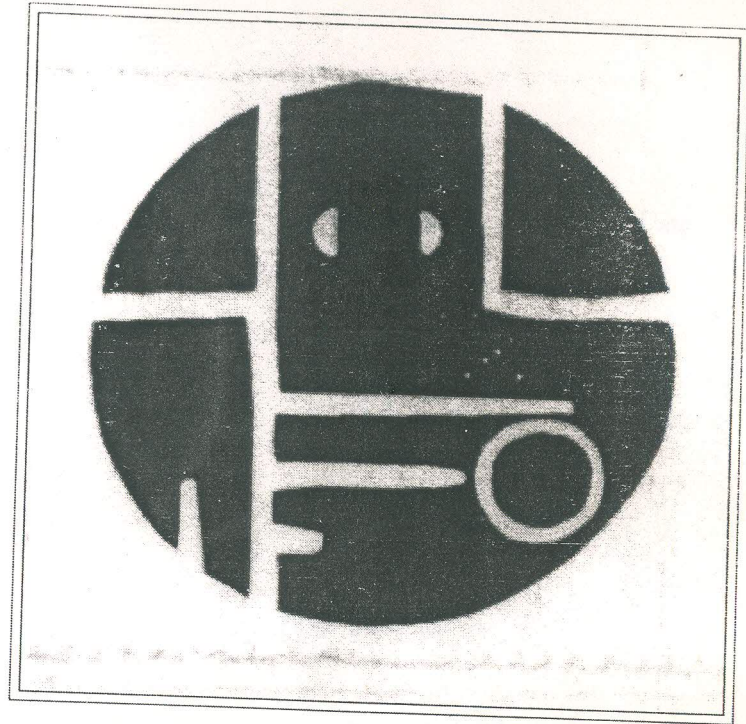


MUTILATION OF ELEPHANT GOD

Special Project



By P.N.Chakravarth[✓]

Guide Prof.Ravi Hazra

Industrial Design Centre

Indian Institute of Technology
Powai, Mumbai.

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Approval Sheet

The special project entitled 'Mutilation of Elephant god' by P.N.Chakravarthy is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the master of Design Degree in Industrial Design.

Signature

Date

Guide

;

P.N. Chakravarthy

15.6.98

Internal Examiner

;

Muthaiah

Acknowledgment

I am greatly indebted to my guide Prof.ravi.Hazra for his guidance and support at every stage of the project

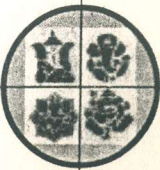
I would like to thank my friends for their help and cooperation

Thanks to Abhinav, Nachiketh, Chilab and iit Printing press personnel for very good collection of ganesha images.

Thanks to Mr. arun kalvankar (ET).

I also thank the people who are directly or indirectly helped and encouraged me through out the course of the project.

P.N.Chakravarthy



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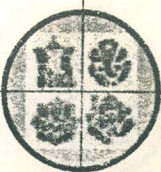
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Part I

Preface

An auspicious beginning of any task is with 'Sri- Ganesh i'-the most beloved god of all. People have an emotional attachment with this god. They feel more close to this god than any other, may be this is the reason they take more liberty while developing the forms of Gajanana, be it an idol or a graphic image. For example people accepted Ganesh form as a paper weight, Flower vase, pencil box etc. It has become a decorative piece which has lot of expression. Another reason being that the god having an elephant head and human body lends itself to very interesting combinations.

This phenomena of difference about a god form can be called mutilation, it is not exactly the dictionary meaning.



What is mutilation

Mutilation is to deform by slitting to remove a material part.

Mutilate means damage by breaking, tearing or cutting off a necessary part, destroy the use

God form is shown in such a way that it lost it's original identity of divine image and became an artist's creative character.

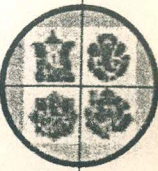
Here mutilation is not in it's actual sense, it is transformation in great extent. People are depicting the elephant god form in many different ways and many different purposes so that the transition is too much.

Why mutilation ?

Mutilation is not only because of Ganesha popularity, graphic potential of this half human and half animal body gave enough scope to create so much on his interesting form. Not only that, psychological attachment that people have with this god is also responsible for this.

Can you mutilate other god form?

No, it is not possible to mutilate other god form as it is happening with the elephant god form because many factors are involved in this, they are sociocultural factors, psychological and religious factors.



About the project

This study mainly divided into three parts

Part one

1. How the concept of Ganesh started.
2. Ganesh as a good beginning.
3. Mythology.

Part two

1. Form variations
2. Variations in iconographic forms

Part three

1. Analysis of graphic potential .

Ganesha names and features

Following are few names of Ganesha which are in relation with his Physical features and character, these features have much importance in creating Ganesha image .

