, the delicate rhythmic letter form of *Om* syllable indicating *Pranava* which is the symbol of *Brahman*, the absolute, declaring that *vighnaraja* is *brahman* itself also as the sound *Nad*;. He is considered the lord of all obstructions. The creation of different layers indicates the movement depicting the visual form of self-reflection.



Vaishnavi, ink on paper, 48x48, 1978. P.T. Reddy Museum, HYD.

In Vaishnavism, the Sakti has been called as Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu. This concept of mother goddess is shown through the round circle as an entity. *Prakriti* as the representation of all the reproductive forces of nature and as Sakti is the prime responsible for the functioning of these forces of *Prakruti*.¹⁷² Artist attempts to express in his work the harmony of the universe. And the visual elements he used to describe his aim in a pleasing manner the power as Shakti. In

¹⁷¹ Sivapriyananda Swami, *Astrology and religion in Indian Art*, Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1990, p.136.

¹⁷² N.N. Bhattacharya, *Introduction to Tantric Religion*, Madras: Ganesh & Co, 2005, pp. 293-308.

Tantrasastra an esoteric interpretation is given as *brahmi* represents primary *Nada*, the energy as the first throb which is the manifested sound the root of all creation. The rays as energy of the almighty the infinite supreme power –*Maha sakti*, power in manifestation as mind and matter.¹⁷³ The wavy eyebrows pose Vishnu *namatilaka* adorned on the forehead, in addition to it the *shaku* and *chakra* on both the sides adds a decorative element. The round breasts on the cheeks denote the feminine aspect of Shakti with lotus motifs. It is same as energy depicted by the *pranava* (*Om*). Through Vaishnavi/Brahmi the universe is created, the power of her gives a definite shape. The organization, symmetrical and radial balance, order and beauty are in the universe also represented in the artist works. The contour of the face is embedded in the lotus flower born in water which unfolds gradually in its entire splendor. Lotus signifies the evolved world. The focal point of the picture plane has a big concentric dot, bindu. This denotes the combination of five elements, the mind and the intellect.¹⁷⁴ The essential shapes of facial features are only as white shapes against the texture created by lines at the back radiating from the center. The intended effect is achieved by the Artist through his use of line and its different qualities like thick, thin, dark and light.



Sakti & Purusha, Water colour, 1984, 59x59.P.T.Reddy Museum.HYD.

The artist has shown his expression of symbolic pattern of *sakti* the *swarupa* as a woman form in this painting. The energy and its results, the universe symbolizing its different stages of Sakti's expression is shown through the subtle treatment of transparent colours. It is a visual representation of the process of creation. The subtle infinite element space is represented by black circle at the back. Consciousness and space within and outside are identical as per *Chandogya Upanishad*. The Tantric greatest aspect is the body. That is considered as a personification of the universe, which is the basis of Indian medical science. As per

¹⁷³ Woodroffe sir John, *Sakti and Sakta*, Madras: Ganesh & Co, 2006, p. 3.

¹⁷⁴ T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Iconography* vol. one, Part I, Delhi: Motilal Banarasi Das, p.78.

Sankhya of Tantra, environmental matter is bodily matter called *Prakriti* depicted as woman form. The forces of nature are considered as *Purusas* or male principle; it is the union of *Prakriti* with the male principle which is drawn in realistic manner as if the *Purusha* is creating starts. It is a constant process of creation of evolution symbolized with the rows of lotus flower petals treated in wash technique with watercolour. Tantra religious texts have the details of human body, as one of them is the location of nerves within the body¹⁷⁵ (*shadchakras* in the body) as discussed in the previous chapters. The artist has made use of the *chakra* motifs as a decorative element in small size to add a rhythm to the composition. The subtlety and delicate aspect of the body and the creation is shown through the overlapping of the shapes and translucent colour wash technique expresses it all.



A view of Kashmir valley, Ink on paper, 34x34 cms, 1976< P.T.Reddy Museum. HYD.

The theme in the painting is a clear subjective interpretation of a particular region's culture reflecting Kashmir. It is uniquely specified through their two-dimensional image properties. Biederman, have suggested that the key features for object identification are shape properties, other properties like brightness, texture are secondary importance¹⁷⁶. It is radial arrangement like a mapmaker in the form of lines representing contours pass behind surface. It is particular picture based on description, about the activities related to the place. The central palm shaped chinar leaf in its front creates a radial effect. In the front is the farmer with his two bulls ploughing, they are their symbolic identity of their place. Recognizable drawings in the canvas are; top architecture of Moghul gardens, right side male figure sitting and inhaling *hukka*, Shikara boat house special for lake, Cattle for the milk products they are known for, two people having *namkeen chai* from the typical kettle called

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Saktanandatarangini, I.66ff.Ed.P.Sastri, Agama Anusandhana Samiti, Calcutta, 1349b.e. pp.5ff. *Opcit.*p.32.)

¹⁷⁶ I.Biederman, *Recognition by components: a theory of human image understanding* .Psychological Review, .1987, pp.94, 115-147.

samovar, People riding on horses to move uphill, *Dal* lake small special riding and selling boats, woman sitting with *kangdi* having *angara* burning coal inside, to keep them warm. All these are in simple realistic¹⁷⁷ recognizable contour drawings in special relations corresponding to their order and proximity¹⁷⁸ in an object centered description.¹⁷⁹ Having white background placed in densely textured background. The texture is created with even line scribbling showing little portions of white background with black pen, adding visual weight and interest to the picture plane. The valley of Kashmir is represented through the form of concave shape of a lotus flower. The petals are well defined with parallel converging single lines denoting as mountain slopes, covered with snow. All this is symbolic visual representation of a Folk culture. Macrocosm is the region to which the people belong and the microcosm is the individual developing and relating to the socio cultural context, having an identity as the *guna* in Tantra¹⁸⁰.

Sculptures In wood



The vision /Eye, 96x84 inch

Artist deal with forms that have multiple views composing is more complex work seen from many different positions is strong and intriguing enough to urge the viewer to move around the work. The eye movements dictated by the transitions created by the direction of lines, emerging from the center of the circular

¹⁷⁷ A style of art that retains the basic impression of visual actuality without extreme details.

¹⁷⁸ Rudolf Arheim, *Art and visual Perception*, London, University of California Press, 1954-74, p.51.

¹⁷⁹ Willarts John, *Art and Representation*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997, p.74.

¹⁸⁰ Avlon Aurthor (sir john Woodroffe), *Introduction to Tantra sastra*, Delhi: Shivalik Prakashan, 2005, p.19.

shape indicating the rays of Sun God. The edges (or contours) in their circular forms make motifs that are similar which overlap cause us to relate them to each other. The negative void space created within the circle enhances the central radiating lines directing our eyes to the periphery signifying the development in perception *Jnana* of *Tantra*. The artist used contrast of size. The center circular form is bigger than the rest and the repeat of the same appear as striking. Contrast in texture helps to produce attraction. These shapes are formed around a central point. Radial balance opposes identical forces, by adding descending sizes of same shapes at the ends having spike like rays, variety is achieved by having the variations in the size of the spaces, numbers and directions of the forces utilized as unifying effect.

Rudra (not Siva) is depicted in all the hymns as a malevolent deity causing death and disease among men and cattle. It appears like a force sent out alike an arrow from a center of energy in a particular direction like the rays emanating from a source of light. It is like symmetrical sun burst a centric composition. In nature it is like the spherical shapes of planets and stars. Each of them issuing from the center and sending its energy into space purely centrifugal behavior. Extensions are an important consideration in producing harmony and in leading the viewer around a sculpture.¹⁸¹ This signifies the concept of an active goal –directed, aiming at a target i.e., a tectonic (open to a large degree), with repeat penetrations of circular and thin projections. The sculpture is in radial balance, with the fulcrum in the centre. The circular shapes that radiate from center point are usually similar.

Vision , wooden sculpture:



Siva, wood and saw dust, 40 cm, 1978. P.T.Reddy Museum, HYD

¹⁸¹ Otto.G Ocwick , Robert Stinson ,Philip R.Wigg, Robert O Bone, David L Cayton, *Art Fundamentals, Theory and Practice*, New Jersey: McGraw Hill, 2001, p. 209.

Symmetrical form having cultural associations and visual characteristics of materials express richness of form. The center of gravity is around vertical axis and horizontal around which gravity exerts equal pull. The form is multilevel assembly. The center of the base is stable ensures a visual balance. A simple group having the hour glass shaped *damaru*(musical Instrument) the symbol of Siva. Two conical forms one over the other making a repeat group in four directions with opening conical form facing outside. Over it is the *Shula*, the trident weapon of *Siva* indicating three *gunas* this form is placed in bisecting each other looks like a full opened flower petals directing up wards. The eyeballs are in a spherical form kept in the concave forms of *trishula* held in its center signify perceiving eyes. All these forms are in proportion to each other to make a larger structure having the movement in x and y axis brings order into composition rhythm is set in short succession with contrast of direction gains richness.

Thus, effectively all the neo-*Tantra* artists brought unity with enhancing clarity and strength of expression. These artists combined expression and logistics of making the form stronger and a coherent whole. The spatial principle along with the color and texture of the material contribute qualitative, emotional aspects. The surface texture is innovatively used to bring aesthetic and expressive desire to the structure. The basic urge to create art forms –paintings /sculptures is persistent in all of these artists. We see there are different techniques and ambitions which are widened, have a span of different approaches to art.

Chapter – V

CONCLUSION

The present study examines historical background of the contemporary artists work, inspired by the age old (ritual-practice) Tantra based art form of the Indian heritage. It proposes the concepts to derive and use them as a subject, having imagery, with certain mediums and techniques, applied and its impact on their work. As a result these expressions emerging out of concepts are visually aesthetic and contemporary. In this thesis an attempt is being made to understand and to explain about the traditional art, the *Tantra* and as well as the contemporary art which is inspired by contemporary artists of modern times and generally termed as the ‘Neo-Tantra’ emerged as a coherent system of thought to project it as the ‘Indianness’.

Tantra principles were formulated by great minds with the best of intentions. In course of time the subject was, unfortunately made it appeared with certain conclusions, lead to misconceptions. Once we consider and understand the esoteric elements and mysteries in *Tantra* in their right perspective, we can appreciate and enter into understanding its details more clearly. The most important principle of *Tantra* is the cult of Mother Goddess. This evolved from the Proto historic Indus valley civilization. Later *Devisukta* of Rgveda and speculations in Atharvaveda, Upanishads *Brahma –maya*, the idea of *Prakruti- Purusha* philosophy of Samkhya, Mother goddesses (*Ambika, Bhavani, Bhadrakali, Durga, Umamaheswari*) of *Puranas* gave the required growth and solid foundations to the idea of *Tantra*. The formulation of *Tantras* philosophy and religion in process of time made a major impact on the medieval religions (*brahmanical, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism*). Out of experiences and human spirit religion arise which feels its connection and continuity with divine. *Tantra* signifies a cultural discipline in a wider perspective; it is a spiritual knowledge of a technical nature. As per some, it is combination of the esoteric science of *Vedanta* and *Samkhya*. *Tantra* is divided into three classes- *dakshina, vama, madhyama*, all three communicate deep matters to the science of the cosmic principles (*tatva*), and the science of mystic sound (*sound*). Its ideas and practices are been gathered from different people, places and times to make it as its components. Like initially the prevalence of the images of Gods, as worship and meditation of the Supreme Being. This system was having a thought that only when God is physically present with form. Therefore there is a belief that he should be worshipped according to the prescriptions.

Tantric Buddhism was the result of it introduction of *mudras, Mandals, Kriyas* and *caryas*. Also the introduction of female deities (*sakti*) and at the same time, *yoga* and sexoyogic practices. The practices of meditation and disciplining the body and mind are the basis for *Tantra* which is brought by *Buddhism* and *Jainism*. In Brahmanical Hinduism emerged as a spell of *Tantra* on Hinduism and it

concentrated on *jnana* (philosophical doctrines), *yoga* (meditation), *kriya* (activities like image/idol making, building a place of worship) and *carya* (observances). Therefore, paying attention to *mantras* (prayers), *bijas* (mystic syllables), *yantras* (diagrams) and *nyasas* (identifying deities in different parts of the body of the worshipper). The essential aspect of Tantrism is that it gives high importance to the body (*Kaya ordeha*) and it clearly says that the mysteries of the universe can be seen in the body itself. Hence, body is regarded as location of the psychic centres, individual identity in *Tantras*, and following yoga a physical exercise along with psychological process. *Sadhana* for the ritual practices through *Mantras*, letters (embedded in chakras) *mandala* and *Yantra/chakras*. Understanding the features that are in Tantra one can consider the commonly accepted features are Enlightenment, *sakti* worldly power, realization, central role played by the images, associated with it are imagination and empirical.

The idea of *Tantra*'s teaching is 'unity'. Any kind of dualism /duality is to reduce to an unadvisable whole/zero. It is thus called as cosmic consciousness a self-realisation of the creative power as *Siva –Sakti* which is also known as *prakriti* and *Purusha*. The female is considered as important kinetic aspect of consciousness symbolizing the ultimate. The three *gunas* or the qualities called *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* having a perfect nature of balance. The cosmic forces governing the individual in a micro level and the universe in a macro-level are one and the same as per *Tantra*. The union of the *kundalini* with *siva* in the *sahasrara*, and the third (the transcendent) one is the nectar of happiness growing from the realization of the union of the *parasiva* and *parasakti*. The experience of this union with supreme *atman* is the true bliss or the union. The term *maithuna* symbolizes the unity which is beyond ordinary human comprehension and that is the liberated (*jivan-mukta*) life. It is also offering oneself to the God.

Devotion or Bhakti basically, indicates deep affection and mystic faithfulness for some personal deity. The visible symbol of this deity is the icon or image through which a devotee could transfer his oneness to God. The images of the gods and Goddesses are represented of the thinkers. Who presented and conceptualized by different means, such as through speech, symbols, signs, pictorial and sculptural depictions have helped in evolving divine images. It is the essence of imagination that takes a shape or the *dhyanarupa*. The elements like lines, forms and colours are not accidental; they are direct representations of the inner forces connected to the spiritual reality. All these methods have been utilized to depict divinity at the level of the common man in order to lift him up gradually to the sublime height of true realization.

The significant growth to the construction of images and houses of Gods, were because of Bhakti cult. This cult popularized image worship, due to the difficulty of meditation on the invisible, the Supreme Being. The theistic religion of Vaishnavism refers to Vishnu as their object of worship. The Siva cult of early times depicted as Pasupati and depictions of his emblem par excellence as the Siva *linga*,

gains his character from the Vedic Rudra rose to importance at later periods of Indian history. We see some mystic practices were connected with the Pasupata religion. This was associated to *vamachara* sect only. At this time onwards, the human and as well as phallic forms of the God were at first enshrined in the main sanctum of the Saiva temples. This became the normal custom later on to place siva –*lingas* only in it and use them as the main object for worship, the human form of figures of Siva are there in the reliefs in various parts of the temples. Religious theme slowly received an artistic treatment, with the result that it turned into an art motif.

Concept of mother goddess which is prominent as *Sahkti* also gained popularity in the early phases of Indian history. In India, the excavations of Indus valley civilization reveal female figurines which, probably testify to the idea of *sakti* as the supreme deity. It is clear that the *Sakta* religion developed in a female dominated society where rituals based upon the fertility image played a very significant role. *Saktism* is a direct off shoot of the primitive mother Goddess cult which was a prominent feature of the religion of the ancient agricultural people. This concept would have developed in course of time. The concept became diverse in nature depending upon the degree of culture attained by separate communities at different times. Evidence to this is the various types of the goddess cults still prevailing in different regions and among diverse people. To secure the fertility of fields, many rituals were designed. Mainly sexual in character, found their way into *Vedic* texts and became the visible portions of the tantric ice berg. The evidence relating to sexual rituals and their connection with agriculture and the mother Goddess cannot be completely brushed aside and it is interesting to note that in almost every period. The *Vedic* literature shows traces of sexual rituals and a pattern of sexual behavior that differed from accepted norms. Reference has been made to use five *makaras* (*panchamakaras*) in *Vedic* rites. It is a fact that the *Vedic* texts contain many tantric ideas and practices. Even the vedic sacrificial cult was not basically different from those of *tantras*. In the *Brahmana* literature sexual union was not only regarded as the means of achieving spiritual happiness, but it was also identified with the sacrifice itself.

The doctrines of *Bhuta*, *Yoni* and *purusha* are mentioned in the Upanishads, with the term *Prakriti* being used later as a substitute for *bhuta* and *yonis*. These four concepts denote the earlier stages of the evolution of the tantric ideas. The creation of the world was viewed in terms of human procreation and that is why supreme emphasis was laid upon the concept of *prakriti* of female principle of creation. In spite of the recognition of the role of the male in the process of procreation, we come across the development of the concept of *purusha* or male principle where this male element is still inactive and passive. The concept of *Sakti* is as said divine energy in its dynamic form. And it is the creative and preservative energy of Brahman. Since it had brought the universe into existence and it's that preserves it from disruptive forces. *Siva* who is called as *stanu*, and immovable, It is also a

divine energy in the form of static aspect, motion less, inert, and without agitation. Sri was a goddess of abundance, fertility, blissful prosperity, luck and beauty. Thus temple architecture from 8th to 9th cent, onwards gave opportunities for the display of artistic talents and the power of wealth. The temple house and the body of God became a piece of art.

The real Tantrika art is functionally associated to *upasana* and *Sadhana* to reach the non-dual *Sahaja* state. The principles itself related to Tantra are projected in ritual, and art. The patterns related are the *Chakra*, *Yantra*, *Mandala*. It means the expanded concept of man for getting to know one's own psychic sources by the way of denoting system of idea and techniques based on experience. Hence it is a start for a new way of outlook. The process of ritual impels to change our actions into our inner knowing by changing actions into creative growth. Further *Tantra's* concept is an amalgamation of spirit and matter to help man to achieve his fullest spiritual and material strengths. And therefore, finally it helps us to accept our desires, feelings and situations as human beings.

Starting to understand the contemporary practicing professional art practices, their main goal is connected with the essence of art expression of emotions. All goals can be gained with the help of art is the feature of utilitarianism. A work of art as an artifact serves the way towards the realization of a goal which lies outside it. Therefore, such goals are the desire to evoke certain emotions, or intellectual activity and actions. The experiences related to art are in three levels; the psychic, the imaginative and the intellectual. The imaginative and intellectual are of two different stages of awareness; while the resulting expression of sensation (impression) coincides with the psychic level, the imaginative is related to the intellect. Each level of experience contains emotion as a charge (power) which is essential to the nature of human being. The emotions of psychic and the emotions of consciousness are correlated yet be independent to each other. The emotions related to consciousness functions as of imagination or of intellectual emotions. Emotions of any state cannot exist without physical expression. In fact, there are no emotions which cannot be expressed. Therefore, expression of psychic correlates with the emotions of the intellectual level which is a reason based unconscious cerebral activity. The psychophysical activity, whose "charge" is emotion and transformed into an activity of the human being controlled by the consciousness; and this activity forms the "language or art". When we are considering painting or sculpture, we see it in two activities: vision (related to knowledge and not sensation) and arrangement with colours. The experience is inner, imaginative, and the second one is outer, or physical. The two activities are not same, but inseparable interconnected, and form a single, indivisible experience. The experience is seen outside as a physical form painting and sculpture.

In the contemporary painters the as an arrangement of their compositions they make the use of symbols in poetic way, a certain combination/composition suggests elements to the artist emotional experiences are symbols which refer, these

function here as meanings. The core aesthetic concept of beauty belongs to the area of nonscientific sense. It is appreciated through the form, composition, harmony, etc. There is no quality outside the mind which can correlate to this concept. These same art elements (line, shape, colour, texture, size) refer the viewer in his turn symbolically to the sight and emotions which artist wishes to evoke in him. The expressions of art itself have an emotive nature, expressing emotions as attitudes or statement. Art the effect they produce on us with certain feature, expressed as if it is perceived with an effect with a quality which is been expressed. It is this way easier to respond to reproduce aesthetic experience through symbolism of painting. By provoking a similar attitude in others, as well as prepare them for some action or something other. The interpretation of power to express the truth about the nature of things, hence the beauty is an integral feature of art. Finally perfect expression of art has an aim as truth as beauty.

