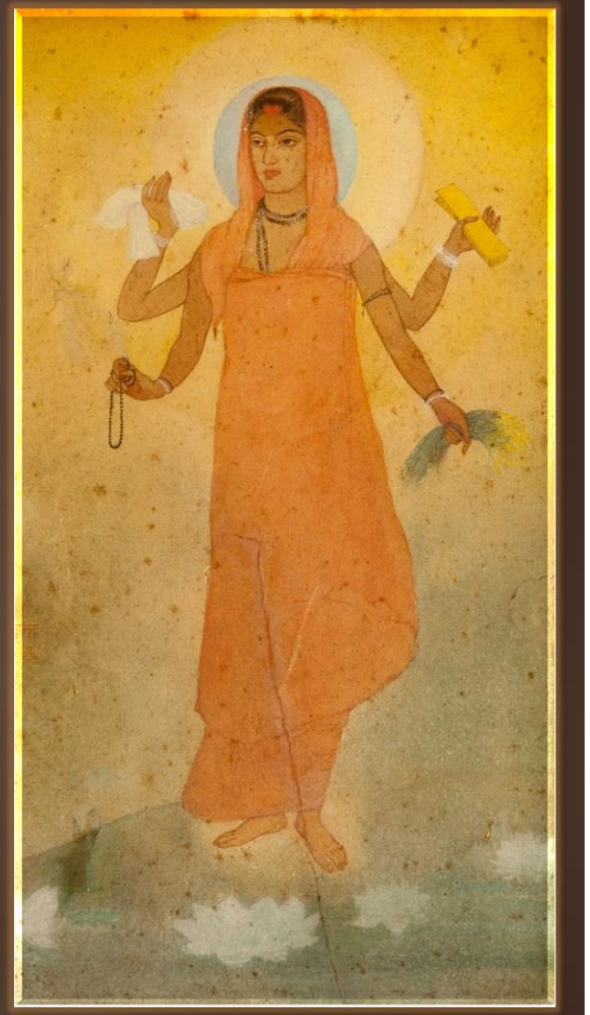
THE BENGAL SCHOOL
of PAINTING

- FROM THE BEGNINNING TO MID OF THE 20TH CENTURY A.D.
- PAINTING 049(UNIT-3)





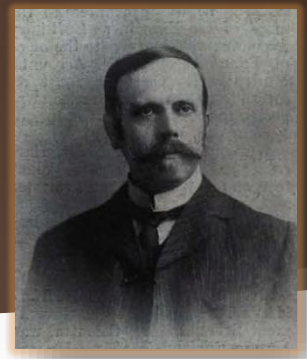


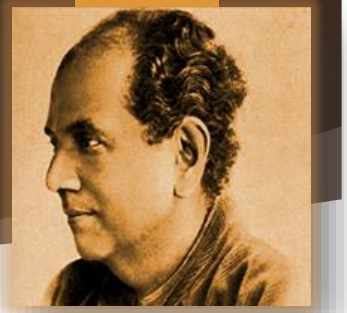


THE BENGAL SCHOOL OF PAINTING

- The Bengal School of Art commonly referred as Bengal School,was an art movement and a style of Indian painting that originated in Bengal, (primarily Kolkata and Shantiniketan) and flourished throughout the Indian subcontinent, during the British Raj in the early 20th century.
- It was associated with Indian nationalism (swadeshi) and led by Abanindranath Tagore (1871-1951), but was also promoted and supported by British arts administrators E. B. Havell, the principal of the Government College of Art, Kolkata from 1896.
- Eventually it led to the development of the modern Indian painting.

