

# GOPAL KANUNGO



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# GOPAL KANUNGO

Dr. Janaki Ballav Mohanty



Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi  
Bhubaneswar

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Dr. Janaki Ballav Mohanty

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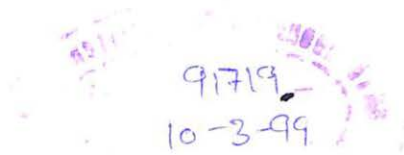
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## PREFACE

It gives me great pleasure that the Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi is publishing a monograph on the life and works of Late Gopal Kanungo.

Gopal Kanungo was a pioneer among his contemporary artists and dominated the art-scene of Orissa for about four decades. He experimented in different mediums and established his supremacy in oil and water colour paintings. His paintings profusely illustrate the cultural heritage and historical legacy of Orissa. He had also delineation for landscape and portrayal of the delicacy and beauty of woman's face.

He was a source of inspiration for the young artists of Orissa who were greatly influenced by his pleasing personality and incredible creations.

His endeavours to set up art faculty in university and art room in schools generated an art-consciousness among the younger generation. Orissa feels glorified to have an artist of Late Kanungo's stature.

I hope, this maiden effort of the Akademi to publish the monograph on Gopal Kanungo would be appreciated by all and would enlighten the readers on the life and works of a great artist.

*Ajit Keshary Ray*  
President

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi is working for the promotion of plastic art in the State since its inception in 1960. Publication of books and monographs on art is one of the important activities of the Akademi. This publication on Late Gopal Kanungo is the second of its kind.

As an eminent artist and writer during the pre-Independence period, Gopal Kanungo influenced the new generation of artists of Orissa. He played a major role for the establishment of Govt. School of Art and Crafts at Khallikote and the Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi. As a successful art teacher, he produced many talented young artists of Orissa. His exemplary contribution to the art-field of Orissa will be always remembered.

Personally, I was inspired by Gopal Kanungo to be an artist. I have not come across such a devoted person as Late Kanungo who sacrificed his career for the development of art and artists.

While bringing out this monograph, I record my thanks to Prof. Dr. Janaki Ballav Mohanty (Bharadwaj), an eminent writer and critic who prepared the manuscript. I am grateful to Sri Binode Routray, former President of the Akademi, who provided some authentic materials on Gopal Kanungo and took personal initiative for this publication. We are also thankful to Prof. Rajkishore Mishra, Secretary, Orissa Sahitya Akademi, who spared his valuable time to review the manuscript.

Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, deserve our thanks for their financial assistance for publication of this monograph.

We hope, this monograph would be an humble tribute to the memory of Late Gopal Kanungo and inspire the new generation of artists to a great extent.

*J. C. Kanungo*  
Secretary

## A WORD OF GRATITUDE

I am extremely thankful to Sri Binode Routray, the well-known artist and former President, Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi, for entrusting me with the responsibility of preparing a monograph on "Gopal Chandra Kanungo" and supplying me necessary materials and his personal letters. I am also thankful to Sri Jagadish Chandra Kanungo, Secretary, Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi for his kind help and necessary suggestions. Last but not the least, my indebtedness goes to Sri K. C. Chand, my friend, who with pleasure took all the pains in making my manuscript suitable for publication.

In this connection, I also recall my pleasant memory of Sri Kanungo with whom I spent a couple of days during May 1951 when he came to Balasore, in connection with his study of stone carving and statue making in Orissa and we both went to Nilagiri and Ayodhya for the purpose. Subsequently, I wrote an article on his achievement in the field of fine art which appeared in one of the Sunday issues of the "Prajatantra" in 1952. He was also kind enough to draw a picture of mine and prepared the cover design of my first poetry collection for which I am ever grateful to him.

*Janaki Ballav Mohanty*  
"Geetika"  
Jayadev Nagar  
Bhubaneswar-2



Self-Portrait (Sketch)



# GOPAL KANUNGO

## A life of struggle and dedication

Gopal Kanungo was one of the foremost artists amongst the few who were practising art in Orissa. About half a century back he was considered unequalled and unique in his profession. He earned a great reputation as an art teacher, writer and art-critic. His stamp of personality was visible in his aesthetic outlook, manifest in his expressions, behaviour, dress and life-style. He dedicated his whole life to the spread of artistic awareness among the people in Orissa. Many of his art-pieces have been acclaimed as national asset. He breathed his last in March 1971 at the age of 67 at Bhubaneswar while he was the Vice-President of Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi.

Sri Kanungo was born in a village named Nentigarh under Gop P. S. in Puri district in 1904 in a well-to-do family. This village is situated on the bank of Dhanua river which was often inundated during the rains, thus making the village inaccessible. His father's name was Jagabandhu and mother's name was Rama Devi. Jagabandhu was an enlightened man and the Dewan of a small ex-state called Dampada in Cuttack district. He was eager to see his son well-educated and employed in Government job.

From the early childhood Gopal's aesthetic sense and search for beauty was discernible in his attitude and temperament. Impelled by an impulse, he kept himself engaged in the contemplation of various art forms while he was still a student. He decided to dedicate himself to the study of art soon after completing his graduation and was not allured by attractive salary of Government service which was easily available to a graduate in those days.

On retirement from the post of Dewan of Dampara, his father had taken up an assignment of the post of Manager in the Sakhigopal Temple. Gopal received primary education at Sakhigopal. He had the fortune of being a student of the Vana Vidyalaya of Sakhigopal, run by Pandit Gopabandhu Das. During this period, Dhaneswar Moharana was the drawing teacher of this School who influenced Gopal to a great extent during his formative years. Gopal watched with great admiration the wood work, idol making etc. of his art-teacher. When the Vana Vidyalaya ceased functioning on account of teachers' direct involvement in the non-co-operation movement in 1921, Gopal had to leave that School and resumed his study at the Puri Zilla School.

In 1923 he passed the Matriculation examination from Puri Zilla School. Then he prosecuted his studies at Ravenshaw College, Cuttack. During this period his talent as an artist was more or less known. Biswanath Kar, the illustrious editor of "Utkal Sahitya", a leading literary journal of Orissa, chanced to come upon Gopal's variety of artistic creations. He printed a few pieces of Gopal's art in his journal. It is needless to say that printing of such art illustrations in the leading journal of Orissa encouraged Gopal beyond measure.

He passed B.A. from Ravenshaw College, Cuttack creditably in the year 1927. He could have easily accepted a Government job as jobs were available then to any graduate in Orissa. But he chose to pursue a different career which he was sure, would never be a gainful enterprise.

