

UNIT III
THE BENGAL SCHOOL OF PAINTING

(Above mid of the 19th centuries)

OBJECTIVE TYPE QUESTIONS

Q.1 What is the time period of Bengal School Of Painting?

Ans. Mid of the 19th century.

Q.2 In the west, the 'Modern Art' started with which type of art?

Ans. Impressionism

Q.3 Which school is known as the Renaissance school or the Revivalist school?

Ans. Bengal School Of Art

Q.4 Which two main persons were responsible for bringing Bengal School Of Art in India?

Ans. Shri E.B.Havell and Raja Ravi Verma.

Q.5 Who was Shri E.B.Havell?

Ans. E.B.Havell was the principal of Madras School Of Art from 1884 and 1896 and thereafter worked as Principal at Madras School Of Art, he was transferred at Calcutta. He along with Raja Ravi Verma (artist) was responsible for bringing Bengal School Of Art in India .

Q.6 Who was Shri Abanindranath Tagore?

Ans. He was a leading artist of India. With the efforts of Shri Abanindranath Tagore and Shri E.B.havell a new school namely Bengal School Of Art was established within ten years.

Q.7 Who founded the "Indian Society Of Oriental Arts"?

Ans. "Indian society of Oriental Arts was founded by Shri E.B.Havell and Shri Ganganendra Nath Thakur in 1907.

Q.8 Who was the artist of the painting 'Mearti Meghd'?

Ans. Ram Gopal Vijaivargiya.

Q.9 What was the main aim of Bengal School Of Art?

Ans. Its main aim was to encourage the Indian traditional style of painting.

Q.10 Mention the titles of five famous paintings of Bengal School Of Art.

Ans. (1) Journey's End

(2) The Evaluation of Indian National flag

(3) Radhika

(4) Rasa Lila

(5) Tiller of Soil

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q.1 What do the following symbolise in our National flag:

(1) Indian Saffron

(2) White

- (3) **Indian Green**
- (4) **Ashoka Wheel Or Dharma Chakra**
- (5) **24 spokes in Ashoka Wheel**

Ans. **Indian saffron**- is for courage and sacrifice. It is the common and religiously significant colour of the religion of Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh and Jain. Saffron colour indicates rejection of the ego of the people belonging to different religion and unites them to become one.

White- is for truth, honesty, purity and peace if the nation. It also represents cleanliness and knowledge. It lightens the path of truth in order to guide the nation.

Green- is for faith and chivalry. It also represents the fertility, life, happiness and prosperity of the nation. It indicates the green fields all over India.

Ashoka wheel- is the Wheel of cosmic law, it stands for constant change and dynamism.

24 spokes in Ashoka wheel- in the centre represents the 24 precious hours of the whole day.

Navy blue – colour , of the Ashoka Wheel in the centre of the white strip represents the colour of the sky and ocean.

Q.2 Write short note on the painting ‘ journey ‘s End' based on the following points:

- (1) Title
- (2) Name of artist
- (3) Subject matter
- (4) Medium
- (5) Composition

Ans. The painting journey ‘S End belongs to Bengal school of art. It is a very meaningful painting. Its detail based on following points is as under:

(1) **Title**- The title ‘Journey’s End’ matches the theme of the painting.

(2) **Name of the Artist**- The artist of this painting is Abanindranath Tagore. He was a leading artist of India during his time. Under his leadership, a new school known as Bengal school came into existence.

(3) **Subject matter**- The subject matter of the painting provides a poetic deliberation. A loaded camel is about to fall and die on a stony ground. He is very exhausted after long journey. His face expressions justify the theme of the painting.

(4) **Medium**- The medium used in this painting is water colours and Tempra with the help of ‘Wash Technique ‘.

(5) **Composition** – In this painting artist has used red, brown and a bit of yellow orange colour giving effect of sunset. In the foreground, the

loaded camel has a kind of cloth tied with reopen his back. A desert has been depicted gracefully. It is a symbolical painting that reaches beyond the explicitly pictorial elements of the work. The crouching, gasping camel set against an arid desert in the twilight hours. Loaded camel after a long journey is about to die and fall on a stony ground. The whole composition is well balanced and rhythmic. The expression of the camel's face is tremendous.

DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

Q.1 Write an essay on the origin and development of the Bengal School Of Painting. (200 words)

OR

How did the Bengal School Of Painting come into existence

Ans. Towards the close of the nineteenth century , Indian painting, as an extension of the Indian miniature painting, fell on decline, and degraded into weak and unfelt imitation due to historical reasons , both political and sociological.

There was only some minor artistic expression in the intervening period by was of the 'Bazar' and 'company' styles of painting. Raja Ravi Verma and Abanindranath Tagore under whose inspired leadership came into being a new school of painting.