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF BENGAL SCHOOL





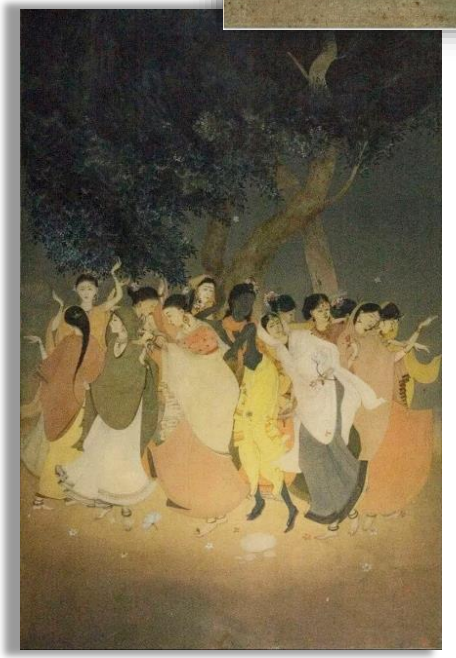
- The Bengal school arose as an nationalist movement reacting against the academic art styles previously promoted in India, both by Indian artists such as Raja Ravi Varma and in British art schools.

- At this point of our identity crisis, there came some highly gifted artists who tried in their own way to give a sense of direction to the art movement of the country and created confidence in the traditional values and rich heritage of Indian Art and made the Indians conscious of the fact. Their efforts included Abanindranath Tagore, Gaganendranath Tagore, Rabindranath Tagore, Nandlal Bose and Jamini Roy and ably supported by E.B. Havell, the principal of Government Art School at Calcutta.

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF BENGAL SCHOOL

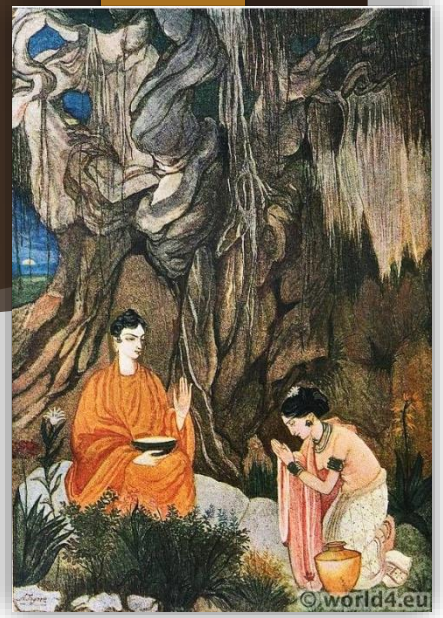


- This Enthused the Indian artists to turn for inspiration to true native tradition. A group of Bengal artists gave birth to a new painting style based on old Indian traditional paintings of Ajanta, Bagh, Rajput and Mughal art. They created a sort of new renaissance under the guidance and leadership of Abanindranath Tagore.
- The Bengal artist adopted a new Japanese water colour technique which synthesized with European transparent water colour and Indian tempera called 'Wash technique'. Wash became the hallmark of Bengal School.