It may be relevant here to mention that the British Government had started a few institutions to impart education in Fine Arts in major cities of India, i.e., Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. Gopal went to Calcutta to study fine art in 1928 inspite of the advice of his father and friends to the contrary. He was granted Government scholarship. While he was a student of Calcutta Art School, Percy Brown and Mukul De were Principals in turn. Gopal could easily draw the appreciation of the Principal and the teachers for his proficiency in fine art. His art pieces were acclaimed as the best in the annual exhibitions of this institution.

After successful completion of his studies in Calcutta Gopal had a desire to prosecute higher studies abroad. He could not avail of a scholarship as the scholarships were suspended on account of the Bihar earthquake. He was left with no other alternatives but to join as a drawing teacher in a Government School. In those days to thrive upon the sales proceeds of one's own art pieces in Orissa was beyond one's imagination. Books, journals and newspapers were rarely illustrated in those days. However, Gopal chose this new profession and spent nearly twentyfive years. In course of his professional career he was posted at Balasore, Sambalpur, Berhampur, Cuttack and Puri and had had the credit of enkindling a novel inspiration in the hearts of his pupils.

There was a rare fresco painting in a hillock at "Ravana Chhaya" of Sitabhinji in the district of Keonjhar of which very little was known. Indeed, it was one of the ancient frescos of Orissa. In 1950 he brought it to the notice of the then Principal of Calcutta Arts School and in collaboration with him prepared a copy of the said fresco. In 1951 he obtained a research fellowship from Government of India to study the contemporary scenario of traditional stone engraving and sculptural art in Orissa. He had to go to different places for this purpose and finally submitted a detailed report to Government of India.

He was pained to notice the pitiable condition, financial instability, lack of patronage of traditional artisans of Orissa. He tried for the betterment of their condition. He could manage to project their art-objects and thereby attract the attention of the public. He wrote to the Government recommending reservation of four teaching posts for traditional artisans in the Government Art School, Khallikote. Moreover, he managed to arrange an exhibition of traditional and folk art in 1970 when he was the Vice-President of Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi and instituted awards as a token of recognition for the deserving artisans.

He was associated with the Central Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi as a representative of Orissa for many years. Moreover, he was closely involved with many art institutions of Orissa. For a few months, he was appointed as Lecturer in Fine Art at Government School of Art & Crafts, Khallikote in 1957. From 1960 to 1967 he was appointed as Artist in the Oriya encyclopaedia unit set up by Utkal University. He became the first Vice-President of Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi in 1968 while Dr. H. K. Mahatab, the then Chief Minister of Orissa was its President. He successfully guided the Akademi till his death, with commitment and dedication. For about half a century, he had nourished the cultural life of Orissa through his powerful brush and pen. The "Lion-Elephant" emblem designed by him on the model of Orissan temple art still continues to be the insignia of Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi. It is relevant here to mention that the first State Level Fine Art Exhibition of Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi held at Bhubaneswar in 1961 was of unique nature, where 446 art pieces of 98 native artists were exhibited for the first time. Many artists were awarded for their remarkable contribution to art, particularly for their technical innovation and thematic variety. A specific art piece entitled "Loading and Unloading" drawn in water colour by Sri Kanungo fetched him a gold medal on this occasion. On his initiative and drive an art gallery of contemporary art was installed in the Orissa State Museum under the management of Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi. Though he served the Government Art School at Khallikote in the capacity of Lecturer for a short spell, he was however, associated with it for long as a member of the Board of Studies till 1968.

The last phase of his life was quite eventful. In 1970 he organised the folk art and traditional art exhibition and an exhibition of selected pieces of art collected from Central Lalit Kala Akademi. He also arranged felicitations for celebrated old artists of Orissa and convened the All Orissa Artists' Conference. Despite his physical ailments he inaugurated the art exhibition sponsored by the Young Writers' Conference at Bolangir and inaugurated the celebration of young artists organised by Utkal Charukala Parisad.



Abhisarika (Water colour)

Sri Kanungo had acquired unparalleled popularity. Almost all the magazines and books published during his time bore the imprint of his artistic and aesthetic flourish in their cover design. The poet Baikuntha Nath Pattanaik had rightly eulogised him in the following terms :

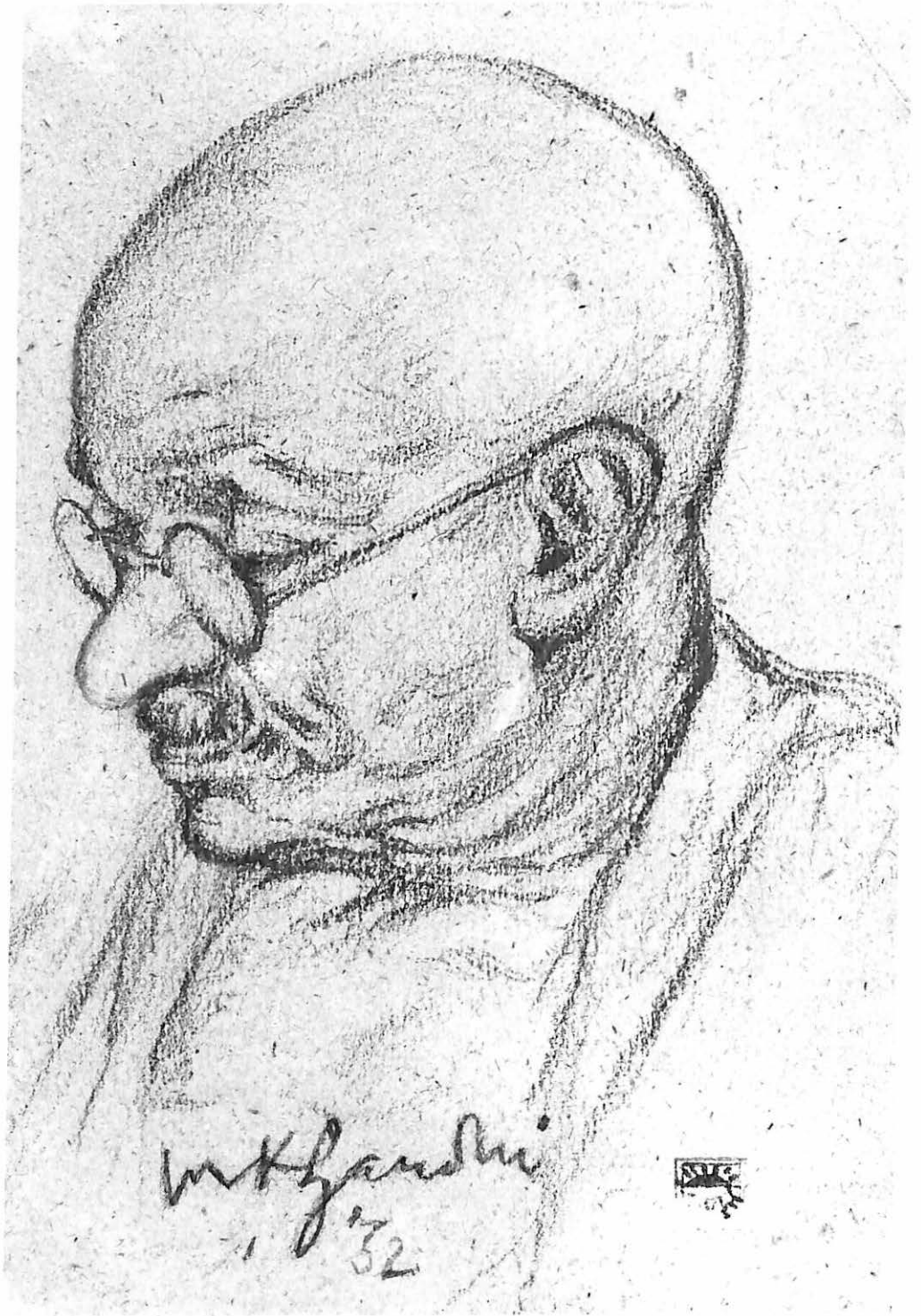
*"You have made beauty truth and truth beauty  
and returned home after your life's toil was over,  
oh thou artist !"*