Vakratunda – Curved trunk

Ekadanta – single tusk

Krishnapingaktra – Black and red eyed

Siddhi vinayaka – Right turned trunk

Lambodara – Large belly

Vikata - Gigantic

Vignaraja – Lord of destroyer

Dhumravahana – Smoky colored

Balachandra – Adorned by moon

Vinayaka – Leader of army

Ganapathi – Lord of ganas

Gajanana – Elephant faced

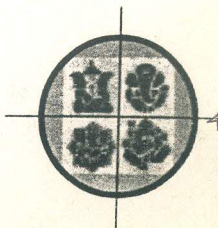
Mushaka vahana – Sits on mouse

Supra karna – Large ears

1000 names of ganesha

Ganesh not only has many forms but also many names, he has more than one thousand names, these are not simple names each and every name has some meaning behind. Here are those names

ganeswara, ganadhyaxa, ganaratreya, ganapriyana, ganadanadha, ganaswami, ganamoorthy, ganatretra, ganajaya, ganapaya, ganakreeda, ganadeeva....





Lord Ganesha

Ganesha or Ganapati is an extremely popular God in India. He is called Vighneshvara or Vighnaharta, the Lord of and destroyer of obstacles.

AUMkara

It is said that Ganesha was born when the eternal couple contemplated on AUM. If you view Lord Ganesha sideways, then you will see the symbol AUM in sanskrit. That's why Ganesha is called AUMkara and worshipped first.



The trunk

The trunk should be curved to the left for normal idols. If it is curved to the right, it is called siddhi vinakya and needs special worship. One should be very careful in worshipping such idols

Trunk is also an unique instrument. It can pick up a needle and also a huge tree. The trunk hangs between the two tusks signifying 'discrimination between the worldly and spirituality'.

But why is the trunk curved to right so special and so strict?

The iDa naaDii is on the left side, while the pingalaa naaDii is on the right. The left-turning trunk has easy rules and one can do puja however one wants with respect since the ida naadii is the moon. but the right turning nadi is the sun and will burn one if rules are violated. When the trunk is facing straight forward, then it signifies the sushumna is entirely open. Idols such as these are very rare and special. Even more special is the trunk where the trunk is swung up right in the air. It means the kundalini shakti has reached the sahasra permanently.



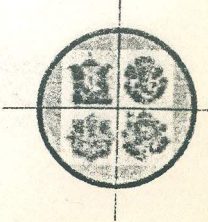
Single tusk

The single tusk is because the tusk was broken when Ganesha killed Gana, the demon. Another incident is related to the breaking of the tusk to write the Mahabharata.

Ganesha ate all the modhakas and became very fat. When he could not move, the moon laughed at him. Ganesha broke his tusk and threw it at the moon. Thus he became ekadanta. Later, the moon apologized. The inner meaning is that the 'light was covered by the maya'.

Red-eyed

Why is Ganesha red-eyed? Maybe he is crying at our ignorance and became red-eyed. Generally, it is referred to the slaying of the demon sindura.





Elephant face

Gajavakra means elephant faced. Perhaps the most popular story regarding Ganesha's origin is the one derived from the Shiva Purana. Mother Parvati once wanted to take a bath and created a boy from the dirt of Her own body, asking him to stand as a guard outside while She bathed. In the meantime Lord Shiva returned home to find a stranger at His door, preventing Him from entering. In anger, Shiva cut off the boy's head, upon which Parvati was stricken with great grief. In order to console Her, Shiva sent out His troops (gaNa) to fetch the head of anyone found sleeping with his head pointing to the north. They found

an elephant sleeping thus and brought back its head. Shiva then attached the elephantine head to the body of the boy and revived him. He named the boy Ganapati or commander of His troops, and granted Him a boon that anyone would have to worship Him (Ganesha) before beginning any undertaking.



Of course, there are several esoteric meanings to having an elephant head. An elephant is strong, but

always calm. ga is sound and ja is to be born. Thus, gajavakra is one who is born from sound. Another derivation is ga is goal and ja is origin. Thus, Ganesha is the origin and goal of life.



Lambodara



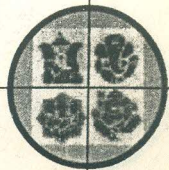
and asked him to give it to Ganesha without pride. Kubera went back. By this time, Ganesha's stomach had become very huge but the child was merry. When Kubera served a cup of rice with humility, Ganesha's hunger was satisfied. We should be never proud of our material or spiritual accomplishments.

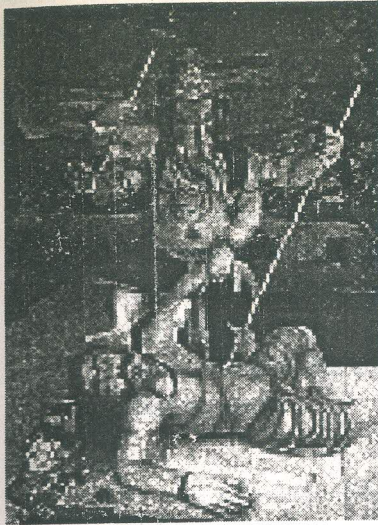
Lambodara was born to overcome the demon krodha-asura. When the ocean was churned, and the asuras and devas quarrelled about the nectar, Vishnu took the form of Mohini and Lord Shiva also took a form. Out of this encounter was born the demon krodha-asura. Krodha is anger.

