Conclusion

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CONCLUSION

As against a common perception that a pattern of training usually inhibits artistic creativity, it is interesting to see how formal art institutions may result in creating an atmosphere in which formal methodology may buttress the flow of imagination like in the instance of B.C Sanyal coming to the Mayo School of Art, Lahore.

At the end of this dissertation, which in the first place included the development of the formal art schools in India established at Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras, it may be concluded that the primary objective of the British for opening up these provincial schools of art had been to encourage the industrial crafts of the country to reap commercial benefits as there was a flourishing market for Indian crafts in England in the early 19th century (see-pp70-71).

However, even in the early stages these institutions had begun to define a unique individuality. Principles of European academic realism remained the basis of art instruction at the School of Art, Bombay and the course of drawing on the pattern of Royal School of Art, South Kensington laid the foundation of training of the students. At the same time perhaps the School of Art, Bombay was the first to have begun an appreciation of Indian art as against the popular perception of Calcutta for as early as the early 1860’s the motifs from Ajanta had begun to be used as part of the decorative scheme for pottery. Later, Gladstone Solomon encouraged his students to take inspiration from nature. The enthusiasm of the Indian students was very well recognized. They
learnt new techniques with enthusiasm and tried to assimilate the new manner with great penchant (see plates 98-99).

Calcutta on the other hand emphasized the instruction in drawing, painting, modeling, lithography and wood-engraving. Students acquired specific training to learn a certain skill so that they could take up their future occupations like drawing masters, wood engravers, designers, and draughtsmen. Later, the academic training methods and realistic conventions of drawing, painting, sculpture and print-making were introduced in the curricula. However, E.B Havell ushered in the phase of Indian art in the art school. Subsequently, the curricula of the school of art in Calcutta was divided into Fine Art and Indian Painting. The school of art in Calcutta perhaps did not identify much with the primary aim of art education policy that focused on fostering Indian design and craftsmanship.

In Madras, the art school continued to function as per the government policy on art education. This school played a major role in the development of industrial arts related to construction and decoration of the items made of metal, wood, stone or clay. The institution played an important role in the region by training skilled designers for various art industries like woodcarving engraved metal work, stained glass windows and pottery. Also photography was introduced quite early in the syllabus of this art school. The ideology of nationalism in art entered the school of art in Madras with D.P Roy Chawdhary. He not only advocated the training in fine arts so as to encourage the students create works of individual distinction but also the revivalism of Bengal School.
Thus, even though the main aim of all the schools of art in the colonial India was initially to develop crafts and industrial skills of the students, it is interesting to see as to how at very stages the patterns of art education at these formal schools of art had begun to acquire distinctive features in each case.

In the early 1940’s there had begun deliberations on the character of art education in India. It was felt necessary to hold periodical Art Conferences in the country so that the issues relating to the system of Art Education in the country could be highlighted. In the first Provincial Art Conference in January 1942 at Bombay V.P Karmakar, Mr. Kelkar and N.C Mehta raised issues related to the prevailing pattern of art education in India at that time. Also the atmosphere of debate between the validity of Indian and western artistic norms was created. Talented scholars advocated the cause of Indian Art and artists. Thus sprang up the discussion on the issue of upgradation of art school curriculum. Ravi Shankar Rawal was the prime advocate of this issue. He proposed that raising the status of the art school would be beneficial, as the students would then be awarded the degrees by the university. Also, he proposed that the art school be governed by a board of academicians, scholars and veteran artists. He mooted the idea of opening up of Primary Art Schools in the provincial cities. It was suggested that these Primary Art Schools should be affiliated to the Central School of Art in the capital cities that in turn should be the first grade Art College having the status of Royal College of Art, London. At the same time, he opined that the curriculum must be based on a style of studies of
Indian Art. Several recommendations were given for consideration by the committee (see pp105-106).

Coming to the discussion of development of art education in Punjab, it is interesting to see as to how both formal and non-formal systems have had an important role to play in the development of arts and also, how in the 19th and early 20th century in the beginning of institutionalized art education, the style of the student, by and large, followed that of the teacher. Later on the impact of the training does not translate into obvious replication but only begins to act as a catalytic agent.