### **In the realm of beauty & colour**

As mentioned before, the artist had engaged himself in the contemplation of various art forms for nearly half a century. He had drawn innumerable art pieces, a few names of which are appended. The art pieces and portraits drawn by the artist out of bemused curiosity and intuitive urge belong to the first category. Pictures drawn on request of various institutions and persons, cover designs of books and magazines and indented portraits, however, belong to the second category. His canvas was too wide. He experimented with various materials, styles and colours. His art work ranges from sketches, oil colour paintings, paintings of water colour to tempera.

Among his numerous sketches, a few have been preserved by Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi in their art gallery. It has been rightly observed by a noted artist that he had very carefully drawn the pictures of the old and the young, the gentle and the common-place, the beautiful and the ugly alike. Most of the sketches embellish mostly two areas — the seemingly complacent common man, the laity ached with casual travails and the venerable eldersmen or the celebrities. The first category of sketches related to the shoe maker, carpenter, potter, mendicants, a person milching the cow etc. The second category related to the sketches of Mahatma Gandhi, Gopabandhu Das, Laxmi Narayan Sahoo, notable artist Bimbadhar Verma, poets and litterateurs such as Biswanath Kar, Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi, Baikuntha Nath Pattanaik, Radha Mohan Gadanayak, Balabhadra Bahidar, Balakrushna Pattanaik etc.

In drawing the sketches of the first category, the artist had adopted the western method of light and shade in order to achieve density of tone and colour. While interacting with his own art pieces a sensible art critic would find that he was not inclined to draw the pictures of Raja, Maharaja and their Darbar. Instead he focussed the attention of the people on pictures that depict the dignity of labour. His dexterity and skill in drawing sketches of eminent people sitting in front of him, was of high order. Just by scribbling a few lines he could bring out the abiding personality of the individuals which was a rare quality of his art. He was fortunate enough in drawing



Mahatma Gandhi (Sketch)

a portrait of Mahatma Gandhi while sitting in front of him in a simple and casual way to which Mahatma Gandhi endorsed his signature. The artist had also drawn a beautiful sketch of his own. For this purpose he might have availed the help of a mirror which was a common practice of artists in general for drawing self-portraits.

He adopted different styles and worked in various mediums which contributed to verve and variety of his art. In his craftsmanship is discernible the adaptation of the style of art of the renaissance period up to the style of the cubic school prevailing in modern times. He has shown his mastery in portraying the imaginary hero and heroines of the mythological age as well as the historical hoot-voyage of Oriya sailors known as *Sadhabas* to the far East. Similarly, his attempt at impressionistic art deserves high commendation. He has asserted that he took resort to impressionistic style while painting the landscape. Following the style of French impressionists he has illustrated the object using lumps of colours from a dot to the centre of the object of painting. As illustrations of cubistic art of the artist, particular mention may be made of the cover design of the novel *Prema O Pratima*, the poetry collections *Tiryak*, *Mrutyu-Sura*, in Omar's *Rubayat*. As admitted by the artist himself though the cubist artists of Orissa had in some pictures adopted Picasso's style many have also been influenced by the Bengal style of cubism introduced by the artist Gaganendranath Tagore.

Thus, though he had followed various techniques in his art compositions, he had never stuck to any particular style faithfully. He had merely adopted temporarily different foreign styles of painting such as realism, impressionism, cubism etc. It was noticed that he had painted pictures with water colour and tempera. His expertise in the use of colour lay in tonal effect of light and shade in his pictures. For the above reason, such paintings were soft, sweet and pleasing to the eye.

He had also admitted that he was partly influenced by the style of Debi Prasad Roy Chaudhury of Bengal. In this context mention may be made of *Naba Basant* (New Spring) painted by him in water colour. In colour paintings he followed the impressionists and the realists as well. While painting the mythological and historical pictures, he had revealed his own originality even though they had some bearings of Ravi Varma and Purnendu Chakravarti. Though he has derived inspiration from the style of native and alien artists, it cannot be denied that he had his independent vision, comprehension and perception in selecting themes and objects. The following pieces of painting display his variety of moods and thematic diversity :

*Sitanka Agni Pariksha*  
Asoka and Upagupta  
Padma and Jayadev  
The wise and Chinese emperor  
Learning of archery by the princesses  
*Boita Bandana*  
*Pathani Samantanka Graha Paryavekshana etc.*

In most of these pictures mentioned above, he has followed the wash painting style. He had drawn the picture of *Sitanka Agni Pariksha* while he was a student of Ravenshaw College. His *Boita Bandana* reminds us of the joyous send-off of Orissan merchandise to the far East. Similarly the painting "Learning of archery by the princesses" represented the combination of many ancient characters. These two pictures are now adorning the walls of Orissa Raj Bhawan.

The artist had drawn some elegant pictures on the themes of *Megha Duta*. Besides, his own illustrations of his translation of *Kumar Sambhavam* canto V and *Omar Rubayat* were memorable indeed in this context.

The artist through the medium of his paintings had gracefully painted the life style of the Oriya society and its environs which are reflected in the following pictures: *Purna Patha, Dola Yatra*, (Dola Festival), *Siva Puja, Abhisarika, Snanarata, Naba Basanta, Bansi Rava* and *Chita Dia*.

