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GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

Mysore:

Situated in the southern part of the Deccan Plateau, Mysore District is an undulating tableland, covered in parts by granite outcrops and fringed by verdant forests. From ancient times, this district has played a significant role in the history of South India. Mysore District is a popular tourist destination, offering several attractions ranging from the royal splendour of Mysore City and its fabulous Dasara Festival to exquisite temples, pilgrimage centres and scenic spots. Mysore city is at 770m above sea level and 140 kms from Bangalore. Also known as the City of Palaces, Mysore retains a quaint charm, that never fails to enchant. Mysore was the capital of the Wodeyar dynasty, feudatories of the Vijayanagar Empire, who declared their independence in the 16th century and ruled in Mysore until independence, barring three decades when Haider Ali and his son Tipu Sultan wrested power from them. Mysore today, is a pleasant city with an old world charm, contributed by its broad shady avenues, well laid out gardens, fine buildings and a salubrious climate.

Geographical location of Mysore:

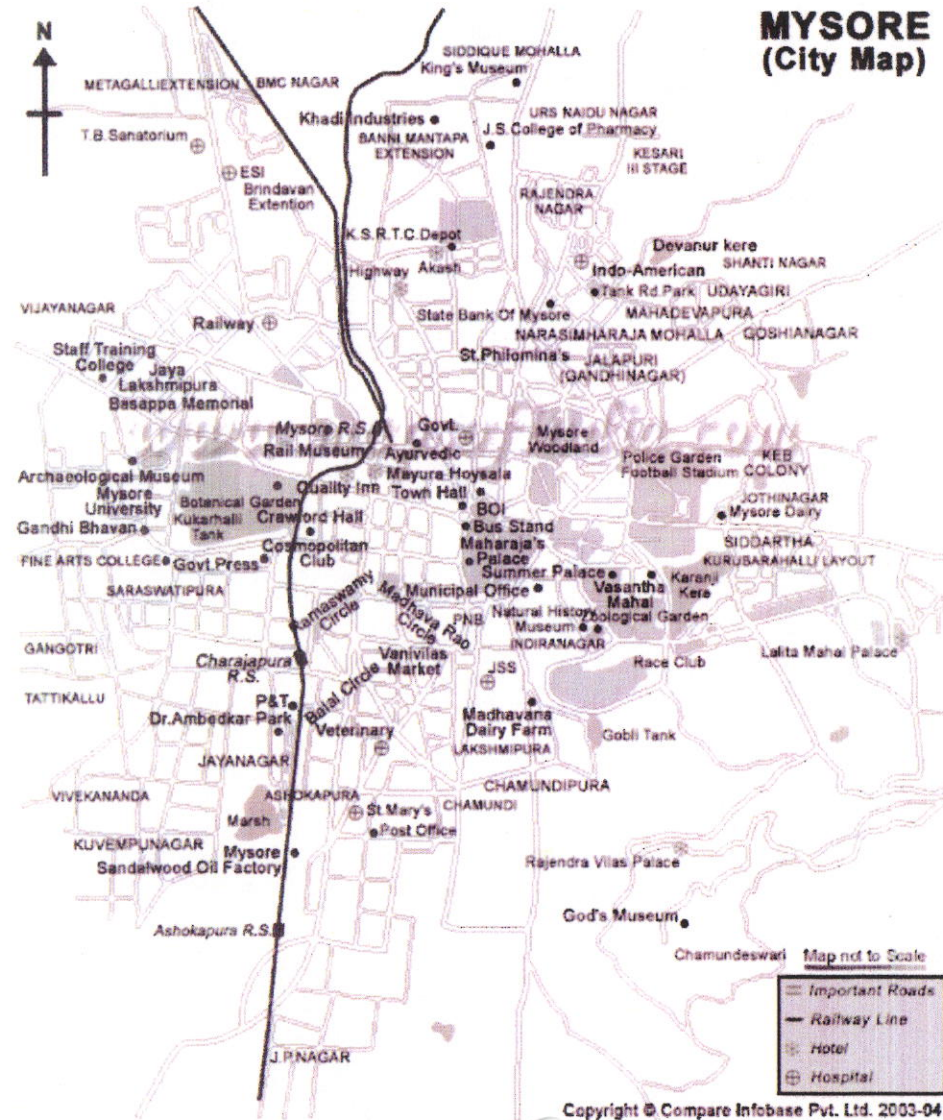
Latitude: 12.17°N

Longitude: 76.41°E

Area: 6,268 km²

Population: 22,81,653

Temperature: Between 19°C and 30°C.



