Chapter 3

Impact of Indian Revival on Bombay

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CHAPTER 3
IMPACT OF INDIAN REVIVAL ON BOMBAY SCHOOL

The Meaning of Revival

Comeback, bringingback, re-establishment, reinstatement, refurbishment, re-emergence, recovery, relaunch, restitution, renewal, resurgence, recondition, awakening, transformation, encouragement, rebirth, renaissance, renascence. "The old traditional crafts are revived given the presence of new interest.”

3.1 Definitions of Revival

Revival is derived from the Latin word “revivere” which means “to live again” or “to get back to consciousness or life.”**1** Revival can also imply “bringing back something to its true nature and purpose.”**2** It may also mean “reform” where there is an implication of insightful change of social morals or belief.

A new thought surrounding revival was much talked about whilst the latter half of the nineteenth century – a view which replaced the old with a completely refreshed understanding of the subject.

A judgement which hasn’t been executed for long requires a considerable process to renew it.

Revival generally implies to restore something to use, acceptance or activity after a period of insignificance or interval. Inlegal terms, it indicates to reinforce an old judgement in a court upon a petition. Additionally, it also means renewing a debt or contract with the help of a new agreement after the expiry of right to demand performance or collect under the statute of limitations.

Modern English usage of the word “Revival” majorly comes largely from the following:

1. French word “revivre”
2. Latin word “revivere”
Henry Blackaby and Claude King wrote, “The word ‘revive’ consists of two parts: ‘re’ means ‘again’ and ‘vive’ means ‘to live’, hence ‘revive’ refers ‘to live again, to come or be brought back to life, health, or vitality.’”

The history of art is the history of revivals. Samuel Butler Revival literally means "come back to life." An ER doctor might perform a revival of someone whose heart has stopped. We usually use it to mean "returned to glory, importance, or strength." Fresh paint and new flowerbeds might mean your neighborhood is experiencing a revival. If you don't like spiky hair, you may cringe at the revival of the Mohawk in fashion magazines. Revival has a religious sense too, referring to a meeting that reawakens religious excitement and passion.

Revival dynamics have local, national or international implications. These implications can possibly be intense and deplete soon, or they can be moving at a much slower pace and exist at a low level for several years before vanishing. The author has witnessed a period of fairly intense revival dynamics, Sir J.J School of Art campus in the year 1985 to 2017.

The word revival implies and means bringing something back to its original glory. It is a process and it does not take place accidentally. It has pre-defined aim and objective and deliberate steps are taken keeping in view the end objective. Naturally, it does not take place in a short period of time. The existence of an extraneous motive force is a pre-requisite for any revival process to initiate. Thus, we have cultural revival, religious revival etc.

The revival of Indian art was a highly influential phenomenon and is a significant epoch in the culture our nation. As Governor Lloyd himself has said, "Indianisation has not taken the form of a return to a hide bond convention but is acquiring a real sense of form and colour, and at the same time developing decorative instinct, which is so strongly in national character."5

The revival of art in Bombay was achieved by organizing training in a systematic manner with well thought out curriculum in a graded manner. The roots of Bombay Revival School can be traced to the Revivalist Art of Bengal.
Captain William Ewart Gladstone Solomon was a studious person. He was not only a great artist, but also a sensitive and sensible person. He realized soon after his appointment the impact of the Bengal School of revival and the momentum it had gathered. To initiate such revival at the Sir J. J. School of Art he encouraged his students to visit historical and other important places from the art point of view and study the sculptures, temple architect and Ajanta murals.

This really prompted Captain Solomon who succeeded him to promote Indian art. He organised painting expeditions to Gharapuri near Bombay, Ajintha and Verul and led him to start the Indian Design Class. Not only this, a mural painting class was started where students were taught to do large paintings and the Bombay Art Revival was initiated.

Talking of Bombay Province, it did not have any art tradition like the Rajput or the Mogul or Pahadi miniature paintings. The students were trained by Englishmen and they were supposed to acquire proficiency in what was shown in the classroom. Naturally, they were greatly influenced by the Western technique, to which they got exposed for the first time. They learnt using transparent water colours, oils and painted not on paper but on the canvas standing in an upright position.

Initially the landscapes were influenced by the British tradition of perfect depiction, realism and tender use of layers of transparent water colours. Another approach that was incorporated was the gouache technique of using opaque colours.

Once the landscape painters started mastering their art, they began using bold strokes instead of soft layers of colours. It was at the time of this very transition that the able Principal Solomon began the 'Bombay Revivalist School' movement. This was devoted to revive and preserve the traditional Indian arts. The movement progressed in two directions. One trend was of the miniature school, primarily availing opaque colours to portray various subjects. The other trend was the synthesis of the drawing skills in western style technique of multiple layers of water colour washes and a lyrical rendering of the Eastern art.6
The students, till then, were taught to copy the western style, draw and paint by copying their instructors and there was no Indianness in their works. It is in this realisation that without the support of the Indian artists, who were masters not only in Indian style but also good teachers, his efforts would not bear fruits that he organized two classes, one taught by Shri. Ahiwasi and the other by Shri. Nagarkar.

Thus the revival of art gave impetus to the concept of design or composition of a painting was the result of the western influence and prior to that we had traditional paintings which were in the form of studies. It is for this reason that we have a fairly large number of artists who painted processions as this subject offered a wide scope of composition, elaboration of the subject.

3.2 Revival of the Indian Art

As the end of the 19th century drew a close, the Western art remained well rooted in India, especially in the South India and was well appreciated by the British Officers. Everything was fine in the art field but the artists following the western ideas were shaken by one incident that took place in 1902 C. The then Vice Roy of India, Lord Curzon came out with a decree that a grand art exhibition would be held in Delhi, (Plat No. 3.1) when Delhi was being declared as the capital of British India (prior to that Calcutta was the capital) wherein the artists from all parts of India would exhibit their native art and handicraft items. The art schools and artists were informed about the exhibition and they were specifically asked to exhibit only indigenous art and craft items.

The Sir. J. J. School of Art too participated in the art exhibition and selected some of the master pieces for the exhibition which fulfilled the above criteria and those included a few portraits, landscapes, compositions and also two sculptures named To The Temple (“Mandirpathgamini”) and “Shabari” created by Shri. Ganpatrao Mhatre. However the then Principal of Sir. J. J. School, Cecil Burns was neither aware of the Indian art nor was he interested in it. But he was one of the members of the selection committee of the exhibition.
The Indian art and craft exhibition held at London had aroused curiosity of the British art experts and critics. Henry Cole who had followed the Model of Central School of Industrial Art, in South Kensington to design the curriculum of Indian art schools really had a concern for Indian Art. Some of the teachers in this art school Mr. Lockwood Kipling, and Mr. Henry Hover Lock had joined as art teacher in the Indian art school and they all were really interested in Indian art.

The then Principal of Calcutta Art School, 1896 C. E.B. Havel had studied the Indian art with great interest and was aware of its superiority. He strongly felt that the Indian Art Schools should teach the Indian Art and also made efforts in that direction.

The Indian Art Schools were started at Mumbai, Calcutta and Madras with a policy to impart art education influenced by the European Academic System. However the People in the then Bengal Province felt that the British Government was not only imposing the British concepts of art upon the Indians but was also considering the Indian art as inferior. They also felt that India owned a rich heritage in art which should be well preserved and nurtured. These feelings led to the movement of revival of the Indian art. (Plat No. 3.2) The teachers in Calcutta Art School had changed the methods of teaching in order to revive the Indian Art and the positive results of their teaching were reflected in the art work of the students. Their teaching style was known as Revivalist Art of Bengal. Some of the master pieces of this style were chosen for the Delhi Art Exhibition 1902-03 C.

The sincere efforts made by Principal E. B. Havel, came to fruition and in the Delhi Art Exhibition the gold medal was awarded to the painting, named as Last days of Shahjahan done by Shri. Abanindranath Tagore, which was based on the Revivalist Art of Bengal. The gold medal in sculpture was awarded to Shri. Ganpatrao Mhatre, for his sculpture named Shabari. Though Indian sculpture is incomparable, at that time, efforts were not made to revive sculpture art.