Painting of India after 1947 was very important phase of our art history, since this time many faceted developments started taking place. During this time artists rarely came forward with change. When compared to other painters. Even though there is a new, that did not have any impact. But this behavior was a healthy and significant reformation in our art. The work of this period cannot be categorized under one particular style, because there in a wide range of styles, from traditional to modern which were produced parallel. But the paintings styles in the several methods were then followed. The quick political, social, and historical changes in our country were the reasons for this change. Firstly, the increasing national consciousness results in the National Movement of 1942; secondly, the Famine in Bengal of A.D. 1943; thirdly, the World War Second, fourthly, the Partition of the country, and the Independence in A.D. 1947, the growth of industrialization and finally the increase in world contacts. These aspects had a great influence on the artists' mental outlook, even on the subject matter of their works, and method of approach in organizing the compositions and their technique.

After World War II and during that time new art of Europe and America especially was exposed to our artists through exhibitions and books. Academic institutions were having faculties teaching European methods. These way artists came into contact with the arts of the world. Apart from that the difficulties and indefiniteness that modern man had to face was industrial era. The four major trends existed in the 1940s. as Bengal School or Revivalist: starting around 1900 A.D. the ideals of this movement with E.B. Havell and Abanindranath Tagore were pioneers. They were particularly inspired by the mystic content and in the poetry of that time. This school was traditionalist and also rejuvenating in approach.

There was another set of thought coming parallelly, looking back at the handicrafts of our country and working the ideas from it. Simplicity in crafts having colourfulness forms Indian folk art. With this personal styles grew with several regional trends, in this who painted now in a modern style. During this period several artists continued to work in the representational western style from all over India, as

taught in the art Schools, in our country. A few of them also had training abroad. They painted in a strict naturalistic tradition either in pure water colours or gouache, and oils. Their themes were portraits, landscapes, street scenes and cityscapes. But several of them had realized the limitations of this style with their, imaginative quality and technical efficiency, good drawing, an urge to find a new idiom befitting the age; they gradually adopted the modern style.

The art of this period was a transitional and experimental phase in the history of Indian Art. The significance of the 1950 is the artistic identity, confusion and survival. Most of them were moreover, in search of different and personal style. Now Bombay, Delhi became the center of all modern art activity in the country. Now artists of younger generation took them as their leaders and source of inspiration, also several of them imitated the style of one or the other of the above painters. The rest drew their inspiration from the various 'isms' of contemporary Western Art. Others who had thought, the urge, to picturise their ideas, having a global appeal but still belongs to contemporary art form. As per the international scenario the free world identified with the cause of the spirit, and abstraction in art. It is a clean conjugation between India's ancient past and its present.

Exposing the hidden material by the several scholars, and translating some of the prime Tantric texts during 1960's and 1970's led to Tantric cults and their studies of earlier times. Along with this, temple studies were also studied. For the context of raised colonial discourse this revealing inheritance of *Tantra* played as the esoteric and exotic image of India. The writings contextualizing on *Tantras* historical art forms of different periods and regions allow the symbols, objects and practices to rise above the time. Therefore this interpretation through writings unified cultural heritage of south Asia. This search to understand the past and hidden *Tantra* within its scope of modernity has given a way to some artists to look at the depths of *Tantra* art as much real as fiction. From this image of *Tantra* and Tantric art, artists selected their imagery. A cluster of artists' work of such *Tantra* inspired work is named by the art critics or historians as Neo-Tantra. This was a good solution for the artists to bridge the gap between being Indian and modern through the abstraction/representation combining both to form the national identity.

The neo-*Tantra* Artists have explored boundlessly with their styles having provoked many definitions of art, that all of them have been challenged. But each one has some essence of what is thought of as an inspiration: The formal expression of a conceptualized image in selected medium by these different artist –The unexpected, obvious formal relations between the elements, emphasis on communication and expression (Paniker) having a significant texture, a diagram with a meaning, that gives effect of relaxing visual pleasure (Santosh, Raza, Reddy). These works created are stimulating, giving a sense of achievement. If we look at the aesthetical aspects: These artists have used familiar, recognizable and sentimental subjects from our heritage and culture. The process to produce the final work or the techniques used is varied.

K.C.S. Paniker used oil colours, applied in transparent layers, one after the other, exposes the rough surface of the lower layer or the material used, like in wash method and on top using thick colour, intricate and playful writings with linear design outlines surface formation that overlap one another. In addition contrast or harmonious colours are used. The texture is seen in script and symbols, as light and dark having variations stimulating our sense of touch having. Through texture he created pattern which is nonobjective and asymmetrical. It is noticeable that he used metallic surfaces for a series of works to explore and take the advantage of the surface quality to add to his intended expression.

He used colours as a means of giving organization to a composition. In his work he gives a feeling of infinite space a cosmos beyond. The central concern of the artist is to create weightlessness, pure light sometimes illusion of coloured light. Sometimes a new harmony of colours emerges with clarity and tranquility. There are series with drafted straight edges, and compass, executed in colour in geometric constructions may be derived from basic design as he been in teaching profession. At this time he dealt with structural problems of equilibrium and the idea of weightless ness in a series but for sure always linked to pictorial signs along with letters which serve as symbols of balance and free suspension.

P.T. Reddy used overlapping of bio-morphic shapes with linear explorations of space which is a new development having symmetrical as well as asymmetrical compositions. There are substantial and delicate characteristic patterns. The artist transformed the shapes into his personal style. Thus one can see a homogeneous and primarily unlimited weave of shapes. Directions are created to encourage transition from one pictorial area to another. To him line is highly personal in nature, which is his individual quality found as flowing and rhythmical, as it enriches an art work. Through line and colour wide application of value and texture is achieved. He used textures having associated meanings along with tactile sensations. No colour is dominant in a set of works; each one is seen on the picture surface in his work, in a dynamic interaction, with other colours. Having figurative and also abstract, expressions show the impossibility of making a real distinction between the art elements of the composition. *Purusha* and *Prakruti* are the dominating factors. As a prolific painter, sculptor and furnishing designer his compositional structures depict centricity and its essential coordinates, importantly vertical and the horizontal in the plane. This way the concepts which he chose, altered and enhanced to interpret the subject with self-reliance. Therefore his idea of composition is whether he takes square or a rectangle frame of space the symbols of the composition create the center, which, by and large, create their order.

G.R. Santosh's geometric configurations are the key shapes that play a dominant role in his works. In his compositions suggest perfection due to the use of geometry, stability is achieved because of symmetry, solidity through arrangement of geometrical shapes. These he designed to gain emotional stability. Shapes associated with objects and situations he set the stage/space for a pictorial drama.

Shapes suggest certain meaning having highlighting particular surfaces to produce abstract textures. The structure or object in his work gets more light from one side than another, therefore interprets the light and cast shadows on the other side. Each basic shape in his composition has a basic highlight and shadow pattern. Tone gradation, flowing evenly invokes a sense of surface. A sudden change in tone suggests a sharp or angular surface. Like the three-dimensional artist he used shapes to displace space and to control locations with spatial intervals. Shapes are interestingly arranged in a compact manner in creating inward and outward space movement. Moreover this ability relates to, he being a stage designer, in his depictions the space that he represents on a two dimensional canvas has a illusion of vast span of width and depth. The works give an impression of an architectural environment, or an installation within a set space.

S.H. Raza's works show the center as *bindu* that forms the core. He mainly uses square space, to take the advantage of the equality of the eccentric axes which supports centricity. The work majorly associated with shape of circle equal to atom or zero scientifically and mathematically, set within the straight lined square or a rectangle. It is a square enclosure with round made him to concentrate on centricity and cherished the role of the variations in compositions. They empower the symbolic and visual substance of the whole. The square has always been considered inferior to the circle, and hence was employed to symbolize the earth, whereas the circle expresses heaven or eternal existence.

This concept could be the influence on him due to his marriage with French lady and made an effort to reflect back to his roots by combining the Indian essence. As in Indian and Tibetan concept, schematically the interaction between the circle and square is represented in a typical "Mandala" form. This combination depicts ordinary monotonous nature with divine. We also see that texture is involved in his work. The triangular shapes are used in a pattern with a strong contrasts in colour, therefore the shapes appear to move forward .by repeat of shapes he created atmospheric perspective. Through monochromatic colour scheme (use of one hue but having complete range of tints and shades of that colour) repeat pattern is used as texture.

The ideal beauty of Indian colours he brought in his works with modernity by using basic geometrical shapes having filled with vivid colours. For him it is the sacred centre with the outer frame as a protective power with its visual weight in expression is so strong. Therefore his work is emphasized on centrality exaggerated attempt of bright colour (chromatic intensity) and form. Therefore his work is exciting and attractive, has its color style with rhythms and harmonies of colour which satisfy aesthetic aspect.

Therefore, the above observations made about the each artist are after the study of recognizability which exists in their work that is called as style. Therefore each one's style is individual and unique. All these artists have produced, because

they wanted to say something, and has selected a particular way of saying it, though their style, the place, or time. By studying their work have involuntarily and subtly altered the vision, also to understand the basics from which they have evolved. These observations impart an understanding by examining the inherent qualities of the many issues involved in creating art work, considering the principles that control different factors. The three essential ingredients of a painting or work of art are content, form and subject. However it is difficult to pin point, differentiate, and define these in some works. The subject of the work of four, contemporary Indian artists, who have chosen as a common source of inspiration is “Tantric art”. These artists have been working for a many years on their personal experiences of Tantra to evolve their individual expressions.

It is their emotional and intellectual affinity with the subject, they do not follow any beliefs or ritual practices of Tantra. The forms which are developed have the common language of the subject. The shapes involved are square the symbol of order, the circle signifies continuity, the oval symbolizes cosmic egg, the triangle facing upwards signifies the male principle; downwards, the female principle, and the trident symbolizes the emblem of the deity Shiva. The message of their work is the content or the statement, expression or mood which is felt or seen by the viewer, ideally synchronized with the intentions of the artist. In a broader sense it is emphasized by the form/structure/composition created by the artist. Content is found in abstract and also semi-realistic. Usually a process, which imposes, itself over the artist, in reaching the desired effect in a work, however effect is not always foreseen when the work is in the progress. Usually abstraction involves reordering/ redesigning and focusing to reach at some point. It is a reduction method to expressive and saying through essentials. However simplification arrives, to intent to make the deeper meaning, more easily understood. The content in such paintings or sculptures is usually subjective, completely inventive. In such process artist is motivated by feelings about a subject. To represent the feelings artist manipulates the artistic elements –line, shape, texture, proportion, to create the composition, results in desired content. Such content expresses the artist’s feelings. In such a method the artist tries to make all parts of the work mutually interactive and interrelated. If this is gained unity or wholeness is brought into the work. In these contemporary artists difference between subject, form, and content are blurred, or invisible. These artists are more concerned with responses called conceptual or idea oriented. Such ideas which are born in the mind produce creativity. This is all encompassing plan for the artist, which is unique, suitable set of relationships that, a way of saying an attitude, a solution to the visual problem. However in the artists mind, the idea arises as mental imagery by inspiration. In the field of art idea is of value. When this same idea converted into reality as a visual imagery is the fertility of one’s imagination.

Findings:

The theory that Tantra was essentially created for the common of people and subsequently approved and even embraced by affluent ones as stressed by recent Indian scholars has now been generally accepted due to the fact that Tantra prescribed rituals and means and methods altogether reject the caste system and patriarchy. Human being as an individual Microcosm and the Universe of the divine creation as a Macrocosm attest to this fact. Unison of both is the ultimate reality is doctrine that is purported by the Tantrism.

The historical Study of visual tradition of Tantra tells us that it is varied, evocative, picturesque from the first, beginning in the Indus valley, through the substantial masterpieces of Buddhist, Jain and Hindu the eclectic culture of golden age of Tantric art. The associated mysticism or the complex symbolism of this culture is an excellent study. The imagery, the pattern and their arrangements are constructed from basic abstract geometrical forms to complex one. These are intuitively captured and are based on irrevocable cosmic principles. These images related to Tantra forms have their intrinsic character and serve to create visual reactions, both spiritual and psychological. Like most of Indian art forms, Tantra art is anonymous. They are very ancient, though the artists' work is of that time and their concern is to bring out the universality hidden of the basic forms. This art is firmly grounded in spiritual values connected with the realities of life.

Same ways, some of the contemporary artists of India, whose artistic expressions have drawn inspirations and content from the spiritual and aesthetic representations of Tantra are not tantric practitioners. Some of the highly talented Indian modern artists, their recent artistic creations define the scope of Neo-Tantra Art, were also concerned with these prime principles which evoked the pioneers of abstract art. For example, these Indian artists also believe in the same set of principles; positive and negative, crucial for cosmic and artistic arrangements are supporting rather than contradictory; symbolism of positive and negative or male or female principle depicted by triangle facing upwards and downwards. The theory of disorder versus spiritual awakening of enlightenment important symbolism of square and circle brought to be understood by their expressions.

Bindu as a cosmic point of reference, oval, the egg shape as the symbol of Brahmanda and the role of primordial sound which creates light and which in turn produces colour in the creation of cosmos etc. However, since these artists are attracted by Tantric sensual, philosophical and spiritual contents rather than those of *Upanishadic* ideas, they have produced different interpretation to these primary elements to achieve visual and aesthetic results, very distinct from other achieved by the pioneers of abstract art. It is also significant that just as traditional Tantra Art was created by using Images and their residues and also totally abstract elements such as square, circles, triangles and oval shape etc. So also contemporary Indian artists are creating both types of work. Some incorporate visual images and their

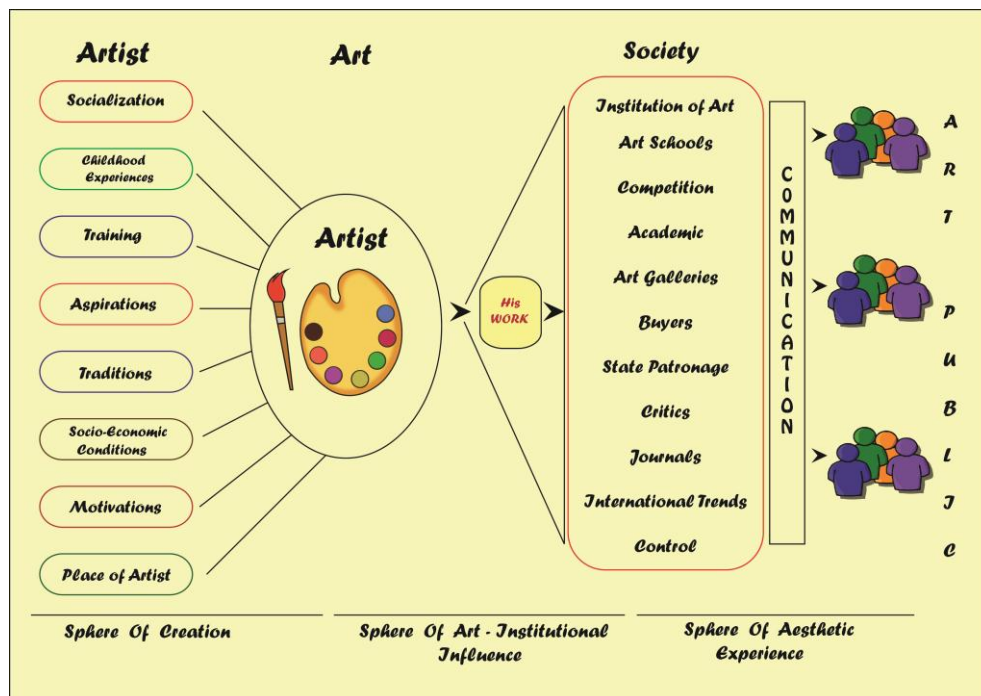
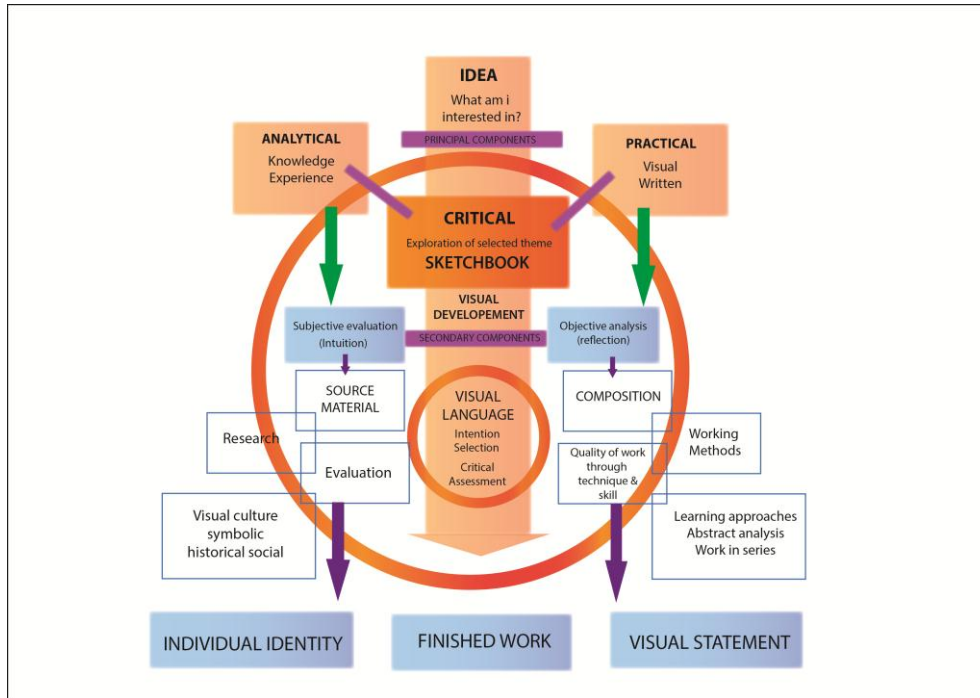
fragments or invent their new combinations by way of transformation of basic figurative forms of human body and /or natural elements as per their conceptual vision and others favor purely abstract forms. Among those who range with figurative images, their style and transformed them or created new combinations are represented by the works of G.R. Santosh, S.H. Raza, KCS Panikar, P.T. Reddy. By examining and understanding their life and their work its gives an insight of their perception of aesthetics. The whole process of artist work and the structuring of their expression are understood by studying their subject, form, and content. Moreover origin or influences of their life experiences in becoming their source of content.

Finally, the Tantra Art demonstrates the 'Indianness' in the aesthetics of the art philosophy as this is the only art which continued as tradition without any interruptions despite facing the threats of modernism and globalization. This thesis is an humble attempt towards this direction.

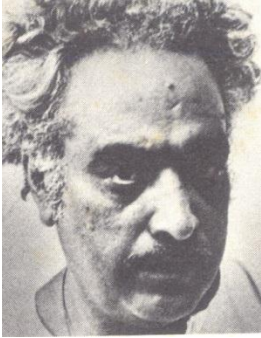

Artist's typology Chart

The following chart will help us to understand clearly the variation of the Artists work with commonality of the subject.