HISTORY-REPUTATION AND TRADITIONAL VALUE

Among various traditional crafts of Mysore, Ganjifa art is one of the prominent craft which has made its name world wide. Historians think that Ganjifa is a Persian work borrowed from Iran during Mughal rule. Ganj means treasury, wealth, money and staking while playing night have become the Ganjifa card play. The Kings, Prime Ministers, Noblemen played the cards for spending their time happily. Mughal rulers encouraged this craft. Babar had great love for Persia and even Humanyun while staying in Persia encouraged the Ganjifa art followed with Akbar the great patronizer was having basic knowledge of painting. Akbar invited about 150 artists from different parts of the country and helped them to settle and work for royal court. He was of the opinion that, artists see the God from nearest distance and they get inspiration from great religious works like Kuran, Babar Nama, kabune, Islam and Aina-E-Akabari treatises mention about Ganjifa art. Thus, the Ganjifa card playing had become part of luxurious life during Mughals.

The Gods play of Ganjifa craft had turned into Courts play and artists got encouragement. During Mughal rule, Ganjifa cards playing received new dimensions. Political tricks, Kings, commandments, vazirs, gulam, rneer, etc., were included. Even the motifs of army, sword, vehicles, birds, animals, Leaves, nude lady figures, etc., were added to the Ganja motifs. Not only round but also square, oval, rectangle cards came into existence. Even for safe keeping of the cards well finished and painted boxes were introduced. Ganjifa were made using ivory, bone, mother of pearl, etc. Ameerkhusro a court singer of Allauddin Khilji imported the handmade paper from Persia and gave new life to miniature paintings including Ganjifa card painting. This enabled the common man to make use of the cards of noblemen. In the South Ahamednagar, Bijapur, Golkonda, Bidar, Gulbarga were ruled by Sultans who had also patronized the Ganjifa art. Thus Hindu and Islam judiciously combined in the craft of Ganjifa.

Adilshahi of Bijapur encouraged the art and the southern miniature painting style was developed by adding birds, flowers, leaves, fruits, etc., in the traditional painting of cards. Karnataka had typical styled Ganjifa cards which were famous due to patronage of Mysore rulers especially Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar the 21st King of Yadava dynasty. He is remembered as Bhoja of Kannada who had encouraged literature, art, dance, sculpture, music, including Ganjifa art.



HISTORY-REPUTATION AND TRADITIONAL VALUE

During the rule of Tipu Sultan itself Ganjifa cards were in existence. But, due to continuous fighting with British Army, Tipu could not pay his attention to art of painting. After the take over of the Kingdom from Tipu, Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar was installed as a ruler in 1799. At the age of 16 years he commenced independent rule as King of Mysore State but due to internal fighting of Divans and Bakshies, after the death of eminent Divan Sir Purnaiah, British took over the administration. The King devoted his full time for the development of arts, crafts, music, dance, etc., as a disciplined devotee of Goddess Chamundeshwari. He encouraged various crafts and during this period the Ganjifa art reached its high peak of reputation. He developed the Ganjifa as Gods play and wrote several books.

He himself devised new plays like Chamundeshwari (320 cards), Panchapandavas (210 cards), Jagan Mohana (210 cards), navarathana Naveenarama (36 cards), Sadyajatha (72 cards), hastadigpala (160 cards), Devi dasavatara (180 cards), Sarvamangala (160 cards), and other plays by himself in consultation with artists. He had also honored excellent artists. This was the golden period for arts and crafts of Mysore. Sritatwanidhi famous literary work of Sri Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar contains details of Ganjifa plays along with miniature paintings. The original book could be seen at Mysore Palace and Oriental Research Institute. The language is Sanskrit with Kannada script.