The Bombay art world was bit shaken by the happenings in the Delhi Art Exhibition. However, Principal Cecil Burns did not take the matter very seriously. In
addition to that, during that period, the prevailing condition in Mumbai was not favorable for traditional art as there was not a single expert artist who would encourage the new Indian artists. Hence the Bombay school was unaffected by the revival moment.¹¹

Revivalism in a wider sense (without disrespect to which it has fallen today), contrary to what is generally believed, each generation has looked at tradition with a fresh angle and seeing it within the framework of the creative problems facing them. Common to all these generations has been an urge to create a new art of the time—of modern India, of the new India that was emerging.¹²

The policies created by the British Government for art education, were bit ambiguous, and some English art teachers tried to manipulate them. For example, Lock, an art teacher in the Calcutta art school, favoured “naturalism in European Art,” at the same time he had an eye to search the possibilities in the Ancient Indian art. He encouraged one of the student, Shri. Shyamcharan Shrimani to write on the Indian art. He also guided his students on a project of Indian Sculpture by asking them to draw sketches in different ways with a view to explain the influence of the traditional decorative art and also to make them interested in the art.¹³

Following the footsteps of Calcutta Art School, there was a possibility to hold a revival movement in the Bombay School too. Efforts to that effect were made by Mr. John Griffiths who was the principal of the Sir J. J. School of Art, during the period of 1868 to 1895 C. He undertook an art project of creating the facsimile copies of the murals and paintings in the Ajanta caves. Working for 9 years continuously, he completed the project in 1881 C. (He was offered a grant of Rs.50000 for this project, by the Indian Government.) Based on the study of those murals and paintings, he wrote an amazing book named, “The paintings in the Buddhist Caves, Temples of Ajanta”. Many teachers and students in the Sir J. J. School had helped him in this project. Mr. Griffiths was touched by the contribution made by the native students and teachers. Expressing the gratitude in his book, he said, “The most curious and interesting phase of my Indian experience was the
initialization of Hindu, Parsi and Goanese students in the mysteries of an art still congenial to the Oriental temperament and hand….

“…..I am persuaded that no European, no matter how skillful, could have so completely caught the spirit of the originals. It is conceivable that if these young men were entrusted with the execution of the original work on a large scale, they might have carried forward the decorative traditions of Ajanta to an issue of considerable interest.”

Mr. Gladstone Solomon who was selected as the Principal of Sir. J.J. School, after 24 years expressed his gratitude and thanked Mr. Griffiths in his book named “Mural Paintings of the Bombay School.”

The History reveals that after the retirement of Griffiths, no efforts were made by anyone to understand the Indian art or to make the Indian students aware of their artistic qualities. Mr. Greenwood (1895 to 1898 C). and Mr. Cecil Burns (1898 to 1918 C). Who consequently took charge of the Bombay School, as the Principal, were not concerned about Indian art and also not interested in knowing the heritage of Indian art. In such situation, it was but obvious that no teacher of Bombay School would think about revival of the Indian Art. History could have been different, if Mr. Havel, an ardent lover of Indian art and also an expert in the art would have become the principal of the Sir J. J. school of Art However, Mr. Havel took the charge of the Calcutta art school in 1896 C., and made revolutionary changes, not only in the art school but in the entire art field also.

As told earlier Mr. Havel, was very much impressed by the Indian Art and he was yearning for the revival of the traditional Indian Art. During his work tenure he changed the total work atmosphere of the school. He removed all the facsimile copies of the paintings of well-known artists in Europe and the replicas of Greek and Roman statues made of plaster of Paris which were exhibited at the various places in the art school and replaced them by the master pieces in the traditional Indian art and sculpture. He also adorned the school with the Mughal and Rajasthani miniatures and sculptures made of stone and bronze and transformed the entire interiors.
He aimed to start the curriculum based on Indian Art instead of European Academic art, in the Calcutta art school. Though initially, Mr. Havel had to face opposition in the school but he gradually got support. At the same time, the of Sir J. J. School of Art Principal V.S. Adurkar tried the same in his institution.\textsuperscript{17}

The revival movement was based on the idea of accepting everything that comes under the Oriental art by giving up the ideology of Western or European art. This led to accepting and imitating the Japanese and Chinese art. Shri. Abanindranath Tagore, who was the founder of the revival movement, was inspired by the Mughal and Rajput art and tried to combine the techniques and styles of the duos in his paintings. Shri. Abanindranath got a chance to stay and mingle with some of the experts in Japanese art. They are Mr. Okakuro Kakuro (who was a Japanese learner and also knowledgeable person of the Buddha religion) and two Japanese artists Mr. Yokoyama Taikom and Mr. Hishida Shurno. They together thought that the techniques and finer points of Indian and Japanese art should be mutually accepted, and that led to acceptance of the wash technique by Shri. Abanindranath.\textsuperscript{18}

He started by depicting historical and literary subjects in a style derived from the Mughal miniatures. He was also probably the first individualist in India, but his individualism was more eclectic. He tried to synthesise various oriental influences from the Japanese, Chinese, Persian and Ajanta to formulate a style where colour was submissivewith absence of cast shadows. Subtle modelling was used, thereby emphasizing linear rhythms of graceful gestures and flowing draperies.\textsuperscript{19}

It was year 1919 C. Captain Gladstone Solomon took a charge of the Sir. J. J. School of art as a Principal and it was a beginning of Principal Havel’s dream to revive the Indian art come true. Solomon was not only an expert artist but also a great student, thinker and a sensitive person. He was tolerant, and full of vigour. He never looked at Indian art with a prejudiced mind; on the other hand he had very much concern about the Indian art. He studied the revival movement in Calcutta carefully and also tried to understand the thinking of Principal Havel, Shri. Arvind Ghosh and Shri. Kumar Swami. He went to Ajanta, Verul and Gharapuri to learn the
core of the paintings and sculptures. He also arranged visits for the art students and teachers at many historical and beautiful places in India so that they would be able to study the actual sculptures and art present there.

He started the Indian Designing Class and Mural painting class in the Sir. J. J. School and made an arrangement of Indian style of seating to encourage the students to sit and paint like the traditional Indian artists. (Plat No. 3.3) the traditional Indian artists would sit on the mattress and would paint on the drawing board kept in front of them. He also trained the students in the cartoon drawing. Gradually the Sir. J. J. School of art also reached to the revival stage.  

If we compare the art creation in Sir J. J. School of Art and Calcutta school of art, we will find that at that time the art creation in Sir J. J. School of Art was more elegant and technically more sound. (Unfortunately we do find a collection of master pieces of the Sir J. J. School of Art made, during that period.) No articles were written on the then artists or about their drawing styles. On the other hand, we find many writings are available on Shri. Abanindranath Tagore, Shri. Nandalal Bose, Shri. Asit Kumar Haldar, Shri. Vinodvihari Mukharji, Smt Yamini Roy etc. The paintings of the Bombay artists, Shri. Nagarkar, Shri. Ahiwasi and Shri. Chimulkar would steal the heart of any art lover, but not much written information is available about them.

Mr. Goetz had deeply studied the Bengal revival style of art. In one of his writings, while comparing Abanindranath’s style with the ancient Indian art, he said, “What Abanindranath had proclaimed, he achieved. But he went further, starting on an intensive study also of folk art. His creations are vigorous and interesting but when compared with the ancient originals they often look simply absurd. For ancient Indian art was based on nature though it never tried crudely to imitate it, and its conscious stylization was the final result of a long development from very native renderings. Ancient Indian art therefore, had been immensely alive, just because it intensified and transfigured the reality.”
Like Mr. Harman Goetz, Shri. Anand Kumarswami, a well-informed personality in Indian art has written a lot on the Bengal revival style of art. His writings are in critical style and he has commented on the Shri. Abanindranath’s and other artist’s style of painting.

He wrote an article referring to the Modern School of Indian Painting in 1911-12 C. in which he said, “The subjects chosen by the Calcutta Painters are taken from Indian History, romance and epic and from the mythology and religious literature and legends as well as from the life of the people around them. Their significance lies in their distinctive Indianess. They are however, by no means free from European and Japanese influence. The work is full of refinement and subtlety in colour, and shows a real love for all things Indian, but regrettfully again, contrasted with Ajanta and Mughal and Rajput paintings which have in part inspired it, it is frequently lacking in the strength.”

During the same period, Mr. Roger Fry, (an artist and art critic in London) heavily criticized the Bengal School artists, especially the artists in Calcutta and said,

“Such pictures as that of the “Sidhas of the Upper Air” show that, however anxiously these artists strive to adopt the formulae of their ancestors, the spirit that comes to expression is that of the American magazine illustrator. Nothing indeed could provide a stronger proof of the profound corruption which contact with European ideas has created in oriental taste than those well intentioned regrettable drawings”.

After reading the comments of Roger Fry, the real proponent of revival art style, Kumar Swami reviewed his own thoughts and replied, “This criticism, so far as it goes is fairly justified. Most of the Calcutta paintings are graceful but they are often, sentimental in conception weak in drawing and tamusic in colouring. Again the colouring of many Calcutta pictures especially the later Japanese influenced work of Tagore is muddy in the extreme and the tones throughout so low as often to make the very subject of the picture hard to decipher.”
Tagore family made a valuable contribution in setting up the revival style. Shri. Abanindranath established an institution named “Vichitra”, in the premises of their family owned bungalow, named “Jorasaanko.” Shri. Rabindranath Tagore too supported this institution. Many artists would gather there. Many seminars, workshops and lectures were held there in which discussions were carried on how the nature of Indian art schools should be! Principal Havel opined that the Indian art students are taught an outdated art education methods in their art and sculpture classes. He commented

“In the department of painting and sculpture the students were instructed in the outdated processes of the British art academy of copying from old masters and European plaster costs of the nudes especially towards a correct approach of human form.”

He further added that “it was not fair to continue with such education system and emphasized the need to impart the traditional art education.”