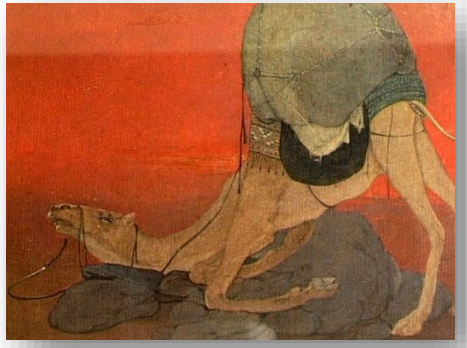


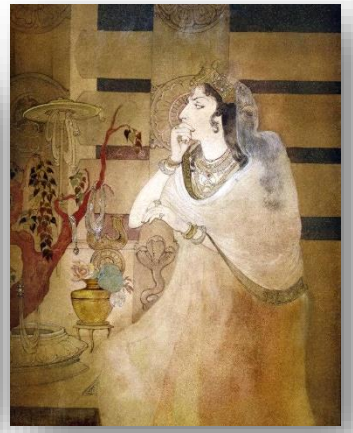
SUBJECT MATTER of BENGAL SCHOOL

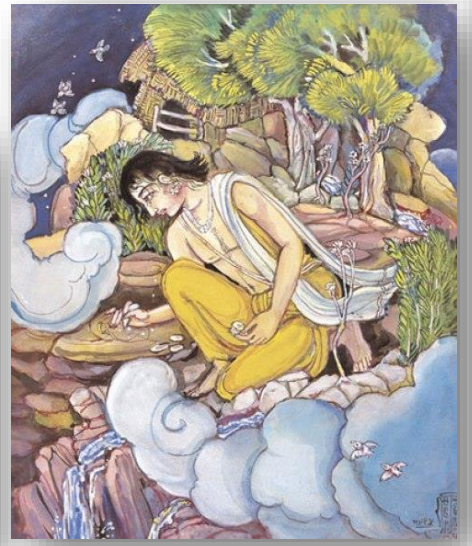


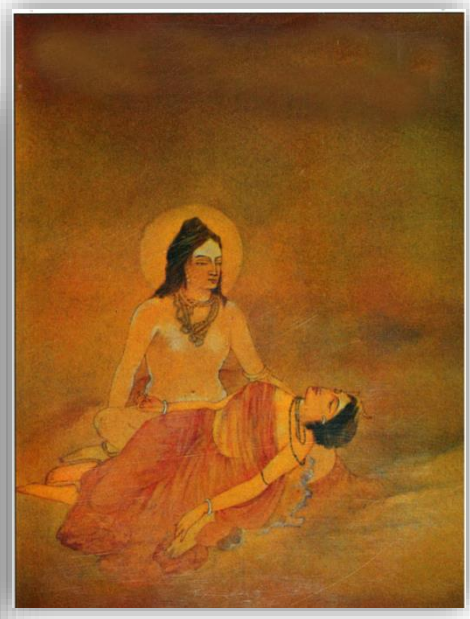


- **HISTORICAL PAINTINGS-** Buddha & Sujata,Tishya Rakshita by Abnindra Nath and akbar & kunal by Asit kumar Haldar.
- **RELIGIOUS PAINTINGS-** Mahakali, Shiv- Parvati, Krishna & Gopies and many other.
- **LITERARY THEMES-** Themes of Indian literature like 'Megh-Doot'(Ram Gopal Viswawargiya).
- **SOCIAL LIFE-** Very large numbers of Social & Daily life painting like 'Beggar' ,The Last Journey' etc.
- **BIRDS & ANIMALS-**
- **LANDSCAPE PAINTINGS-**

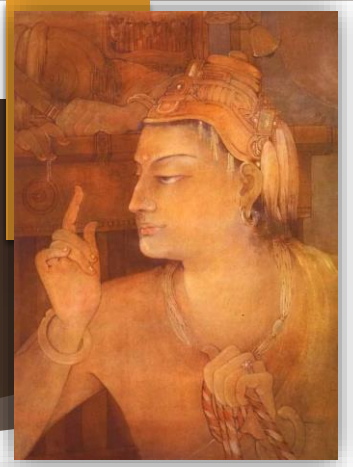


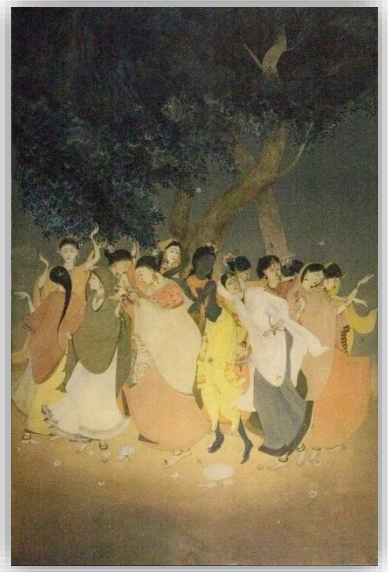
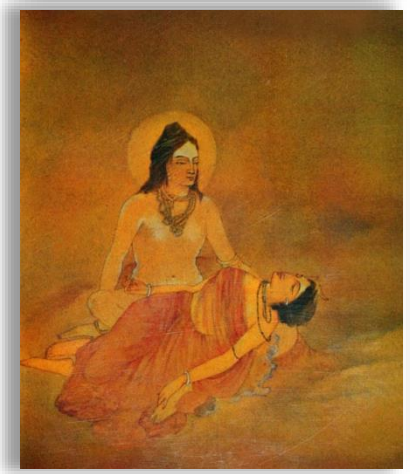