Indian Ganjifa marketed to France through Arab countries 300 years back and taken new shape of the present playing cards and returned to India affecting Father of modern cards, Due to British influence slowly the Ganjifa craft lost its traditional importance and the craft was completely languished. At this stage Shri Raghupati

Bhatta took greater interest to collect old paintings and with dedication and love he reproduced and brought new life to the age old craft. Because of his high caliber, minute strokes, - knowledge of religious books he could come up as excellent Master craftsperson. For his excellent workmanship, he was honored with Kamladevi Chattopadhyay Award instituted by Crafts Council of Karnataka in the year 1989 and National Award in the year 1993 by office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts). He had projected his skills at London and his articles were displayed in the Victoria Alber Museum, London. He had trained number of candidates under the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) programme. This craft reached again to its fame of traditional greatness. The excellent age old Ganjifa can be seen in the Jagan Mohan palace of Mysore, Folk art Museum, Gangotri, Mysore, special Ganjifa museum at Srirangapatna and Manjusha museum at Dharmastala. The elderly master craftsperson like Shri Ramnarasaiah has also took interest in the art and encouraging younger artists to learn this art.

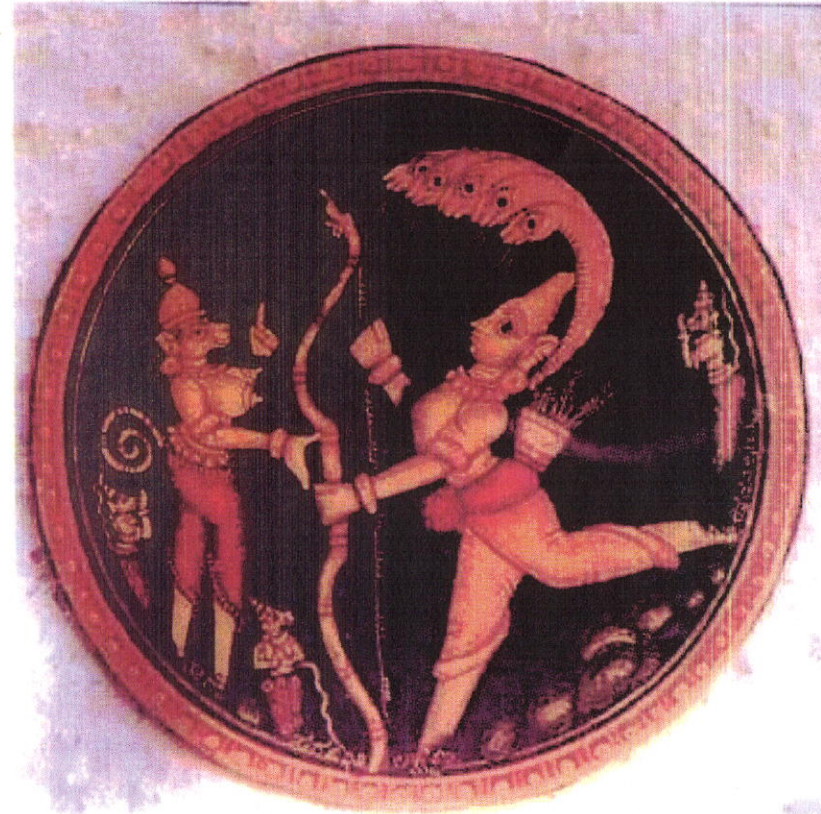


PROOF AND EVIDENCES

This craft was practiced during the king Mummadi Krishna Wodeyar (1771) It is the only recorded time period (developed 636 leaves of ganjifa) known. This craft might have existed much before in point of time, but no recorded evidence is available on such occurrence.

In any case this craft was revived in 1980 by Raghupathi Bhatta. He is now 48 years old. and originally belonged to Udupi. He has a family background of temple related activities, and got interest in temple arts and forms. Later he started studying traditional arts and culture and in the meantime got some training from Chitrakala parishad. Thereafter he started collecting and studying Ganjifa cards from various parts of India. He has put in tremendous efforts in reviving this craft, practising and researching it all the while. He has also organised many exhibitions with a view to spread awareness amongst people and bring this craft back to life. He has been instrumental in training a number of artisans not only in India but also abroad through various programmes.. An Art gallery is already set up by him to promote the craft. Today, most of the artisans practising this craft in Karnataka are trained by him.

There is scope for applying this craft form on small products made from paper or paper pulp, and promoting them not only within the country but also in the international market. It is learnt that he is ready to conduct more training programmes with the assistance of a designer.



Laxman meets Vali's wife Tara
Mythological Painting on Ganjifa Card

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RAW MATERIAL

Materials used

Surface

Thin handmade paper

Cloth

Ivory

Palm leaf

Mica

Leather

Gum -

Acacia,

Arabica,

Maravajra and Anakkai(elephant fruit) grind when it is green, tamarind seeds

Colours

Fruit,

Mineral,

Flowers,

Leaves etc.