Shri. Kumarswami supported to Havel’s ideas and said, “The true function of School of art in India is not to introduce European methods and ideas but to gather up and revitalize the broken threads of Indian tradition build up the idea of Indian art as an integral part of the national culture and to relate the work of Indian craftsmen to the life and thoughts of Indian people.”

India’s art revival movement was influenced by The Swadeshi Movement, which was the part of Freedom Movement of India and also by the Nationalist thinking. One of the critic, Shri. O.C. Ganguli strongly criticized in his article named “National Art and Foreign Art” and said that the Indian art schools are losing their existence due to the foreign art schools. The European scholars, who favoured Indian arts, supported him. These scholars advised the Indian artists to consider the Japanese art as a role model, which never copied any foreign art. In the Modern Review, Sister Nivedita, the social worker, teacher and disciple of Shri Swami Vivekanda strongly criticized, the painting made by Raja Ravi Verma, saying that his art lacked quality and Indian style.
In Bombay the art revival movement was kick started by Principal Solomon, who was a scholar and a good reader. He had enough knowledge of the History and his thoughts were well directed. His writings were informative and thoughtful but had an emotional touch too. Along with his ambitious projects, he continued to write on art. His book named, “Bombay Revival of Indian Art, in which the comparative study of the revival art is made is worth studying. Another most important book written by him is named, “Mural Paintings of the Bombay School”, in which he has explained the various aspects of the Indian drawing and has also expressed his thoughts about Indian Murals. Considering the art history, the important part of the book is that it contains illustrations about the Murals done by the students and the teachers in the Imperial Secretariat, at Delhi. In addition to that, some of his books named, “The women of Ajanta,” “Jotting at Ajanta,” The art of Elephanta etc. have also been published.

In Bengal, the art revival movement was supported by Shri. Anand Kumarswami, Sister Nivedita, Abanindranath, and Mr. Percy Brown. Many young artists like Shri. Nandalal Bose, Shri. Asitkumar Haldhar, Shri. Suren Ganguli, Shri. Kshitindranath Muzumdar and Shri. A.R. Chughtai were impressed by the thoughts and creation of Shri. Abanindranath, and started creating art like him.

The main intention of revivalism was to felicitate and to memorize the important past events. It was but obvious to draw or paint pictures based on the happenings in Ramayana and Mahabharata, legendary stories or from the references taken in modern content or from Sanskrit literature. The Indian literature and the Sanskrit literature emphasized more on expressing. The revived art was influenced by this fact. The main feature of the revived art was fluency of lines and the use of water colours with colour combination of mild and faint colours. Though the revived art was mainly revolved around History, later on some of the artists made drawings on the dreadful drought in Bengal.

The effects of revival movement were felt outside Bengal, directly or indirectly. For e.g.- in the art school of Macchalipattanam, Andhra Pradesh, the students were inspired by the art teacher. Shri. Nandalal Bose to make drawings in
the Indian style. Around 1910 C. One of his students, named. Shri. Damrala Ramarao earned a name and fame as an artist. During the period of 1927-1950 C. Shri. Deviprasad Roy Choudhary was the principal of the Madras Art School. He encouraged his students to make drawings based on the Indian art. Shri. Asitkumar Haldhar, an art teacher of the Lucknow Art School also made sincere efforts to encourage the local artists and students to make paintings on the Indian art.  

The extended form of the revival movement in Bengal was the Oriental art movement. During 1894 C. an art conference was held at Lahore where in the speakers mentioned the word “Oriental art” in a broader sense while criticizing the fact that the Western art had suppressed Indian art. The supporters or proponents of the “Oriental art” were the same who had advocated the revival of the Indian art. Special efforts were made to make propaganda of the “Oriental art”. 

In the year 1935 C. Principle Soloman got retired and went back to his own country and that led to an end of the glorious era and within the next 15 years, the new art style which was inspired by him suffered a setback. After the retirement of Principle Soloman, Mr. Charls Gerrard was appointed as the principal. However, he was not at all interested in the Indian art but was fascinated by the modern Painting style existed from the Impressionism in Europe. He motivated his students to study the same new style. However many students who were taught by teachers like Shri. Nagarkar and Shri. Ahiwasi were inspired by Principle Soloman’s style and continued to make drawings in the Indian style. After the retirement of Shri. Nagarkar in 1950 C. and Shri. Ahiwasi in 1957 C. nobody could take their place, and the Indian designing class got closed and the Bombay Revival of Art movement came to an end. 

Considering the fact that the art institutions or art societies in India made the European Academic art popular, Shri. Abanindranath established “The Indian Society of Oriental art” to encourage and to propagate the Oriental art. Percy Brown an ardent art lover supported the institution. The Oriental art exhibitions were held in foreign countries. The First such exhibition was held on 8th February 1914C. At Paris. It contained many drawings made by the artists from Bengal. After that
exhibitions were also held at Belgium, Holland and lastly at England. The American Federation of Art held a mobile exhibition of Oriental art in 1924 C. In 1928 C. an exhibition of Indian art and craft artistries was held at Geneva.\textsuperscript{34}

3.3 Revival of Indian Art in Bombay

As stated earlier, the Sir J. J. School of Art came into being because of the initiative taken by Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, a wealthy and large hearted Parsi Baronet. He had gone to London in the year 1851 C. to see an art exhibition and found many art schools established there. (Plat No. 3.4) At that time he thought of establishing such art school in Mumbai. He then offered one lakh rupees to the East India Company to be used for the said purpose with a condition that a building suitable for the art school should be built and expert teachers should be appointed in the field of drawing, designing and painting. Till 1856 C. many discussions were held on this issue and lastly a drawing class was started in the Elphinston Institute. (previously known as the Elphinston School.) Mr. Paton, an art specialist, was made in charge of the drawing class. However it took 8 years to get expert teachers in this field. Accordingly when 3 experts namely, Mr. Lockwood Kipling, Mr. Higgins and Mr. Terry joined the Elphinston School, the Sir J. J. School of Art was separately started on the first floor of Sir Jamsetjee’s house. However soon after that Mr. Higgins left the world and Mr. John Griffiths (an artist) was appointed to assist Mr. Terry. Mr. Griffiths used to teach painting and modeling while Mr. Terry taught drawing and engraving.\textsuperscript{35}

During the year 1866 C. Mr. Lockwood Kipling joined the art school as an art teacher. He taught sculpture art related to architecture. It was during Mr. Kipling’s work tenure the sculpture art came up.

The modern sculpture art, which favoured the Britishers, had its roots back in the architecture of Bombay city and the establishment of the Sir J. J School of art. The then Governor of Bombay, Bartel Friar had an ambitious plan to transform Bombay into a grand, magnificent city. It was necessary then to find experts, artists and architects who would shape the city accordingly and that led to develop the sculpture art.
At that time the sculpture art, was considered as a part of decorative art. Sir. Friar favoured the neo Gothic style and wanted to develop the Bombay city in Anglo-Indian style of architecture. He wanted the Indian artists to work on the Western style. Friar himself was an artist and had a consideration for art education. He felt the need of good art teachers and made efforts to appoint them in the school of art. He invited the foreign artists to work in Bombay, so that the art students would be benefitted by them. He also started paying the students for their art creations.

He appointed a committee to study and preserve the ancient structures in Western India. This committee published 3 volumes on these ancient structures. In the later period, these volumes proved beneficial in the study of Ajanta, Elephanta and Werul. When Mr. Kipling joined the art school, he started workshops on sculpture art to give practical knowledge to the sculptures. Workshops were also conducted on decorative painting and metal work. Within a few days, the decorative designs and sculptures were being created for the public buildings in Bombay. (Plat No. 3.5)

Mr. Kipling’s policy was to keep the flame of traditional art burning at the same time he asked the students to study the nature in detail and to include these details in the designs. He was confident about the artistic qualities of the India and was sure that with little training and encouragement they would show brilliant performance in sculpture art. As the students in the Sir J. J. School were mainly trained in sculpture art, the modeling art and the study of shapes remained secondary.36

During the same period, along with the decorative art, the students were also taught to make the relief sculptures of human bodies. This fact was recorded in the report of the Sir J. J. School, (year 1873-74) which mentioned that a large risen sculpture of Sayajirao Gaikwad, Maharaj of Baroda and a marble sculpture of Justice Norman, in the Calcutta Cathedral was created during that period. Some other important examples of sculpture art created during that time were, the relief
sculptures at the building of Bombay University and at the entrance of Crawford Market.

At this time Mr. John Griffiths was the head of the Sir. J. J. School. He joined the school to teach the decorative art and became superintendent in the year 1879 C. and was retired in the year 1895 C. Both Mr. Griffiths and Mr. Kipling liked to maintain the record about the lifestyle, occupations and the artistry of the local Indians, through their paintings. Later on, these paintings inspired many artists and sculptors to study the local life in India. This style of painting was continued for some period and this fact is reflected in the murals paintings.

If we have a look at the art education policy of Sir J. J. School Art during the year 1919 to 1937 C. we can observe its two unique features which have indirectly affected the sculpture art: Firstly, though the art school was mainly started to create best craftsmen, everyone,(from Mr. Terry to Mr. Griffiths )gave more stress on drawing of human sketches and considered the study of human figures very essential to acquire the best skills in art. They believed that the study of human figures was the preliminary base of modern and decorative art and that is why the sculpture art could develop as a separate branch of art and many talented sculptors could rise too.