Table for Interpretation of the Idea – Its Process of Visual Representation



[illegible][illegible]

s.no	Name	Date of birth, Place & demice. Acheivements	Education	Inspiration	Catagories of work	Visuals
1.	<p>Ghulam Rasool Dar (G.R. Santosh)</p> 	<p>1929 lived until March 10,1997</p> <p>Imortant Achievements</p> <p>Paris Binale - 1961, Padmashri - 1977</p> <p>Sahitya academi award , Poetry –“Besukh Rukh”,1979</p>	<p>Cultural scolar ship from the govt of India- M.S university, Baroda, under N.S,Bendre as a non collegiate student. 1954</p> <p>Lived in Srinagar and New Delhi</p>	<p>Trika- Shivism of Kashmir</p> <p>Amarnath cave in Kashnir - vist-1954</p> <p>Devi- Shakti principle Sri Yantra.</p> <p>Shiva – Sakti,</p> <p>Meditating - Visual sensation</p>	<p>•Drawings</p> <p>•Semi Abstract use of figures and symbols- Curved shape compositi ons, Geometric compositi on</p> <p>•Nada, Bindu, Bija series</p> <p>•Architect onic compositi ons- Geometric compositi on</p> <p>•Prakriti series</p>	<p>carefully constructe d space, iridescent, geometrici sed, precise edges and mathemati cally consistent</p> 

Santhosh Painting Works



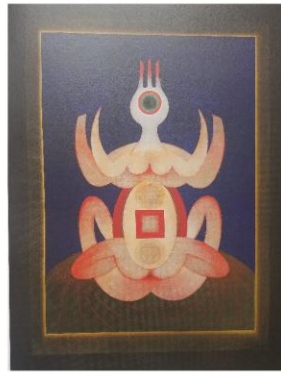
Oil on acrylic on canvas, 1980
127 x 101 cm
signed in hindi



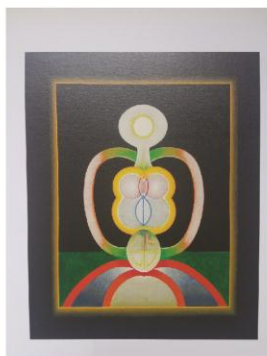
Earlt tantric period
oil on canvas, 1974
94 x 91 cm



Oil on canvas, 1975
127 x 101 cm



Oil on canvas, 1975
203 x 152 cm



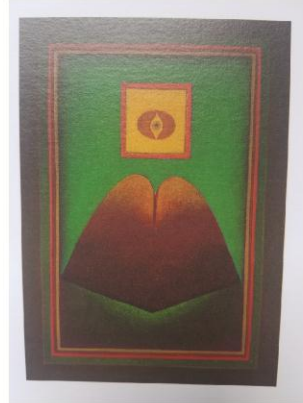
Oil on canvas, 1977
127 x 102 cm
signed in hindi dated in english



Oil on canvas, 1974
1118 x 91.4 cm
Signed in hindi and dated in english



Oil on canvas, 1981
152 x 127 cm



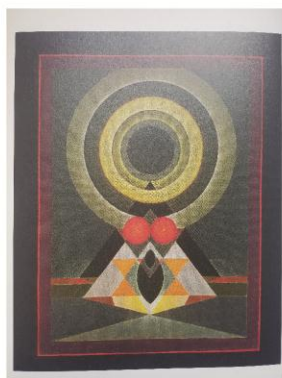
Watercolour on paper
58.9 x 43.7 cm



Acrylic on canvas, 1985
30 x 24 cm



Oil on acrylic on canvas, 1980
127 x 101 cm
signed in hindi



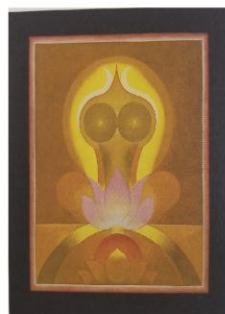
Sharika
Acrylic on canvas, 1987
30 x 24 cm



Oil on canvas pasted on board, 1980
50.8 x 39.9 cm
signed in hindi, signed and dated in english



Acrylic on canvas board
pasted on 1982
50.8 x 40.6 cm



Oil on canvas, 1980
152 x 127 cm
Priya and jithendra Rakhyan, New Delhi



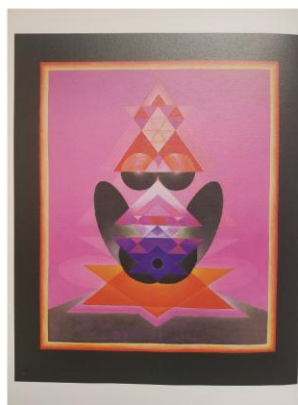
Sharika
Acrylic on canvas, 1984
30 x 24 cm



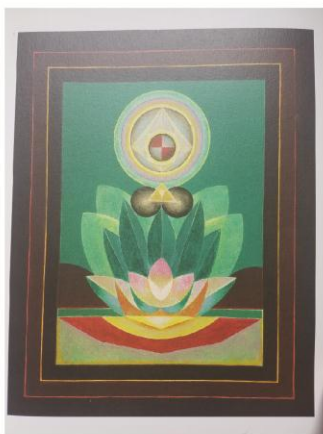
Etching on paper, 1981
28.4 x 21.8 cm



Acrylic on canvas , 1987
29.5 x 23.7



Oil on canvas, 1973
127 x 101cm



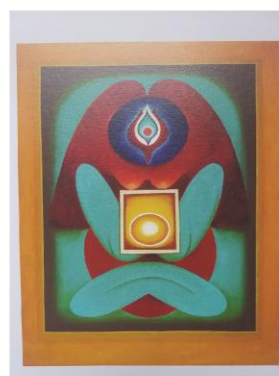
Acrylic on canvas, 1987
29.5 x 23.7



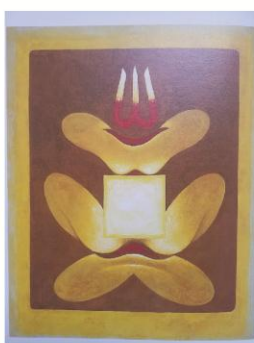
Acrylic on handmade paper, 1972
37.3 x 27.2 cm
signed in hindi and english



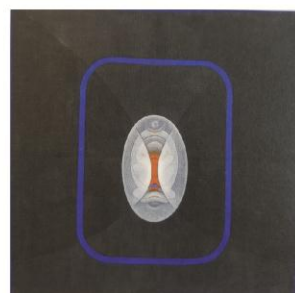
Acrylic on paper, 1989
47 x 29 cm
signed in hindi and dated in english



Shiva shakthi series
oil on canvas
127 x 101 cm



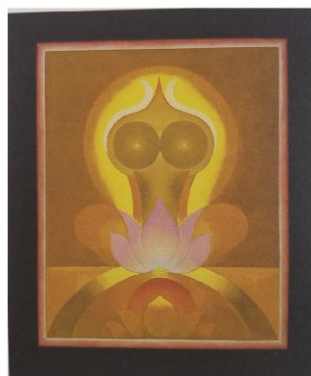
Acrylic on canvas, 1996
24.3 x 19.6 cm
signed in hindi and english and dated
in english



Oil on canvas, 1970
69.0 x 69.2 in
lalit kala academy . New Delhi



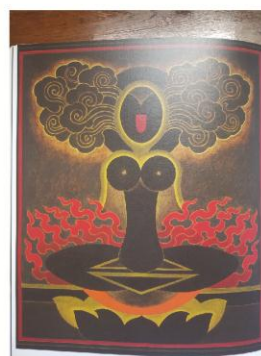
Oil on canvas, 1968
130 x 85 cm
signed in hindi



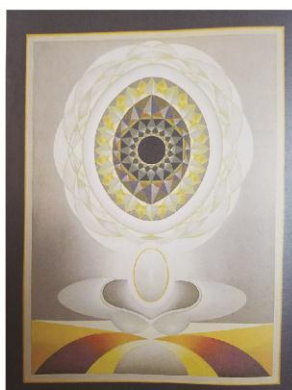
Oil on canvas, 1980
152 x 127 cm
Priya and jithendra Rakhyan, New Delhi



Shiva shakthi series
Mixed media on paper, 1968
30.5 x 22.9 cm



Oil on canvas, 1993
114 x 99.1 cm
signed in hindi
New Delhi, Delhi Art gallery 2011



Oil on canvas
202 x 159 cm
National gallery of modern art, New Delhi



Acrylic on paper, 1988
47.5 x 29.7 cm
signed and dated in english

Data collection Of Gulam Rasul Santosh

Born 1929 in Srinagar, Kashmir-1997 died.

Previous Information :

Born in Shiya family , Srinagar's Chinkarl Mohalla.

Self taught Crafts Man , Painter and weaver

Learnt painting ,weaving , papier mache -1947-53.

Cultural acholarship from the government of India,1954-56, enabling the artist to study at the faculty of Fine Art , Maharaja Sayaji Rao, University, Baroda.

Previous experience:

Teaching experience: Visisting Professor at school of Planning and architecture, New Delhi.

Selected solo exhibitions

1954-56 Studied with Professor N.S. Bemire under National Cultural Scholarship at Baroda University

1957 Won the National Award, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi (and in 1964 and 1973)

1961 Paris Biennale

1962 Solo exhibition in Los Angeles

1963 Sao Paulo Biennale, Brazil Published a novel in Urdu, Samandar Piasa Hai

1965 Mainichi Biennale, Tokyo

1968 1st International Triennale India, New Delhi

1969 Sao Paulo Biennale, Brazil

1976 Awarded Padma Shree by the government of India

1978 4th International Triennale India, New Delhi Published a collection of poems in Kashmiri, Besukh Ruh

1979-80 Contemporary Indian art exhibition in Japan organized by the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi

1981 5th International Triennale India, New Delhi

1982 Contemporary Indian Art exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London

1982 Modern Indian Paintings exhibition. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.

1983 Solo exhibition in South Korea Tantra exhibition, Stuttgart, West Germany

Santosh, Gallery TAIN, Seoul, South Korea, 1983

Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi, 1985, 94

Jahngir Art Gallery, Bombay, 1989

Little theatre Gallery (L.T.G), New Delhi. 1991.

About thirty group shows and eleven posthumously held shows.

Statement :

Edith A .Tonelli, Neo Tantra, Contemporary Indian Painting Inspiration by Tradition, Fredric S. Wright Art Gallery, University of California, Los Angeles, Dec 17, 1985- Feb 2, 1986.

The unison of this vital process (prana-shakti, in the Kumbhaka) and its retention as a soundless state of sound creates the beatific sound, "shabda." The soundlessness (ashabda) of the void (shunyata) which is the universal womb (Brahma Yoni) resonates with the primordial sound and leads to the birth of the reverberating image (shabda akara).

Sound centralised as a point (nada bindu) is the principal visual perception, and is self-illuminated (ananta prakash), and is the abode of the male-female phenomenon (Shiva-Shakti), the pristine geometrical concept (Shabdabrahma). When the folded universe of subjective reality unfolds itself, it takes the limitless complex forms as Nature (prakriti), the materialised world at sound-light-energy perceived and related to the senses.

The universal mind (Brahman) manifests itself by its own will and when transformed in an artist's mind becomes self-creative. The individual mind of an artist has the potential to transfix the visual concept into the materialised creative expression: a work of art.

The immanent universal mind (Brahman) is beyond causation and the individual mind subject to the laws of time and space. And, when the individual (jivatma) comprehends the Universal (paranuma), it becomes "that."

The individual mind is the embodiment of unending thoughts, perceiving the objective reality directly and indirectly. The mind of an artist is conditioned and activated by continuous thought, thereby rendering the creative expression self-consistent. The formless subjective experience becomes through the process of creation and recreation in the framework of time and space a work of art.

Indian tradition is based on the universal concept of the ultimate reality manifesting itself in a myriad [of] shapes and forms in time and space. My own self is preoccupied with the same universal concept. Therefore, (soham). I am that. My paintings are based on the male and female concept of Shiva and Shakti and, therefore, construed as 'ananta'. It is not just the male and female concept. Any semblance in my paintings in this respect is symbolical, but my stress is on the more fundamental male-female (Shiva-Shakti, purusha-prakriti) principle with its infinite connotation with all the pervasive light emanating from the objective reality.

To me a painting is a necessary, normal activity no more special than any of my other activities. It is an integral part of "being." my svabhava, my karma.

Interview with Mr. Santosh in

1994 in Kashmir, 1993 Delhi, 1995 on Nov 21, New Delhi :

References :

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On new artistic movements in the Seventies and Eighties, see Sinha, Ajay, 'Envisioning the Seventies and Eighties' in Sheikh, Gulammohammed, ed., *Contemporary Art in Baroda* (New Delhi: Tulika Publishers, 1997), pp. 145-209

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Auslandsbeziehungen, 1982) in Tonelli, Edith, ed., Neo- Tantra: Contemporary Indian Painting Inspired by Tradition (Los Angeles: Frederick S. Wight Gallery, 1985)

Tuli, Neville, Interview with G. R. Santosh on 9th November 1993, in his Contemporary Indian Painting (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1998), pp. 372-3

PANIKER WORKS



Fig no.1
conolly Canal . watercolour on paper ,
18x14-1943 ,coll-s.Nagpal.



Fig no.4
Blessed are the peace makers , 96x50-1951



Fig no.2
Boat Jetty ,water colour on paper , 16-12x13-1943,
coll-Paaniker museum, Trivandrum , Kerala.



Fig.no.5
Lalbagh ,Oil on paper, 24x18-1951,
coll S. Nandagopal



Fig no.3
The grove,water colour on paper ,
22x18-1943.



Fig no.6
Ware house on the canal ,
Oil on board, 24x18-1952 ,colls.nadagopal.



Fig no.7
Mother and Child, Oil on canvas, 24x19-1954



Fig no.8
Mother and child, Oil on canvas, 24x25-1954



Fig no.9
Mother and child, Brush drawing on paper, 26x23-1956.

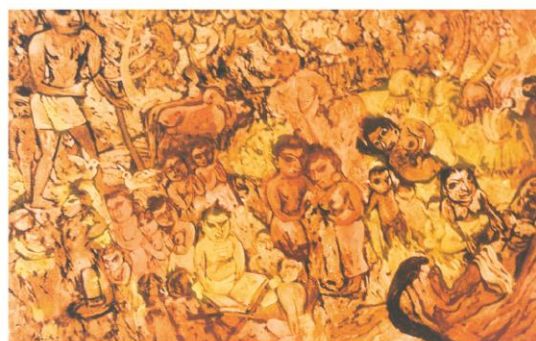


Fig .no.10
Life of a farmer, Oil on board, 72x40-1958



Fig.no.11
Mother and child, Oil on canvas, 30x21-1958



Fig.no. 12 Christ, Oil on paper, 48x36-1959,
coll-S.Nandagopal.



Fig.no.13
Christ, Oil on canvas , 20x30-1961.

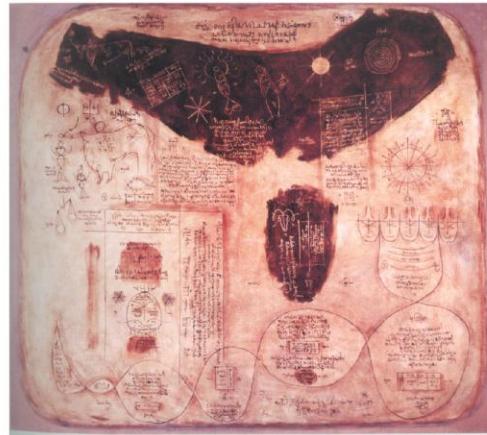


Fig.no.16
Ancestral Assertion, Oil on canvas , 66x60 -1965,

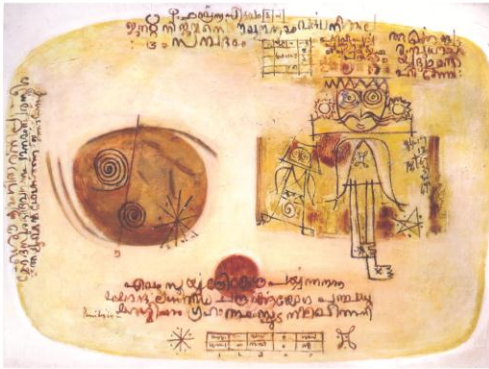


Fig.no.14
Words and Symbols , Oil on board ,
48x34-1964, coll.S.Nandagopal

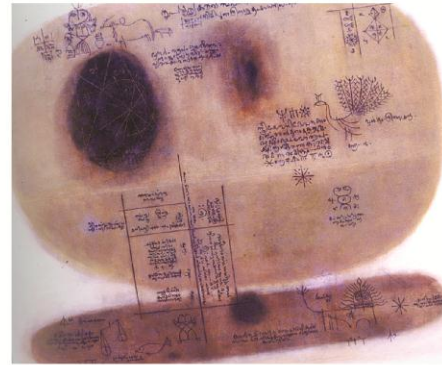


Fig.no.17
Words and Symbols , Oil on canvas, 65x60-1965

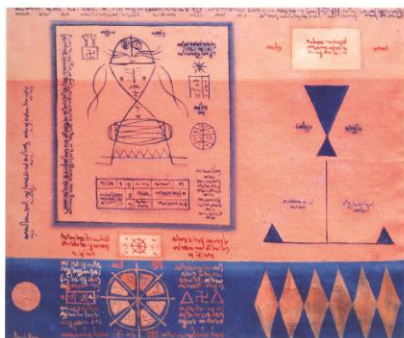


Fig.no.15.
Drummer Oil on canvas , 29x25-1965
Coll-Paniker Museum, Tiruvananthapuram.

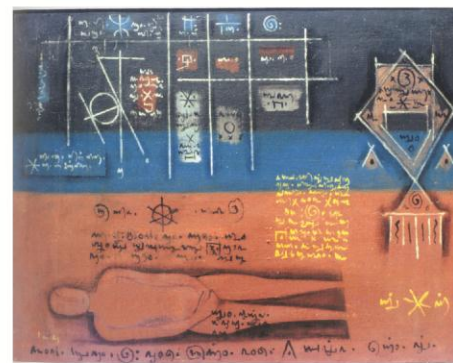


Fig .no.18
Words and symbols , Oil on canvas , 17x22-1968,
coll,Paniker Museum, Tiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

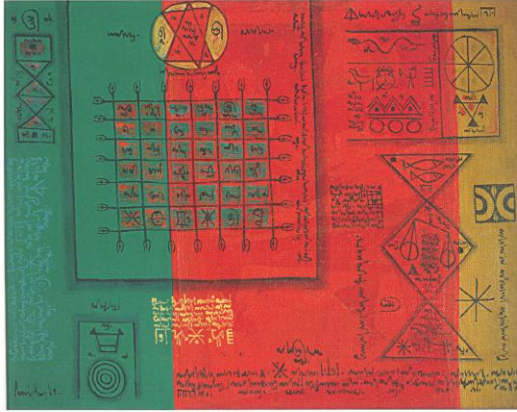


Fig no.19
words and symbols , Oil on canvas ,
1968,26.5x33.5 Coll. DAG

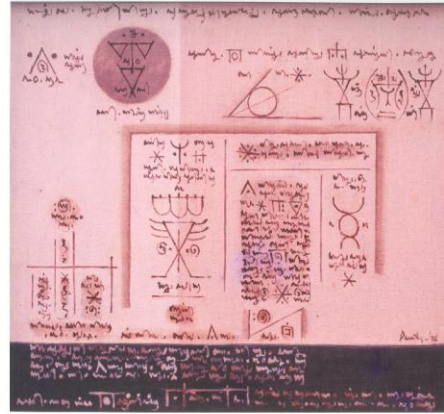


Fig no.21
Pink picture , words and symbols , Oil on canvas
36x33- 1976 , coll.s. Nanda gopal.

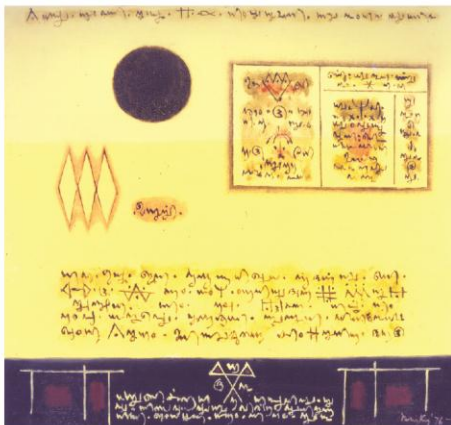


Fig .no 20
Words and symbols , Oil on canvas,36x34, 1976



Fig.no.26.
Picture in Pink and Green Oil on canvas,
30x30.1970.



Fig no.22.
PAniker showing batik work done by art student to visitors at the college of arts, Madras.



Fig no. 24
Out side view of Museum of Madras



Fig no.23
The museum of the madras Movement at cholamandal



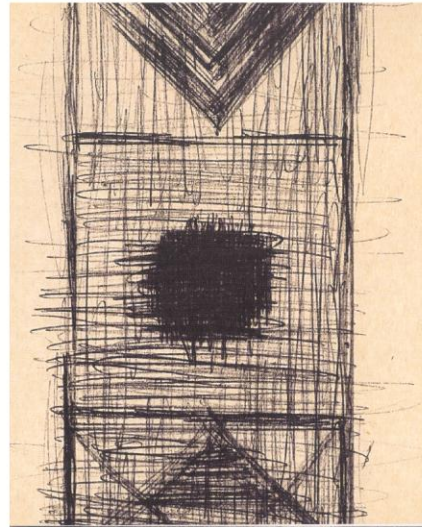
Fig.no.25
Craftmen at the Govt. school of Arts and crafts ,
Madras in the 1930's



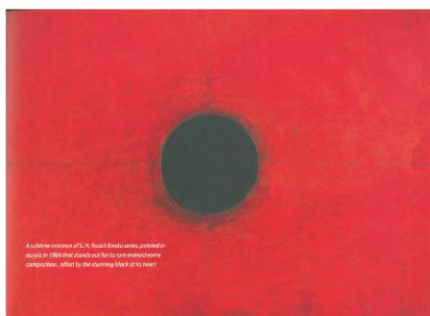
Fig no. 27
Family of Paniker ,
Mrs Ramabai Paniker, Sumitra, and Nadagopal.



An acrylic painting by S. H. Raza from 1997, Germination, that uses the form of the Triangle



An untitled pen and ink drawing by Raza exploring the bindi concept through the use of the geometric forms of the circle, square and strong



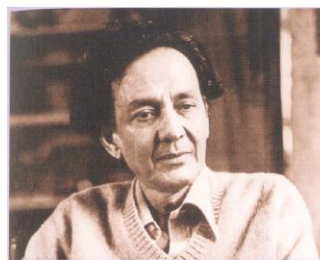
A sublime instance of the S.H. Raza bindu series, painted in acrylic in 1984 that stands out for its rare monochrome composition, offset by black at its heart



The untitled acrylic painting 1991 left is a fine instance of S. H. Raza extensive exploration of the esoteric concept of the bindu.