The following art pieces of pencil sketches are reminiscent of Orissa's country life e.g. *Yogi* (the mendicant), *Mochi* (Shoe-maker), *Godohan* (milching the cow), *Krusha Kshetrare Karmarata Krushaka* (farmers engaged in cultivation), fictional rural characters (of '*Matira Manisha*' by Kalindi Charan Panigrahi) such as Baraju, Chhakadi, Hari Mishra, Bada Bou etc.

In the delineation of landscape rich in flora and fauna Sri Kanungo seemed to have taken resort to the western style of painting, except of course, his picture of *Pakshi Yugala* (Twin birds) which had a bearing of Chinese style. His *Go Charana* (Grazing of Cowherds) was no doubt modelled after the European style.

As pointed out earlier, Sri Kanungo had a special knack for the cover design. In Sri Radha Mohan Gadanayak's *Pashu Paksira Kavya* the art work provided by Sri Kanungo was unique. It was faithful to the thematic description of each poem. Cartooning was his special charm. His cartoons were regularly printed in the magazine "Krushaka" published by the leftist Praja Socialist Party. This speaks of his boldness.

The following observation on his art is worth-noting : "He was a right royal artist in portraying the delicacy and beauty of women's face. One could always discern by looking at the picture from its expression and contour that it was drawn by only Gopal Babu."



There was a happy fusion of the classic and romantic trend in his creation of art. Though mainly his style of painting was traditional in nature, in many places it has transcended the limits of tradition and has merged into the reality of life. He was very close in his artistic perception to great artists of the west such as Leonardo Da Vinci, Van Gogh, Matisse, Raphael and Rembrandt.

The pictures of the east and west were the pasture of his creative mind. His style of drawing, perspective, placement of limbs vis-a-vis body, sense of proportion, the elegance of conception and its projection were indeed unique.

### **His world of word and rhythm**

The creative talent of Sri Kanungo, the doyen of the world of fine arts in Orissa, was not confined to portrayal of pictures or paintings only. As an art-critic, essayist, translator and poet he has left a memorable imprint. His contributions to the field of juvenile literature is quite noteworthy.

During the period of his flourish the "Sabuja" group of writers were making a headway in the literary scene of Orissa. He was intimately associated with the members of the "Sabuja Sahitya Samity". While he was a student of Ravenshaw College, Cuttack he was residing in the East Hostel with Kalindi Charan Panigrahi, the celebrated poet, novelist and one of the principal members of the Sabuja Sahitya Samiti. "*Prativa Pranaya*" is his first notable literary publication. This is a collection of delightful pleasant essays, which were first serialised in the "Sahakar", the then leading literary journal of Orissa. In 1950 it appeared in a book form. The essays embody the personal life and love episodes of a few eminent personalities of the world. His essay "*Mo Jiban Upare Rupara Prabhaba*" (Influence of Beauty on my life) is a fine autobiographical sketch. The "Dagaro", a leading literary journal of Orissa first introduced this feature. After B. Verma, the veteran artist, Sri Kanungo was second to write his biographical account as an artist. Thus he began his account: "what shall I write about the influence of beauty on me ! Not only beauty, colour and rhythm also have influenced me."

His lyrical compositions are sensuous, mellifluous and full of aesthetic grace. Though they are not many in number yet they convey the genuine emotion of a sensitive artist. His poetic translation of the Rubiyat of Omarkhayam containing his illustrations came out in 1954. About this book it has been rightly observed by Sri Chintamani Behera, a poet and literary critic of Orissa, that "in this translation and illustration both pen and brush of Sri Kanungo have become vocal. Simultaneously, in this work there has been a fusion of the poet and the artist. He has not been satisfied with the rhythm alone. He has also made the art messages expressively manifest through colours."



Farmer (Water colour)

He had also translated the canto V of *Kumar Sambhavam* of Mahakavi Kalidas, which was published in 1962. It contains a few pictures drawn by him. While studying art in Calcutta he first drew a famous picture called "*Umanka Swapna*" or the "Dream of Uma".

The book *Kalara Vichar* (An Evaluation of Art) was the first of its kind in the field of criticism on art and architecture in Oriya literature. It is a valuable work. It glances through evolution of Art over ages beginning from the pre-historic period up to the modern times. Varieties of art such as fine art, architecture, stone engraving etc. have been discussed in depth. This book contains 13 chapters and 120 illustrations. It has been rightly observed by Ramendranath Chakravarty, a noted artist of India that such type of book is rare in Indian literature. This book was published in 1955 by Utkal University. His another booklet named "Contribution of Art to Universal Brotherhood" in Oriya was translated into Hindi by Sri Govind Chandra Mishra. This was published on behalf of the Utkal University in 1950. This booklet indicated vividly the firm commitment of the artist to the creation of art. In this context the artist asserted as follows :

"History may state that peace is established by kings. But I would assert that art is the only medium for establishment of peace, friendship and goodwill which becomes permanent and more desirable than the kings, politics and religion."

The artist also produced another illustrated title "*Utkalara Chitrakala*" (The art of Orissa). This book contains a thorough and indepth discussion on the evolution of art in Orissa from the olden times to the modern era. It contains his personal observations on Oriya artists of modern period. This book was published in 1964 by Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi.

He wrote two books for children namely "*Minira Swapna*" (1954) (Dream of Mini) and "*Dinakar Sultan*" (Sultan for a day). The artist had translated "*Meghdoot*" and "*Hansa Duta*" but these two works have not been able to see the light of the day as yet. He had a wish to write his autobiography in his ripe old age, which he failed to materialise on account of his ill-health. Similarly his desire to bring out all his published and unpublished poems in a book form, titled "*Patha Smruti*" has still remained unfulfilled.

He mentioned in his essay, "*Mo Jiban Upare Rupara Prabhaba*" that whatever could not be expressed in art could find expression in language; whatever lies unfulfilled in life, actually finds fulfilment in art. Hence, it is said that art is a compensation for life. That is why I write essays, poems, stories etc. Thereby I give expression to my realisation which does not get reflected in art pieces.

The artist was honoured by Orissa Sahitya Akademi in 1968.

## **His personality and achievement**

The artist possessed an attractive personality having well-built body and handsome features. People who came in contact with him were really charmed with his courtesy, manners and pleasing behaviour. Eminent persons such as Mayadhar Mansingh, Baikunthanath Pattnaik, Kalindi Charan Panigrahi and others held him in high esteem. It has been rightly said about him that he had an insatiable desire for knowledge. He had an open mind, his perseverance was quite enviable. One perceives in him two contrasting tendencies — a sensitive and sympathetic heart and a sense of lingering loneliness of an independent artist. He never hesitated to express whatever he felt to be just and true. While he bestowed his love and affection on others, he expected others to reciprocate. He was always eager to learn new ideas and concepts from others, even though they were his students. Till his last breath he was pursuing knowledge with passionate zeal. There was absolutely no difference between his inner and outer self. He had the frankness to express his lapses before his intimate friends. He adored life in its manifold aspects. He was a worshipper of truth.