Eg.

Yellow from turmeric

Red from mix of turmeric and lime, red sandal

Green from leaves

Blue from Indigo

Black from carbon deposits of the lamp

White from Clay

Merroom from mud

Yellow ochre from mud

TOOLS: different sizes of brushes with points made out of squirrel tail hair are used for painting. Pencil is used for rough outlines, paper cutter; scissors are also used in the craft.



GANJIFA

KARNATAKA

PRODUCT



Ganjeefa / Ganjeepha (also god's play/game or chadd) are the different names of a game played with cards which is of God's images along with bunch of precious craft work. ||

Author says that when he was the student of Chitrakala Parishat his master Late Sri M S Nanjundaraya had shown him the art of our old people who had used their craft (kasuti) skill with wonderful colour combinations, even now it is good. Author had seen many Ganjeefas in Mysore which helped him in studying and learning this art. This was exported through mediators to foreign countries with high prices. Even now the officials without good knowledge of its value, they sell in open market. These many things made him start working on it and he tried to improve the art Ganjeefa and he started looking for colours, particular thin brushes, preparation of diamond coating etc. In Karnataka he did not get more information. People did not recognise this game much in those days. He went across the country and tried to understand the games very close to this. This helped him in understanding how they used the number of cards in RASHI (heap) and DASHAVATARA. In 1981 he completed his invention of Ganjeefa and in future there was good demand for this work also improved with many changes.

Thousands of students from India and abroad have learnt this History of Ganjeefa, Ganjeefa colour creating type/method and art. Govt of India through Handicrafts Development Centre and Craft Council conducted classes and it helped in saving the art. Exhibition of this art in many parts of the world gave good response to this Indian Art. First book of Ganjeefa was printed in German. Then in England's Victoria and Albert Museum there was a good response from the public and it was a great success. Maharaja of Mysore Sri Mummudi Krishnaraja Kantheeravendra Dashaka (created in 1771 Soumya Samvatsara Jestha shuddha first day) with 636 cards Sarva Samrajya Pethika Ganjeefa, Baju for 30 cast 18 cards with 540 Chakravarthis-64, Peacock -7, swan-7, parrot leaf -11, Chetika women's leaf-7 and shlokas to create Ganjeefa.

This is the beginning of the book created by Sri Mummudi Krishnaraja. This shows that to construct or to create Ganjeefa they were using Shlokas and explanation of the game. They were creating this art with background of shlokas and colour with measurement. Sri Mummudi Krishnaraja Odeyar had created a 18 games beautifully. Following are the details of 18 games:

1.	Chamundeshwari	320 leaves bunch
2.	Jaganmohan	360 leaves bunch
3.	Mahisha Mardhana	216 leaves bunch
4.	Naveena (Modern) Dashavatara	240 leaves bunch
5.	Naveenarama	36 leaves bunch
6.	Navagraha	216 leaves bunch
7.	Sadyujata	72 leaves bunch
8.	Sri Krishnaraja	72 leaves bunch
9.	Panchapandava	216 leaves bunch
10.	Devi Dashavatara	180 leaves bunch
11.	Dikpala	160 leaves bunch
12.	Manohara	160 leaves bunch
13.	Sarva Mangala	160 leaves bunch
14.	Navaratna	160 leaves bunch
15.	Ramayana	96 leaves bunch
16.	Dashavatara	120 leaves bunch
17.	Sarvasamrajya	636 leaves bunch
18.	Astaishwarya	320 leaves bunch



PRODUCT

This belongs to Mysore Ganjeefa (drawing)art. The above game bundles/bunches were round and rectangular in shape made of paper cloth or sandal sheet. These drawings were made separate bundles and kept separately in different box or bag. While playing also they have differentiated whether day or night. They have named it as Mysore Chedd, Mysore game leaf or God's game. They were mentioning / pronouncing with more respect While playing Sarvasamrajya Pethika, Chamundeshwari or any Godess cards/leaves. In this game they add the numbers, they increase, by adding chakravarthi's meetings, adding of Soldiers and if not possible to add they remove they use to create a High quality Ganjeefa was played in many parts of India. Kashmir to Kanyakumari it was played in those days. Now in very few places we can see this game. That too only Dashavatara 120 leaf and Ramayana 96 leaf game is popular. Apart from this games are being created with the background of their local language and culture. For example Orissa Navagunjara, Kashmir Devi Saraswati etc. they try to create the colours with the help of products available in their area. In some parts they use this for story telling and to learn Astrology.