Kubera went to the eternal couple and wanted to show off his wealth. He invited them to dinner. But, the couple denied Kubera's request and said he could feed Ganesha instead. Kubera laughed, and said 'I can feed many children like this.' Ganesha calmly went to his place and sat down to eat. He started eating all the food. Kubera's army had a tough time feeding the child. Then, Ganesha started eating all the furniture, palace etc. Kubera became very afraid but Ganesha merrily said, 'You promised my parents you will feed me. Now, I have to eat you.' Kubera ran away and pleaded with Shiva. Shiva gave him a handful of rice



Dhūmravarna (why is he smoky-coloured?). Man's ego is like smoke, it is everywhere, but when searched for, it cannot be found. Search, in this case, means self-enquiry as to 'Who am I? Where does the ego arise from?'





Gajanana - Gajanana was born to overcome the demon lobha-asura (greed) and moha-asura. Once Kubera, the richest person, meditated on the eternal couple of Lord Shiva-Shakti. After a long penance, They appeared before Him. Kubera thought to himself that since He was the richest person, everyone would be greedy for his wealth. So thinking, he cast amorous glances at the Divine Mother, Parvati. Parvati was greatly angered that Kubera would think like this of Her and cursed him saying that She was not greedy (She had Shiva, no other wealth is necessary) and Kubera was deluded by moha. Out of this encounter was the asuras. They were killed by gajanana.

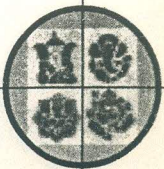
and hit vamadeva accidentally. Vamadeva cursed the gandharva to become a mouse. After the gandharva apologized, vamadeva said that he can be a mouse at parasara's ashrama. One day, Ganesha came across this mouse which was causing trouble at the ashrama and threw his paasa and caught the mouse. This is said in the Ganesha purana. The inside implications are obvious. Indra is the subtle mind, paasa is the noose of ignorance.



Mushaka vahana

Let us examine the word mouse closely. Mouse in English is derived from the sanskrit word, 'muushhaka'. What is the name of pure gold in Hindi/Sanskrit ? muushha. The crucible for melting gold ? muushh. Thus, the mouse is the gold

There are at least two stories. In the yajur-veda it is said that Agni became afraid of Shiva and became a mouse and went into the earth. Agni is fire, just like Kundalini shakti. If you play with it; it will burn you. If you harness the fire, you can do a lot of useful things. Such is the rat of Ganesha.



Balachandra - Ganesha's head is adorned by the moon. The moon signifies the subtle tendencies i.e., the mind.

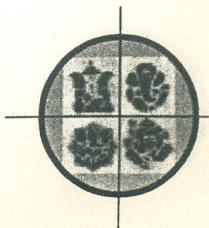
Suprakarna

Among other features of Ganesha's body is the suprakarna (large ears). Ganesha with His long ears will separate the wheat from the chaff and give the aspirant what the person actually needs, not what the aspirant actually thinks what he wants.

Vinakaya and ganapati

He is the lord of gaNas (groups, numbers) and the leader of the army.

The story: To the King abhijit and queen Gunavati was born a beautiful son named Gana. He was very bright and strong. In addition, he had great devotion to Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva pleased with his devotion granted him some boons. However, this increased Gana's ego and he also fell into bad company. One day he visited sage Kapila's ashram. Kapila had a gem called Chintamani which was wish-fulfilling and could provide food for thousands. When Gana saw this, he wanted to possess the gem but Kapila did not want to give it to him. But Gana forcibly took it away from him. Kapila prayed to Lord Ganesha and Ganesha appeared in the dream of Gana and cut off his head. Gana, on waking up, did not repent but became angry and took his army to kill Kapila. Gana's father, abhijit, pleaded with Gana to give Kapila back his gem but Gana did not heed the advice. However, on reaching Kapila's ashram he found that Ganesha had assembled an army. In a huge fight, Gana was killed by Ganesha and Ganesha restored the chintamani to Kapila. Kapila, however, gave it back to Ganesha saying that even a small gem like that is the cause of all troubles and wealth is the root of many troubles of the world. Kapila, however, requested Ganesha to stay in that place. That place is called 'Chintamani Vinayaka' and is at Theur, near Poona .