A young S. H. Raza in his studio Paris, 1960



A pensive S. H. Raza in France in the 1980



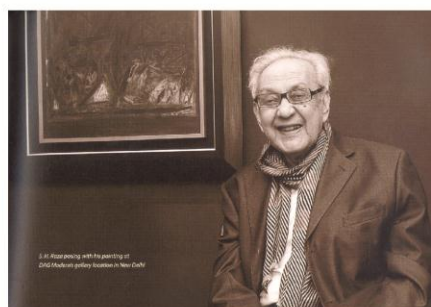
With the artists Shankar Palsiker and K. S. Kulkarni



Fellow students at the citys Ecole des Beaux - Arts, 1958

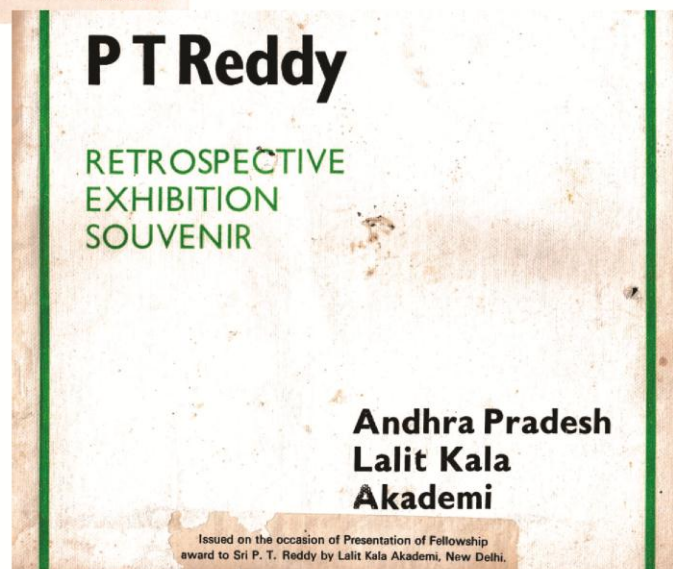
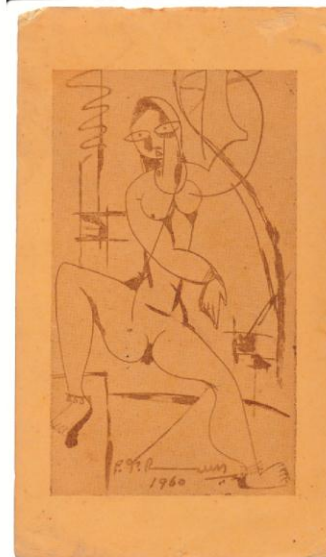
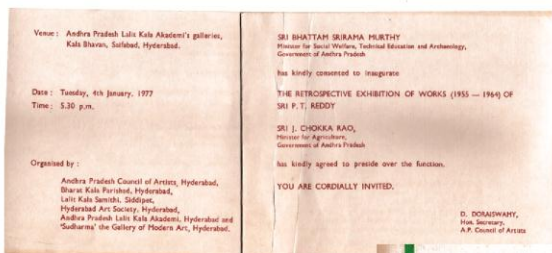
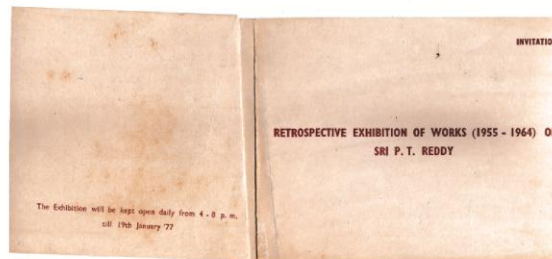
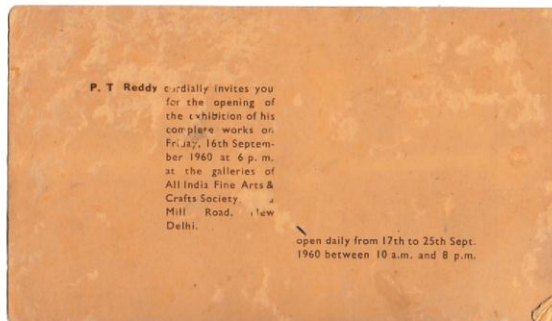


S. H. Raza at the garden outside his home studio in Gorbio, Southern France where he lived for Decades with his French artist wife



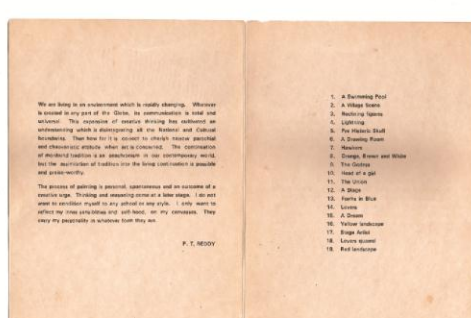
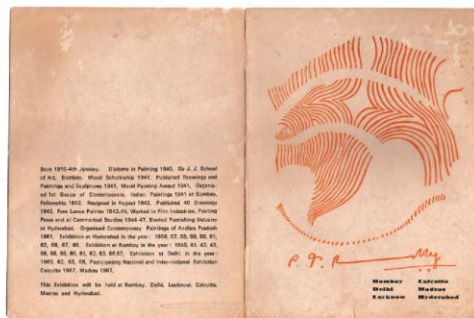
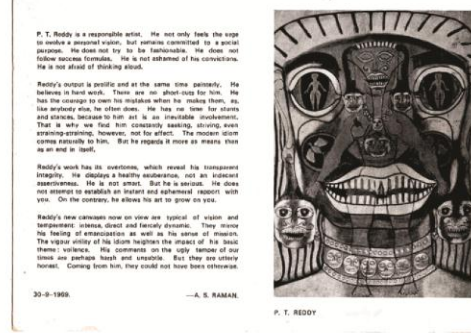
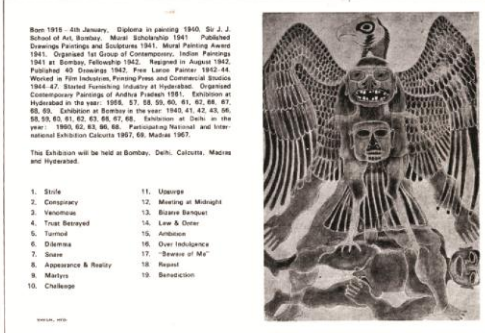
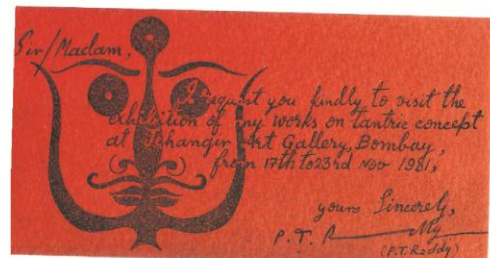
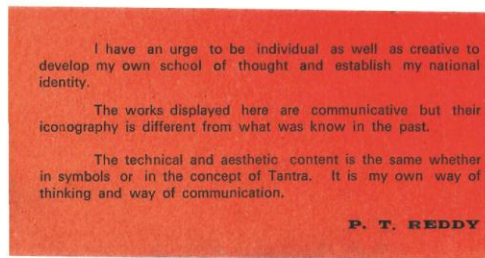
S. H. Raza posing with his painting at DAG Moderns gallery location in New Delhi

INVITATION CARD FOR EXHIBITION

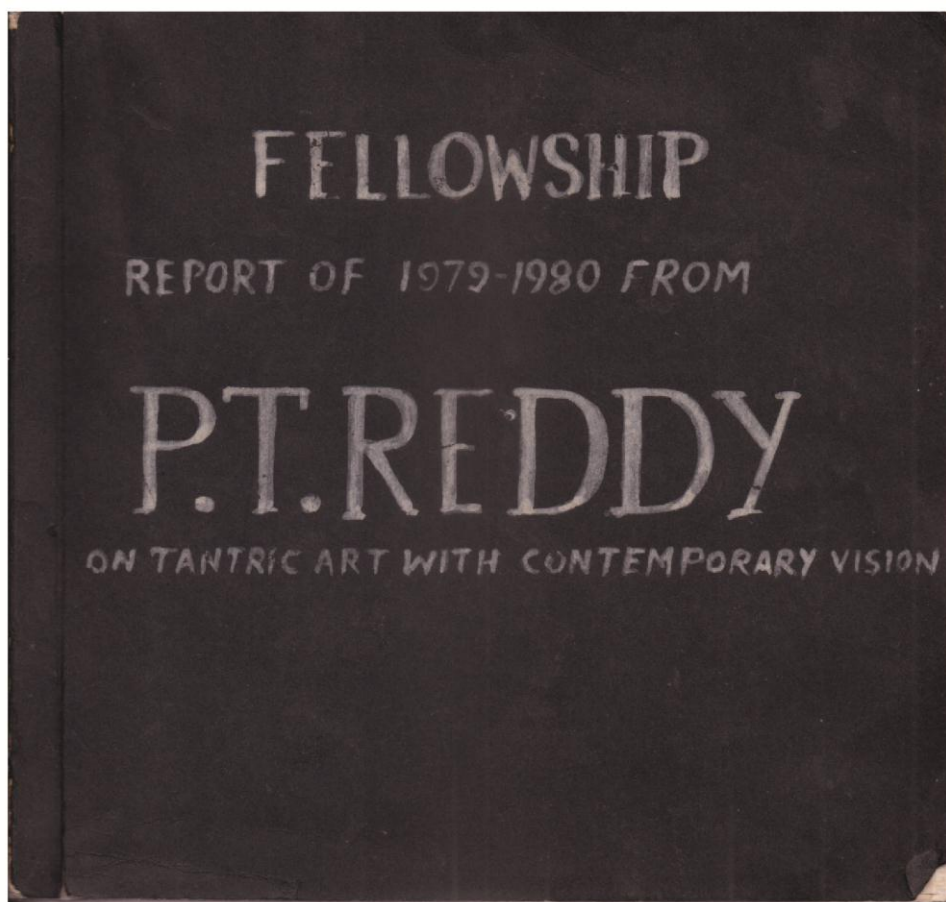


Publication during the fellowship award

SAMPLE OF INVITATION CARD FOR EXHIBITION



DOCUMENTATION OF THE VISUAL RESEARCH WORK DURING FELLOWSHIP



From:
P.T. REDDY
3-4-574, Narayanaguda, Hyderabad.

Camp: Bangalore.
Dated: 7.3.1980.

Dear Sri Sood sab,

I am in receipt of your letter dated 1.3.80 only today. It was redirected to my camp at Bangalore, at present I am working on Painters camp which is organised by the Karnataka Lalit Kala Akademi.

However, I send a following telegram on 6-3-80.
FELLOWSHIP EXTENSION DESIRED TO COMPLETE THE WORK UNDERTAKEN(.) LETTER FOLLOWS.

The report of the 1st year which I sent in triplicate for 1978-79 in which I had done 14 drawings and 12 paintings. The following is 2nd years report which I am giving you in rough sketch for 1979-80.

12 works are completed. They are on High tidal wave, five on cyclone, three on sun and moon, two on wine women and wealth, two on man and woman. The following are on hand: 12 drawing on Union based on Kamasastra, five on cyclone, two on Shanti, four on Nehru cult, two on absolute power, two on Gandhicult and four on Sri Om.

The second year (79-80) report along with triplicate copies of the works will be sent on 1st week of April, 1980.

The works which are on hand requires serious research and symbolization also they require to be designed and re-designed according to the subject and person and his character and personality. So this would need another two years work. Please see that Fellowship is extended for two years and I request you to kindly grant me senior fellowship to which I will be grateful.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,
Sd/-
(P.T.Reddy)

Personal copy

From:
P.T. REDDY,
3-4-574, Narayanaguda,
HYDERABAD - 500 029.

May 14, 1980.

Dear Mr. Gupta,

With reference to the D.O.No.F.6-14/79-C-H 3 dated 1-3-1980, I have addressed a letter to Mr. Sood, Under Secretary, on 7-3-80 from Bangalore, a copy of which is sent herewith.

Now I am submitting a report in triplicate for the year 1979-80, the report contains 28 works with their description.

Again I request you to consider extending the Senior Fellowship for another two years to work on research and symbolisation with contemporary vision on different subjects.

Yours sincerely,
P.T. Reddy
(P.T.Reddy)

Sri Gupta,
Under Secretary,
Department of Culture,
Govt. of India,
NEW DELHI.



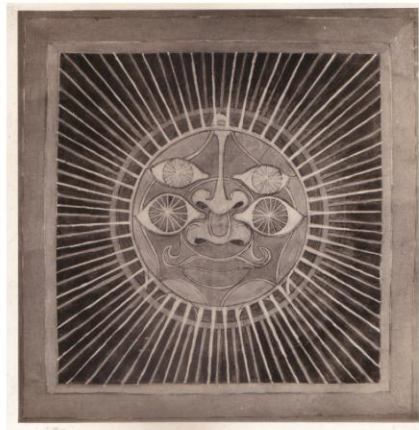
1. I and my parents.

Our's is an agriculture oriented family with Vaishnava Faith - I took to painting. In my view, painting is a stepping stone for my eternal beauty which is represented by Shad-dala-padma with Srihari as the 'Thalaa' or the controlling force along with other symbols like yoked bullocks, a woman ready for plantation, palette with brushes and an open book with a hand ever engaged in writing, peacock representing the culture and 'Hansa' the final beauty or peace.

2. My present family.

This is almost like the previous one. In place of my parents, my daughter and my lost son along with my wife who took to letters were introduced in this picture. The totality of my life's aim is pronounced with nuclear power of Almighty. Here Vishnu is not only a family God but is supreme power with all the capabilities of Hari, Hara and Hiranyagarbha. This concept is achieved by a round dot which is serving the purpose of the third eye.





3. Aditya.

As the Sun is considered to be the eye of the world and the dispeller of darkness, the concept and manifestation of solar energy appeared to me as a controlling power, which is static and moving. These two aspects of cosmic energy is being depicted by double eyes and noses. The sharp cuts of a diamond-like form suggesting brilliance and mustach-like curves for authority.

4. Creation.

This picture is an outcome of a tantric rendering to a puranic story of the First creation. After a delution when there was water over whole, a lone child was floating over waters on Vatspata. To him an idea of some companion was occurred and the 'thought' was responsible to stir the waters and create Brahma. In this picture picture I have personified the 'thought' as a female child, the two male and female children were responsible for the growth of the Humanity, which was depicted through intricate circles, knots, lines etc.



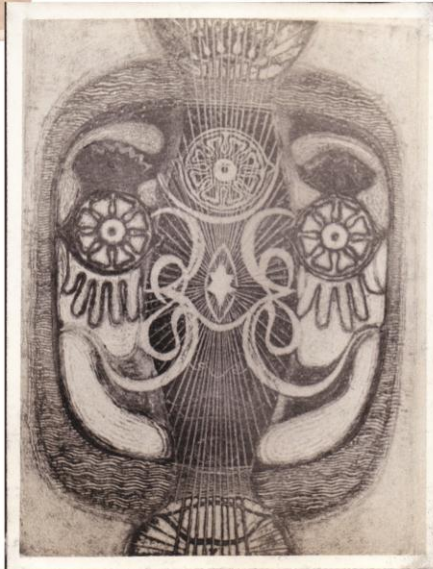


5. Supreme being.

This is a representation of an embodiment of Power as Almighty, that is 'Siva with Shakti' symbolized as 'Linga' and 'Yona'. Here the light is shown along with energy coupled with sound that is 'Omkaara'. All these concepts, I tried to explain by way of irregular square, cylindrical and circular forms representing creation and force.

6. Emergence of Siva.

The picture is based on Siva purana. According to it when everything was water, there appeared a spark of light growing like a ~~pillar~~ huge pillar of brilliance. When earth and sky were separated, the other two powers Brahma and Vishnu were ~~was~~ emerged and wanted to know the origin and end of the light. So they started in disguise of an arrow and a bird. But they could not succeed. Finally they agreed the supremacy of 'Eshwara'. This concept is visualised by 'Abhaya' and 'Varada' hastha mudras and 'Surya and 'Chandra' as his eyes.



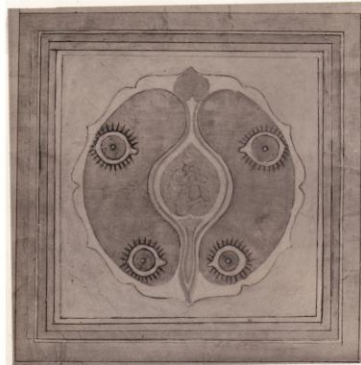


7. Shanthi.

A circle with ~~water~~ water in background represents earth and a big double lotus with four petals represents Brahma and his four faces. Again in the inner circle, the symbol of 'Om' is inscribed, the two sharp big and complete open-eyes, which were standing for knowledge and serving the purpose of bees. When a man perceives this knowledge he becomes humble and propitiates the Almighty for Shanti. This is being represented by raised hands and uturned feet.

8. Mahakurma.

'Kurma' stands for strength and force according to 'Varahapurana'. Mahakurma was the 'first' to appear in huge waters and he was existing there since the time immemorial. He was the Karana or the source of every life. In the evolutionary process also this creature has got some importance. In vedantic literature Kurma is well known symbol for a learned man who conceals his knowledge and looks simple. This form is suggesting a genetic organ with characteristics of earth. It is like a soaked seed with seedling inside - Kohetra with germinated seed.





9. Portrait of Krishna.

Against a circle, a decorated crown, two hands with Abhaya and Varada mudras, stands for supreme authority or 'Vishnu' but the 'Sikhipincha' characteristic of him as 'Sri Krishna', the circle representing earth establishes Krishna's authority over it as 'Gopala', the protector of 'go' i.e., earth.

10. Dancing Krishna.

Krishna as Yasoda's son became a darling to everyone in the Village. For him dancing has become one of the favourite leela. He used to dance and melt the hearts of cow-herd women whenever they churn the curds. This concept was exploited by dancing mudras, two little feet with bells, and a crown decorated with peacock feathers.





11. Krishna leela.

This is one of the portrait of his ~~an~~ erotic deeds, but the combination with in Padma and a crown symbolizes this as a union between atma and paramatma.

12. Govardhana Uddharana.

The anger of Indra brought heavy rains deluding the cowherd village. Perceiving this danger Krishna could protect the life and wealth of the village by lifting the mountain on his finger rendering it as an umbrella. A 'Crown', Shanka and chakra stands for Krishna. The symbols below represent the life of the village and above the hands stands the 'Govardhana'.



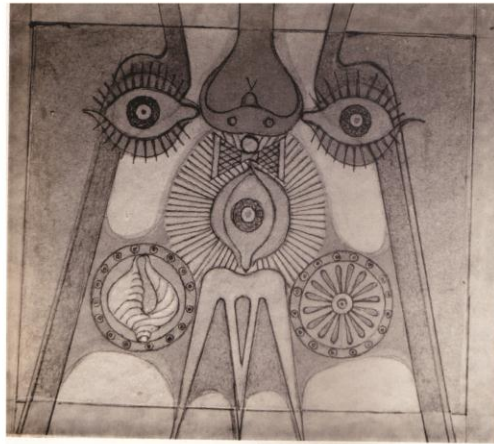


13. Varahamurthi

The main purpose of the avatara was mainly for lifting the earth from delution. A circle with two breasts stands for Bhudevi, the gentle touching with the tip of nose of Varaha suggests the erotic sentiment. A cavity in Padma filled by powerful hand suggests that the earth was lifted from water to upward direction. This introduction shanka, chakra elevates the animal form from ordinary chore to God-hood.

14. Hari Hara.

The third eye, shanka, chakra, trisulam, damarukam and Naga all these stand as symbols for Hari and Hara. These are carefully exploited into a design, constituting a single form with the characteristics of both the deities.





15. Gajalakshmi.

The required form is evolved by the introduction of Gaja and Lakshmi's characteristics to a Torso of a beautiful woman. The introduction of Padma, shanka and chakra created the desired effects for tantric form.

16. Vishnu.

This is a very simplified tantric form of 'Vishnu'. His dominating parikaras - Shanka, chakra etc) were utilised to fulfil the concept of Vishnu.





17. High tidal wave.

The unique phenomenon of tidal waves, the eruption of fire in the sea and its after effects which were dangerous to the surroundings were utilised for creating a picture with metaphysical concept.

19. Cyclone No.1.

The technicalities of the science is utilised to visualise the catastrophe of cyclone with aesthetic rendering constituting tantric form.