Secondly, the inclusion of traditional local decorative Indian art designs into the western style led to creation of a new and unique style in sculpture art.

Mr. Kipling was working in Sir J. J. School Art from the year 1865 C. to 1875 C. However, in 1875 C. he was appointed as the Principal of Lahore School of art and he went to Lahore.37

The farsightedness of Sir J. J. Bartle Friar, the governor of Bombay, led to formation of a committee to study and preserve the ancient buildings in Maharashtra and for this purpose the Bombay school was given the first opportunity to work on the project even though the art schools were established at Madras and Calcutta. This was because it was expected to undertake the project on a limited scale.
With a continuous hard work from the year 1872 to 1881 C. the principal of Sir J. J. School, John Griffiths and his students at the Sir J.J. School of arts, created the replicas of the murals at Ajanta, (Plat No. 3.6) Griffiths was aware of the greatness of the Indian art and mentioned his feelings in his book on Ajanta saying that, “If Indian art students and artists study the rich heritage of India, they will have a bright future.”

The great Indian art residing at Ajanta was noticed by the Bombay it essence 1872 C. There is a proof that these facsimile copies here were painted by Shri. Jagannath Ananta and Principal John Griffiths, Shri. Narayan Khushaba and Shri. Pestanji Bomanji. These pictures were first painted in water colours in small sizes and then painted in oil paints on large size canvas to make the facsimile copies. These paintings are still available in the collection of the Sir J. J. School of Art.

After the appointment of Mr. Kipling at the Lahore School of Art, not much development took place in the field of sculpture art. The department of decorative art in the Sir J. J. School Art was reformed, the curriculum was changed but the department of sculpture art got neglected.

Shri. Ganpatrao Mhatre: At the age of 15, he took admission in the Sir J. J. School of Art. Though he had a liking for sculpture art, he joined the painting classes because there was no teacher to teach sculpture art and the drawing classes were more popular here. At the age of 19, while studying in the last year of the drawing department, he created a marvelous sculpture of a temple going marathi young woman, and named it as, “Mandirpathgamini.” The Indian and Western artists were stunned to see this amazing piece of sculpture art. (Plat No.3.7)

Though Shri. Mhatre had mainly learnt drawing in Sir J. J. School, he could create the beautiful sculpture prior to taking a formal academic education on sculpture art, this was mainly because of his flair and experience in the sculpture art.38

If we observe the sculpture art after Renaissance, it is observed that the Christian religious tradition, rituals, legends and mythology were taken into
consideration, however, here in India the mutual influence of folk art and the modern art is not taken into consideration. If we look into past 100 years of making Ganesh Idols we will definitely find some connection between the monument sculpture art and idol making.

The uniqueness of the Maharashtrian Sculptor like Shri. Mhatre is that he learnt to shape the clay by making the Ganesh idols. The idol making art is based on the tradition and the code signs of iconography. However while making Ganesh idols; these codes are made flexible to combine our tradition as well as the western elegance in human sketches.

Towards the end of 19th century Indian Art students across India and especially in South of India were practicing the western style of art taught by the British. This deep rooted style of western education of art in India got a major setback in the year 1902. A decree was given by the then Viceroy of India Lord Curzon about the Grand Art exhibition to be held on the declaration of Delhi as the New capital of India. It was decided that the artists would have to exhibit their native and traditional handicrafts and art. Sir J.J School of Art too participated in this exhibition, for which one of the finest masterpieces from the institute was selected. Portraits, Landscapes, Compositions and two sculptures called To The Temple (“Mandirpathgamini”) and “Shabari” created by artist Ganpatrao Mhatre were selected. It is interesting to note that the Principal of Sir J.J School of Art Cecil Burns possessed no knowledge on Indian art but was one of the members in the selection committee of the exhibition.

In the Delhi Art Exhibition the gold medal was awarded to the painting, named “Last days of Shahjahan”, done by Shri. Abanindranath Tagore, (Plat No. 3. 9) which was based on the Revivalist Art of Bengal. The gold medal in sculpture was awarded to Shri. Ganpatrao Mhatre, for his sculpture named “Shabari” while the silver medal in the Bombay art society’s exhibition was awarded to his sculpture named “Mandirpathgamini” (To the Temple).
The Times of India in its issue dated 13\textsuperscript{th} February 1896, appreciated his creation very much and wrote “An amazing creation by a Hindu student in Sir J. J. School Art. This is one of the best sculptures which have been created in India.” The famous artist Raja Ravi Verma said, “This is the most beautiful sculpture created by a native Indian and it will ever last in my memory.”

An eminent art student Mr. George Birdwood wrote articles in the Bombay Gazette (dated 26\textsuperscript{th} November 1896) and in the Journal of Indian art industry, (January 1898) praising the sculpture which read, “Mandirpathgamini” (To the Temple) is the best creation of the present times and it proves the commitment of Mhatre towards the art. Technically it is perfect and even though I am partial towards foreign artists, I do have high regards for this Indian artist.

After reading the article, the former Principal of Sir J. J. School of Art, John Griffiths wrote, “Mandirpathgamini” is a beautiful combination of Hindu emotions and Western technology.” This young artist is inspired by the Greek style due to his unity with the olden times.

Shri. Rabindranath Tagore too was impressed by the sculpture and wrote 2 articles about it. One article was published in the Bharati magazine (Aashad 1305, year 1898) and another one was published in a Bengali magazine, named “Pradeep”, the title of the article was “Mandirabhimukh”. This magazine was started by the modern reviewer.

Shri Rabindranath Tagore said, “\textit{If anyone sees the two photographs of the sculptures created by Shri Mhatre, which have appeared in the art magazine edited by Mr. Birdwood, are really a feast for eyes and we just cannot take off our eyes from them. After seeing these photographs that we realise that Indians were longing to see this kind of image of a woman. We have always worshipped a woman in the form of Goddess Laxmi, Saraswati and Annapurana, however until now; no one had created an amazing sculpture of a woman like this one. Though it reflects the Greek art, it is not a copy of it but an acceptance of the same. It is like converting the foreign art into an Indian art and giving new looks to an old content, which is possible only if the artist is talented}.”
The concept on which the sculpture was based i.e.: (a woman going to
temple for worship was not new). The then artists, Shri. Taskar and Shri. Dhurandar
had also painted the pictures of a woman in Marathi culture. The foreign artists like
Mr. Lockwood and Mr. Griffiths had felt the diversity in the Indian culture which is
reflected in their pictures However when the Indian artists like, Shri. Dhurandar and
Shri. Mhatre made paintings on Indian festivals, Indian customs etc, the paintings
got a unique Indian touch. The sculpture created by Shri. Mhatre has a typical Indian
feel and that is why it appears to be like a real woman.43

All these things (and especially the sculpture created by Mhatre) led to think
over the revival of Indian art and the first step towards revival was taken by the
Bombay school. If we see the references we come to know these facts.

Mr. Havel, started to work as superintendent in the Madras Art School, at
the age of 23, after completing the art education. While working there, he was
fascinated by the amazing art at the nearby places like Tanjawar, Mahabalipuram,
Madura etc. He may have had revelation about Indian art after seeing the grand idol
at the Mahabalipuram. In 1896, Havel was appointed as the principal of Calcutta
School of art and he started a new curriculum based on self realization of Indian art.
Havel was also fascinated by some of the paintings done by Shri. Abanindranath. He
honoured Shri. Abanindranath, and requested him to join the art school as a vice –
Principal because he knew the talent of this budding artist.

Principal Havel also had a confidence that Shri. Abanindranath, was capable
to guide the new generation of artists.44

We may call Shri. Abanindranath, as one of the “Gem” in the Thakur family.
It was full of talented people in various fields like art, music, poetry, drama history,
and education, knowledge about religion, politics and patriotism. Some of them
were also holding higher posts like I.C.S. or Economist. Thus the Thakur family was
full of scholars and talented people. Shri. Abanindranath had taken his basic art
education from European artists like Mr. Gilardi and Mr. Pamar. Though this
education did not include complicated subjects like Geometry, Perspective and
Orthographic Projection it was driven by these subjects.
Shri. Abanindranath’s study included drawing and sketching which required the model to sit at one place. He then had to copy the shadow light (just like a camera). That time the artist used to get little freedom to sketch the model as per his will. Shri. Abanindranath felt uneasy to work in such conditions and that made him unhappy, however in that state of mind he painted a series named “Radhakrishna” which was influenced by old Rajput miniatures and miniatures in other manuscripts. The series was well appreciated by Mr. Pamar and he advised Shri. Abanindranath to follow the same path and go ahead. He insisted that Shri. Abanindranath should work on Indian art only, and told that it was better to work on Indian art as that would help to grow it more and more. However though these were the feelings of the eminent artist, the revival movement was not thought of at that time.45