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

Renaissance- After long effort, Britishers could not develop the western art of painting in India by the end of the 19th century this art came to an end with Raja Ravi Verma . But the credit of bringing a new style of painting in India goes to Shri E. B. Havell and Raja Ravi Verma, Shri E.B. Havell was the Principal of Madras School Of Art from 1884 to 1896 and then he was transferred to Calcutta where he was introduced to Abanindranath Tagore, then leading artist in India.

Within ten years a new school of painting was established with the efforts of both. It was based fully on Indian traditions which became famous as the Bengal School of Art.

In 1907 Shri E.B.Havell and Ganganendra Nath Thakur founded the "Indian society of oriental arts" whose main aim was to encourage traditional Indian art of painting with the help of progressive artists. There were 30 Britishers and five Indians in this organization and the director Lord Kitchner. In 1908 an exhibition of painting was organised in which the paintings of shri Abanindranath Tagore, Nand Lal Bose, Asit Kumar Haldar and Shailendra Nath De , were exhibited.

In the same time lady Herringham came to India. She got the painting of Ajanta copied by Nand Lal Bose , Asit Kumar Haldar etc. the painting of

Bagh caves were also copied. The artists from Bengal School Ishwari Prasad, Shri Anand Kumar Swami held many exhibitions in India and in foreign countries and helped in spreading of Indian art in every corner of India and the world. Special art centres were opened at Bombay, Madras, Punjab, Lucknow, Delhi etc. Many artists did different experiments based on foreign techniques with Indian theme and in spite of all this a tinge of Indian art remained there. A foreign technique namely 'wash technique' was used in Bengal School. Bengal School is actually a mixture of Indian and Foreign art, but on the whole it is Indian in character.

Q.2 How did the Indian artists (painters and sculptors) contribute to the National Freedom Movement.? Describe in detail with appropriate examples.

Ans. For encouraging the national freedom movement, the exponents of Bengal School selected classics, mythology and Indian history for their painting. This effort created the wave of patriotism amongst the Indians and re-established the forgotten Indian cultural values. The artist from Bengal school Shri Nand Lal Bose painted the national leaders and swarajya movement. He also decorated the Congress pandals such as the Haripura Pandal. That is why Bengal school is also known as renaissance school. Later the artist from Bengal school got attracted towards the Modern art belonging to Europe some Indian sculptors like Amaranth Sehgal, P.V Jankiram, Ram Kinker Vaij, D.P Roy Choudhary etc. Contribute a lot to the national freedom.

So, Bengal School Of Painting contributed alot to the national freedom movement and the Indian artists contributed their great efforts for the success of the national freedom movement. Furthermore, some of the national leaders, such as Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, also took help from traditional Indian art to arouse feeling of patriotism.

At the juncture came Bengal School which played a great role as a revivalist movement to help art in gaining a national identity and also contributed to the freedom movement.

Some appropriate Examples of the contribution of the Indian painters.

ABANINDRANATH TAGORE - answered to the rising Swadeshi sentiments in the form of the painting 'Bharat Mata' In this painting , a young woman with four arms seems to be the related to the theme of nationalism.

AMRITA SHERGIL- She also prepared version of Bharat Mata with another theme. She painted Bharat Mata as a poor peasant woman with her poor children.

NAND LAL BOSE – He painted many Congress Pandals . Nandlal Bose to decorate one of the several huts in the pandals for the Haripura Congress Adhiveshan . For themes he selected the life of common people of Bengal and their working condition during the British rule .

GAGNENDRA NATH THAKUR- He prepared a caricature on Jallianwala massacre.

“Declaration of peace in Punjab “

Highlighting the brutal act and hatred of Indians towards the British.

Q.3 Why do you like or dislike the paintings of the Bengal school. Give your appropriate reasons?

Ans. I like the painting of the Bengal School very much with the arrival of the British Empire in India, there was downfall in Mughal and Rajput Schools of Art towards the 19th century and then a national style of art was established in Bengal to revive traditional Indian art and came to be known as Bengal school following are some reasons why I like painting of Bengal school.

- (1) The linear delicacy, rhythm and grace of Ajanta can be seen in Bengal school painting.
- (2) The main aim of school artists was to flourish Indian through their paintings.
- (3) The colours of Bengal school paintings are very attractive. Bright colours are not used at all.
- (4) The wash technique has been used brilliantly
- (5) The Bengal school paintings have a very good quality of showing ‘Light and Shade’ which enhance the quality of softness in the paintings.
- (6) The subject matter brings the feeling of Indians, religious, historical, social and literary themes have been adopted birds, animals, beautiful landscape scenes etc. have also been painted.
- (7) Paintings are simplified and normal. It takes no time to understand the paintings.
- (8) The figures are delicate and graceful. There is no hardness in them any where the rhythm of the figures gives an extraordinary pleasure to the eyes.