Moghal Ganjeefa:

In Moghals era they started changing 96 leaves according to their Dharma/community. They changed Gajadhipati, Ashwadipati, Rathadipati etc. and started using it. Muslims in different parts of India were playing Moghal Ganjeefa but in some parts it was like Hindu Ganjeefa. They created by Ivory, paper and leather in Srirangapattana (Mysore District) it was one inch area (high-width) during the period of Hyder Ali and Tippu. Moghals replaced Hindu gods/godess name to Ganjeefa (or the name Ganjeefa was given by Moghals). In Parsion language Ganj means money, Ganjeefa means bidding money and playing. 96 was the favourite number of Moghals. They had created there own Ganjeefa with bird and animals. In later stage instead of the name Chadda, Ganjeefa was used by Sri Mummadi Krishnaraja Odeyar and he is the one who improved Mysore Ganjeefa. In his period thousands of Ganjeefa bunchs came with beautiful artwork. World famous designs were created during his period (dimension was three inches area) Slowly they stopped using brass in this. Art of the craftsman which will predict the beauty of face compared with petals is really wonderful. It was very special with kusuri work and very beautiful and was precious piece of work in the world didn't get any importance or recognition. It was sent/exported or transferred to foreign countries. It is impossible to create most beautiful Mysore Ganjeefas once again. We have to save the remaining art and can be retained to our future generation.

PRODUCT

Dashavatara Ganjeefa -120

We get Dashavatara Ganjeefa bunch in almost all parts of India. In different states it is different style with 120 leaves a bunch, and different in measurement in different areas (5" x 1.5") In some area we can see rectangular Ganjeefas which will be of regular cards size. Mysord cards are of 3" circular rectangular in shape. Dashavatara baju leaves-10, rate 12, 10 x 12 = 120 leaves. Shlokas 10. In every avatara no. of huku will be 2. totally 30 huku leaves. Details are as follows: 1. Matsya, 2. Koorma, 3. Varaha, 4. Narasimha, 5. Vamana, 6. Parashurama, 7. Srirama, 8. Balarama, 9. Krishna, 10-Kalki. In some parts 8-Balarama, 9: Krishna, 10.Kalki (without Budha) Details of these are as follows:

1. Matsya 1st leaf: Vishnu's first avatara with four hands (shall (Shanku), Chakra, Gada and Padma/lotus in hand) with half body of fish.
2. Matsya 2nd leaf: It is like first one but sitting on a horse position.
3. Matsya 3rd leaf: -one fish image, Matsya 4th leaf -2 fishes image like this on 12th leaf 10 fishes image will be there. These fishes will be having human type nose, eye and ear. It looks like one facing each other. Backside colour will be same on all the 12 leaves.

Koorma 1st leaf: Vishnu's second avatara, with four hands along with Shanku, Chakra, Gada and Padma (lotus) but half the body will be of tortoise and it is in standing posture. Usually this will be of side posture. Koorma 2nd image: It will be like first one but sitting on horse, on 3rd leaf one tortoise's image, 4th leaf 2 tortoises like this on 12th leaf 10 tortoises one looking on the other. Backside colour will be same on all the 12 leaves.

Varaha 1st leaf: Vishnu's 3rd avatara. Face of a Wild pig with human body along with 4 hands sitting on throne. Four hands- Abhaya hasta, Shanku, Chakra and varada hasta with side posture. Varaha 2nd leaf same as first leaf but sitting on a horse. 3rd leaf one shanku image. 4th leaf 2 shankus, like this 12th leaf will have 10 shankus. Backside colour will be same on all the 12 leaves.

Narasimha 1st leaf: Vishnu's forth avatara. Lion's face and human body along with four hands-Abhaya, charka, shanku and varada hasta sitting on a throne. Narasimha 2nd leaf- same as first one but sitting on a horse. 3rd leaf one lion image, 4th leaf-2 lions, like this 12th leaf 10 lions. Backside colour will be same on all the 12 leaves.

Vamana 1st leaf: Vishnu's 5th avatara. Image of a Small boy in right hand-kamandala and left hand umbrella. A short person walking image.

Vamana's 2nd image: Sitting on a horse holding Kamandala in his hand. 3rd leaf on umbrella. 4th leaf 2 umbrellas like this 12th leaf will have 10 umbrellas. Backside colour will be same on all the 12 leaves.