Principal Havel thought that the students and the teachers will be inspired by the new working atmosphere; however he had to face a lot of opposition in the beginning. Many of the people in high class societies, who had clasped the English culture, launched a complaint against Havel to the British Government. The then Vice Roy, Lord Curzon had to mediate in the issue and declared that Havel had taken a right decision (Many of us may not be aware of this fact.) Later on, Principal Havel was supported by many great scholars like, Dr. Anand Kumar Swami, Shri. Aravind Ghosh, Sister Nivedita, Shri. Ravindranath and Shri. Abanindranath Thakur and some great students of Marathi art and culture. With the Union of such talented personalities, the thinking about the revival started around 1897 C. 46

Lady Herring Ham was an artist and knowledgeable person in art. She saw the printed pictures sketched by Principal Griffiths and his students that had appeared in an informative book, which named, “The paintings in the Buddhist cave,”-Temples of Ajanta. She commented that those pictures were not perfect, as they were painted with the oil paints. (The paint brush does not move easily while painting with the oil paints because the oil paints are thicker than the water colours.) She made up her mind to make those murals again and then requested Havel, to allow her to do so. Late in 1909 C, the work to create replicas of the Paintings at Ajanta was started at the Bengal school of art with the help of Shri. Nandallal Bose and Shri. Asitkumar Haldhar, who were related to The Indian Society of Indian Art.47
• **Haripura posters**

After the work of creating replicas of the Paintings at Ajanta, Shri. Nandalal Bose was invited for the Congress session at Haripura, near Bardoli in Gujarat in February of 1938. Shri. M.K. Gandhi appointed Shri. Nandalal Bose in charge of reviving an environment replete with local art and craft. Shri. Nandalal painted almost eighty posters himself, majorly about two feet by two feet large in size, and his student and teacher associates then drew similar copies of them, multiplying their number to around 400. These paintings and posters were created on handmade papers stretched on strawboard and possessed beautiful colours extracted and mixed from the local earth pigments. The construction of the display panels all around were made possible with the help of bamboo, thatch and homespun. Shri. Gandhi desired that the posters should grab the attention of the passersby and hence they were displayed at the meeting compound's main gate and on the exterior of the pavilions. The whole vista turned out to be a huge display of public art. Shri. Nandalal Bose himself enthusiastically wrote, ‘Following the pata style we did a large number of paintings and hung them everywhere on the main entrance, inside the volunteers camps, even in the rooms meant for Bapuji and Subhasbabu, the President.’

The Indian rural life and culture are celebrated through Haripura posters that epitomise a vibrant earthy colour palette and bold, energetic lines with an intenselymodernist graphic quality. A mere glance at the available images depict the different activities, professions and trades which are the part of daily life in a village in a picturesque manner. The imageries pulled out from his observation were developed from the rapid sketches Nandalal drew whilst on his survey of rural areas and people living near the location. The soft, spontaneous strokes enclosing the forms and figures pave way for an equally effortless viewing typical of the character and disposition of Kalighatpata and various other folk paintings that shun any strenuous or affected idiom. The charm and the playfulness radiated by the linguistic features intermingle perfectly well with the contents portraying subjects like Hunters, Musicians, Bull Handlers, Carpenter, Smiths, Spinner, Husking women and modest scenario of rural life including animal rearing, child-nursing and cooking.
Also lies in the unvarying use of the point-cusped niche that frames the principal subject describes the simplicity of these works. The vital dynamic forms of certain figures of course cut across the frame thus braking the monotony from the images.

As per Binodebehari Mukhopadhyaya, “In these Haripura panels painted for the session, there is an ineluctable harmony of tradition and study based on observation. Each poster is different from the next in form as well as in colour and yet there runs all through a strong undercurrent of emotional unity, lending a familial stamp. The artist has not looked towards any ideals either traditional or modernism, but keeping an eye on the contemporary situation, has worked out his own goal. The stream of form and colour which flows over the subject, subordinating it, brings these posters into kinship with mural art.”

As his greatest contribution to the popular culture of mass nationalism, Haripura paintings brought Shri. Nandalal praises and far-reached recognition. These paintings brought him close in a certain sense to Shri. Gandhi's claimed mission 'to make Gods out of men of clay'.

However, the comments made by Lady Herring Ham after observing the pictures that appeared in the above named book, proved to be wrong because, the collection of the actual paintings made at the Sir J. J. School of Art shows that these paintings were first made in water colours and later on they were painted in oil paints on a larger canvass. 30 water colour paintings in smaller size and one painting made in oil paint is still kept in the collection of the Sir J. J. School of Art, however none of the paintings were kept in any of the exhibition till now. Though India owned such a rich heritage, not a single collection of various arts in Maharashtra, prepared in chronological order was made available at Bombay at that time. That is why the traditional contemporary art remained unexplored. However it is very surprising that detail writing on this subject was done by the Bengal School. Due to these facts, the appreciation and version of the Murals in Ajanta caves was firstly created in the Sir J. J. School. Under the supervision of Principal Griffiths, the replicas of the Murals at Ajanta were created. However out of the 300 total paintings, with the exception of 30 water colour paintings made in smaller size and
one painting size 12ft x 10ft made in oil paint are available at Sir J.J. School of Art, rest 269 paintings were sent to England, out of which some were destroyed in the fire but still few are available today at The Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Like the Bengal school, changes also took place in the Bombay school, after 1919 C. due to appointment of Mr. Gladstone Solomon, as the principal and a true admirer of the Indian art. With his ambitious and adventurous attitude towards work, he surpassed the Bengal school within a short period of time and then the Bombay revivalist school was born.\(^5\)

Though this is the fact, we can say that the movement had started in the Bombay School, in the late 18\(^{th}\) century. It should be noted that the Bombay School has made a valuable contribution in developing the modern arts. Under the supervision of Principal Griffiths, the students of the Sir J. J. School created the replicas and the documentation of the sculptures in Ajanta caves. Principal Griffiths always aimed to have flawless sketching. He was also very particular about the quality of the work to be done. Though he did not make any special effort for the development of sculpture art, during his work tenure the quality of the sculpture work did not suffer.\(^6\)

Shri. Ganpatrao Mhatre, who was one of the student of Sir J. J. School, had created his own style in sculpture and was risen as “sculptor” in the year 1895 C. This was because during Mr. Kipling’s work tenure, along with the decorative art, the students were also trained in making the relief sculptures of the human bodies.

If we have a look at the history of art, before pre independence era, we realise that the contemporary art creation was sometimes based on the Indian art and sometimes it was supported by the foreign art. However with every changed situation, the art –historians and the experts had expressed their views clearly and we are able to experience them at some places or the other.

If a review is taken, it will help to throw light on many happenings in the past. If we have a look at the written historical documents, and see the photographs of the murals or replicas of the sculptures at the Ajanta caves, made at the Sir J. J.
Impact of Indian Revival on Bombay School of Art, we come to the conclusion that the Revival Movement of Indian Art, did not take place in Bengal Province but was originated in Bombay at the Sir. J. J. School of Art.

History reveals that after the retirement of Principal Griffiths, the efforts to understand the Indian art and to create awareness about the Indian art amongst the Indian student were stopped completely. If Principal Havel, a knowledgeable person in art and an ardent art lover also would have been appointed as the principal, after Griffith’s retirement, then the history might would have got a different turn and the first two decades of the century would have been on the name of the Bombay School and not on the Bengal School of art.

Today, both these schools are the thing of the past. The students or artists who were associated with these schools might not be known to anyone except the historical art lovers. Though this is true, if we take the review of the complex art streams and the changing values we realise that the we just cannot forget the artistic creations made by the contemporary artists, as they have made an everlasting impression in our mind. The creations made by Shri. Nandalal Bose, Abanindranath, Ukole were really fascinating while the creations made by the Bombay artists Shri. Chirmulakar, Shri. Nagarkar and Shri. Ahiwasi too, had stolen the heart of art lovers and even today the people are amazed by their magnificent work.  

We must say that these forgotten Indian artists, have indeed made a valuable contribution to the Indian art and have also created a special place for themselves in the History.