Intense belief in God went hand in hand with his life as an artist. In his youth he believed in Marxist Philosophy. But his belief in God deepened as he progressed in life as an artist. His devotion to God gave him self-confidence and peace of mind and made his personality sharp and full of zest. Hospitality, friendship, patronisation of young talents were some of his special characteristics.

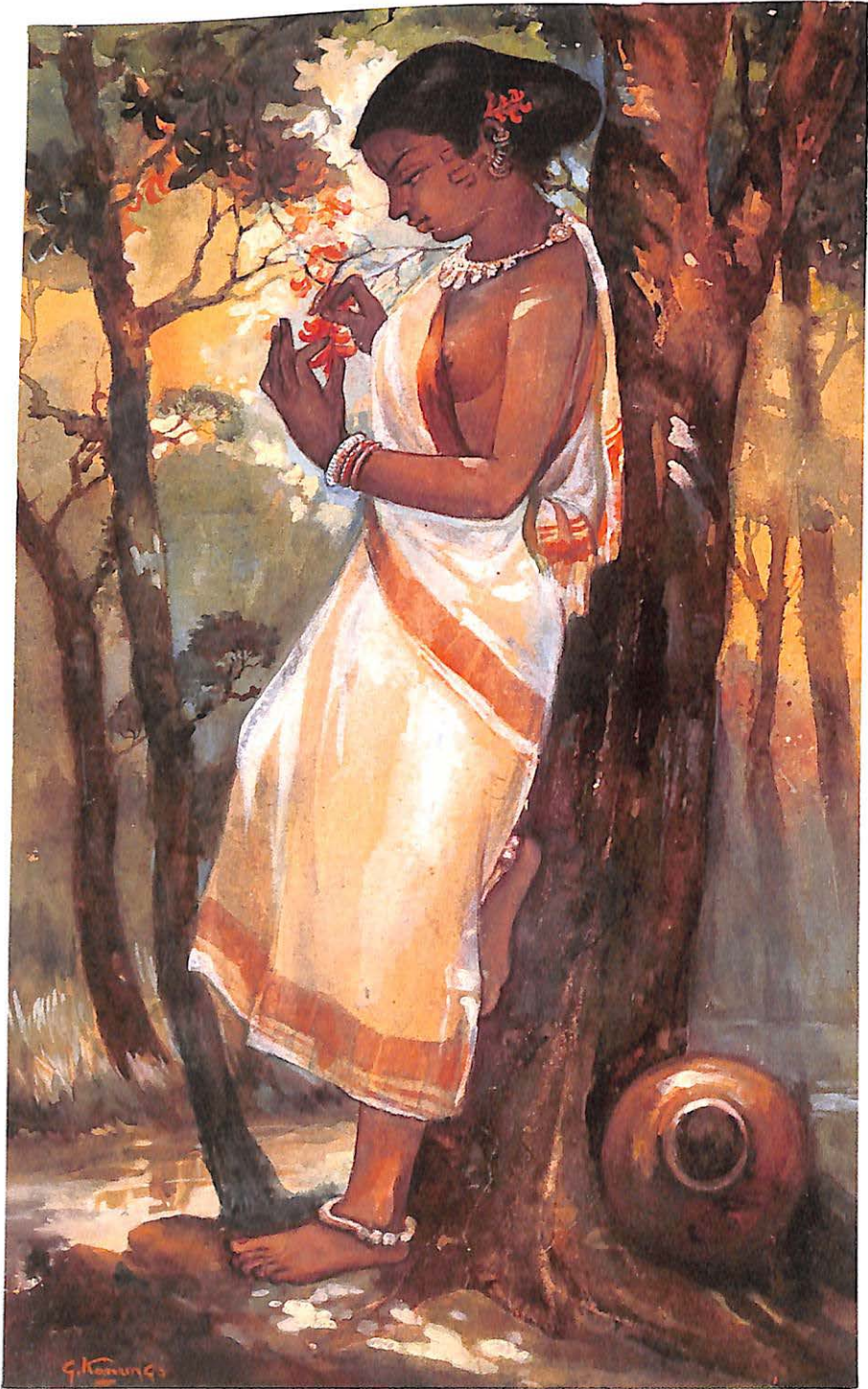
Late Kanungo, during his long career as an artist has inspired many seekers of Art like Late Padmashree Jadunath Supakar of Sambalpur, Laxmidhar Das of Puri and Siba Panigrahi of Mayurbhanj. Besides, Jagannath Mohapatra and Benudhar Mohapatra belonging to the traditional school of Art have also been much benefited by their association with him.

He was a good speaker. He impressed upon his listeners in various meetings. His written speeches were quite thought-provoking and critical.

He was engaged as an art teacher for about twentyfive years. He inspired many a student to enter into the threshold of art. In those days teaching of art was not receiving due attention and recognition. He, however, tried his best to improve the situation according to his might. He paid special attention to children for their self expression. He took pains to inspire children to take interest in art. He was charmed by the colour picturisation drawn by children. He noticed the simple beauty, spontaneity, attractive quality in their art. On this subject he wrote a few articles. Yet instead of reward he got apathy and indifferent attitude of the people. He was eager to render artistic environments to schools. He was firm in his opinion that there