Part II

Form variations & iconographic variations

Garuda

Chakravartin

Simha

Kirtimukha

Manomukha

Varada

Sarabha

Parashurama

Sankarabharata

and to others

Variations in Elephant God form

Form variations are categorised into few categories, they are variations in iconographic forms

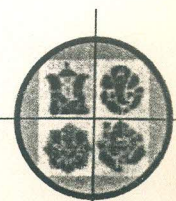
(variation to another god form, variation to animal forms, human beings)

graphic forms which retain original form

graphic forms which do not retain original form

line drawings

material changes



Elephant god is shown like

Balaji

Vishnu

Saraswati

Durga

Shiva

Krishna

Hanuman

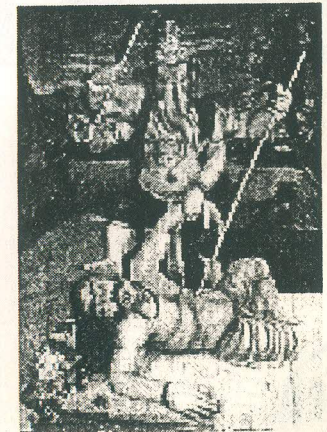
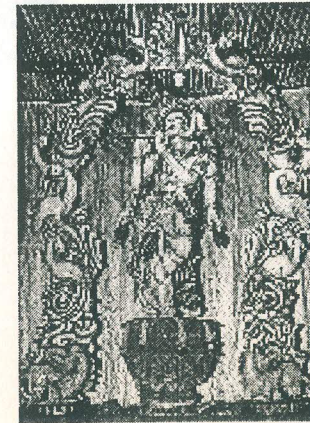
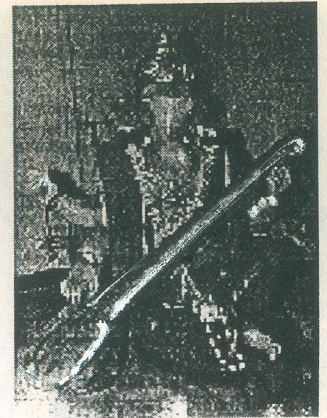
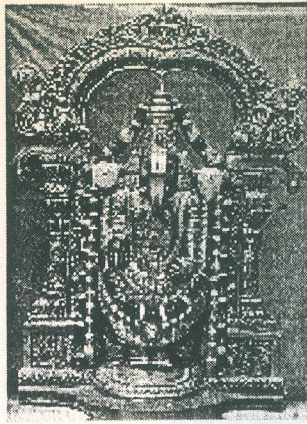
Wamana

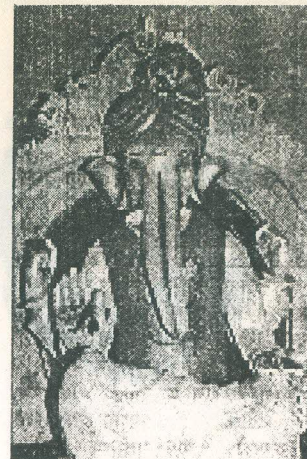
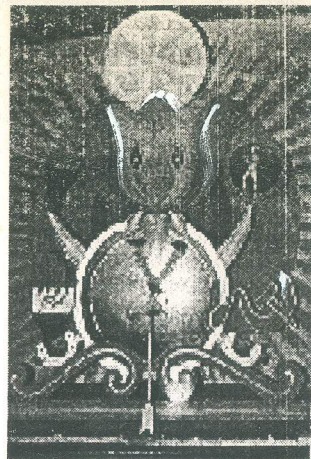
Sai baba

Balakrishna

Sankaracharya

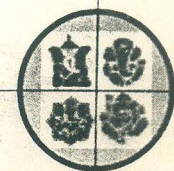
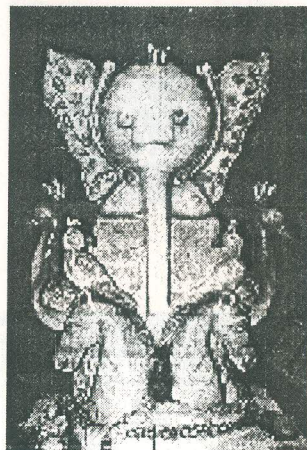
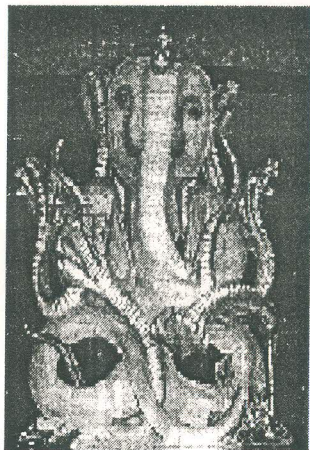
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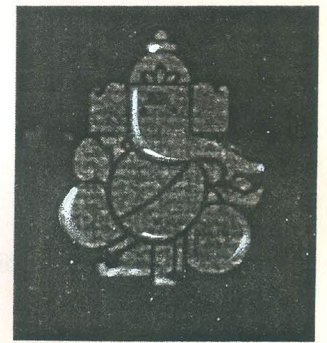
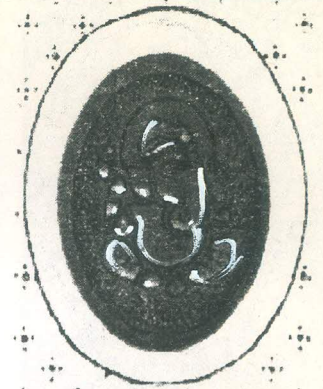