20. Cyclone No. 2.

The natural forces and their ways and effects were utilised to represent the eternal time and its supreme hold over earthly creatures. No effort could save this mundane world from its clutches. Knowledge is the only remedy.

21. Cyclone No. 2.

The central point, the eye of cyclone and its course of line is depicted in symbolic way.





22. Kashmir No.1.

To Kashmirian 'Chinari' tree is like 'Kalpavriksha'. This tree is a deity, protector and wealth for them. Without 'Chinar' and beautiful girls Kashmiris does not exist at all. These two important things are taken and woven into a design within 'Astadala Padma', a symbol for prosperity.

23. Kashmir No.2.

The presiding deity of Himalayan mountains is Siva, whose heart is Parvathi. In Ashtadala Padma three petals are representing the three eyes of Siva and the petal at the lower end for his chin. The other four petals represent the living conditions of the masses of Kashmir.





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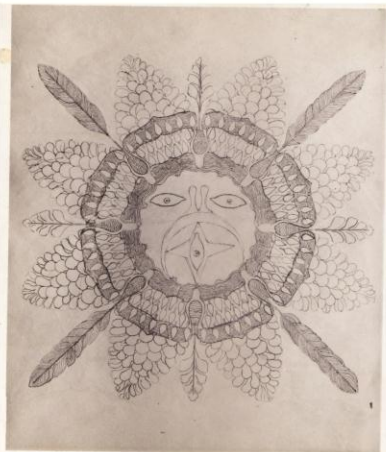


24. Kashmir No.3.

The whole scene is picturised in a squarish four-petalled flower. The snow filled mountains, flowing waters, tall and slender trees as a background, and the life of people, fishing and ploughing was pronounced. The snow is personified as Siva. Below his chin the trisula stands for a fire which was essential and capable to warm and protect the Kashmir.

23. Kashmir No.4.

The natural surroundings of Srinagar, the snow covered hills with flowing waters and devdar trees visualised as Siva personified with his consort 'Ganga' on his head and a crescent which stand for cool and pleasant atmosphere.



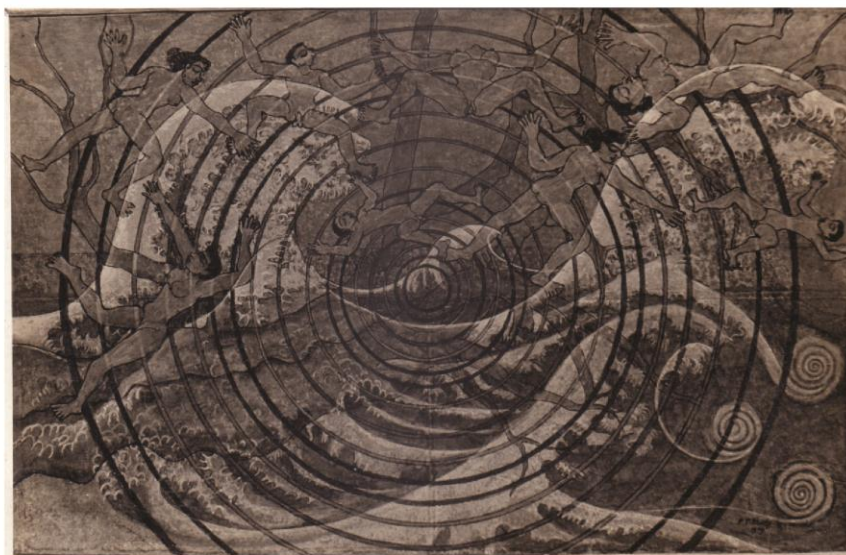


28. The Cosmic power.

The Sun, moon and the earth are interdepending cosmic phenomenon. They were deified and worshipped. Man gaining extraordinary knowledge of science he could remove the mystery by landing on the moon. This concept is visualised and rendered into a Tantric form.

18. High tidal wave.

The currents and the cross currents which were responsible for the havoc were exploited in explaining the 'Kala dharm' the ever revolving wheels of death.



Virendra Nath,
Assistant Educational Adviser.

No. F.6-14/78-CH-3
Government of India,
Department of Culture

New Delhi
June 7, 1980

Dear Shri Reddy,

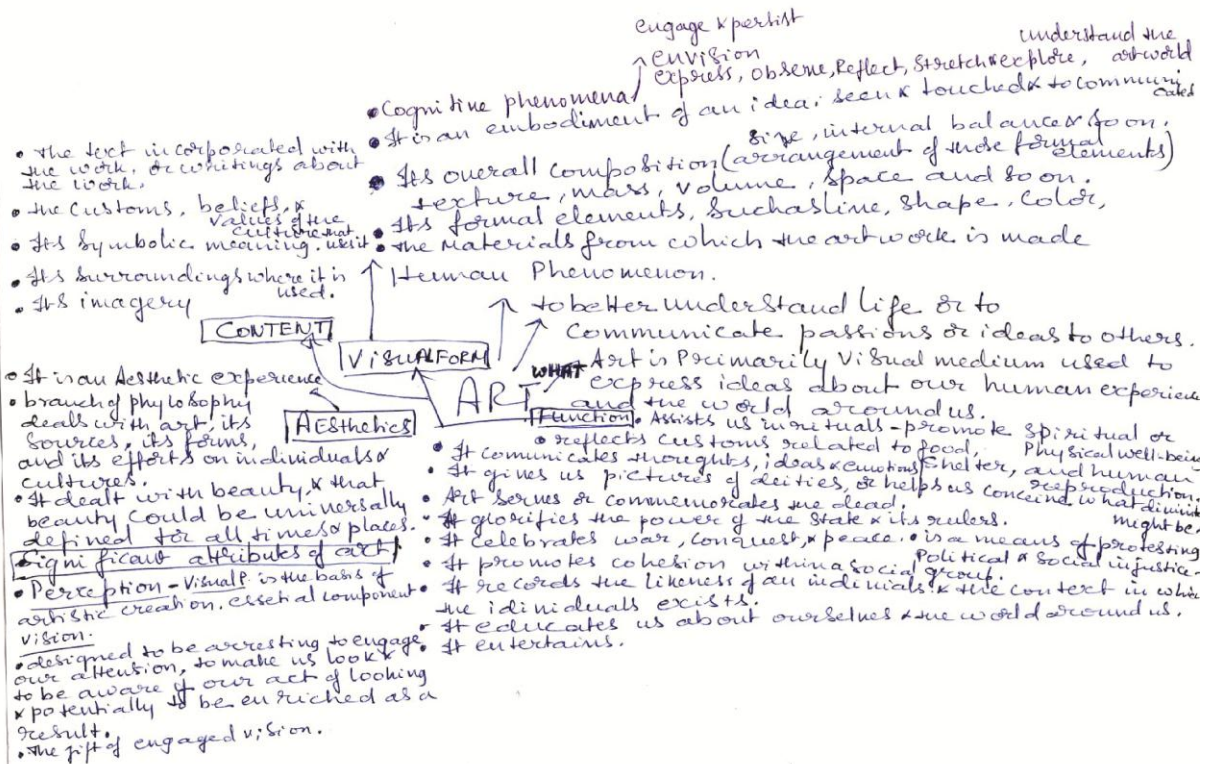
with
This is to acknowledge/thanks receipt of your
letter dated 14.5.1980 forwarding therewith work report in
triplicate indicating work done by you during the 1979-80
under the Scheme for award of fellowships to outstanding
artists in the fields of the performing the literary and
the plastic arts.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Virendra Nath
(Virendra Nath)

Shri P.T. Reddy,
3-4-574, Narayanaguda,
HYDERABAD-500 029



The Data collected: Paintings and sculptures

Began with the analysis of Tantra work done by the artist Shri P. T. Reddy. This gave a lead to study the entire evolution of his work from the beginning. Started collating and cataloguing the details of the entire oeuvre (drawings, paintings, etchings, lithographs and sculptures and furniture) done by him over the period of time. **The details of each work is catalogued including its title, medium, size, subject, category, and year of execution.** The total number of works are categorized according to the subject, it consists of Portraits, Landscapes, Still Lifes, Figurative, Tantra, Traditional School, Moon Landing Series, Political Series, and Non Objective -Abstracts in various mediums.

The list of data collected is as follows:

Genre	Number of Works
Portraits	48
Landscapes	80
Still Lifes	45
Figurative	150
Tantra	200
Traditional	45
Moon Landing	15
Political Sense	20
Abstract	160
Drawings	200
Ganesha	150

Total number of works which are executed so far 1093 (Approximate).

Once the list of works is totally covered, the chronological order of the entire works are studied briefly. And importantly the **biographical details were collected in a chronological order** to understand the evolution of his work.

Definite Periods in the Art of P.T. Reddy (1956-1996)

<u>S. No.</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Commentary</u>
1	1939 - 1942	Out standing impressive melodious rhythms of line drawings.
2	1942 - 1946	With Indian content he synthesized the technique of Post Impressionists.
3	1946 - 1956	Furnishing design and decorative door designs.
4	1956 - 1960	A struggle for painting since he had lost the ground.
5	1960 - 1965	Rejuvenation of his inner urge to find something new and experiment with
6	1965 - 1967	Gained control over imbalance of aesthetic idea and formal expression A period of semi abstract and color fantasy.
7	1967 - 1969	Period of social involvement and calamities. Pictures are the result of a deep involvement as a man of his intense awareness of the recurrent acts of the tragedy around him.
8	1969 - 1970	A deep sense of admiration to wards national leaders like Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi. Exploring the possibility of symbolic abstractions in the field of portraiture.
9	1970 - 1971	A period of form and color. Abstractions of fantasy and also exploiting the Indian miniature into a technique of abstraction and simplification.
10	1971 - 1973	A period of wooden sculptures and graphics exploiting the possibilities of mutual cooperation in the field of modern concept, linear viabilities, as well as tonal perfections.

- 11 1973 - 1975 Symbolism and nature. Finding and searching his own iconography. Development of pure design and drawing, portraits as miniatures. Ms. Indira Gandhi series.
- 12 1975 - 1980 Nature and cosmos is simplified in geometrical forms exploiting all Sorts of modern techniques and isms. 3- dimensional application of symbolic forms related to Tantra in form of sculptures.
- 13 1980 - 1990 Evolvment of neo Tantrism on which he made his indelible mark of value based in Modern Indian Art.
- 14 1991 - 1992 Breaking out of shapes and figures, entered into free flowing 'Abstract Expressionism'- Working only with color and textures
- 15 1993 - 1995 Interpretations of Lord Ganesha in different styles and mediums.

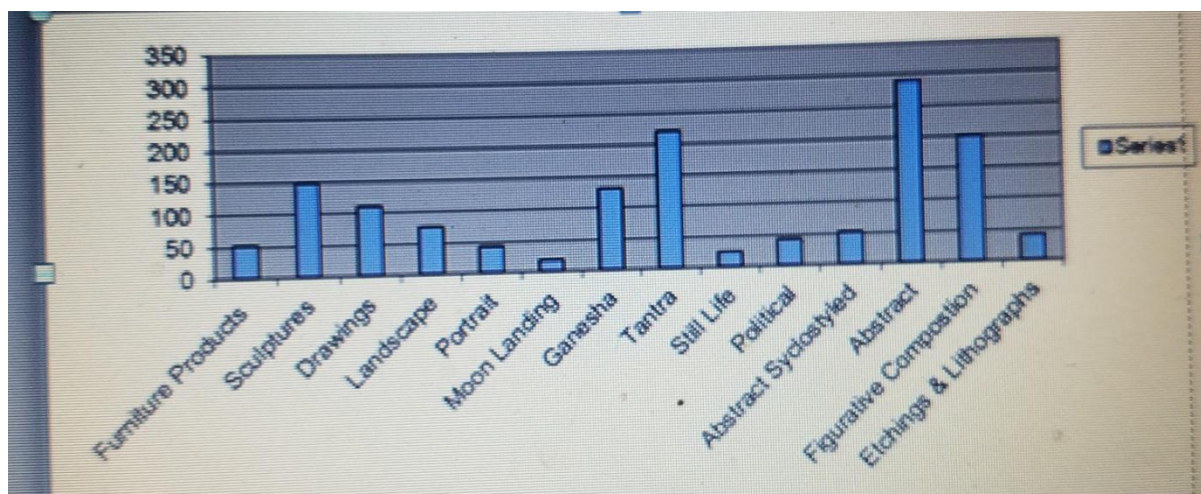
The analysis of definite periods in the art of P.T.Reddy is briefly covered.

References -

Data collected is from P.T.Reddy's Museum Sudharam at Narayanguda, and several journals from the Lalit Kala Academi Annual Publications.

50th Anniversary of India's independence "Major art trends in Indian art 1997.

Exhibition catalogs, Articles in the news-papers, Art publications.



Dhyaneswar Nadkarni – 19-11-1981

A RETROSPECTIVE TANTRIC EXHIBITION 1969 – 1989 BY P.T. REDDY

Sl.No.	Title	Medium	Size in Cms	Price in Rs.	Year
1.	Dancing Krishna	Acrylic	18/21	6,000	1980
2.	In search of God	Mixed	32/39	9,000	1987
3.	Archers	Acrylic	30/30	9,000	1984
4.	Bhama& Krishna	Acrylic	22/24	6,000	1984
5.	Shiva in Himalayas	Pen & ink	34/34	6,000	1980
6.	A scene of Kashmir	Water colour	33/33	9,000	1980
7.	Rasaleela	Acrylic	20/24	6,000	1984
8.	Tantric energy	Oil colour	66/82	12,000	1973
9.	Sakti & Siva	Acrylic	31/33	9,000	1972
10.	Science & Industry	Acrylic	84/84	20,000	1988
11.	Vishnu Cult	Acrylic	26/26	6,000	1985
12.	Prakriti&Pursh	Acrylic	34/43	12,000	1970
13.	Shiva &ParvatiLeela	Acrylic	49/49	20,000	1985
14.	Growth of Politician	Acrylic	19/22	6,000	1969
15.	My family	Pen & Ink	33/33	6,000	1970
16.	Poojari	Acrylic	26/26	6,000	1970
17.	Birth of Ganesha (No.1)	Acrylic	120/90	25,000	1987
18.	A political chair	Acrylic	32/23	6,000	1969
19.	Ganesha	Acrylic	31/24	6,000	1969
20.	Srichakra	Deep Hatching	43/43	12,000	1971
21.	The Churning	Acrylic	24/31	9,000	1971
22.	Akarshna	Oil Colour	120/90	25,000	1971
23.	Power & Peace	Acrylic	31/34	9,000	1974
24.	Shakti	Acrylic	56/70	20,000	1969
25.	Yesterday & Today	Acrylic	32/32	9,000	1974
26.	My Moto	Water Colour	22/22	6,000	1974
27.	Yoni	Acrylic	16/16	4,000	1987
28.	Sree	Deep Hatching	43/41	6,000	1972
29.	Union	Acrylic	16/16	4,000	1984
30.	Cosmic Dance	Acrylic	49/34	12,000	1987

31.	Birth of Ganesha (No.2)	Acrylic	120/90	25,000	1987
32.	Sri Krishna	Acrylic	20/22	6,000	1975
33.	Adi Varaha	Acrylic	18/22	6,000	1970
34.	Sri Hari	Acrylic	24/21	6,000	1970
35.	Wine, Women & Wealth	Acrylic	57/57	12,000	1978
36.	Father of Nation	Acrylic	36/26	9,000	1988
37.	Bindu Leela	Oil Colour	113/84	12,000	1989
38.	Kashmir	Acrylic	33/33	9,000	1980
39.	Brahma	Water Colour	24/20	6,000	1984
40.	Origin of the sound	Deep Hatching	50/38	9,000	1970
41.	Mahatma	Acrylic	26/29	9,000	1985
42.	Poorna Kalusha	Acrylic	27/34	9,000	1970
43.	Shringara Kreedha	Acrylic	33/30	9,000	1975
44.	Formation of a Seed	Acrylic	23/23	6,000	1975
45.	A Marriage Card	Acrylic	41/41	9,000	1973
46.	Shiva	Acrylic	35/51	12,000	1975
47.	A devotee	Acrylic	33/33	9,000	1975
48.	Sharanagathi	Acrylic	34/34	9,000	1975
49.	Kama	Acrylic	31/31	9,000	1975

Bombay. Drawings and painting in Jahangir Art Gallery.

I have an urge to be individual as well as creative to develop my own school of thought and establish my national identity. The works displayed here are communicative but their iconography is different from what was known in the past. The technical and aesthetic content is the same whether in symbols or in the concept of Tantra. “It is my own way of thinking and way of communication”.

In the works such as “Wine and Women” Reddy does, in fact, try to graft a contemporary imagery on to a Tantric or semi-Tantric scheme. Some of his Tantric oriented paintings in mixed media are quite immaculate. There is a stress on symmetrical arrangement, mandalas, the sunrays and the symbols are used.

My concept of Kashmir – what is interesting and intriguing is the self-portrait in such line drawings as “I, my father and mother” and “me, my life, son and daughter”. Here we see P.T. Reddy as he must have been when he was called a “Turk” way back in his art school days.

Economic Times – 5th December 1990, New Delhi – Krishnan Gopal Sharma

Generally my subjects are Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma. To me God means the Sun and the Earth because the sun is held responsible for natural calamities. Sometimes my subject may be constructive and sometimes destructive. The human forms are always portrayed to provide a good atmosphere. I treat all these gods in symbols. In a way my Tantric works as everything in nature, without the bounds of specifications and limitations ascribed to ‘Tantra’ genre of art.

If his works are seen in their totality of individuality, one can say they speak something of the Tantric philosophy; though not in accordance with its literary concept. This is what he wanted. I think he achieved it some may have been successes and other a failure. This is precisely the way Reddy adopts his own symbolic forms and introduces his vision of life and beyond.

Reddy works are true to the essence of his creative credo, that is, either to ultimately create his own symbols and iconography or to recognize the existing ones in the realm of Tantra or spirituality. He makes for an amalgamation, both the figurative and the abstract. What is remarkable about these paintings are his astute draughtmanship, evocative designs, uninhibited freedom, sense of symmetry and aesthetics.

Thus one notices an unmistakable liberating force in “origin of the sound” (1970). Inside the square shaped ‘mandala’, are inscribed pictorial design using ‘chakra’, moon and sprouting rays. The wax line work at the periphery and the flux-matter in the centre denote evolution not of matter but of thought and a distinctive vision. In other works like “Sakti and Siva” (1972), and “A Devotee” (1975) one finds human forms within human forms and facial features depicted by tantric symbols. Everything is enclosed in circular but wary structure. Obviously the artist is reflecting on the spiritual harmony and the process of human psyche. Broadly speaking, one discovers in Reddy’s works a powerful transcendental quality derived from his immersion in the philosophies and cultural traditions of the places he has liked. That is way, his approach seems to be more on the expressionistic side. His paintings breathe free and enjoy the typical rhythmic pattern of traditional form. One is amazed at the wide repertoire of the artist for here innumerable folkish and miniature idioms form his decorative accessories.

Viewing these works, one is reminded of an ancient mystical maxim from natha upnishad which says that men and the universe are related; “whatever is here (in man) is there (in the universe); and whatever is there is here”. This relationship is being pictorially depicted showing the cosmos in the form of divine lords Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. The entire universe seems to be confined in his body.

“If the light of a thousand Suns rose up at once, that splendour might be compared to the radiance of that cosmic form”. In a contended way, the aesthetic quality is self sufficient and the compositions have the greatest elegance.

Reddy’s profoundly evocative paintings are essentially different from other styles of paintings predominant today. Brilliant imagery and borders, soothing and deep colours mixed with varied

symbols concerned with the genesis of the universe – all combine to wrest impressive form from what may at times appear highly mysterious images.

By nature, Reddy is not a theorist but a trained and disciplined artist who has drawn on some of the oldest traditions of art, ritual and religion in India to bring mystical intuitions and pictorial art into a new relationship. The purpose is to bring to contemporary art a renewed sense in the magical power of the image.

TANTRA

Tantra Art at UCLA: Tantra art exhibition at the Wight Art Gallery of the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) Nov, 24 through Jan 5, 1986.

Circles and squares, dots and triangles. Piercing eyes and coiled snakes. And the Om symbol. These iconographic elements of Tantra Art are through 80 paintings on view are by contemporary Indian artists, Tantra itself is ancient. Its birth marked the first time in Indian religious history that two seemingly incompatible streams of Indian life, Yoga (spiritual discipline) and bhoga (enjoyment), met to synthesize into a spiritual discipline. Tantra is just one manifestation of the Tantric philosophy, which reinterprets many of the orthodox norms of Hindu spirituality. In its art form, this has meant also a reinterpretation of space, light, colour, form and a marriage of graphics with rituals, myths and magic.