Parashurama's 1st leaf: Vishnu's 6th avatara, a beard person holding an axe in his hand supporting with a pillow on his back.

PRODUCT

Parashurama's 2nd leaf: Sitting on a horse, 3rd leaf 1 axe, 4th leaf 2 axes, like this 12th leaf will have 10 axes. Backside colour will be same on all the 12 leaves.

Sriram 1st leaf: Vishnu's 7th Avatara, sitting with two hands supporting with pillow on his back with bow and arrow and a arrow holder (battalike) at his back.

Srirama 2nd leaf: Horse riding with bow scene. 3rd leaf one arrow, 4th leaf 2 arrows etc. 12th leaf 10 arrows one facing another and all the leaves are of same colour.

Krishna's first leaf: 8th Vishnu's avatara. Krishna sitting on a throne reciting flute, 2 hands a pillows on his back , these leaves are with little difference.

Krishna's 2nd leaf: Reciting flute and riding a horse next to this leaf one charka. 3rd leaf one charka image, 4th leaf 2 chakras, like this 12th leaf 10 chakras. Backside colour will be same on all the 12 leaves.

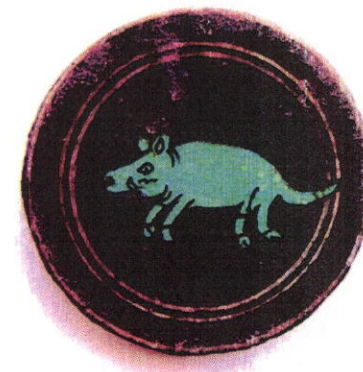
Buddha' s 1st leaf: Krishna's 9th avatara. Sitting under a tree without any ornaments with saffron dress.

Buddha's 2nd leaf: Buddha sitting on a horse, 3rd leaf one lotus, 4th leaf 2 lotus, like this 12th leaf 10 lotus bunch totally 12 leaves. Backside colour will be same on all the 12 leaves.

Kalki 1st leaf: Vishnu's 10th avatara, Horse faced human body in a sitting posture. Pillows on his back, sword and shield(gurani) In his hand.

Kalki 2nd leaf: Riding a horse along with a sword in his hand. 3rd leaf one sword, 4th leaf 2 swords, 12th leaf 10 swords

Like this 120 leaves make a bunch of Dashavatara Ganjeefa. For this they use to make box to keep and they also draw on the outer surface of the box just to safeguard the art.



KARNATAKA GANJIFA

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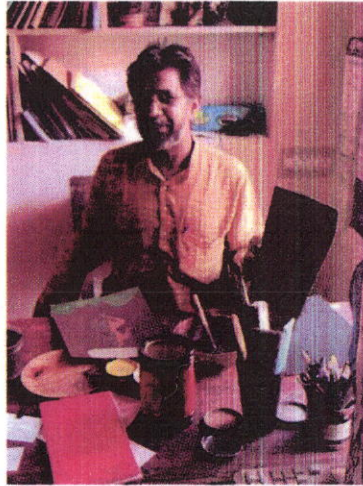
PROCESS



To begin with, seven layers of paper are stuck together, with tamarind seed paste to make a thicker and hard base material. Its dried under sun with weight put on top to straighten.

Then it is cut in to sizes, borders and figures are drawn for being painted. After painting, outlines for all fine details are drawn. Lacquer (honeycomb mixed with Anakkai) is also applied) to achieve final finished surface.

The Ganjifa cards are first designed in circular or rectangle shape with 2-3- mm thickness made of pasted layers of paper. With free hand, outlines are drawn in black colour and then painted with different colours. Minute details of eyes, nose, mouth, hair, etc. are worked out, Iconographical details are also included, Embossing is done on the sketch to bring 3 dimensional effects, and then gold leaf is pasted for ornaments. The border is also given a contrast colour. Finally its coated with varnish to give a shining look and also avoid spoiling during the use as well as easy shuffling of cards during the play. Each set or cards are painted for different themes, stories, avatars, etc.



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UNIQUENESS

Besides their graphic features, what is probably the most interesting peculiarity of any Ganjifa deck is that these cards are still hand-made and hand-painted by skilled craftsmen, known as chitrakara. Therefore, each deck is a truly unique item. Ganjifa are traditionally rounded, measuring approximately from 20mm to 34 mm to 120 mm in diameter.