3.4 Reflection of Revival on Bombay School

After the old Buddhist artists left from the land, probably no paintings quite as enchantingly beautiful as theirs have adorned the walls of Indian buildings. The art of Mural Painting thrived under the Mughal and Rajput princes; and that wall decorators survived throughout this period is specified by still enduring work so presently, the practice of wall painting art continues in one form or another, and a mere sight at the bazaars of any South Indian City is enough proof that the Indian
artist—though unfortunately no longer the follower of Emperors or King is still celebrated in this great traditional form of artistic expression.\(^{53}\)

The question of the revival of Painting in India resolves itself in fact into one of Organization art Education, the transfer upon the students of facilities for study.\(^{54}\) The Bombay School of Art with a focus for national instincts naturally offers full scope for the work of beginning to encourage Indian art, and when in 1919-20, a the students began decorating the walls of the School of Art which marked a very real and sure-shot step on the part of the Educational Department towards realizing its Ideal of Trusteeship for National Genius. As of December 14th 1920, His Excellency Sir George Lloyd, the Governor of Bombay, revealed in the Sir J.J. School of Art, the first Mural Paintings which his Personal patronage had called into existence, the action was interpreted by the audience in the crowded hall as one of those historically significant gestures which can sometimes state the principles of National Progress more sharply than words at the scene indeed gave rise to glowing musings and brighter hopes for the rejuvenation in the School of Art of that atmosphere of ardent endeavour in the artist, and of help, appreciation and recognition.\(^{55}\)

On the occasion of the inauguration of the first Mural Paintings at the Sir J.J. School of Art, the task of improvising the Sir J.J. School of Art which the Government of Bombay had decided to take in hand, came to be identified as the particular care of the Governor himself. The policy adopted by the Government of Bombay since it gave the sum of Rs. 5,000 for the designing of the walls of the School of Art with paintings, is one which is directed towards genuinely fast-pacing the renewal of Indian painting, which no observer can doubt has already started.\(^{56}\) In no way, India is one of those countries where art is a matter of artificial import rather being part of the National "Faith", the soil has to be ploughed and the seed has to be sown before the plant starts to grow. All that we need in India is to water the dry earth. The public mind has received and approved very quickly of the idea distinctive in the Indian Art revival as promoted by the Sir J.J. School of Art, is so strong in its importance that no review of the recent work of the School has been able to decipher.\(^{57}\) The interest of the Governor was immediately responded to and
understood as a serious component of Indian Art Education by a very great form of public opinion. It’s uncertain whether the untutored visitors to Bombay's Picture Galleries and Art Schools fully understand the importance of the work they look at but it’s essential one know the pleasure they find seeing them. People in thousands visited the first Display of Mural Painting in the School of Art.58

The Indian School of Art is broadly based upon the quick foundations of the hearts of the Indian people. This was well explained by Sir George Lloyd in his speech. His Excellency said” From the time of Plato onwards it has been recognized that the state cannot afford to neglect the Aesthetic environment of its citizens.”59

The appointment of Solomon as Principal of the Sir J.J. School of Art at Bombay in the year 1919 was to bring about unimaginable changes in the art scene. The students, till then, were taught to copy the western style, draw and paint by copying their instructors and there was no Indianess in their works. Solomon was studious person. He was not only a great artist, but also a sensitive and sensible person. He realized soon after his appointment the impact of the Bengal School of revival and the momentum it had gathered. To initiate such revival at the Sir J. J. School of Art he encouraged his students to visit historical and other important places from the art point of view and study the sculptures, temple architect and Ajanta murals. It is in the realization that without the support of Indian artists who were masters in Indian style but also good teachers his efforts would not bear fruits that he organized two classes, one taught by Shri. Nagarkar and the other by Shri. Ahiwasi. It can be safely said that if these two illumineries had not been there, what would have happened to Solomon’s vision of revival.60

Thus on the one hand, we had Shri. Ahivas as the head of one class who as everyone knows did work in Rajput style exclusively using Indian motifs and imagery and on the other we had Shri. Nagarkar who used washed technique and western style human figure to the best effects. And in Mural Paintings they used oil colours and Marouflage technique. As a result of which we have painters like Shri. Vasudev Smart, Shri. Parekh and Shri. Rawal who did work exclusively in Indian
style and we also have Shri. Shirgaonkar and Miss Ambika Dhurandhar who adopted their styles to the western influences.

**Table 3.1 : Two Pioneers**

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<td>Jagannath Ahiwasi</td>
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This tradition of art was termed as Bombay School. Bombay province having a large territory stretched from Karachi, M.P., and Maharashtra to Gujarat, Karwar and Karnataka had diverse cultural traditions and regional skills. Those traditional skills and the realism of academic art were fused into one, giving birth to a new tradition of Ahiwasi and Nagarkar’s class.

### 3.4.1 Jagannath Ahiwasi

One of the pioneers of the Indian Art Revival was Jagannath Ahiwasi (Plat No.2.16) who was also a student of the prestigious 'Mural Decoration' class. In this gifted painter, the British Principal Solomon realised the potential of carrying out his vision of Indian art revival. He was an exceptional member of the team of young artists who painted Indian style murals in the Secretariat Building at Delhi under Solomon's guidance in 1929-1930 C, and was later appointed as the main instructor for the 'Mural Decoration' course. Ahiwasi was born in 1901 C. at Gokul, but he spent the first twenty years of his life at Porbandar where his father was a Vaishnava kirtan singer. He was well versed in Vaishnava poetry of Brajabhasha having spent his childhood in sacred temple precincts, amidst music and festivals.

He revived the Rajput painting and consciously avoided the wet-wash technique. He synchronized beautifully the best characteristics of Ajanta along with
Mughal painting. His two murals, on the themes of Chitralekha (Painting) and Drama, (at the stage of compositional studies) were praised by Sir John Marshall, Sir Leslie Wilson and Solomon. In the mural portraying the Drama, ideas have been derived from the *Natya Shastra* such as the notion of the range of the eight (or nine) rasas, i.e emotions. *(Plat No. 3.10)*

Since the 1934 C. London exhibition, Shri. Ahiwasi's Message has greatly inspired and reproduced probably due to its closeness to Rajasthani miniature painting. It resembles sets of 'love-romances' as that of Dhola-Maru. The painting titled Naming of Krishna or Nam Karan is artistic and exceptional. It is an elaborate sketch, which was intended to be developed into an Ajanta-like monumental mural. In some ways, Shri. Ahiwasi's approach exemplifies the rejection of the Bengal variety of revivalism including the wash technique. For the western Indian region, the phenomenon involved seeking inspiration directly from traditions, which are indigenous to it geographically, including the elements. During the period of more than two decades that he taught at Bombay, Shri. Ahiwasi's students included Gujarat's Shri. Rasiklal Parikh and in later years Maharashtra's Shri. Palsikar, Shri. Gaitonde and Shri. Lakshman Pai. It is in this generation of Ahiwasi's students and their response to fresh insight of traditional schools of painting that one observes how such an endeavour has served as the take off point towards modern art in the post-Independence era at Bombay.  

### 3.4.2 Gunawant Hanamant Nagarkar

The talk of 'Bombay Revivalist School' would seem incomplete without the mention of some of the iconic painters. One of them being Shri. Gunawant Hanamant Nagarkar. *(Plat No. 2.15)* Mastering the art of synthesis, his human figures were based on Greco-Roman ideals, whereas his inspirations came from the art of Ajanta. While the artist’s style resembled Bengal Revivalist School, the compositions and the beauty of form were his own creations. He never compromised on quality and painted in water colour and oil with great skill.

When this prolific painter, joined the Sir J.J. School of Arts as a student, he was encouraged by Principal Solomon to paint the fresco 'Ragini'. The painting
'Ragini' and 'dropadi vastra haran' (Plat No.3.11) bagged the Governor's award and received great reviews in the Times of India. The artistic feats of this able painter were endless. In 1920 C. he stood first in the Diploma examination and was awarded the Mayo medal in 1921 C. When Principal Solomo started the Mural class, students of the first batch, one of them being Shri. Nagarkar, painted a huge fresco on the wall of Sir J. J. School of Art measuring 26’3”x19.6” tilted 'Kala devyaha punar Pratishta'. (Plat No.3.12) Governor Lord Lloyd, who inaugurated the exhibition was so impressed that he commissioned the students of the class to do the interiors of Darbar Hall of Government House.

Already making a mark for himself, Shri. Nagarkar was selected as a teacher in 1923 C. by Principal Solomon to teach the fresh batch Indian Style painting. He received many awards in national exhibitions since 1921 C. including the Gold Medal of Bombay Art Society in 1927 C. The same year, 'Radha's Reconciliation' was displayed at the first Imperial Art Exhibition in London. It is really amazing how the painter could master the ornamental details, finesse of line, and retain the characteristics of Indian art: half open eyes and arched brows, expressive faces and lyrical proportions of human figures in oil.

Water coulour paintings such as 'Banishment of Rama and Sita' 1920 C. 'Triumph of Devotion' 1926 C. and 'Draupadi Swayamwar 1927 C. stand as a hallmark for their dramatic presentation and composition of large number of human beings. With 'Draupadi Swayamwar', one gets mesmerized with many human figures, their expressions, postures and subtle use of colours.

One of the traits of the artist is that he used to draw outlines on white paper and fill it with tints and shades of water colours. The paper was then washed in water after which layers of colours were applied again and again. This process went on for days and weeks till the tones became dark and saturated. The outline was done in flowing, lyrical strokes. Ornaments and eyes were added with Chinese white and the paintings were completed. This work is so sensuous and mellifluous that it leaves the viewer spellbound. This knowledge was passed on to the students and no
wonder we had talented artists such as Shri. Chimulkar, Shri. Gondhalekar, Shri. Jambhalikar availing of this technique with a sense of dexterity.\textsuperscript{62}

The situation got a dramatic reversal in 1918 C. with the retirement of Cecil Burns as Principal 1896-1918 C. which brought to an end the era of the old guards, disorganized developments and endless uncertainties over the school's objectives. Mr. William Ewart Gladstone Solomon, the son of a South African politician of Jewish lineage settled in Britain, arrived from London to take responsibility of the school.