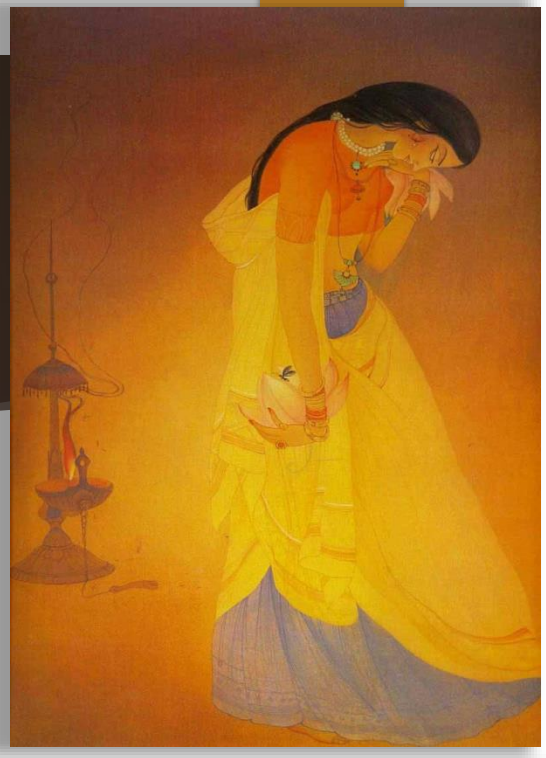
CHARACTERISTICS of BENGAL SCHOOL

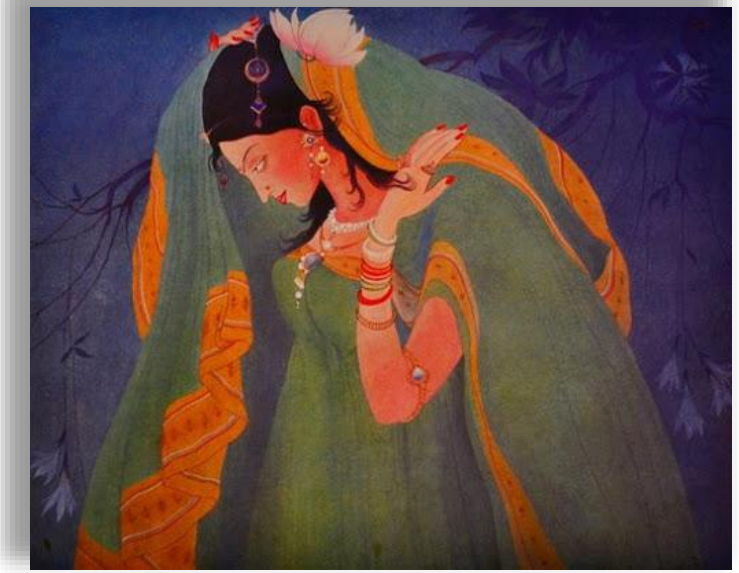




- **Based on Indian Traditions** : The Bengal School is fully based on the Indian traditional style as the subject matter of this school is based on Indian culture. The paintings based on Indian theme like 'Mahakali, 'Shiva Parvati' Krishna and Gopis etc. prove the Bengal School's Indian mentality.
- **Influence of Ajanta Paintings** : Bengal school is influenced from Ajanta Art. The qualities of Ajanta Art like rhythm, grace, harmony etc. are visible in in the paintings of Bengal School.
- **Softness and Rhythm in Figures** : The figures of Bengal School give soft effect and no hardness is there. They are graceful and have delicacy. They are rhythmic and provide pleasant experience to eyes.