- For every nature there is a god personified. On every particular nature there is feeling for Goddess. Hence there emerged a Goddess for each nature. If there can be a symbol imagined for each nature and if that can be visually expressed / derived. These can be very important and easy to express with different technicalities.
- Absorbs the eye with its terse visuality and the mind with the diversified content underlying the visual interpretation indicating a phenomenal reach which ranges from philosophical, esoteric, spiritual concerns to here and now interests such as politics, power, wealth and a whole host of mundane and earthy engagements.

- Highly arrived and mature style of P.T. Reddy which charges the exhibition with an impressive sense of unity over and above divergent and diversifying themes.
- It is the sterling quality of his line, its characteristic linear and curvilinear flows and their inexhaustible range, self assured matching or blending of colours, their flawless handling, relaxed inner attitudes serving commendable and tight compositional ideas which become core-factors in the outward semblance of the projected image to lead the mind into the understanding of the content. Tantric geometrics have received what I feel are new interpretations modernistically expressing our own ethos at various levels of thought and feeling.
- Titled Siva – The artist takes the upper part of the trident projecting it centrally on the iconic form of “linga” with a hexagonal spread surrounding this integrated image. This separation and union recalls the word Allah as it is written in Arabic words release abstract imagistic feelings in the mind and in the present case would find response both from a Muslim as well as a Hindu viewer.

But the matter does not rest at that along. The surrounding hexagon is essentially a reach out towards the circle with linga serving as diameter in the image under review. That is a phenomenon which has interesting connotations from the Islamic point of view too.

The line, throughout is imbued with a meditative character because of source of and at times only leanings towards, Tantra which is governed by intuitive discipline, in contradistinction with mechanical discipline leading to states of balance, order and peace in a harmonious blend of colours and contrapuntal echo of colour and line.

The complex combines of rhythms involved in the archer have to be seen in order to be believed. It is a cohesive image in every respect and would admit neither of any subtraction, in terms of colour or its specific tones, in terms of the reversal of rhythms of the line or of addition.

Origin of sound, a graphic, subdues and moves the mind with those soulful curvilinear moves of the line. What an intensity of flow and how effortless! While formation of seed Shiva-Parvathi (a superb creation), Sree, Shakti, Cosmic Dance, Birth of Ganesha and a few more deliver visions generated by higher states of awareness of the essential reality of life. There is

compact force in the visual metaphors related to the wordly subjects, such as wine, woman and wealth. A political chair or growth of a politician; all full of subtle invendoes. Somewhere in between, the artist who at 70 is still highly energetic and active, has brought in his inner simple image, in a marriage card! My motto and my family. It is in these that we find how warm he is inside.

- Painting is a thunderous collusion of different worlds – said Wassily Kandinsky. In 1949, after about 15 years of dedicated painting, P.T. Reddy at the age of 34, faced ulterior.
- The furnishing firm he was running in Hyderabad, had collapsed. The other partners withdrew their capital from the business. His son died of diahorea. His father withdrew all financial support “different worlds which are destined to create the new world in and form the struggle against each others. “Wassily Kandinsky adds 1951: After Herculean effort, the business slowly picked up. He started supplying drawing materials. Finance stabilized.

S.A. Krishnan, a close friend says “In 1948 in Bombay, I had met Ara, Gade Hussain, Souza, Bakre – all members of the Progressive Artists Group. There was one name among the artists that came up again and again. That was P.T. Reddy. He had disappeared from the scene but was legend already. He was lost to art and was in a kind of “Agnatavasa”, some where in Lahore or Hyderabad.

TANTRA

“I might not have gained much economically from profession. But I take my commercial failure in good spirit”, says Reddy and adds, “My economic gains might have made me stale and static”.

- One could see at the panoramic glance the brilliant and muted, the ethnic and geometric surface arrangements of Reddy’s work. The palette is contrasting or unified the candour is almost overlooked in viewing the pattern like Tantric conceptions. A picture of wine and one rupee coin form the foreground and background of a painting in pastel shades, with a man and women sandwiched earthily between these.
- On visions, Reddy adds, “truth stated as trugh is flat. It has to be rested with empathy and élan”. His own meanderings in style sometimes realistic as in his still life with grapes, in his

J.J. School of art days. Sometimes cubist, some times miniaturist in style, PT Reddy has baffled modern day specialisationists.

- To PT Reddy, even God is not an unknown stranger for he can feel him in particular symbols and forms and this he reflects in his neo-tantric painting where the Om, the Swastika and the wanes represent the birth of sound from the almighty.

Financial express, Sunday, November 25, 1990

Exhibition of considerable artistic importance is being organized by Sidheswar Dayal at the ITG Art Gallery. "He is widely acclaimed for his distinctive iconography".

A gifted draughtsman, often guided by an uncontaminated vision and quick spontaneous response, he organizes symbolic forms, resulting in provocative designs, which have roots in the Indian traditions which he considers as the liberating force. Delicate, linear and in harmony with subtle tones, with whispering images in these paintings evoke a dialogue between his personally transformed transitional images and images and symbols and the viewers sensitive responses. The complexity of motifs and archetypal forms, both figurative and abstract, set within "Mandala" forms and mostly arranged in strict symmetrical compositions, denote a strange and perplexing mood, permeated with the experiences of his inner being. His works are essentially entrenched in the Indian tradition though modern in treatment and execution.

TANTRA

From 1976, Reddy has been involved in Tantric Art and in 1978, the Department of Culture, New Delhi awarded him a two-year fellowship for research in this area interpreting the mythological, scientific and erotic aspects, exploiting with precision skill the geometric forms. He has conceptualized the them in his personal Tantric language, since Tantra is part of every ritual, ceremony and festival of the Indian ethos, our people are no strangers to Tantric philosophy; by evolving his iconography in both painting and sculpture from the known symbolism, going beyond the fashionable Bindu, Shakti, Yoni and Linga, he gives a fresh and forceful interpretation: in this he is sometimes cubic and at other miniaturist in style.

- The Hindu, Sunday, December 12, 1993. by Lakshmi Venkat Raman.

TANTRA ART

Among the contemporary artists specializing in Tantric arts, the prominent names, according to him are Birende, K.V. Haridasan, Mahirawan Mantani, Prafulla Mohanti, Om Prakash, K.C>P. Panikar and G.R. Santosh.

Sunday Chronicle, September 25, 1988 – page 5.

G. bharath bhushan talks to P.T. Reddy on Tantric arts (41 works) – exhibition on Tantra works in (CCMB) – 1988, September - 31st Oct. Inaugurated by K.K. Hebbar on September 14.

Ever since the pre-historic times there were Yantra, tantra, mantra and I fully understand the philosophy of all the three. And it is this very philosophy that I have been using in my works, said. Pakala Tirulama Reddy, a leading contemporary painter specializing in tantric art.

“Tantra is an ancient art which has become quite popular through generations. What I wish to depict is totally different. I do not want to highlight what is already familiar and known to the world. But I wish to give the subject a new dimension. For example, there have been many works on Shiva and the image is more or less similar in all. But in my shiva one can easily see the contrast. I have used the symbols – third eye, snake and half moon.

“Indians have strong traditional rituals, customs and conventions, from birth to death. An industrialized society may criticize them, but all the rituals have a tantric concept and it is this philosophy which has given it a new maturity”, said P.T. Reddy.

He used his own symbols and designs, with a new style to convey the message in a more simple form. Even I use squares, circles, triangles, stylized petals. All these exist in the universe and I use them.

“Tantra just does not mean Shakti, Bindu, which is why I love nature though I am aware while I use new and independent symbols to introduce my vision and my philosophical understanding of the objects, there may be many people who may consider them non-traditional arbitrary in nature.

- Indians have known tantric arts for nearly two thousand years. Both the Hindu tantra and Buddhist tantra are old and date back to the Harappa and Mohenjodaro period. To this day many prominent pictures on tantra are available in China and Japan.
- P.T. Reddy says that many of the mythological figures and picture in geometrical form found in Rome and Greece are various forms and expressions of Tantric art. Tantric art was earlier done on “Mother Stone” followed later by slates made of wood metal and stones.
- It has been observed by many that Reddy, a pioneer in Indian modern art, combines both the figurative and the abstract while creating new styles and provocative designs. Yet he retains the grassroots of traditional Indian arts. This according to him is the liberating force and guiding factor.
- “If my works are studied in their totality, said Reddy, then perhaps the observer will feel the works and symbols speak clearly my ideas and my philosophy. Of course putting it naturally, I may have succeeded well with a few works and may be a few are bad and may not reflect my ideas exactly. But I am satisfied and I am what I am.
- P.T. explained that he is not a literary man (with erudite words of explanation at his command) said that he followed his own concept of Tantric art, which was neither traditional nor neo-tantra.
- He experimented with form, space and colour within a geometric pattern, the chakra or Mandala and whether the outcome was abstract, geometric or realistic his assessment of the painting was based on “Whether it is reacting to him or not”.
- An arresting painting “movement of sperm” with its confident sweeps of nappy blue on a bright yellow back ground, the whole in a circle bordered with green.
- The painting of the same name done a year earlier is also evocative, though the colours are more muted and the sweep less aggressive.
- Variations on a theme are as characteristic of art as of poetry and the way footprints appear and re-appear in “foot prints on moon” would make an interesting alley way for a serious student of Reddy’s symbolism. While grey and green and academic tantric patterns dominate paintings such as “Birth of Sound” totally contrasting explosions of orange freakow in others like “Artha, Dharma, Kama, Moksha”. The more abstract paintings speak a more eloquent and subtle language.
- “Nehru and Philosopher”, in which Nehru, incongruously crowned and looking more like a melancholy learner than his debonair self, appears framed in squares of white, blue and red with

an ominous black spiral crawling out of an eye. The work 'Raja Gopalachary' with pencil sketches caught up in a jarring Tantric web and another which purpose to show the link between the village and modern industry, would seem to depict the impact of the contemporary (and transient) on the painter's psyche.

- More mysterious and painterly (if the expression can pass muster) are "Sri Chakra" and intaglio print in orange and violet. With its quiet suggestion and Surya, in which sieves, baskets and wood coated with sawdust are used to sculpture a vision that allows the view space and freedom of interpretation.
 - The Hindy, November 10, 1989
- The works are varied in appeal the work of PT Reddy, a doyen among artists, from Andhra Pradesh was in the "Tantric Style" depicting an industrial wheel and a laboratory atmosphere with fest tubes, puppets and so on symbolizing scientific and Industrial advancement of the country.

TANTRA

The paintings are graphic symbols religious, social, political and even erotic. It seems that Reddy has made free use of iconography for creating fresh combinations of imagery, comprising motifs of Gods, people and places and giving them a symbolic significance relating it to our own times. For example, his 'Shakti' a political chair or science and industry.

He weaves certain accepted symbols with symbols of his own creation. Their truth or meaning, however, is meant to lie in the subjective in sights they include in the spectator. The works vary from diagrams of world-image to illustrative symbols of events and ideas executed with a remarkable linear fluency. The however, illustrate ideas which are Indian rather than 'Tantrik' as he professes. For where Tantra involves emotion, the imagery becomes conceptual.

The works represent the highly intellectualized and outward looking aspects of Indian world – image at the point where it is perhaps at its weakest in relation to modern scientific constructs and changing socio-political values. They are least connected to 'Tantra' Philosophy and concepts such as for instance "The Universal Subtle Body" etc. Most of the paintings are interminglings of Mandala

Yantric and conceptual diagrammatic elements in a multi-stylistic approach incorporating geometric, symbolic and naturalistic features. There are overlapping forms of differing rhythms conceived, perhaps for reproducing a kind of resonance they must have produced before. Some of the works superficially recall the image of a “Mandala”, possessing its three basic properties.

- A centre, symmetry and cardinal points, wherein the first principal is common and the later two vary according to the nature of the ‘Mandala’. This is quite obvious in Reddy’s works, for, they combine the complex, formalistic variety, with the rhythms of the ‘Mandala’ process, through in provocative designs. But unlike the various interacting elements of the Mandala, which aid the individual’s concentrating process. Reddy’s images are visual constructs that are more in the nature of symbolic illustrations than the vehicle of the process for reflection and meditation.
- Patriot – Geometry of distortion – Patriot 2nd December 1990 – P.N. Mango.

The works of PT Reddy give a momentary escape from the stultified world of modern art of today. It’s live moving from the imitative to real art. Here is an artist who, while firmly tooted to his milieu, exploits with great dexterity geometrical forms to put across his understanding of things. A sensitive artist, he follows tradition but is not a verse to contemporary European influence. Folk art and post-impressionism merge in his works. The artist has evolved a tantric vocabulary and uses it to re-interpret the mythological, scientific and erotic aspects of life. Reddy has been a student of sculpture, both traditional and contemporary. He sculpts in wood in his free time. He has also worked as an Art Director for films and has his own furnishing business. These aspects have had a direct bearing on his altitude to art and its function. Whatever else its role, the decorative and aesthetic sides of art are important for him.

Tantra a philosophy the artist has been pre-occupied with since 1969 and a system that has given him the freedom of expression. He uses it with great skill to turn the familiar and the ordinary into something exotic and new. In frame after frame one sees his unmistakable touch. Common objects and activities of aim great design value. Once he decides to bring them on canvas. The sexual union of man and woman becomes a delicate floral pattern for him.

The birth of Ganesha as a consequence of the union of Shiva and Shakti becomes an exquisite aesthetical configuration gaining in compositional, iconographic and formal interest. In a painting of Krishnaleela, the gopis alternate with Krishna in a circle of face conveying a merger of identities. In

the centre of the same frame, the artist sums up the theme through symbolic essentials that are not without their erotic side. Every painting has an independent design value. Repetitive images of Gandhi for instance, stand together to spell his various movements within the simplicity of the total design.

- Surinder K. Datta – Variety Sunday Mail – January 6, 1991.
- The paintings and graphics are characterized by severe symmetry balance and impeccable design. His lingam and the symbol of Shiva are among the finest realization of the kind. A village street drama is Yaksha gana with leather colours. Others are emblems like the inca or maya creations and recreations of images. Om with (1972) Swastik is a burning apex of Reddy's works in the symbolic genre. The section of an onion, another sample of the purely international modern idiom.
- In 1989, the CCMB here invited stalwarts in the field from different parts of the country and arranged an artistic camp for 10 days. The driving spirit behind this institution is Mr. P.M. Bhargava who believes that art and science both being creative, are correlated VST Collaborated.

COMPOSITIONS

His first painting 'Roof' is now no more a part of his collection.

Large scale multi-figured compositions emphasizing the veridical in altitude and the typical in expression.

One of his latest large-scale composition typifies the enthusiasm of workers who in factories as in all other points of production strive steadily to increase the quantity and improve the quality of output.

- The artists makes skillful use of colour in focusing the attention of the on looker on the glow in the furnaces.
- This composition marks a culminate point in the artists creation in full development.

- The subject of the picture its compositional realization, the somber shades, masterly execution, the solid pictorial texture of the garments.
- This composition marks a culminant point in the artists creation in full development.
- (family) The subject of the picture , its composition realization, the somber ‘museum painting’ shades, masterly execution, the solid pictorial texture of the garments and of every detail of each figure the result of an art that has reached full maturity make this canvas a most valuable composition of contemporary painting.
- The farmer as the in asses, as the central them of the composition, is brought out in dashing, dynamic style, accentuating the dramatic tension of the struggle. A important role is played by choice of colour, which is skillfully subordinate to the demands of the subject, giving strong expressiveness to the general dramatic atmosphere.
- Artist has committed to the vast areas of monumental painting his taste for social and historical scenes. Renouncement of anything rhetorical in plastic, expression gives a touch of the epic even to ease paintings of scenes of every day life.
- Outstanding gifts as draughtsman, his ability to delve deep into the mysteries of the human soul, his discreet yet lively coloring and expressive style in modeling forms, dashing personal vision with attractive chromatic harmonies.
- During the period, social thematics assumed a more important role in the artist sought a closer approach to simple folk & their daily worries & difficulties.
- Fishermen, country artisans with a sincerity, trueness – to – life and even tender feeling which imbrued them with deep & vibrant human qualities. These qualities are also in a composition using horizontal lines which widen the visual field; the figures reveal gravity of gesture & expression which gives the work a solem character. Nudes were a favourite theme with him offering him scope for his qualities as a draughtsman and colourist. They revealed purity of line & subtle association of colour. Against a background of – shows a pyramidal group of nudes which brings out the classical qualities of the artist’s draughtsman ship and his sense of arabesque balance & rhythm. Depth of dramatic feeling and mastery of artistic means makes one of – master pieces.
- The figure of the worker is vigorously modeled, with sharp outlines and discreet colouring; it is able individualized, showing the personage wrapped in thought.
- Within the confines of limited spaces he achieved landscapes of exuberant chromatic brilliances, such as – among so many others.
- It has a captivating liveliness and freshness of colour. The brilliant yellowish green of the ground, the flowers showing above the grey, brown & whitish fences, the multi-coloured dresses of the women, all are harmoniously blended in full light and gleam like enamel is one of the artist’s brightness, liveliest works.

- Attracted by rural scenes, by the country folks impressed by the feelings and passions so clearly readable in their countenance, movements & attitudes the artist spent many years in the countryside. There he studied the environment & produced some of his best compositions in this genre, work revealing remarkable merits in draughtsmanship colour & composition.
- The composition combines realistic draughtsmanship with a wealth of bright colours introducing a lively, buoyant note.
- During the period between – they served to enrich his vision as a colourist.
- Apply and realistically caught these paintings are full of life & freshness, they are typical of the artists gifts of observation & expression.
- Activity in the sphere of decorative painting as an illustrator of folk legends episodes from the country's heroic past scenes from peasant life –
- Outstanding representative of Indian painting in the first half of the present century, especially during the early stages of his career, depicted a variety of aspects typical of the period.
- This combative attitude was particularly manifest in his works of graphic arts.
- A predilection for scenes of peasant life, one of the people & strict observance of fact, rendered in simple compositions achieved by means of vigorous, expressive draughtsmanship & sober colouring free of garishness.
- A draughtsman possessing an un questionable artistic gift, he uses heavily weighted brush which becomes an instrument of construction in relief. The theme is accurately envisaged and sincerely expressed is one of his favourite motifs, depicts a typical scene from the life of misery formerly led by working peasants.

Composition

- Clearly demonstrate the artist's consummate mastery of synthesis & expression in draughtsmanship.
- Displaying inexhaustible chromatic fantasy with warm, lively shades, they add a personal note figure composition – by choice of subject as well as originality of treatment.
- PT belongs to the generation of painters who have grown unprofessionally in the spirit of the J.J.School. From the out set he proved to possess qualities which he placed in the service of a versatile range of themes.
- Treating a wide variety of significant aspects in his compositions.

- From the artistic viewpoint the canvas impresses by virtue of composition and draughtsmanship as well as by remarkable aptness in choice of colour.
- These qualities contribute to give graphic description of the heroine's character which combines daring willfulness with cool judgment.
- The composition relying on sound draughtsmanship & mid palette which expresses the high – spiritedness of the characters, is clear & significant.
- From his very beginnings proved himself an able draughtsman, many of his sketches revealing an aptitude for sizing up natural objects at a glance. His early works reveal a spontaneous, sensitive nature, later disciplined by earnest technical preoccupations.
- Then in 1955, after a gap of 10 years, Reddy started painting again. He received awards at Hyderabad art society's Annual exhibition. This is the dialectic of the art world – survival versus revival – the tenacity of the body as opposed to the delicacy of rejuvenating aspirations. And P.T. Reddy in his 75th year, is a crusader in his own way, the LTG Art Gallery held an exhibition to bridge a gap of eight-nine years since his last exhibition.
- One could see at a panoramic glance the brilliant and muted, the ethnic and geometric surface arrangements of Reddy's work. The palette is contrasting or unified the candour is almost overlooked in viewing the pattern like tantric conceptions. A picture of wine and one rupee coin form the fore ground and back ground of a painting in paste shades with a man and women sandwiched earthily between these.
- Reddy's eyes gleam under his snow hair I am not a distortionist. Not a gambler. not gimmickry. My work has value for the aesthetician. I believe in the international pool of art.
- "My tantric paintings are communicated in a simple, graphic manner". Colour and visual puns, as well as "unique textural techniques make them sing for themselves. I may leave Tantra. Any day I cannot say anything with certainty".
- "My work has always been appreciated be her abroad.
- He appreciate the beauty of women, who in his works passed through stages of sensuous and sensual elaboration while the toilet depicts a maiden bathing, attended by two others (it is very Indian in spirit and execution the model and artist, vibrant with colours is more suggestive. Then, there is the Moon and woman the outline is tant, but it contains and suggests a pneumatic form. Yet the colour is significantly independent of the form.
- His paintings are characterized by a delicate grace only faintly tinged with melancholy.
- Some of his pictures reveal not only a brilliant draughtsman but a painter who is able to disregard the outline and express volume by colour.
- "The richer the colours, the more solid the forms" ceyannes dictum: Modigliani, Y. Sonabel, 1958. Cat.No. 5931/0.
- It is the contrast of light and shade of flesh standing out against the shadowy background which gives density to the volumes, determines the contours of the elongated bodies, and

captures, not the instantaneous, incidental movement, but the most characteristic and permanent attitude. The outlines are idealized deliberately stretched, simplified, or deformed to illustrate in a definitive and penetrating image the essential rhythms of the human body.