November 1918. The Indian Headmaster Dhurandhar intensely remembers the day in his memoirs. Being the senior Indian teacher at the school, his new boss abruptly instructed him to submit his works for inspection.\textsuperscript{63}

This use of authority and power by European superiors to remind the Indian staff of their subordinate status was a regular practice in Government institutions. Being adequately impressed with his works, Principal Solomon expanded, thus laying the foundations of future collaborations on a series of crucial projects. The Indian teacher even received the affection of Principal Solomon. Ambitious, bursting with energy, persistently pursuing his objective of undermining Bengal's artistic pre-eminence, Solomon left his personal stamp on the school in its critical years.\textsuperscript{64}

3.4.3 Government and public building Mural, Indian Room Project

Principal Solomon was persistent to infuse a new energy into the declining art school and provide a convincing 'indigenous' alternative to Shri. Abanindranath's orientalism, the much-liked recipient of imperial largesse: Abanindranath's pupils, for example, ran reputed art institutions in Jaipur, Lucknow, Madras and Lahore, to name only the significant ones but such favours degraded with the announcement of the government’s ambitious mural project.

Principal Solomon was determined to acquire as large a slice of the imperial cake for his students as possible. Solomon had an added advantage. The foundation was already laid by Solomon's predecessors at the school, Mr. Lockwood Kipling
and Mr. John Griffiths, who had access commissions for their students to design public buildings.  

Solomon himself had an added edge as he was training at the Royal Academy in marouflage, a mural technique comprising of attaching large painted canvases on to the walls as a part of decoration in place of painting directly on to the wall.  

Being a veteran of World War I, Captain Solomon's first-hand experience in war prepared him for mapping out the school's future with military efficiency, each measure a step towards making it the numero uno art institution in India. However, a reform was only possible if he had a free hand within the school.  

Straight out of this strategic victory, Solomon deprived the school of the Foundational South Kensington curriculum with decorative arts as its foundation. This is not startling since Solomon had been educated at the rival institution, the Royal Academy, with its fine art prejudice. In December 1919, he introduced the revolutionary drawing from the Nude as a sine qua non for large-scale, many-figured mural compositions. Having undraped models was not new, and indeed under his predecessor Cecil Burns' students had turned out life-size figures for mural decoration, the systematic use of nude models was unknown though.  

The early history of South Kensington, the mentor of Indian art schools, had been one of confrontation to this central policy of the Renaissance. Solomon's reform also challenged the then existing opinion that Indians were only able to pull off flat decorative drawing. This 'naturalization' of the Royal Academy practice finally sanctified the school as a 'fine arts' institution, a process that began in the late nineteenth century. Since his Indian Deputy Dhurandhar was a devotee of the nude, Solomon's task had become easy.  

Two prizes were decided, one for mural design and another for broadening figures to scale from small sketches to life-size, a requirement for any large figure composition. Drawing and painting from the nude now secured a place of pride in the school. As Solomon argued later, every 'student's colour is his own. But he may be taught to draw correctly... [When] a student can draw the human head and the
Human figure accurately [he] has mastered the grammar of the language of Art.' The visiting English portrait painter Oswald Birley wrote in 1935 that 'the work of the Life classes in the Bombay School of Art is well up to the level of the Standards of European Schools of Art.' The year 1923 saw a commission to decorate the Government House in Bombay. A medallion and three panels on the theme of personification were erected in its Durbar Hall, the four of them measuring 396 x 213 cm each, with life-size figures, signifying the success of the new department.  

Even though Principal Solomon might have strongly stressed upon the significance of naturalistic drawing for large-scale murals, he must have been aware that even in Bombay, orientalism had already paved its own way. Journalist Shri. Vasudev Mehta, who was fond of the murals, opined on their 'un-Indian' character.

It was hard to give a miss to the 'language' of Indian art with such an impactful body of opinion as articulated by the Bengal School. Solomon went on to learn it with enthusiasm if only to defeat the enemy at his own game. Ajanta murals, the national symbol, had been imitated by John Griffith’s students in Bombay from 1872 to 1881 but it was only in 1909 under the influence of the Bengal School, that 'pilgrimages' to this nationalist 'shrine' became mandatory. The students were led to the caves by Solomon in 1921 so that they can study the paintings, claiming that these paintings justified his own approach to art. In denial with the orientalist 'pretensions' that such art could be a result of religious dedication alone, he was of the opinion that they demonstrated a 'scientific' approach and the constant use of living models.

Each phase of these decorations epitomized a throbbing, vigorous, energetic life. They were a group of tremendously practical hard workers. With the presence of approaching, Indian Art from the mystical or antiquarian rather than the genuinely artistic point of view, this is a point which lacks strong insistence.

Principal Solomon's aim here was the defamation of life drawing as un-Indian and grossly materialist by the orientalists. Solomon questioned the orientalist elimination of life classes in Calcutta, strongly defending Bombay's curriculum with
its core teaching of drawing from the antique and from life. He strongly opined that the 'Classic' styles of Europe and India could be combined without any harm to the student. The Indian student would have tackled his own 'Decorative' heritage more effectively only if indeed Greek Theory was understood better.

Long story short, figure study was the only possible way to strengthen Indian decorative skill, since 'the inherent love of decorative drawing has been a religious ordinance ever since Vedic times land was deeply-rooted national talent.\textsuperscript{74}

Keeping up with the tradition of British art teachers in India, Principal Solomon published a number of books on Indian art, including Ajanta, partly to publicize his own 'Indian Art Renaissance'. Solomon's fundamental ideology was that style, whether Eastern or Western, must be chosen in accordance with the requirements of a designated mural, but whatever the style may be, it must be grounded in Western 'scientific' figure drawing. He ridiculed the Orientalists 'who profess to foresee deadly danger in progressive discoveries in Art such as drawing a life size figure accurately from life'.

It was not just through his writings but also through his speeches that Solomon engaged in shadow boxing with his orientalist adversaries, continuously challenging their claims to cultural authenticity. Open resentment between him and the orientalists of Bengal broke out almost the moment Bombay's mural department gained publicity.\textsuperscript{75}

Shri. Abanindranath's followers, a majority of whom headed government art schools, were delegated with the selection of works for Wembley. A Fine Arts Committee was formulated which comprised of two orientalists, Shri. O. C. Gangoly, the ideologue of the Bengal School, and Shri. Samarendranath Gupta, Deputy Principal of the Mayo School of Art in Lahore. However for a fair selection, Lionel Heath, Principal of the Mayo School, and Solomon were also nominated to the committee. Post the selection, with full support of Lloyd and his own powerful canvassing, Solomon managed to secure a strong representation for Bombay. 55 students were invited to send an entire Indian Room, designed by the different
departments, in a victorious demonstration of Gesamtkunstwerk. Dhurandhar organized the work, which took a period of nine months to manifest. On his Retirement, Governor Lloyd paid a last visit to the school to appreciate the Indian Room before it was shipped to London.\textsuperscript{76}

Entirely constructed out of Malabar Teak, the Indian Room boasted of a beautifully painted ceiling, describing the Hindu God Surya and the eight planets, and was embroidered with decorative borders of Ajanta inspiration. Although Solomon claimed to have preference of actual frescoes to verify Bombay’s credentials in this area, for convenience of shipping, the students used the marouflage technique. However, one should not ignore the fact that Solomon’s expertise was marouflage. The seven main oil panels of varied dimensions, implemented by the senior students, were of individual inspiration to underline the range at the risk of letting go overall unity. Different departments contributed the carpets, furniture and sculptures. To finally emphasize the school’s claims to excellence, Shri. Mhatre’s celebrated student work, the plaster sculpture To the Temple, originally exhibited in 1896 C. greeted the visitors at the entry of the school.\textsuperscript{77}

Principal Solomon’s book The \textit{Bombay Revival of Indian Art} was on sale in London which coincided with the exhibition. Before he left for Wembley, he had dispatched an inscribed copy to Shri. Dhurandhar in appreciation, ‘A souvenir of the sunshine and gloom through which we have passed together since Nov 25th 1918.’ Supposedly the story of the developments at the school, its true resolution was to make the case for a rival ‘renaissance’. Each chapter persistently proclaimed the superiority of Bombay’s naturalist methods over those of Calcutta. The chapter on Bombay was placed judiciously next to ancient Ajanta in a comparative account of different mural traditions which invited the intelligent reader for an obvious conclusion.