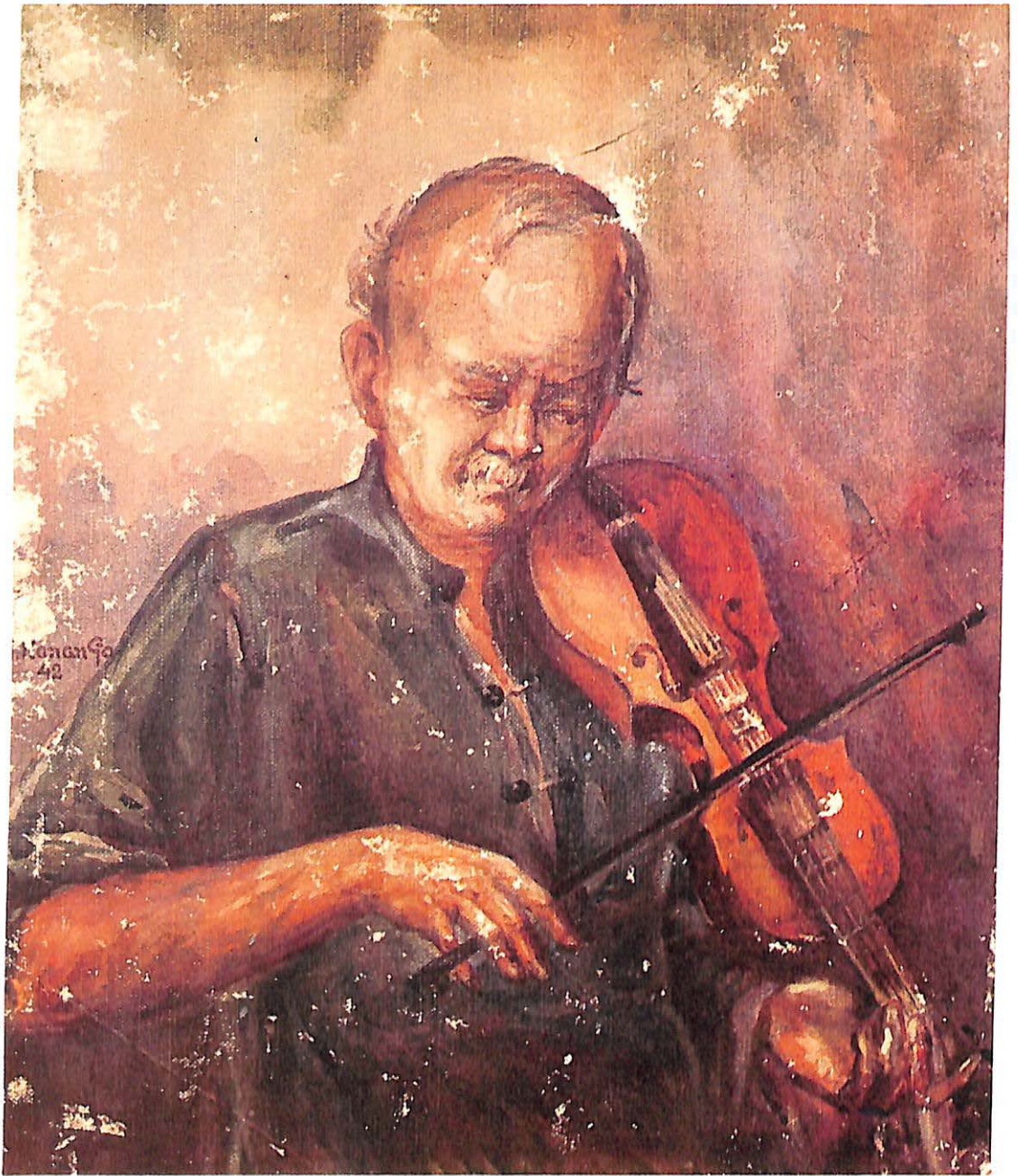
Ashok and Upagupta (Water colour)



The spring (Water colour)



Bathing Ghat (Oil)



Violin Player (Water colour)



should be an art room in each school. He emphasised that an art room or a studio was as much essential for a class in art as a laboratory was for students of Chemistry.

His endeavour for setting up an art school in Orissa and a separate department for Art and a separate Art faculty in University is worthy of mention.

Dr. Mayadhar Mansingh, the noted poet and educationist gave the following observation on him :

Sri Gopal Chandra Kanungo is well-known all over Orissa as an artist. Poets and artists generally get proper evaluation of their products at the hands of future generations. So it is not safe for me to pass judgement on the works of this living artist. But I can without hesitation declare that Sri Kanungo is the best teacher of art in Orissa that I know of (Dated 19th May 1951).

Orissa feels glorified and honoured in having an artist of Kanungo's stature. His art creation forms an integral part of Orissa's cultural heritage. An artist never dies. While in life the artist beautifies death and celebrates it more intimately than the life itself. Sri Kanungo is still living in the myriad of his art manifestations even long after his mortal frame is consigned to the pyre.

### **I. A few Memorable Events**

- 1904 - Born at Nentigarh, Dist. Puri.
- 1923 - Passed Matriculation from Puri Zilla School.
- 1927 - Passed B.A. from Ravenshaw College, Cuttack.
- 1928-34 - Student, Arts School, Calcutta.
- 1932 - Marriage with Bidyutlata.
- 1934 - Passed in Ist Division and received Diploma in Fine Arts.  
- Joined as an art teacher in Government High School, Balasore.
- 1938 - "Dola Festival", a tempera painting got award in All India Art Exhibition held at Lahore.
- 1940 - "Palli Patha" got award at Art Exhibition, Sambalpur.
- 1943 - Felicitated and received a certificate for his outstanding art work for A. R. P.
- 1947 - Got award for his work in black and white in All Orissa Chitrakala Exhibition held at Cuttack.
- 1949 - Got award from the Transport Department for preparing their symbol.  
- Joined All India Artists' Conference at Calcutta representing Orissa.



Flute-player (Water colour)

- 1950 - Participated and got award at Sarvodaya Sammilani held at Angul for his painting "*Yuge Yuge Utkal*". Participated in drawing the fresco painting at Ravan Chhaya, Keonjhar, with R. Chakravarti. His article "Fresco Painting of Orissa" published in A. B. Patrika.
- 1951-52 - Got stipend to study art of engraving and image making in Orissa.
- 1952 - "*Boita Bandana*" painting was exhibited during Nikhila Banga Sahitya Sammelan held at Cuttack.
- 1957 - Joined as Lecturer in Govt. Art School, Khallikote and after a short stay was transferred to join as art teacher in Secondary Training School, Cuttack.
- 1957 - Nominated by Government to act as a member of Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi for five years.
- 1959 - Felicitated by Visub Milan of Prajatantra, Cuttack.
- 1960-62 - Joined as an artist in Oriya Jnana Kosa office of Utkal University.
- 1960 - Member, Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi till his death in 1971.
- 1961 - Got award for his painting in water colour in the exhibition of Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi.
- 1965 - Felicitated by District Art Teachers' Association, Ganjam.
- 1968 - Felicitated by Orissa Sahitya Akademi.  
- Vice-President, Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi.  
- Presided and delivered a written address in an Artists' Conference held during Visub Milan.
- 1969 - A sketch of "Jayee Rajguru" sent to Khurda College.
- 1970 - Felicitated by Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi as a senior artist of Orissa.
- 1971 - March 13th - breathed his last at Bhubaneswar.

## II. A few memorable creations of Art

1. Sitanka Agnipariksa - Ravenshavian  
(Diamond Jubilee Issue — 1926)
2. Madhura Milan - Utkal Sahitya - (29/1)
3. Siva Pooja - Baruni (1333/Asara)
4. Abhisara - Basumati (Bengali) 1929
5. Bansi-raba - Basumati (Bengali) 1929
6. Umanka Swapna - 1928 - exhibited in A. I. C. C. Meeting, Calcutta and was sold.