It is significant to mention here that it has been observed that there is no uniformity in the official documents and reports about the nomenclature of the industrial training institutions. We find Mayo School of Art referred to as an industrial training institute at one place and School of Art at another place for example reports by Richard Temples, H.H Locke and JL Kipling (See p-25). These irregularities sometimes, lead to confusion about the exact role that each institution accorded to art and the distinction that drew between art and craft. The stages of how these industrial training establishments turned into art schools are not very definite and sharply defined and perhaps no official document recording the need for this change is available. As a matter of fact, no distinction was drawn between training industrial crafts and arts, both of which were lumped together. Despite these discrepancies in the official records, it is clearly observed that Mayo School of Art acted as the premier institution that guided the industrial training institutes of less pretentious character in the province besides providing training in art.
In the work of early students from Mayo School of Art like Mohammad Din, Sher Mohammad, Amir Baksh, Ala-Ud-Din and others. We can clearly see the emergence of a new experience of art in which the traditional motifs begin to coalesce in a kind of harmony with the new ones and with features like chiaroscuro, perspective, cross-hatching and so on. These early drawings and sketches published in Journal of Indian Art and Industry like those by Sher Mohammad and others prove that a specific emphasis was accorded to a detailed viewing of the objects. Important example is ‘Thana Silk Weaver’ by Sher Mohammad, wherein the interior view of a room in which a clear passage of light is depicted unlike in traditional Indian painting (see-p160).

Even though this study reveals the original emphasis on craft and industrial products that had already started to evolve towards a more creative and imaginative approach; a watershed courses as it did in India as a whole in all spheres, with 1947-48, suddenly more emphasis begins to be laid on the creative inspiration. As the century turned there was witnessed an expansion of activities and ingression of a new approach in the art school. In the late 20’s the school began to change from its essential craft ethics towards fine arts with the coming of B.C Sanyal. Further, this dissertation discusses the circumstances, which encouraged the shift of perception in the function of fine arts. In the context of Lahore it might be also the establishment of a strong intellectual and philosophical movement as also the acceptance of change, liberal education, liberal as it became the nucleus of all cultural activities of Punjab. The atmosphere and circumstances were already in place, it
only needed the genius of Sanyal to concretize them and give them a defined shape. Also, more receptive authorities helped in realizing the new goals.

Another important change that was brought about was that the gap between the activities of the school and the society began to diminish. The practice of crafts had not evoked that much of interest in the citizens other than people from families of craftsmen. By the early 1930's we can see the emergence of some citizens of Lahore as amateur dilatants and students of the school by following the lectures along with life studies by B.C Sanyal. Apart from the customary modeling exercises in the modeling section at the Mayo School of Art, students began to have an idea of life-study in clay. The works of Sanyal like the bust of Lionel Heath and the life size study in clay of the famous wrestler Gama at the school premises had an obvious impact on the students. On the other hand, the works of painting department probably created a congenial atmosphere for students to unleash their creativity. The school had begun to acquire a catholic outlook. The decade from 1930-40 was a period of great and quick changes for instance in the early 1940's the rigid criterion for the appointment of a lecturer underwent some degree of relaxation when S.L Prasher, an M.A English was appointed as a lecturer in the school. He had not been trained in the systematic curricula followed by an art school but only somewhat informally trained with Abdul Aziz. By that time, also there came up a change in the character of students. Earlier the students came primarily or exclusively from the craft background that is to say, people who belonged to the families practicing traditional crafts in the
region. But now, people from the other sections of society too became interested in the practice in fine arts like painting and clay modeling. During the early 1950’s under the principalship of S.L. Prasher, the Government School of Art and Crafts, Simla began to function with emphasis on both design and fine arts. In the newly set up art school, students got ample opportunity to learn the art of painting and modeling besides the whole range of crafts and commercial art courses. Professors like P.N Mago, a professional artist trained at Sir J. J School of Art, Bombay was on the faculty who guided students on drawing and painting as also the history of Indian and Western art.

During 1960’s and early 1970’s another stage was reached in the development of art education when individuals like B.C Sanyal began to vociferously advocate the need for not only the severance of fine arts from the industrial shackles but also the establishment of studios of fine arts as a separate self contained individual academic discipline. Subsequently came the establishment of a separate college of arts under the overall jurisdiction of the university. In the context of Punjab, the College of Art, Chandigarh came under the Department of Fine Arts, Panjab University Chandigarh and began to function as a premier art institution in the region with its modern outlook and art educational practices.

Finally, in the context of India, however, another dimension was added in the progress of art education practice when the Faculty of Fine Arts, Baroda as a part of the university was initiated as also the department of Art and Aesthetics Jawaharlal Nehru University and National Museum Institute, New Delhi.