ECONOMIC ASPECT/ARTISAN PROFILE

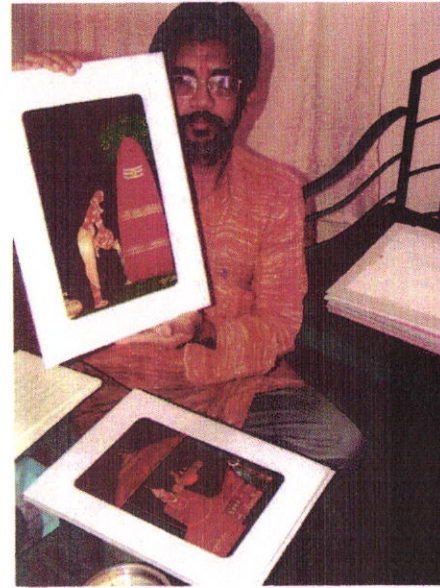
NO. OF CRAFTSPERSONS: - There are about 35 crafts persons practicing this craft.

ANNUAL PRODUCTION: - Annual production is said to be Rs. 3 lakhs and capacity is estimated to Rs. 3.5 lakhs.

MARKETING: - The Ganjifa cards made by the trained artisans are locally marketed due to cheapness. Also widely marketed during exhibitions organized by the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) the Temple trusts, Mutts, rich class of society buy the masterpieces in miniature style and encourage the artists. The gift senders to foreign countries send the Ganjifa cards as gifts. The excellent masterpieces are marketed in the external market especially in Britain, America, Germany, and other places. The foreign tourists visiting Mysore witnessing them in the Palaces, museums, go for purchase.

PROBLEMS: - Due to lack of knowledge to the public about great skill involved, there is a problem of regular marketing. The KSHDC and other government and private emporia are not taking risk of marketing these novel items. With little knowledge, some artisans tried to copy. This also affects the marketing and brings down the reputation of the craft. There is no dissemination on international market intelligences for exploiting the foreign demand for such exclusive and unique articles. Mineral and vegetable dyes are replaced with synthetic paints which are not eco-friendly.

SUGGESTIONS: - This being a unique craft the KSHDC and Government Emporia's should encourage with buying of products and proper display of the same. The KSHDC must bring out a detailed catalogue for international market. The office of D.C. (H) may enroll the Mastercraftspersons and depute them in the



international exhibitions for popularizing. The copying without proper knowledge must be stopped. The artists must be educated in use of eco-friendly dyes which are in demand in the external market. The detailed pamphlets describing the craft as well as traditional playing techniques may be brought out. The craftsperson along with the Ganjifa cards may take up traditional miniature painting for interior decorations. The Ganjifa craft may be diversified with facilities for decorative display

and use. The craftsperson may also try the other media painting on wood to be used as pelmets, pooja room, doors etc. for widening the market. They may use mild colors to enrich the work and for tapping foreign markets.