Rabindranath Tagore (Sketch)

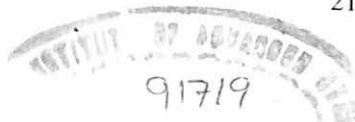
7. Mo Gaon (My Village) - Oil painting—exhibited and got award in Chinsura Art Exhibition. At present it is in Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi Art Gallery (named "Landscape").

This picture represented a landscape drawn in western style. The element of distance of objects drawn such as mountain, distant road and grazing cattle nearby has perfectly brought into focus giving an idea of symmetry. On the right there are a few trees, big and small, and on the left appears the mountaineous high land. Three cattle nearly in different poses are nicely revealed. Few more grazing at a distance look beautifully shady. The approaching dusk has made its impact very vivid and charming.

8. Dol Jatra - 1934 - (Tempera) - Exhibited in All India Art Exhibition held at Lahore in 1938 and got award.
9. Boita Bandana - First appeared in Dagaro - Holi Special. Now adorns Orissa Raj Bhavan.
10. Purnapatha
11. Bhauma Narapatinka  
Vijay Jatra - 1950 - Water Colour
12. Prajna O  
Mohachhinna Samrat - 1950 - Water Colour
13. Raj Kumarinka  
Samar Siksa - 1950 - Water Colour
14. Padma O Jaydev - 1950 - Water Colour
15. Pathani Samantanka  
Graha Paryaveksana - Water Colour
16. Bathing Ghat - Oil Painting
17. Ashoka O Upagupta - Wash

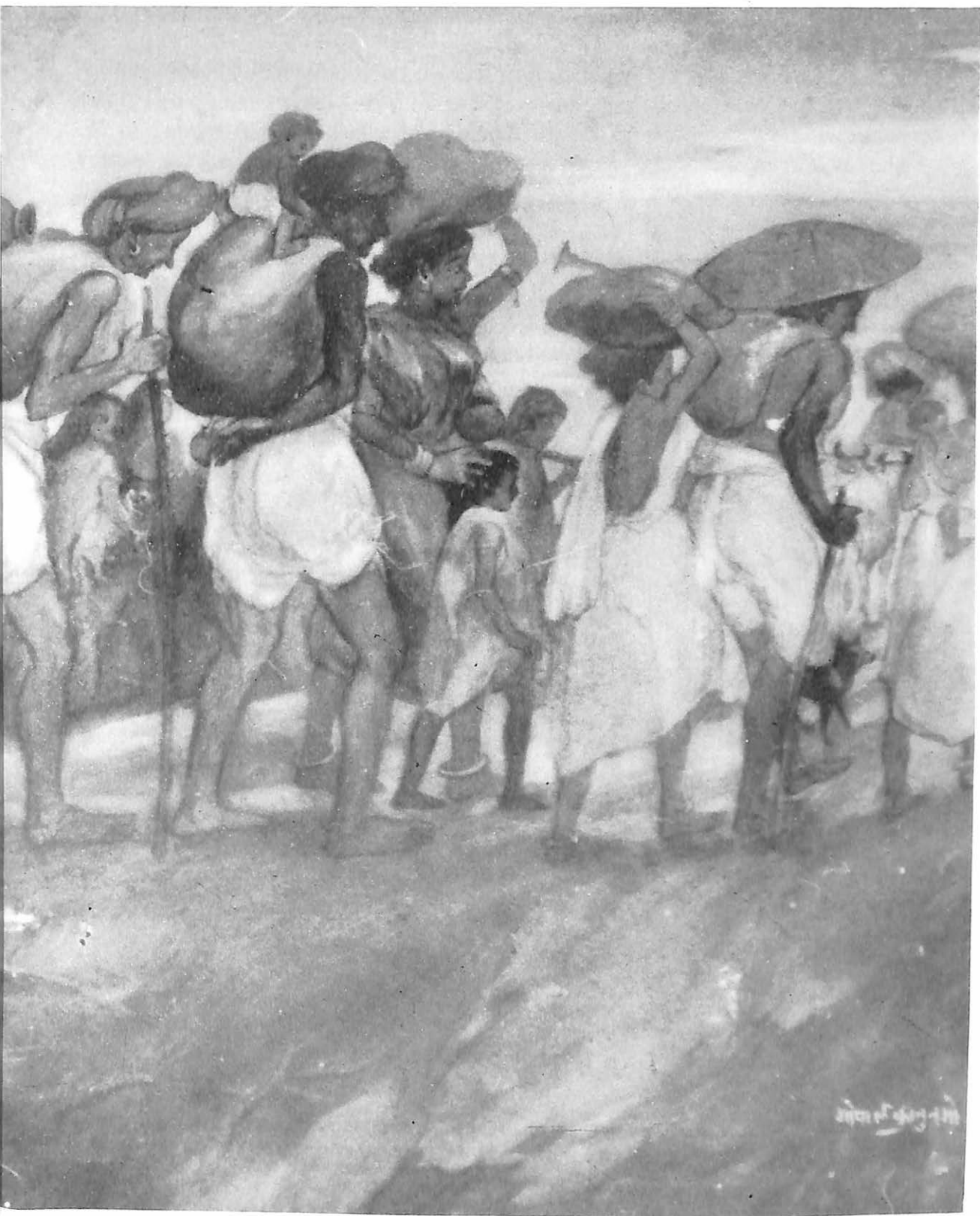
This picture depicts only three persons. The first person is a dazzling Sannyasi sitting on a raised platform under a tree with a calm look on his face. The other person of very fair complexion appears to be of royal origin, who looks repentant, is sitting in front of the Sannyasi on a decorative wooden seat of less height locally called "*Khatuli*". The royal person has no head-dress. He has laid down his sword and the shield on the ground. One lady bodyguard who is of dark complexion is holding a decorative "*Chhatri*" of Orissan type as manufactured at Pipili. She is having a knife fixed on her waist.

*Art pieces beginning from Sl. No. 11 to Sl. No. 15 were printed in 'Odisara Aitihāsik Chitra' — a compilation, published by Utkal Khadi Mandal.*



Flood (Water colour)





मिशनरी कॉलेज

18. Naba Basanta - Water Colour

This appears to be a symbolic picture. It depicts a beautiful *adivasi* girl reclining on a tree. It seems this girl is the representation of spring itself. She is wearing the red *palasa* flower on her head and also holding a bunch of such flower in her hand. She has worn *adivasi* ornaments too with bangles on her hands. Adding to her beauty, she has a Sambalpuri Sari on her body.