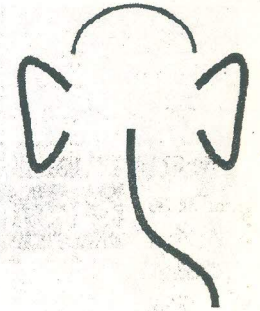
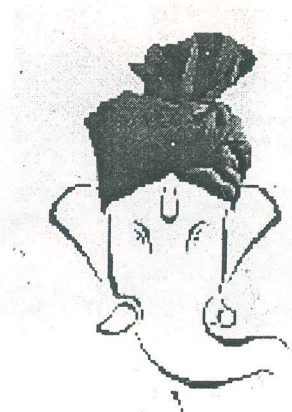
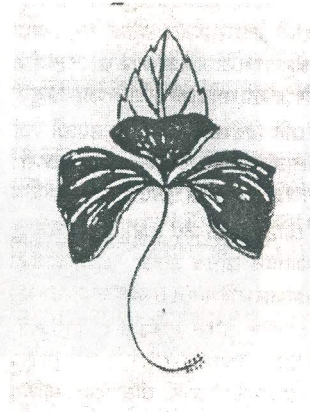
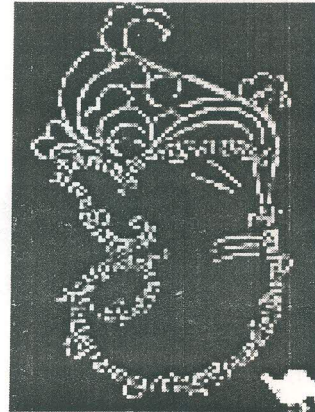
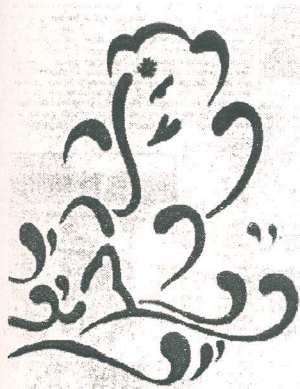
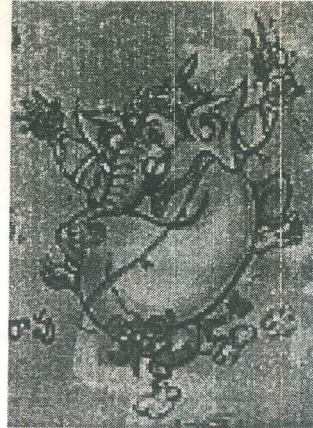
Form variations :Ganesh is shown in other god form; not only this, persons like Siwaji, sankara charya, sai baba and many other great personalities also interpreted in the ganesh form.

Ganesh is made up of political party symbols, snakes forms, animals and bird forms, vegetables and so on. Ultimately it should look like Ganesh by whatever material it made up of.

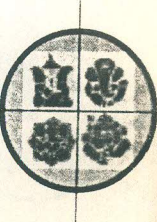




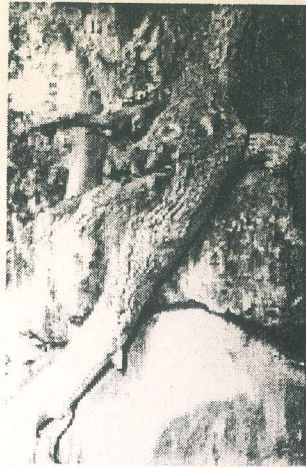
Line drawings



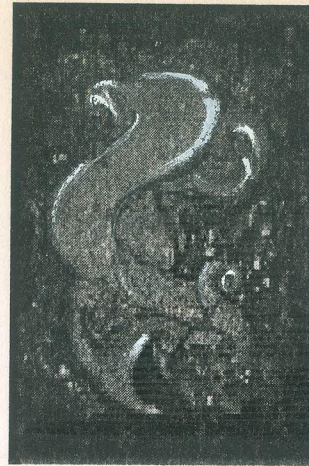
Original identity is not disturbed in the first row line drawings, but the second row line drawings are simple and original form identity is not very much visible.