- Some are characteristic examples of an art which puts subjective feeling before accuracy of representation or the restraints of objectivity. Bold exaggeration and distortion are used by the expressionists to reach the highest emotional and expressive pitch.
- He developed a free and spontaneous painting technique which enabled him to work at speed. His brush work is remarkably flexible and varied, sometimes board and weeping, sometimes fragmented and sparkling. Occasionally he used the handle of the brush to scratch through the paint surface and create a more broken textured effect.
- Many of them have a richly encrusted surface, the paint dragged and superimposed, layer upon shimmering layer.

MOON LANDING

The Hindu, Sunday, Dec. 12, 1993.

- He feels that an artist can never remain apart from the society he lives in his art must reflect the life around him. He responds to events through his art whether they are happy ones or turbulent happenings. The historic step of man when he landed on the moon in 1969 inspired Reddy to evolve a vocabulary of his own born out of the synthesis of the cosmic and the mundane and enabled him to paint almost canvases on the subject.
- Man conquered moon in 1969 and it was that historical step and giant stride of mankind that inspired Reddy to take up Tantra art. He has made a series on this subject and has been working at a remarkable place. He has conceived and successfully produced well over tow hundred works of which around 50 are sculptures, the rest are painting and graphics.
- Perhaps, that is why the sensitive soul in him was hurt when man conquered the invisible moon. In his 25 paintings entitled 'Moon series', his message is loud and clear. He looks upon this win as an end to romanticism, myth and magic with which the moon was always associated with.
- In footprints on the moon the artist, simplified the local overtones to give a fine modernist mystery.

POLITICAL SERIES

“An artist cannot work in isolation, he is influenced by his own environment, the political cross-currents, the pressures and the agitations that come and go. “An Artist wants to convey his visual experience of things around him and the perspective of seeing things differs from person to person. A true artist goes into an unexplored area of the incident or the subject and gets a visual experience that he conveys on a canvas” says Pakal Tirumala Reddy, an eminent artist.

- How does he “catch this spirit” and develop his symbols? Reddy talks of the vulture that eats human flesh and he has used the vulture as a symbol of politician “who wants to make money by squeezing innocent people”. A chair will represent a seat of power which can be used to put a person behind bars or even for a mass murder.
- “I believe as an artist, I have a special obligation to record history. I have to react to my surroundings, as indeed every man, woman and child does”.
- On his canvas he had starkly drawn the fight for power, which is symbolized by the vultures, fighting over a dead carcass.
- While discussing the current political sceneries, PT Reddy appears dejected. He said “The political arena is in a total shambles, there is absolutely no decency or honesty, for there is nothing but a bloody battle for power”, he adds bitterly.
- His painting depicts his emotions better. His versatility comes out in them, while at one point he beautifully captures the sensuous earthy quality of the bathing girls at the other he captures the Hamlet conflict in the eyes of Nehru. “Nehru was a great leader who loved beauty, a true philosopher, but at the same time a man who craved for the crown and the staff”.
- PT Reddy, feels “an artist is a part and parcel of the society for his roots are with reality”.
- Assorted though, his works from the Andhra situation to the congress crisis embodies his point of view and his vision which he can be proud of . a protagonist of the Art Movement in India and a loyal son of Andhra, P.T. Reddy has given the best of his life in trying to guide and shape it. Deeptha Palaniswamy.
- His series on Jawaharlal Nehru is significant. It is a kind of invocation to a dynamic leader, signifying, the gradual unfolding of Nehru’s mental makeup and spiritual growth. The series sparkles with the imprint of true inspiration.

A earliest style of painting:

He had received an academic training during his BA. Initially he had just copied some of the modern and ancient art like Ajanta, Rajput and Moghul miniatures and even banzar art. He was in the process of acquiring a mastery over drawing before he could think of assimilating the modern idiom. It was more or less a period of warming up for him.

In the late 30's he came out with a series of water colours and temperas in which the tradition of India Art in which he grew up are alike with the melodious rhythms of line as R.V. Leyden wrote about him; these deal in a delightfully candid manner with the home life of rural folk of the Telengana region. These same people with their prominent facial features also figure in his later paintings where he adopted some of the European techniques, which he admits his admiration for Modigliani, Chagall, Dufy, Picasso, Vangogh, Gangin and even Dali and takes ideas from techniques. He is much too independent to imitate them. As our everyday life is influenced in every aspect by western ideas, it is impossible that art alone can remain untouched and in fact art in general is international, according to Reddy. Reddy as a student of the J.J. School and as a young freelance painter, later explored all media and styles. His subject ranged from lush rural landscapes to rain drenched cityscapes to harlots and portraits of noble men and women.

While attempting at figurative compositions he had his own subject matter/content from his own surroundings or from stories like Jataka stories. He had a strong linear quality in his figures and treatment it is a blend of traditional Indian painting Ajanta and miniature painting. Treatment of colours are harmonious and flat. The figures generally are placed against the lifted background. With a rhythmic Gestures of the figures in the composition. Both drawings paintings reveal an artistic merit, they are conceived in sober lines of subdued dramatism, free of superfluous rhetoric's and having high moral tone.

He had produced an admirable set of water colours which by dint of realism and ample, expressive, luminous composition prove the artist's qualities of colourist.

(Landscapes) Well constructed and plastically compact landscapes, light softens outline and adds a touch of poetry by subtle variation, even the shadows have their own colouring jagged out lines are absent, but there is a admirable harmony in colour, typical of the atmosphere and picturesque of

scenery. The clear, transparent tones classical of the vast sky, the quivering reflection of the trees and boats in the waters of the lake, the reposeful character of the scene give the painting its charm.

PERSONALITY AND CONCLUSION

A multidimensional artist, daringly defiant in attitudes and perceptions, seventy – eight years old Reddy is direct and unambiguous in appeal and is involved in art for arts sake and the commercial side or signatures never bother him. He lays equal stress on creativity and aesthetics. His line is fluid, delineating the form and the feeling clearly, while his colours are warm. Vibrant and sensuous reflecting his joy in creation. Synchronization of colours are important to him whether they are bright or soft. The Hindu, Sunday, Dec, 212, 1993.

Selection of his works through sixty years to the benefit of the art lovers of Madras in Heritage. Alliance Francaise.

But a retrospective such as Reddy's allows one to see beyond the surface of the canvas at the various streams that have contributed to the evolution of the art of a country. Weekend Newstime – Sunday, March 11, 1990, J.S. Rao.

These were not analytical painters who probed for hidden meanings, nor were they the cerebral brand who expressed themselves through puns or double extenders. Their's was a simple, observing approach that contained a down to earth reverence for life and for the technique of their chosen medium. Retrospective exhibition of paintings and sculptures by old masters of the Bombay Art Society at Nehru Centre, Jan. 22, The Sunday Observer – Kamala Kapoor.

In the midst of the house P.T. Reddy always to be found with either a chisel or a brush in his hands. But his zeal is that of a 20 year old as he speaks about his plans. It looks as though he is dreaming and one wonders how many of his dreams would be fulfilled. But in his life Reddy has always achieved his dreams.

- Is a new experience in his search for aesthetic pleasure and technical perfection.
- His technical procedures have led to the discovery of a remarkable range of forms and colour effects which compel the viewers to get involved in his art. The forms that have been caught up in these paintings are those which are not usually seen. They have emerged during the artist's painting process. "When we apply black oil on plain canvas and give it a water colour coat in white we get certain transparent forms or lines from the bottom" says the artist. Colour has been introduced whenever some space is found. 15 of the exhibits have been painted in black and white and the rest in pleasing colors.
- "Reddy feels that any painting defeats itself when it ceases to be a source of joy".
- Hindustan Times "The Evening News, Tuesday, 19, 1978 by Swadesh Arora.
- There is no story telling nor recording of any actions, nor even any known forms of figures in his recent paintings but still they hold the viewers because of their strong aesthetic appeal.
- Reddy compares his recent art to classical music which in his opinion is neither expression nor communication but pure exploration of the technicalities of art. His love for technical virtuosity made him work in almost all the "isms" and ways of expressions, eg. Abstractions.
- Expressed abstracts, the merit of these works rests on the interrelationship and balance of shapes, form and tone or colour, some sort of repetition is inevitable in such a scheme as the one chosen by this redoubtable artist.

In spite of this, Reddy succeeds in relating to each work and achieved a certain degree of excellence.

Reddy says he was originally a realist, after a period he became an impressionist and later and expressionist. "Finally, I want to enter into a contemporary tantric style. I use this expression as a symbol, not in its literary sense. In art, I confront a canvas that will not yield to spiritualism, but only to symbolism, he says.

"Generally speaking, beauty in art is not natural beauty that is pleasing to an untrained eye. I present a new vision and a new thought on a canvas as a piece of art. This is an experience that is sublime. If a person can look into the painting and have similar experience, he will naturally derive immense happiness.

“Unless the creative urge is communicated, it becomes a waste. The expression may be different, but it has to be communicated”. Reddy calls painting “A silent Voice” which should be taken as “a visual language” different from the language of communication we are normally accustomed to. The sense of aesthetics should develop in the observer, but we cannot blame the people who are not accustomed to this language. “After all, as a painter I should get something that the lens cannot catch”. He is still not satisfied with his attempts at catching his spirit and he regards himself to be still exploring. “I have to explore from within myself to be able to see the outside world better”.

Recalling his early difficult days, Reddy says “my struggle for my own development in art was increasing day by day and I was constantly working either on painting, sculpture or graphics. Even today I work hard and my interest is in working.

With a brush in his hand and marks of dry paint on his shirt, he works diligently on the canvas. A form emerges and he looks critically from all angles. Totally satisfied, he sets aside his work, and turns back. “To me art is a visual reflection of prevailing culture”, he says. This septuagenarian artist Pakala Tirumal Reddy or PTR has come a long way in field of painting now. From childhood, colours and forms always attracted him and to satisfy this inner urge he fled from home to join a school in Hyderabad with the assistance of his drawing teacher. The turning point in his life was the drawing of Lord Baden Powel, which he drew in a Boy scout junction and which besides appreciation also earned him a scholarship to continue his art studies further. Thus, being from village in Karimnagar had the good fortune to join the illustrious J.J.School of Arts in Bombay.

Working for long hours is PT Reddy’s hobby. He experiments with impressionism. Post impressionism and abstract styles of painting. Whether is is a mythological subject or a historical one he usually gives it a touch of modern art. And when it comes to expressing romantic love and pastoral settings, he wisely makes use of the Rajput and Ajanta styles.

The artist is well aware of the trends in the world art scene. He is equally in tune to the changing necessities and priorities of life in the nineties. He also knows that there are artists who sell more because of ‘Signatory’ value, yet he stays unperturbed. Economic security at the expense of artistic integrity is not for him. A sign of great spiritual strength perhaps. This candid, humble and down to

earth person is an excellent artist and also a great human being. Surinder K. Datta – Variety – Sunday Mail – Jan. 6, 1991.

P.T. Reddy has evolved a tantric vocabulary and uses it to interpret the mythological scientific and erotic aspects of Indian life. Reddy's popularity notwithstanding, he is not one of those artists who sell their work for cash.

A classicist turned modernist, Reddy has transgressed from one powerful medium to another, with remarkable ease. He has painted many canvases to keep up with the changing trends and content of Indian art. They vary from one genre to another, from one 'ism' to another, so as to have a firm grip on form, space and colour – and to broaden his outlook and vision. And they comprise figurative composition abstracts, political scenario, moon-landing tantric lose, etchings, all experiments in form, space, colour and sculptures.

From the sweet innocence of self portraits to the still life's a went on to the nudes and plaster casts of realistic emphasis, as was the vogue then. But the artist thereafter turned gradually towards expressionism as he hardened or toughened his attitudes. Slowly parochial or provincial world or psychic environment got to be dominated by the painters slashing knife. Far from derivative or common. But all through his growth and evolution an artist, P.T. Reddy had the courage and integrity to resist the influences he adores, but cannot assimilate, Cezanne, Vangogh, Gaugin, Ronault, Braque, Motisse and Picasso. He admires them all. Yet at the same time, his academic attainments, his tempestuous artistic temperament, his feelings for the soil where he belongs, have all produced an idiom that in at once painterly virile and authentic. All born out of his birth and background, as the son of a farmer. A number of Reddy's works, thus reflect how deeply Indian culture is inter-linked with agriculture.

The village Panchayat (1956), women milking (1963), Peasant Couple (1964), and Gossip in the train (1990) to name a few, show how rural life is a recurring theory in our contemporary art and how it has all been affected by changes – fragmentation and emigration.

To use an oft-repeated cliché “Art knows no boundaries”, is particularly true of P.T. Reddy . he has transcended all barriers to emerge triumphant as a true artist in his own right. He has eloquently demonstrated through the medium of his own work that it is possible for a creative artist to experiment freely within the format of tradition. He has truly surpassed the cultural dilemmas and overcome the aesthetic specialism in his works.

- Today he is the doyen among South Indian artists. He belongs to that class of artists whose work endures for all time because it is a product of values that are indestructible.
- Art will flourish only when there is harmony between the individual and the society. “Reddy’s pictures are thus the result of a deep involvement as a man, of his intense awareness of the recurrent acts of violence around him.
- Alliance Française in Madras, organized by the Heritage Gallery. Deeptha Palanisamy – Indian Express – Sunday, November 21, 1993.
- As an artist, P.T. Reddy was determined to be different and so he is. He followed no particular style or school of thought as such. A number of desperate surroundings can be detected in his work. Yet, what finally emerges from his efforts is something essentially his very own. Says he, “I give expression to inner carvings, and I am unable to identify myself with any school of thought”. Yes, his work is definitely not for those who look only for style, and not spirit or substance in art.

One of the greatest artists encompasses the arts of painting, sculpture, architecture and even poetry.

Retrospective exhibition in the honour the artist on his completion of sixty years. An illustrated catalogue with an introduction by Mr. Bartholomew an eminent art critique.

Sri P.T.Reddy, a man of courage, comes from an agriculturist-family. He developed an irresistible courage, comes from an agriculturist- family. He developed an irresistable passion to become an artist, even from child hood, which made him to peruse this faculty in spite of a staunch opposition of his parents and relatives. He obtained P.J.Reddy memorial scholarship for five years with the help of late Rajabahadur venkat Rama Reddy and joined the sir , J.J. school of arts, ,Bombay. After successful completion of his diploma in first class, he got the much coveted fellowship of the sir J.J.school of arts, as early as 1942,which was acclaimed as the most outstanding one, not only by the eminent Indian critics like Dr. Vijayachandrapal, Dr. Vyas and Sri karl J khandalawala but also foreign critics like R.V.leyden, Herman Goetz, Slazenser, Bralvi etc.

He was responsible to lead a progressive movement in Bombay as early as 1940, which was the first creativity and thus became the father of Modern Movement in India. He has to his credit of bringing out a portfolio of his works, consisting of colour plates, half-tone plates and drawings, which is the first of its kind ever published in the country.

He is very emotional by his temperament and does not care for the consequences, if he is convinced of rightness and priority of his actions. He resigned the fellow –ship of the Sir J.J School of arts, Bombay, a

rare distinction at the time of the quit India movement, incurring the displeasure of Mr. Gerard who had evinced great interest and love and admiration towards him. Consequently he had to undergo many hardships for his survival, accepting all odd jobs and finally had to leave Lahore, where he was working as an Art director in a film studio, due to participation, with great difficulty. He was compelled to direct his attention towards business for 10-12yrs, after coming to Hyderabad, keeping his creative urge suppressed, until his wife took up an appointment as a lecturer in osmania university in 1953 after that he again took to his creative activity with a renewed vigor, simultaneously bridging a no small gap of 12 years of his work.

He never sacrificed his convictions or techniques for the sake of others unlike the fragile artists. He often says that whether it is right or wrong, good or bad ,modern or traditional one must have firm conviction and confidence in one's own work and honest to his own self, however unfashionable it may look to be .then the outcome will be universal in appeal, though temporarily it may not receive due response.

Sri P.T.Reddy, for his out ward appearance may look harsh in his approach, at times rugged in his attitude and disagreeable, unpredictable and irrepressible eccentric. But beneath this he has a soft and kind heart, a helping nature, an intense liking for artists, affirm believer of sincere and hard work, which qualities can be discerned by a close association with him. He believes in development of artists as a community and quite often his attempts towards this aim are misunderstood that he is arrogant and assertive.

He has been associated with number of art organisations in the state and has been elected as a fellow of the Andhra Pradesh Lilith Kala academy. He was a member of its executive board for some time .He has been doing a great service to the cause of art and artists.

I believe that by doing this research on his work who struggled and suffered and gave his heart and life to the cause of art and whose prodigious contribution brings glory not only to the state and the country but becomes universal in appeal. If the proper study of mankind is considered study of man himself then surly the study and development of modern movement in the country is the study of P.T.Reddy'S life and work. It's his contribution to the art of our country and will inspire the Young and upcoming artists.

D.Doraiswamy, Honorary Secretary,A.P. Council of artists, Hyderabad.

K. Rajaiah,President,Lalit samiti, Siddipet.

P.R.Raju,Honorary general secretary,Bharat Kalaparishat,Hyd.

Srihari Bholekar,Honorary secretary, Hyderabad art society, Hyd.

Presentation Certificate



CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that

Prof. R. Lakshmi Reddy

has presented paper on “Ritual Art of Tantra (Vantra, Chakra and Body and Mandala)”
during Second International Seminar,

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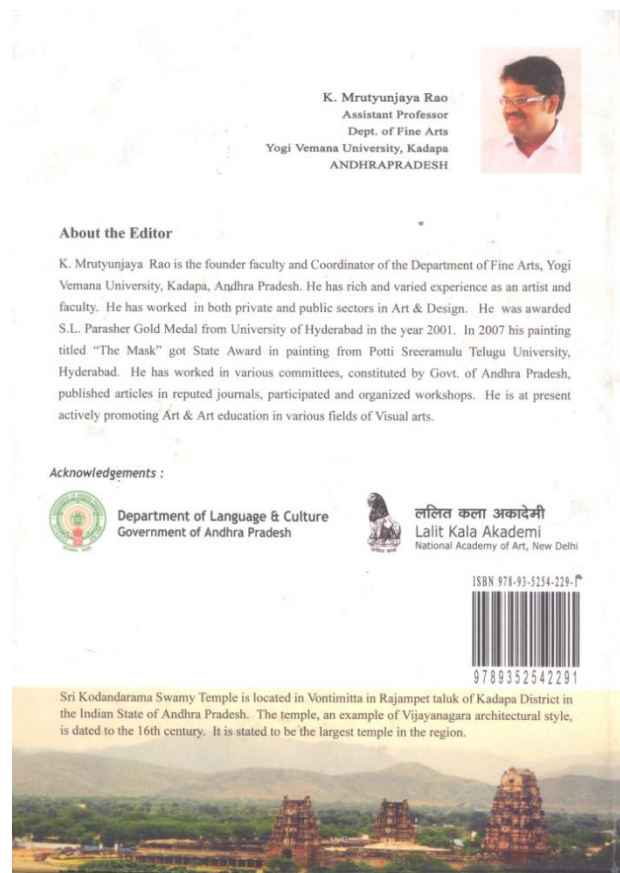


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expressions .Outer side the rim of a circle a lacy intertwining floral patterns are present around the four portals celestial palaces and fortresses are built. There are celestial fires and swirls of clouds are around the deities which are symbolic. Centre of mandala is the cosmic zone represented in form of lotus as the seat of the *vajrasattva*, embodiment of the supreme wisdom it's a place of union with sakti in an infinite ocean of joy. This is a representation of cosmos, reflecting its process as a synergic form, the cycles of elements, and harmoniously integrated opposites within itself like kinetic and static, the earthy and the ethereal. Followers of Tantra treats his senses and emotions as assets to be turned to a special kind of account. Life contains positive experiences which can be put to use. The followers from dark negative depths of ignorance are put to unfold the self and expand. Just like a lotus plants grow in the darkness of mud and gradually blossom out to the surface of the water, unsoiled by mud and water which nourished

them, so the inner self transcends and transforms itself beyond. In relationship of art to ritual it is evident that these forms become the mediators of self-enlightenment. It is a cycle taking us from art to ritual and back, thus making it as a social function and keeping the tradition going for the times to come.