19. Flood - Water Colour

20. Mahatma Gandhi - Sketch

21. Balakrushna Pattnaik - Sketch

22. Self portrait - Sketch

23. Violin player - Water Colour

24. Birds - Water Colour

25. B. Varma - The artist (Sketch) 'Dagaro' Feb. 1954  
(Bimbadhar Smruti Sankhya)

26. Rabindranath Tagore - Sketch

27. Abhinibesh (Sketch) - 'Bhanja Pradipa' (1/4 - Aswin 1942) - 1934.  
This picture also appeared in Mayurbhanj gazettier, an English Journal bearing the caption – "Carpenter at work".

28. Godohan (Sketch) - Bhanja Pradip (7/1)  
Aswin - 1345 (1937)

29. Sarada Shree - Dagaro - Cover piece - July, 1954.

30. Dancing lady - (Water Colour) Jhankara - Cover piece  
(II/4)

31. Sanje (In the evening) - (Water Colour) Jhankara - 12/1 (1960)

32. Lord Budha in Meditation - (Water Colour) Jhankara - 1960 - 61

33. Sakuntala with deers  
in Ashram - (Water Colour) Jhankara - 1960-61

34. Bana Pahadara Fula  
(Flowers of forest and hill) - Sketch representing two *adivasi* lady  
carrying fuel on their head, Jhankara –  
(8/4)

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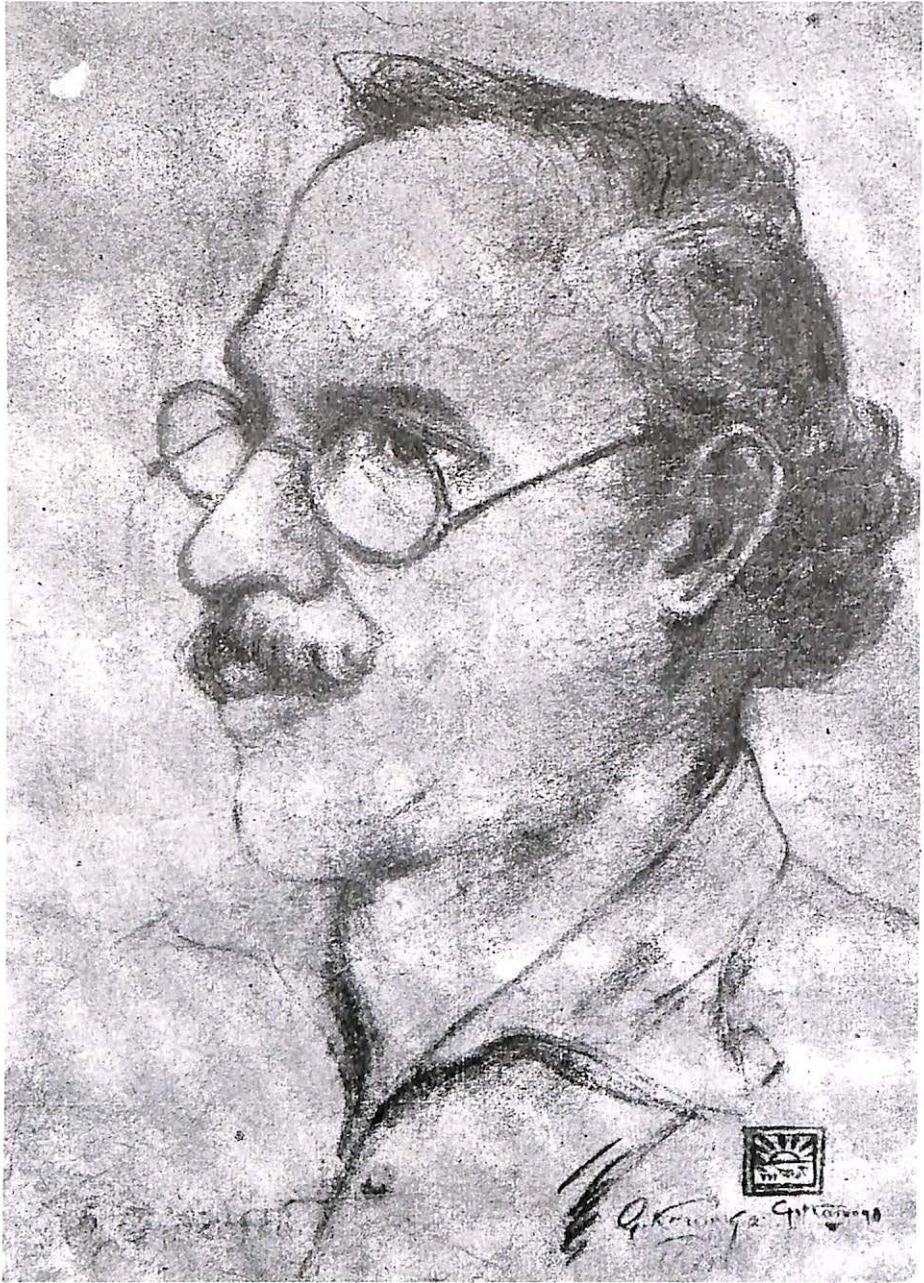
*Art pieces beginning from Sl. No. 16 to Sl. No. 26 are at present adorning the Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi Art Gallery, Museum Buildings, Bhubaneswar.*



35. Lover becons his lady love  
to wake up in the morning - Oil Painting
36. Lady amidst rose - Sketch
37. Lover and beloved sitting  
under a tree with a book,  
wine-pot and the musical  
instrument
38. A damsel with rose - Sketch
39. Farmer ploughing in rain - Sketch
40. Muazin on Minar - Sketch
41. Two learned *Moulabis* in  
discussion - Sketch
42. A man soaring in astral plain - Sketch
43. Young lover and beloved  
having bowel of wine and *Vina*  
by their side - Silhouette
44. Young lady near the  
entrance door - Sketch
45. Surrender of the young lady - Water Colour
46. Young lady with wine-pot - Sketch
47. Messenger of Death - Water Colour
48. A symbolic picture - A child on the lap of a lady and behind them the half visible figure in dark colour.  
- A picture, representing the living being, asking about his lot to its maker, the Lord (Sketch).
49. A lady keeping wine pot on the  
platform built in the forest
50. Portrait of Dr. P. Parija,  
eminent scientist and  
Ex-Vice-Chancellor,  
Utkal University - Oil Colour
51. Portrait of the poet  
Godavarish Mishra - Oil Colour

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*Art pieces beginning from Sl. No. 35 to Sl. No. 49 appear in Omar Rubiyat - Published by United Book House, Cuttack - 1954.*



Bimbadhar Varma (Sketch)

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