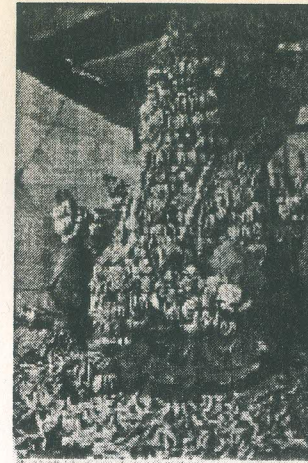
Variation by materials and form



Ganesh form in a tree root



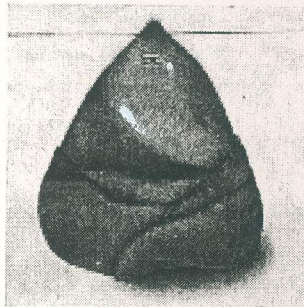
Concrete abstract sculpture



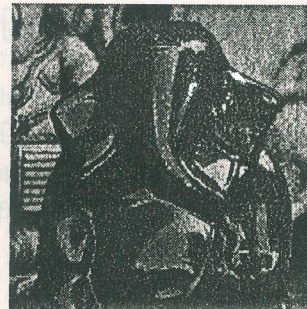
Ganesh made out of bananas



Carved sculpture



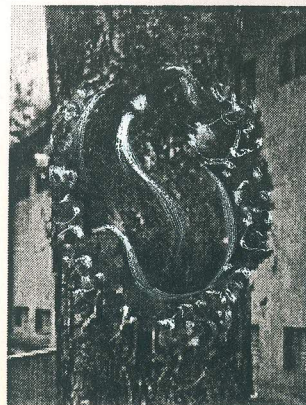
Coconut shaped like Ganesh



Plastic idol



Capsicum shaped like Ganesh



Ganesh form in a tree trunk



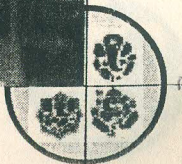
Stone idol



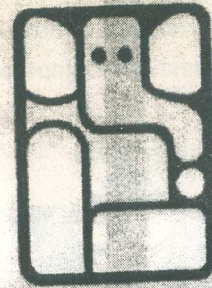
Stone sculpture



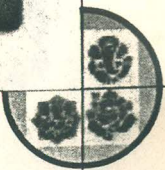
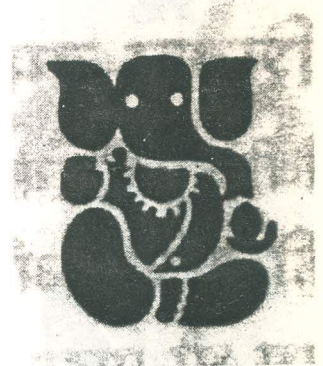
Stone idol



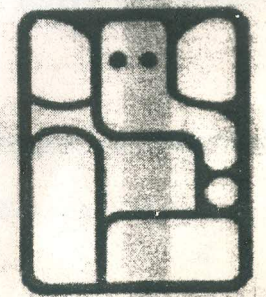
Graphic images

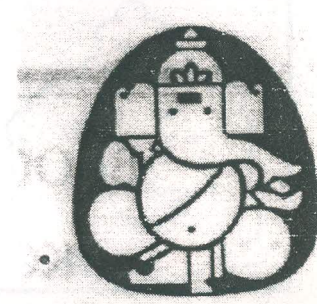
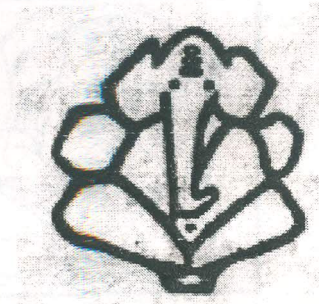
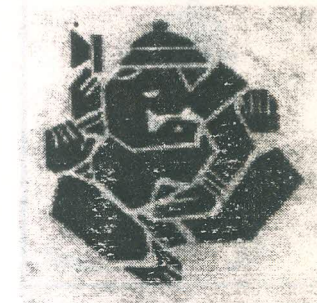
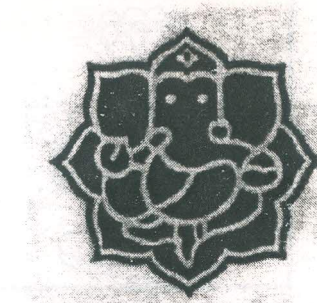
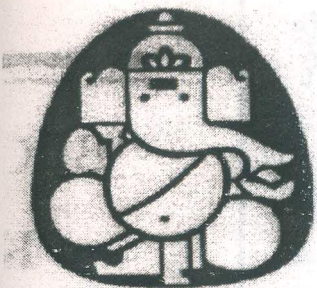
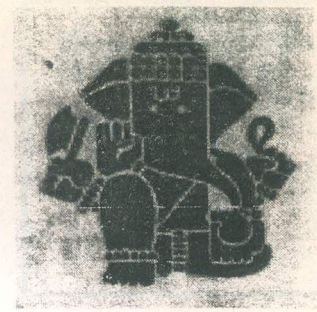
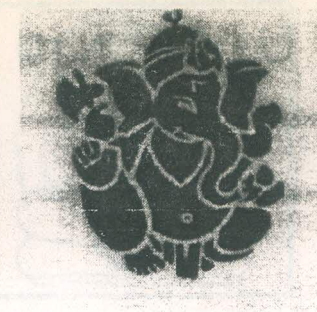
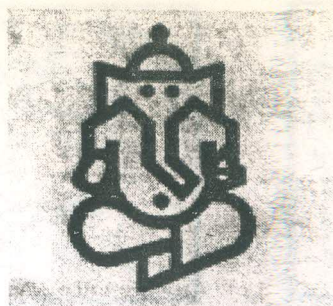
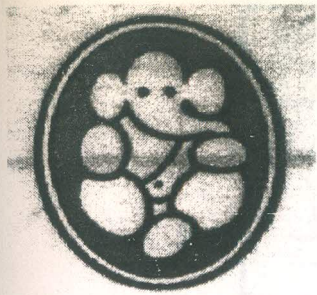