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GLOSSARY

ALVA ---- votary of Siva.

A GAKTI--- The Primal Energy.

ADHIKARA--- A disciple's com-petency to practise spiritual discipline. Inv

AGAMAS — Traditional religious texts of non-Vedic origin often associated with Saivism.

AGAMAS--- Sacred tantric scriptures.

AJAPA MANTRA--- The involuntary repetition of a sacred formula.

AJRJA CHAKRA----- Centre between eyebrows in the subtle body.

AKAA--- Generally, ether, a kind of matter subtler than air.

also, the divine consort of Siva.11;

ANAHATA CHAKRA---- The heart centre in the subtle body.

ANAHATA SABDA---- Unstruck sound.

ANANDA---- Essential principle of joy, bliss, spiritual ecstasy.

ANIMA-----Power to become small as a.1 atom through yoga.

ANTRA---- A form symbol, aid to contemplation, geometrical representation of a deity.

AP, the material element of water.

ARDHANAREVARA--- The andro-gynous form of Siva.

ASANA--- One of the energies that goes downwards, controlling the vital air in the abdominal region.

ASANA---- Steady posture, yogic pose, and poise.

ASRAMA--- A hermitage or dwelling place dedicated to spiritual pursuits.

AUM---- The three sounds which compose the root mantra, Om (q.v.).

AVADHUTA---- A rebel renunciatic.

AVATARA---- A divine Incarnation.

AYURVEDA---- Ancient Indian medi-cal system based on the Vedas.

BINDU---- Dot: a sacred symbol of the universe in its un-manifested form, in tantra also equated with semen.

BANDHA---- Muscular flexion, yogic practice in which certain or-gans of the body are 'locked' in a position.

BC-AD 100).

BHAIRAVA---- Destructive aspect of Siva.

BHOGA---- Enjoyment.

BHUKTI — Enjoyment, domination, a practical goal in Tantrism.

BHUTA----- Any of the five elemental conditions of matter.

BHUTADI----- Rudimentary matter devoid of any physical substance.

BIJA MANTRA----A seed sound for-mula corresponding to a parti-cular psychic potentiality. Tantra texts state that the universe has evolved out of the fifty original bija nvntras which correspond to the fifty letters of the Sanskrit alphabet.

BliAGASANA-----'Vulva pose', a secret sexo-yogic posture in which the male member is 'locked', in prolonged erection inside the certain internal esoteric acts are performed.

BRAHMA---- The first god of the Hindu trinity, the creator. BRAHMAN, the Absolute Reality, transcendental or pure con-sciousness, not to be confused with Brahm5.

BRAHMARANDHRA---- Crown of the head.

BRAVA---- Emotion: aesthetic state or feeling which enlivens the senses, the vehicle of rasa (q.v.).

BUDDHI----The principle of in-telligence; that intelligence-stuff which reveals knowledge of the cosmic unity.

CIT-SAKTI----Consciousness as power, the supreme energy.

CITTA--- Basic mental awareness.

CAKRA — A wheel; the discus carried by Vishnu; mystical centres located in the human body.

CHAITANYA--- Pure consciousness.

CHAKRAS---- Literally 'wheel' or 'circle'; technically, the psychic centres of energy situated along Sushumni in the subtle human body, also known as padmas (lotuses).

CHAKRASANA---- A sexo-yogic circle pose.

CHEKRESVARI--- Leader of the chakra-piiji, the communal ritual of union.

CHINNAMASTA--- One of the Mahavidyis, Devi in her de-structive and creative aspect, signifying apparent dissolution and return to the First Cause.

CIORRAXASA--- Mental or physical inner space.

CIT--- The Absolute, the pure con-sciousness attributed to the knowledge of the one reality. creative aspect of the Goddess.

DAKINI -- Minor female deity; semidivine sorceress.

DAMARU---- An hour-glass shaped drum used by the Saivites.

DARSANA — Literally seeing or viewing; also used to designate various Hindu schools of worship.

DEVATA---- A form of divinity, generally male.

DEVI---- A form of female divinity, goddess, Sakti.

DIKSA — A consecration or initiation ritual.

DURGA---- Closely related to Kill, and generally identified with her. *EKAGRATA*, one-pointed.

SIVA ---- the third god of the Hindu Trinity, the Destroyer; in tant-rism, Pure Consciousness manifesting in creative union with Sakti or Prakriti.

GAYATRI MANTRA--- A sacred formula, one of the most impor-tant of all mantras.

GHANA- A bell.

GHATA--- a pot or sacred vessel.

GONYA-- Void.

GORAKHNATH---- A great rantrika siddha-i (c. Al) 112o) of the Nithas, founder of the order of the Kinphiti Yogis.

GUNA — The three qualities that make up matter, namely: sartva—knowledge and *INTELLECT*; *RAJAS* — Passion, physical and mental activity; and *tamas*—mental and physical passivity.

GUNA--- Attribute, quality; the three gulps are the substantive qualities of Nature - sattva, rajas and tamas - of which the world is composed.

GURU--- Spiritual preceptor.

HAKINI--- The Sakti who presides over the 5jria chakra.

HAMSA--- Literally a swan, used to indicate spiritual unfolding.

HATHA-YOGA----- A yoga system in-corporating bodily disciplines leading to psychic development.

IDA ---- The left subtle nadi or psychic channel, coiling round the Sushumna and ending at the left nostril.

in the pure source of feeling.

INDRIYA--- The ten faculties of sensation and perception in the body: five 'knowing' agents,

JNANENDRIYAS - Hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling; five 'action' agents,

KARMENDRIYAS - Walking, handling, speaking, pro-creation and evacuation is
TA-DEVATA--- An individual's chosen deity.

JAGADGURU---- The world teacher. Jagath, waking consciousness.

JAMBU DWEEPA--- The earth seen as the gigantic jambu (rose-apple) tree of
Mount Meru casting its protective shadow over the island which is the earth.

JAPA---- Constant repetition, either silently or audibly, of a mantra.

JIVANMUKTA----- Liberated in this life; spiritually free but still manifest in human
form.

JIVATMAN---- The individual self.

JNANA-----Self-knowledge, know-ledge of the absolute through meditation.

JYOTI---- Spiritual light, Kunclalini

KAIVALYA----- Realization of one's self as being identical with Reality.the Sakti of
the anihata chakra.

KALAGNI--- The lowest plane (bhuv-ana) of existence.

KALI--- The Divine Sakti, represent-ing the creative and destructive aspects of
nature.

KALIMUKHA— A Tantric cult cantered on the left-handed worship of Siva.

KAPATIKA —a Tantric cult cantered on the left-handed worship of Siva.

KALPA--- Aeon; a 'day' of Brahmi the creator.

KAMA----- Enjoyment, especially in love; desire as cosmic power.

KARANA---- Caine, source; wine, in tantric chakra-puja, ritual of union.

KARMA---- Action; the law of uni-versal cause and effect.

KAULA — One who performs Tantric left-handed (vanuicani) rites.

KAULA---- Left-hand' sect of tant-rism.

KHECILARI-MUDRA---- A yogic pose in which the tongue is thrust up to close the
nasal orifice.

KLAN --- Time: the power that con-ditions or limits the existence of unchangeable
elements in matter.

KLIM--- A bija mantra often used in tantric rituals.

KOSA---- Sheath; an individual human being is conceived of having five sheaths or

KOLAS. KILISEITLA---- Incarnation of Vishnu; the Divine Lover. itsm, the earth
clement.

KULARNAVA TANIRA----- All important tantra of AD 1 1 so.

KUMBHAKA---- Retention of breath during the practice of priniyama.

KUNDALINI — The latent energy located at the base of the spine. The awakening and raising of the Kundalini represent spiritual liberation (moksha).

KUNDALINI----- Dormant psychic power lying coiled up like a serpent at the base of the spine.

LAGHIMA---- Power to attain weightlessness through yogic practice.

LAKINI----- The Sakti of the maoiptira chakra.

LAKSHANA----- Auspicious sign; fea-ture of self-expression; attribute.

LATA-SADHAKA---- Tantric discipline requiring a female partner, lad. literally 'a creeper'; tint-rir tern, fors woman embrac-ing a man as the creeper en-folds a tree.

LAVA-YOGA, ---- The awakening of kundalini.

LAYA---- Merging. cessation, total dissolution.

LILA--- The divine play.

LINGA — The male generative organ, a symbol of divine creation when associated with the yoni.

LINGA---- Phallus; generative force in its creative aspect; according to Skanda Puripa, the lioga is the name for space, in which the whole universe is in the process of formation and dissolution.

LINGASARIRA----- Totality or the subtle or psychic body.

LOKA -----World, plane of existence.

LOTUS---- Symbol of purity, unfolding.

MADHU---- Honey. sacred wine.

MAHAKAIA--- An aspect of Siva, personification of the disintegrative forces of the cosmos.

MAHAMUDRA---- Sexo-yogic asana known as 'great posture' in which the practitioner sits with the left heel pressed against the perineum (yoni-place) with the right leg stretched out-ward. and holding the right foot with both hands. The nine orifices of the body are con-tracted and the chin is pressed closely into the chest (Oland-hara) for the control of the breath.

MAHAVIDYA---- Transcendental knowledge of the Nature. mArrut.INA, sexual union.

MAMSA---- Meat, one of the five M's in the tantric ritual of union.

MANAS---- Mind, the mental faculties of reasoning, assimilation.

MANDALA — A complex diagram used in ritual.

MANDALAS---- A mystic diagram of squares and circles, symbolic of cosmic forces, used as support for concentration.

MANIPURA CHAKRA---- Navel centre in the subtle body.

MANTRA — A sequence of syllables with or without meaning

MANTRA----- Sacred formula based on the principle that sound has a spiritual significance and power; incantation.

MARGA----- Path.

MATRKAS — The divine mothers; a class of goddesses; in yoga, symbols of the cakras.

MAYA---- Creative power, the limiting principle, illusion of the real nature of the world-appearance.

MERU---- The mythical mountain supporting the world, murtwiaoja; symbolically, the spine.

METHUNA---- Paired.

MIIOINR; IA ---- Concentration. on-vANA, meditation, sustained inner concentration beginning with concrete and ending with abstract awareness. nixsnA, initiation by a guru. *DIPA*, a sacred oil lamp.

MOKSA — Spiritual release or freedom.

MOKSHA---- Liberation. stoma. seal, finger gesture. yogic control (.1 certain organs as an aid to Concentration which produces psychic responses.

MOLADHARA CHAKRA--- The root chakra at the base of the spinal column in the subtle body.

MOLA-PRAKRITI--- Primordial root Energy.

MUDRA— Symbolic hand gesture; in Tantra may refer to an entire ritual.

MUKTI — The same as mokla.

MUKTI---- Liberation from the wheel of life and bondage of existence.

NADA---Motion:vibrational energy manifesting as sound, primeval and inner sound

NADA-BINDU---- Primal vibration: the seed sound out of which the universe emanates.

NADI— In yoga, channel through which energy flows through the subtle body.

NAKINT---- The presiding Sakti of the murtidhara chakra. *DAKSHINA-MARCA*, 'right-hand' path of the tantra.

NAMAHA---- Salutation.

NAMA-ROPA---- Name and form.

NARAYANA--- An aspect of Vishnu.

NICOL-- Psychic or astral nerve channel in the physical body.

NIRVANA--- Final emancipation.

NITYA — The sixteen-fold division of eternal goddesses of the Srividya School.

NIVAMA---- Control. yogic discipline of the mind and body.

NYASA----- Projection of divine entities into various parts of the body.

OJAS----Vital energy.

OM----- Seed mantra compounded of three sounds, aum. embracing all the secrets of the cosmos which are, as it were, gathered to a point within it.

PADMA---- Lotus: symbolic name of the chakras.

PAESIRIXN--- One of the six systems of Indian philosophy; its founder, the author of Vaiśeṣika-sūtra, was Kanada (c. 250

PANCHABHUTAS--- Five gross elements; earth, water, fire, air, ether or space.

PANCHARATRA--- The Vaishnava philosophy.

PARA--- Last stage of consciousness.

PARA VAK--- The unmanifest vibratory movement of cosmic ideation.

PARAM---- The supreme.

PARAMANU--- A gross atom.

PARAMPARA----- Supreme of the supreme.

PASHYANTI--- Literally. 'seeing': sound emerging towards the visible.

PASU--- One who is bound, the individual soul.

PATANJALI--- Author of the systematized treatise on Yoga-Sūtra (t. 100 Bt: AD 300).

PRAJNA---Wisdom, First Principle.

PRAKRITI--- Counterpart of Purusha; creative energy the source of objectivity referred to as the primeval female or Nature.

PRALAYA--- The end or dissolution of a cycle of aeons.

PRANA--- Life-force, the vital energy of the cosmos.

PRANAYA---- The primal sound.

PRANAYAMA---Yogic breath control.

PREMA--- Love, wherein there is no longer a distinction between the lover and the beloved.

PRITHVI ----- Earth principle.

PUJA---- Ritual worship.

PURANAS---- 'Old'; 'ancient' Hindu scriptures expounding in legendary form the powers and deeds of gods and goddesses.

PURUSHA---- Pure Consciousness. counterpart of Nature or Prakriti.

PURUSHA-PRAKRITI---- Consciousness in its relation to Nature. male-female, static-kinetic.

RAJAS--- Female seed, menstrual flow.

RAJAS--- The principle of motion, a constituent of Prakriti.

RAJASIKA--- Active quality of the mind,

RAKINI--- The iakti dominating the svadhisthna chakra, at the base of the genitals.

RASA-- Essence of thing, aesthetic delight, the substance of aesthetic experience, pleasure

RECHAKA---- Exhalation.

RETHAS--- Physical substance.

RISHI---- An inspired seer or sage. swum, originally a Vedic deity of many aspects; later mythology associates Rudra with Siva.

RUDRAGRANTHI---- One of the knots that Kumblini has to pierce in its ascent.

SAAKALPA---Personal,de-termination, resolution or will to achieve the desired goal.

SAAKILYA---- One of the major systems of Indian philosophy founded by the sage Rapa (c. 500 BC), which influenced tantrism.

SABDABRAHMAN-- The Brahman as the primal sound energy.

SAD-GURU--- A teacher of spiritual wisdom.

SADHAKA — A Tantric practitioner.

SADHAKA--- Seeker; one who is disciplined.

SADHANA — The road to spiritual emancipation or domination; ritual practice for achieving a particular goal.

SADHANA--- Spiritual discipline. sAnou, holy man.

SADHU--- Spontaneous, inborn. innate; a minor sect influenced by tantrism.

SAHAJA--- One of the mudris by which to reverse the down-ward tendency of seminal energy.

SAHASRARA CHAKRA---The psychic centre above the head, symbolized by the thousand-petalled lotus above the head where the Kuoclalini Sakti unites with Siva.

SAKTA — A devotee of divine energy (Sakti) as personified by the Goddess.

SAKTI— The divine energy that is personified as being female, the Goddess.

SAMDA-TANMATRA-- Infra-atomic sound potential.

SANNYASA---- The final stage in the pilgrimage of life which cuts the thread of all bondage.

SANSKAKA--- An imprinted im-pression or memory-trace, fruit of karmic action.

SAP: IDHABHASA--- Esoteric termi-nology of tantrism.

SARDA---- Cosmic sound.

SASAYAVASTITA- State of equilib-riutn, undifferentiated con-dition.

SASTRAS-- Sacred books of divine authority, scriptures.

SAT---Being, Pure Existence.

SAT-CHIT-ANANDA, Being Con-sciousness, Bliss. As unity; thepeak stage of realization.

SATTVA--- The highest of the guoas,principle of equ ilibrium, truth, purity.

SAYASANA-- The 'corpse'-like yogic posture for complete re-laxation.

SIDDHA — A yogin who has acquired or supranormal powers, sorcerer.

SIDDILASANA--- One of the most important yogic postures.

SIDDHL---- Acquisition of paranormal powers, fruits of yogic prac-tices but not their ultimate aim.

SNIFOL--- A gross.

SOMA--- A certain type of vine from which wine was made; an intoxicating drink known in Vedic times.

SP110TAVA'DA--Concept of sound. sipsirt I, creation.

SRICAKRA— A sacred diagram consisting of nine triangles and representing the

SRIVIDYI— A particular mantra; sacred knowledge of the Goddess; a cult dedicated to the Goddess.

SRIYANTRA— Same as Sricakra; a sacred diagram consisting of nine triangles and representing the creative aspect of the Goddess.

SRUTI— Hearing, sacred knowledge of the Vedas.Vidyiatrue knowledge; in Tantrism, a specialized type of divine or esoteric knowledge.

SUM'S--- Nectar.

SUSNUMTIA--- The subtle channel in the centre of the spinal column through which the Kuuclalini rises.

SVADISHTHANA CHAKRA---The chakra at the base of the genital organ in the subtle body.

SVANIT-- The terminal word of sonic mantras.

SWRI--- Spiritual peace.

TAKT1, kinetic aspect of the Ultimate Principle; the power that permeates all creation;

TANMATHAS--- Infra-atomic energy potentials.

TANTRA-- One of a series of scriptures that emphasize practical ways of self-enlightenment, especially relating to the power of Sakti.

TANTRIKA--- One who follows the discipline of tantra.

TAPA-- Self-discipline.

TARILTA-- The material body, substance.

TARPANA--- Libation of water allowed to fall from the palm of the hand.

TATTVA--- 'Thatness'.

TATTVAJNANA--- Knowledge of Nature, of all powers and principles.

TAWAS--- Power of inertia; the lowest of the three gunas.

TEJAS--- Fire, heat, energy. the iakti presiding over the viiuddha chakra located in the subtle body.

TRATAKA--- To look at the space between the eyebrows, or to gaze without any blinking, concentrating the vision on a single point or object.

TRETI-YUGA-- Dvipara-yuga, and K5fi-yuga, the present age of mankind.

TRIKONA--- A triangle.

UPANA-- The upward movement of vital life-force in privayama.

UPANISHADS----Spiritual doctrines of ancient Indian philosophies composed in their present form between (c. 600 BC and 300 BC.). The fundamental concept of the Upanishads is the identity of the individual soul with the Universal Soul and is essentially an inquiry into the nature of the ultimate Reality.

UPASANA-- Worship.

VAIKHARI--- The fourth stage of the gross physical sound or vibration manifesting as word.

VAJR01.1-MUDR 7k, one of the mudris by which sexual energy is controlled and re-absorbed into the body. The adept is expected to draw in the female seed through the member into his body during the union, in a process called sahajoh. Care is to be taken during the act that emission of the semen does not occur. If his semen is released into the female body. both the male and female fluids are subsequently drawn back into his body through amaroli.

VAUDDIIA CHAKRA---- The throat centre in the subtle body.

vAvu, vital air.

VEDAS--- The original source-books of India, revealed knowledge of the Aryans, consisted of too,000 verses and are in four divisions, the Rig-Veda (c. 2000-1 Soos), the earliest literature of the world; the Yajur-Veda; the Sama-Veda; the Atharva-Veda.

VIBHOTI--- Examples or expression of supernatural powers.200*VIRA*, an initiate in tantric rites is called vira or hero, as distinguished from the paia, the uninitiated, one in bondage

VISHNIN--- The second god of the Hindu Trinity, the Preserver.

VITIVARUIPA--- The universal form of the absolute.

VYANA--- One of the five vital airs (vayu) distributed in the body.

YANTRA— Sacred diagram possessing occult powers; in Tantric meditation, the residence of the deity.

YOGA--- Union; a system of philosophy; the path on which the individual self is united with the Universal Self; teaching about that path of realization.

YOGI--- One who seeks to attain essential identity with the Reality.

YOGINI--- A student of yoga; feminine, yogini.

YOGINI— A female divinity, sometimes protective but more often a sorceress; a female practitioner of Tantrism.

YONI— Female generative organ; a symbol of divine creation especially when associated with the male.

YONI--- The primal root of the source of objectivation; a triangle pointing downwards symbolizes the yoni, the female sex organ, symbol of cosmic mysteries.

YONI-MUDRA--- Sexo-yogic isana known as 'vulva-posture'. In this the adept is required to sit in siddhisana and contract the perineum (yoni-place) between testes and anus.

YONISTHANA---'Yoni-place', or perineum, corresponding to the position of the female vulva.

YUGA-- Aeon, the four yugas are Satya or Krita-yuga,

ZERO--- Void; the dot.

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