Solomon diverted his attention on two of Bombay’s claims: they were the first to discover Ajanta and had a systematic training in sculpture, both of which made them competent for their ‘alternative’ mural project. Additionally, Solomon's
Royal Academy experience of figure study strengthened the existing Indian talent for decorative murals, revising the tendency to 'over-spiritualize'. While offering economic reasoning for the prevalent artistic stagnation in Bombay, he demanded that Bombay be designated the 'spokesman for Indian artists', in India's artistic revival.\textsuperscript{78}

Governor Lloyd then proceeded to amplify on Bombay's exclusive position by summoning Mhatre's famous work. With the exception for Calcutta, no other art school followed the fine arts. Not just the proximity to Ajanta but the city also enjoyed active public patronage, and had unexhausted funding which could be usefully applied to rouse 'Indian artistic sense'. He was of the opinion that Bombay had lost its artistic purpose for a while and took the credit for inspiring 'Solomon to start murals with stipends and strong life study' because the murals would pay for the lack of public art galleries. Lloyd's talk received the endorsement of the Indian commissioner on the Wembley committee, who were also keen to see the end of Bengal's monopoly.\textsuperscript{79}

Following Lloyd's 'temperate' yet convincing presentation of Bombay's case, Solomon introduced his favorite refrain, the success of naturalism at the school: 'some of the drawings and paintings of the undraped figure compare constructively with some of the best Art schools in the West, considering it has been such a short time he was causing the 'de-orientation to return to Bombay, Solomon was completely aware of the economic benefits of the New Delhi murals for his students.\textsuperscript{80}

### 3.5 Commission of New Delhi Murals and Bombay School

Delhi Murals was a turning point in the history of Revival and the impact of Bombay School of Art on the Art scene in India. (\textbf{Plat No.3.13}) It was a clash between the Calcutta School of Art and the Bombay School of Art. The two provinces fought tooth and nail to get the commission of New Delhi Murals and India House London. When Raj decided upon decorating the New Delhi buildings with Murals, it shifted its presence to the two leading government art schools in Bombay and Calcutta.
Mr. William Ewart Gladstone Solomon, became the new in-charge of the Bombay school of art in 1918 C. and with him he brought many changes to the school which left a lasting impression in years to come. Solomon dedicatedly wished to infuse new energy into the art school and make it a better alternative to Shri. Abindranath Tagore’s orientalism, the favoured recipient of the Raj. With the announcement of the New Delhi Murals Abindranth’s pupils who managed leading art institutions in Jaipur, Lucknow, Madras and Lahore to name only the large one’s were considered by the imperial largesse. But after the announcement of the ambitious mural project, these favours paled into insignificance and was a competition between the Calcutta School and Bombay School.

Principal Solomon dug in to get a huge slice of imperial cake for his students at Bombay. This he achieved by planning well stages that consisted of making mural paintings the foundation of art teaching, in order to bid successfully for the New Delhi Murals. Solomon in doing this however had an advantage since the road was already prepared at the Bombay School for the project well in advance by Mr. Lockwood Kipling and Mr. John Griffiths, who previously managed to get commission for the students to beautify public buildings.81

Principal Solomon also in preparation to secure the commission of New Delhi Murals started mural paintings as a specialist course at the advanced level. The first generation of students especially Shri. Fernandes, Shri. Bhonsale, Shri. Nagarkar and Shri. Joshi undertook the ornamentation of school walls in intense, the greatest achievement being an experimental lunette, 'Kala devyahapunar Pratishta' (Installation of God of Art). Made in the central hall symbolizing new calling of the school, it was inaugurated by the Governor in 1920 C. and the school received a generous sum as encouragement.

A commission to decorate the Government House in Bombay came by in 1935 C. The visiting English portrait painter, Mr. Oswald Birley, wrote in 1935 C. that ‘the work of Life classes in the Bombay School of Art is well up to the level of the standards of European School of Art.82
Through his writings and speeches questioning the cultural authenticity of the murals by Calcutta school of art, Principal Solomon often challenged the orientalists of Bengal School of Art. In this way Solomon ensured maximum publicity for the Mural Department of Bombay School of Art. In doing so the mural department of Bombay also won many commission of paintings for public buildings. Principal Havel who was the mentor of Bengal School was outraged by the developments at Bombay School because till then Mural paintings for public buildings were the cornerstone only of the Calcutta school of art. Principal Havel said that Solomon through his efforts had won the government support for the Murals of public buildings to Bombay school which otherwise was a favour which Calcutta school enjoyed.83

After the spectacular presentation of Indian Room at Wembley exhibition, Solomon convinced the committee at Wembley to get the project of painting Delhi murals for Bombay School of Art which until then was over shadowed by Calcutta school of art, artists and also the favouritism of the Raj for Calcutta over Bombay. Solomon in his appeal with further suggestion at the Wembley conference in 1924 that those in charge for planning the capital would not wish to prevent the revival of Indian art, he implicated that support for Bombay was synonymous with guaranteeing Indian artistic revival. He also added that the conference that SirPhirozeSethna, a member of the Indian Council of State from the Bombay Presidency, had already promised his support at a Council meeting in 1922 C.84

The clash between Bengal and Bombay got subjected to public glare when Solomon received endorsement for his efforts to thwart modern Indian Art being monopoly of Bengal by the succession of Prix de Delhi Resolution and efforts by the newspaper Bombay Chronicle on the government.

In 1927 C. the Government of India held an open competition for decorating the Imperial Secretariat designed by Herbert Baker with murals. Well primed by Principal Solomon, in January 1928 Shri. Dhurandhar paid a visit to Delhi with his students to study at first-hand the architectural plan, elevations and other details. Shri. Dhurandhar measured the dimensions of the Law Members’ Chamber, in order
to prepare the preliminary pencil, watercolor and oil sketches for the murals. His experience with large aerial drawings for Principal Cecil Burns, followed by the pylons, had equipped him for large-scale work. The deadline for submitting the coloured sketches to the judges was 7 March 1928, which barely left him a month. But capable of working at great speed, he completed four water-colour sketches, each measuring 183 x 30cm. In August the Department of Industries and Labour asked him to submit the preliminary cartoons for the murals. The senior students of Solomon’s mural class also submitted preliminary watercolour sketches to the committee. As widely expected, in 1928 C. the Government of India, on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee chaired by Sir John Marshall, offered the lion’s share of the murals to Bombay artists, especially the Sir J.J School of Art. 

The government expected Shri. Dhurandhar to complete the paintings by September 1929, leaving him approximately a year. Although Dhurandhar was able to keep to the deadline, he suffered ill health and even despaired of completing the work on time. However, after taking several months off from work, he was able to regain his confidence. Shri. Dhurandhar was assigned two generous wall spaces in the chamber, each 7.3 m long and 1.5 m wide, divided into three parts, each to accommodate a 2.4 meter long canvas. Dhurandhar’s theme was the dispensation of colonial justice: two laws from the Hindu Civil Code, Bride Wealth and Adoption, and an example of the Muslim Shariah law, Last Will and Testament. ‘Framing’ these scenes of civil law was an East India Company court scene, celebrating the empire as an impartial upholder of law and justice.

Bombay art schools contribution, including Dhurandhar’s, was mainly in the marouflage (oils) method, introduced by Solomon, though tempera murals were not entirely absent. The South Loggia was in the care of Shri. G. P. Fernandes, one of the first students to be trained by Solomon. He used marouflage on the dome but had the versatility to paint the rest in tempera. The lantern of the dome was brightened by the use of colorful costumes for the artisan figures. Shri. Nagarkar, another senior student of Solomon’s, covered the dome, arches and spandrel with an elaborate series on ‘Hindu Aryan life’, represented by well-drawn figures in low-key colours.
The lofty dome crowning the North Block was decorated by Solomon’s students under his supervision, with figures representing different periods of Indian history. Eight further lunettes were filled mostly with female figures personifying themes of painting, architecture, music, dancing, poetry and drama. A typical lunette, for instance, on the theme of music represented the classical Indian Todi ragini in the manner of miniatures. Shri. Ahivasi from traditional Nathdwara, who painted the lunette ‘Drama’, was versatile enough to range from a Rajasthani miniature style to deeply modelled figures.

The murals, on view from 1931 C. following the inauguration of New Delhi, did not win universal approbation. Baker initially felt that the murals would inspire Indians for generations. He even urged the government to print a small explanatory pamphlet. Arthur Mr. Gordon Shoosmith, builder of public edifices in India, criticized the faulty draughtsmanship and cloying romanticism of some of the works.'39 And Baker soon had private misgivings. In 1931, the Secretary to the Department of Industry and Labour confided to the President of the Bombay Art Society that Baker had found the work in New Delhi to be ‘very unsatisfactory’ and the outcome of ‘the first impatient efforts’ 36 Baker later reflected:

“In the buildings of New Delhi, where I felt that encouragement should have been given to India’s great traditional art of mural painting, my advice as to the training and selection of artists was not taken, and painters with no thorough training in the difficult technique were for political reasons turned loose and uncontrolled upon my walls, and the architect was ignored.”

The actual problem faced by the students of Principal Solomon from Bombay School of Art while doing Delhi Murals was their lack of experience in handling large scale project. However Solomon rectified this by seeking assistance from the students of the Architectural School who helped in decorating the dome. Basically Solomon was convinced that the Indian students love for decoration was vindicated in the New Delhi Murals.
Principal Solomon is responsible for the Revivalism which took place in the Bombay School. In the beginning the teachers in India were expert in the British Realism academic art. When they were on the verge of getting professionally established as an artist, students of Principal Solomon started Nude Class, Mural Class, and Indian Design Class and played a major contribution towards Revivalism. He created an atmosphere for the students. Swadeshi movement was propagated using the paintings painted during the Revivalist Movement by the Bombay School. The paintings depicted the religious, social and political scenarios of the history of Procession Paintings.
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