In these graphic images one dominating feature is ears. Ears are exaggerated and those are not proportionate to the body or face. Ears are drawn bigger in size and it's shape is varying from figure to figure.



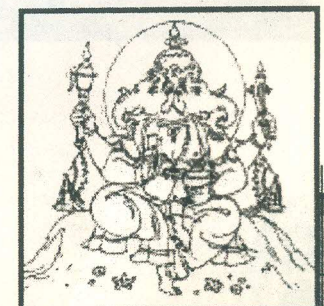
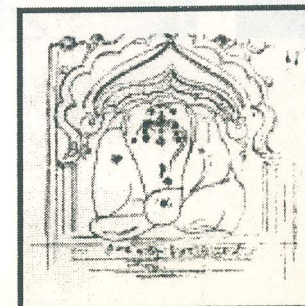
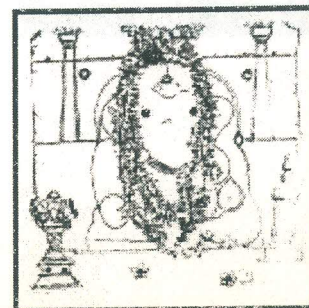
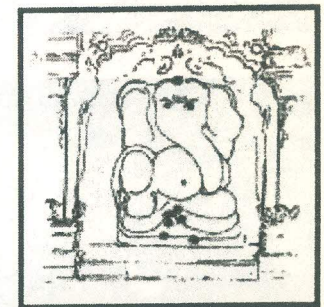
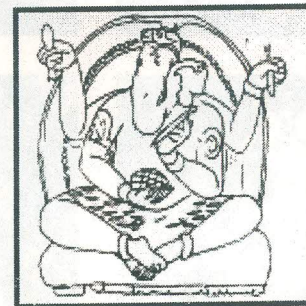
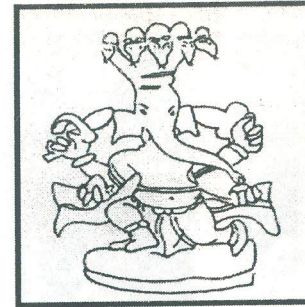
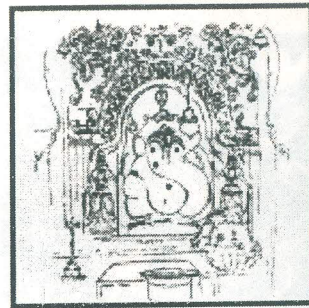
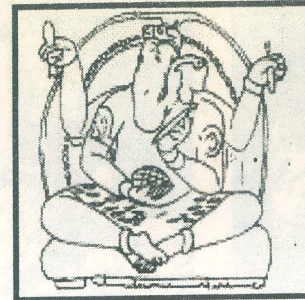
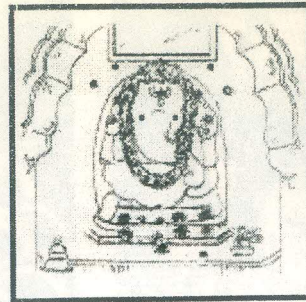
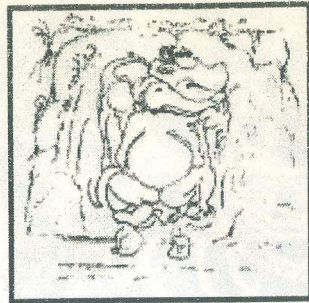
Highlighted part of the figure is the trunk. Generally it is turned left side. This flexible and voluminous part is typical feature of elephant god form. Curves, folding and dynamic character of the trunk can be created easily and effectively.





The particular feature is highlighted in the graphic images above in first two rows, , but overall form is very easy to identify by the typical sitting posture and body proportions.

The only highlighted feature is the belly in the graphics which are in third row ; Belly is round and voluminous, a crossing line over that and in the middle and a small dot as naval.





Analysis of graphic potential

Each and every part of ganesha is very expressive and has lot of graphic potential to create the figure easily and effectively. This elephant face form always inspires many artists, creators to create the form interestingly. Here is the analysis of the some of the ganesha body elements.

Face- Elephant face with vibhudi on fore head and crown on the head is common.