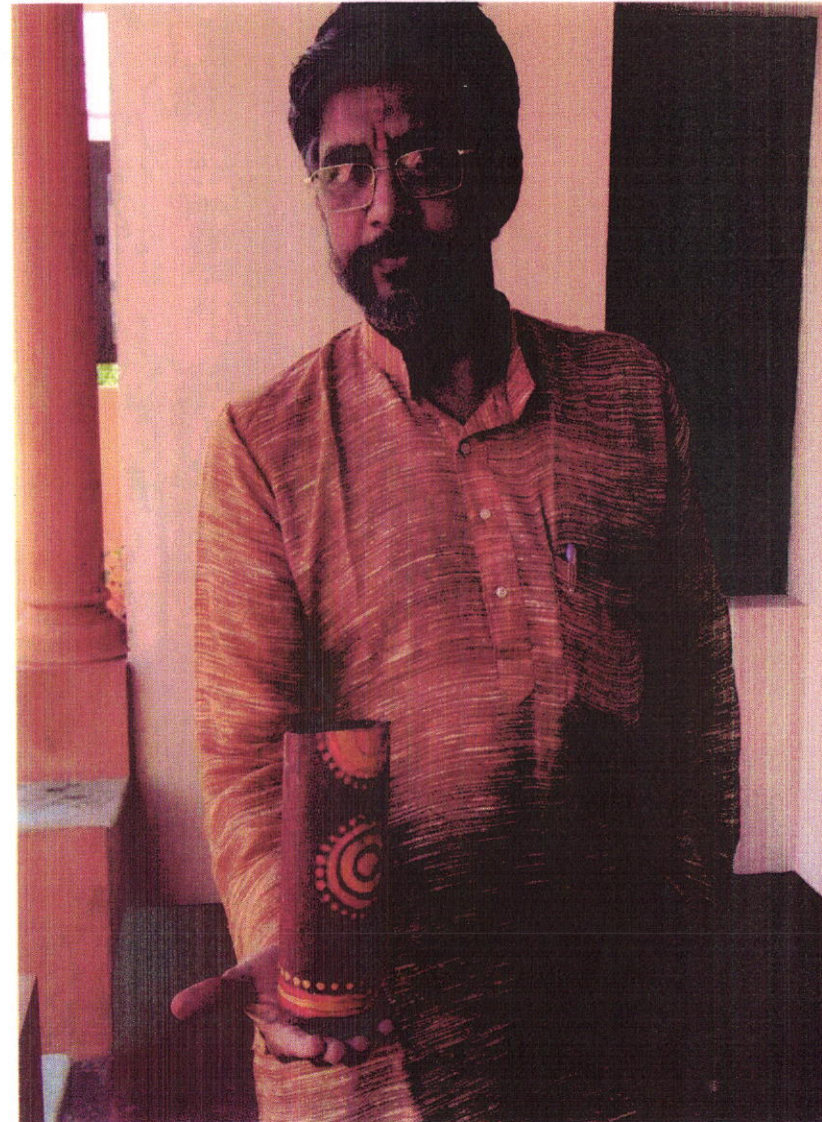
To sum up Ganjifa craft has received its original value along with folk style. The craft has made the name of Karnataka and hence in the world map of Ganjifa, Karnataka craftsperson's name is prominently highlighted

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ARTISAN PROFILE

Name: Ganjifa Raghupathi Bhatta
[Name got after revival of Mysore Ganjifa painting)
Date of Birth: 21-07.1957
Father Name: Late S'hri. Anantharam Bhatta
Address: Ganjifa Raghupathi Bhatta, # 31, 'CHITRA SADANA "K.
C. Layout, Chamundi Hills Road, Mysore -570011. Cell:
9448246849, E-mail:
raghupathibhatta@rediffmail.com

Awards: 1989 Kamaladevi Chattopadyay Viswakarma Award 1991
Jaycee State Award
1992 Jaycee National Award
1993 National Award [O/O DC [Handicrafts) received from ~ Hon
'ble President of India.
1996 Lalitha Kala Academy Award Etc.
Rewards: 'CHITRAKALA MAHARSHI' 'CHITRA BRAHAMA'
'CHITRAKALA NIDHI'
Exhibitions ': 1992 -London -Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan J 994 -
London -Victoria & Albert Museum.
1996 -Netherlands -The Hague [Demonstration) 1997--
Washington, New York [USA]
1997 -Tunisia -Organized by O/O DC [Handicrafts),
2000 -Tokyo, Osaka, Hiroshima -Expo & Demonstration
Master Pieces with: Victoria & Albert Museum -London [60
miniature Ramayana paintings)
Government of Karnataka Museum, Bangalore Art Gallery Ananth
and Taj Residency, Delhi Manjusha at Dharmasthala. Etc.
Private Collections: American, European and some Asian Countries.
Membership: 1993 -96 Karnataka Lalithkala Academy Member
2001-03 Member of Selection Committee for Awards in the field of
Visual Arts, Government of India.



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VISUAL IDENTITY

Ganjifa cards in different sizes, shapes are made. For the epic Ramayana story 28 to 1008 cards are made, for Dasavatara 120 cards made. The number of cards for each theme varies from 16 to 900 cards. Motifs of animals, birds, nude figures, sword, leaves, and zodiac signs etc. themes are drawn on the cards. Traditionally the design motifs were selected from Agamas, Upanishads, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bagavathageetha, Puranas, Jain, Buddhist literature, Shakta, Shaivya, Vaishnava, Ganapathya, Advaitya, Dwaitya, etc. Even Islam had also helped in selection of motifs like birds, flowers, animals, leaves, creepers, army, fruits, zodiac signs, Navagraha etc. The details of design motifs could be seen with microscope. The artistic skill of traditional craft is seen in adoption of designs with very minute details using superb lines of painting, elegant and appropriate. The executing of designs delights the eye and mind.

