CONCLUSION

The present *Critical study of Progressive Art Movement in Bengal* brought to light many interesting aspects, point of views, concepts, information of historical relevance. During the process of my findings and analysis over the topics various clarifications regarding the previous understanding and the general perception gave me a fresh approach to ponder upon. Minute historical details and the details of less significant events and less bothered issues and incidents also provided a new insight towards a deep and more elaborative study. Through various interesting meetings and discussions with some prominent artists and art critiques my quest was enriched with more elaborative content.

The planed structure produced in the introductory part of the study represents the approaches I was supposed to go through and this concluding part is the essence of the complete study and the findings.

In the process of the conclusion, first and the foremost point worth mentioning is that the term Bengal School is associated with a style rather than a period of time or with a regional development. The Bengal style of painting immersed as a part of the cultural revival movement exactly in the same way as Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj came forward in the field of education and social reform. Under the prevalent circumstances of the social...
and political domination of the British, revivalist movements raised its head inside India especially in Bengal in the due course of 19th century.

In the beginning part of the study it was found that the revivalist movements and the ideology of the progressive art movements of Bengal was founded over a strong urge to connect with our roots, the roots of Indian Art, as the whole fundamental structure was constructed on the theory of ancient and classical Indian art. The foundational investigation of the revival and progressive art movements of the 20th century Bengal art, in the light of the structural values of these movements thoroughly discussed and found that it was formulated on the traditional theories and philosophies of Indian Ancient and Classical Art.

The historical chronology also confirmed the influence of Ajanta, Mughal and Rajput miniature fist in the form of direct Copying and later as assimilation of forms and structure with wash technique.

In the second chapter different local folk arts of Bengal described with its original form and techniques helped to distinguish the real characteristics of the traditional art and made a distinctive difference of its use in the contemporary art of Bengal. It was found that the essence of both differ in its spirit while merging in appearance at several level, as distinct in the folk art practice of Jamini Roy, Rabindranath Tagore, Abanindranath Tagore and Nandalal Bose among others. This was also found that at the same time some diversions towards European art were also grounding. The extent of western influence on this art is not always conceded by national sentiment. 19th century ideas tend to stress historicity and this coincided with the wish to
glorify the national heritage, for any open homage to western ideas was damaging to the Indian sense of self respect. Indeed, the artist left other thinkers and writers to think about how much they had already absorbed from the west.

Some mature and established artists came up with some emerging talents along to reform the art scene. Experimental work of art is one of the major breakthroughs among the artist. So the Bengal school artist played a vital role for the progress of art of the era, with the help of the ancient Indian art unto the western influences.

The first widespread nationalist protest in India was the *Swadeshi movement* which thrived upon the questions on east and west differences. The *Nehonga movement* in Japan, the *Irish republic movement*, the *Indo-Japanese nationalist movement*, the *European cultural movement* immerged at the same time. Several reactionary encounters emerged out of this chaos. Though, with the help of few pioneers critic and artist of non-Indian Tagore family rediscovered the art completely devoid of western influences, but Japanese style of work were widely visible in their work. In this movement artist of Bengal school look back in the past for the sake of inspiration. They received inspiration from the ancient art style of India owing to his interest in literature. The early pioneers of that period like Abanindranath, Nandalal, Bose, Abdur Rahman Chughtai and others were adopted combined style and themes from literature in which the features of ancient art, their recognize value and ideas were included, at the same time they had merged with the Japanese and Chinese style. Their style was in fact invented by these
experiments. Thus this movement gave way to new style of painting that was the first aesthetic development or "swadeshi" thinking that appeared at the turn of the century.

In the further studies the questions of the terms Progressives and Neo Bengal are answered. The result of progress in a ‘progressive’ manner as understood in the world of art was not entertained among the Bengal artists group, as the position of Bengal in the sphere of visual art was a peculiar one, since they were primarily identifying themselves with the conventional art trend, it created an uncomfortable and dubious situation to talk openly about rather modern term ‘Progressive’. Contrary to this educated Bengalis were more eager for artistic assimilation of southern and western along with those of Ajanta, Rajput and Mughal art. The neo-Bengal artist were able to demonstrate their genius in sphere of painting and through their generous and moderate attitude, established for themselves the foremost place in modern India art, the effort to go along with the world, though did not receive appreciation as it was perceived as there was no gain in such liberation the fact perceived as that it has been a borrowed art.

It was witnessed that a new culture was emerging in India, which was a mixed culture of dichotomies, namely east, west, past, present, rural and urban. So there was the inevitability of change in the traditional social structure of Bengal.

Anyhow, these movements were basically by Bengali for Bengalis, different pint of views immerged as some people unturned this change expressing that the motive of revival was of traditional culture of art in the
Nation. Some people also believed that it was provincial rather than national perhaps it would be more appropriate to say that it was national that developed in a provincial limit.

It is clear that Calcutta was a growing city to which migrated people had served their connection with the land and became interested in trade, industries and professions. Thus grew an urban culture different from the feudal aristocratic communities of early times. The aristocratic family and elite group of people assembled here and British also regarded this place and bestowed with development and their concerns. It was rich with art, artists and culture.

The critical views and observation reflect that this trading and industrial advancement when on one side was positive factors of development of art, on the other side of the fact is that it also created problems in political and social life which caused chaos at several point for the artist of that period.

Industrialization in the 19th century was instrumental in making a sharp division between manufacturers and art. Artist also involved and occupied a wide range of place with this trading community. The traders contact with the artist and made a strong group of artist for the imitation work because of the market demand. They made paintings as per the officers wish and fixed its value.

In this way the simultaneous activities of the Neo-Bengal school and western realist stand on the same path. The beginnings of progressive art movements in Bengal continued with amalgamate problems. The
characteristic of these movements was highly significant in terms of pictorial revolution, a period of experiment and adventure of Western Modern Art.

So E.B. Havell, Abanindranath Tagore, O.C. Ganguly, Okakura, Coomarswamy and James Cousins gave expressions to the views of the neo-Bengal school regarding the western experience in art and their observation by the Indian artist.

The study shows that a peculiar condition emerged in context to the Bengal style which was founded with the fundamentals to put resistance against European art could not resist its charm and in due course gradually came nearer to it. The span of period (1900-1947) in which progressive art movements occurred with cultural development and awakening of national movement finally impacted and was turned towards the European influence. Consequently, it was difficult to recognize the actual form of art.

According to the references and documentary proofs concerning progressive movements of Bengal, right from the pioneer groups to the young group we find unique results of assembled movements for art sake. From the historical point of view and my privileged meetings with some eminent persons, who expressed their view I could gather that there are reactions from artists community that the higher authorities do not exactly know whether the traditional art or post independent art of India is more suitable for shaping the cultural trends of our country, the opinion was also found that the rival school of thought should also be given equal chance to express themselves in their own way, the choice should be of the artists not of the so called caretakers of art. Art is not bounded by any tradition or culture, artist should
be freed for creation of anything and this should not be bonded with a ‘movement’.

Though art of ‘Progressive’ movements bloomed individually but the unfortunate reality is that they never recognized the actual essence, reformation or progress was continued generation to generation but the gap of consolidated interaction and exchange of thought was the main cause of default of this volcanic movement. The result of accumulated movements and different views of artists confused the critic and society.

In reference to the above discussion it may be concluded with the point that the ‘identity’ crises and lack of unity was the main drawback of the progressive art movement in Bengal. Today the school in itself has the position of such an antiquated group and it is difficult to finding modern critic appreciate it. The writers and artist of today looks at it with eyes trained for contemporary taste.