Trunk- has enough graphic potential to create his figure easily. Flexible soft character of trunk is one of the interesting parts in elephant headed figure.

Many images are shown with the varying thickness of the trunk but in contrary without the varying thickness also images can be expressive .

Turn- generally left side turned trunk is very common.

Twist - character of twist and folds can be very expressive.

Tusk- Single tusk or both the tusks in which one is half broken.

Ears- Ears are big, sometimes ears are look bigger than the face. Shape is roughly round and sharp edged at top. Interesting curvy shapes also fits as ears

Eyes- Eyes are small and linear in shape, but in common practice eyes are big and attractive. Simply dots can also fits as eyes in many graphic images.

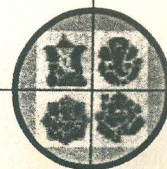
Eyebrows are alined with trunk edge so that in many images eyebrows are not very distinctive.

Gigantic figure-Body is fat and figure is short and whole thing looks bulky, some times body looks like children's body.

Posture-Sitting posture is very common, in particular two folded legs and single leg folded figures are very common. standing and dancing figures are also used depending up on the context.

Limbs-Both the upper and lower limbs are bulky and short, one hand is shown like blessing, and other are holding the armouries, flowers, shanku, Thrishool, sweets etc. Commonly upper limbs are two or four.

Belly_Belly is big and round with a small depression (dot) on it. Tan belt over the stomach hangs from the shoulder. A serpent (snake) wraps around the stomach.



Symbolic philosophy

When we look at the idol of Ganesha the predominant symbols depicted are the Elephant, Serpent, and the mouse, representing the head, the girdle and the mount, respectively. The symbolic philosophy of his form with elephant head, human body and mouse as his vehicle denotes the process of evolution.

Elephant : It is the symbol of majesty, strength and intelligence. Elephant is highly intelligent and also known for its fidelity and gratitude.

Serpent : The serpent around the waist of Ganesha symbolizes the kundalini sakthi. Snake is the symbol of alertness and also energy.

Mouse : The job of a mouse is to cut everything. A simple technique of transcending, going deep with can bring all the great knowledge out of you. The greedy mouse denotes desire, man's desires destroy the material as well as spiritual wealth. The lesson we learn here is that a man has to put a ceiling on his desires.

Tusk : Broken tusk signifies the shedding of ego.

One pointed focus: Ekadanta signifies one pointed focus, loyalty undivided. two focus is not innocence.

Eyes-Ears : Small eyes and big ears. There is a relation between what is seen and heard. Have abroad vision and look at others on a magnified scale, without be litting or underrating anybody.

Conclusion

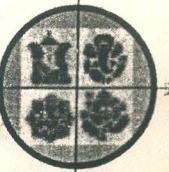
Ganesha's popularity is unchanged despite of change and variations, people are devoted to this god and at the same time people are accepting certain liberties and changes in elephant god form.

Lucrative business Prevailing in the market for Ganesh images, form variations iconographic variations are causing popularity and employment and increased business. Millions of people are involved in India in making of ganesha. Lacks of greeting cards and idols are sold in the market every year and without any little change and variation it would not be possible do this large business.

Advertising field is one which is using Ganesh image for several advertisements, many of such ads are comprised with creative sketches, illustrations of elephant god which looking like less god and more interesting and creative form. Such advertisements are reaching to many people and people are not surprised to see any form variation and creativity.

Artists , painters and sculptures are creating so much change in the elephant god, in modern arts identifying the basic form is very difficult.

Though we see varied forms of Ganesha, love and devotion we developed on the elephant god is unchanged forever.



References

Collections

Paper cutting from the news papers

(times of India, Indian express, Asian age, Navabharat times, Maharashtra times, Taruna bharat, Eenadu, Sakal etc.)

Advertisements from magazines and news papers

Greeting cards and wedding cards

Vinayaka, Kalakshetra road, Atma Gnana Charitable trust, Thiruvannamipur, Chennai-41

Line drawings by Mayank bhatt for the calendar, 1997; 23, Paldi, Ahmadabad-7

Paintings by Rudhra veer mulgaonkar for Ratna prabha; mulgaonkar art studio, Bombay - 4

Graphic images from Chimanlal Pvt. Ltd. Taj building, D.n. Road, Bombay-1

Computer images of Ganesha by Mr. Arun Kalwankar

Internet

[Http://www.hindu.net.org/god/](http://www.hindu.net.org/god/)

[Http://www.hindunet.org/god/ganesh.html](http://www.hindunet.org/god/ganesh.html)

[Http://www.vpservices.com/vps/jeff/ganeshoo.html](http://www.vpservices.com/vps/jeff/ganeshoo.html)

Ganesha web-micro

Ganesha.html-micro

Visits

Ganapathi festival stalls in Bombay

Ganesha immersion in Bombay (Juhu)

Printing press- IIT

Ganeseha exhibitions