CHARACTERISTICS OF BENGAL SCHOOL

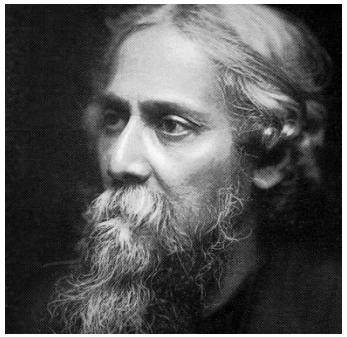


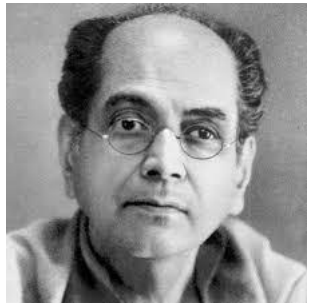
- **Beautiful Colour Scheme** : The colours of Bengal School are very attractive. Wash technique is used and colours are not bright and gaudy at all.
- **Influence of Mughal and Rajasthani Schools** : Mughal and Rajasthani Schools' influence can also be seen at some places.
- **Linear Delicacy** : The lines of Bengal School resemble the Ajanta Paintings. Lines are delicate and rhythmic.
- **Light and Shade** : The softness in the paintings of Bengal School is due to its quality of brilliant light and shade.
- **Impressive and Indian Subject Matter** : The subject matter of Bengal School is very impressive and Indian in character. Themes used are historical, religious, literary etc.



Prominent artists of Bengal school of art

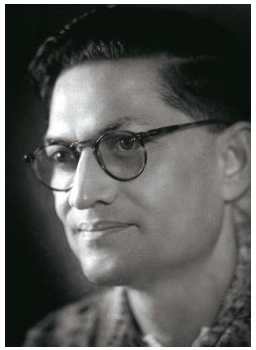
- Abanindranath Tagore
- Nandalal Bose
- Gaganendranath Tagore
- Asit Kumar Haldar
- Jamini Roy
- Ramkinkar Baij
- Rabindranath Tagore
- Manishi Dey

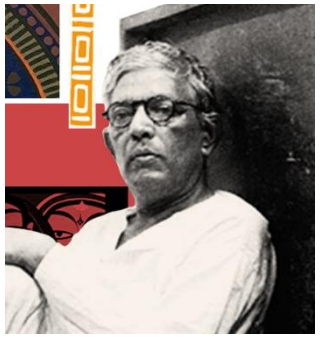


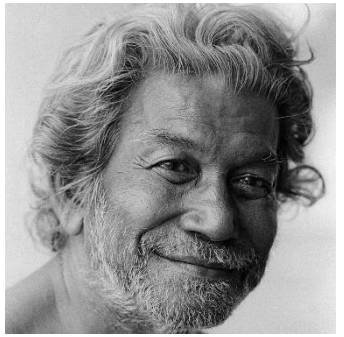










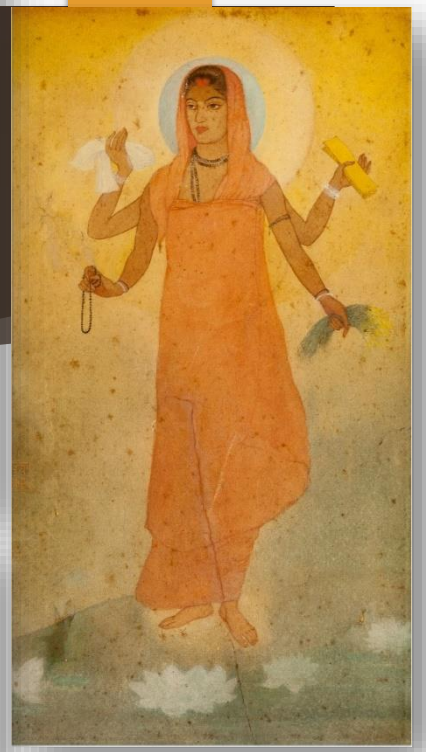




CONTRIBUTION OF INDIAN ARTISTS IN THE NATIONAL FREEDOM STRUGGLE

Indian classical art Rajasthani, Pahari and Mughal miniature painting was faded with the establishment of British rule in 1857. The Art school of Mumbai, Madras, Kolkata Lahore which had been established by British the Western art education used to be given in western style. British artist spreaded propaganda that India had no worthwhile traditional fine arts and Indian was incapable of learning it. They did their best to establish the superiority of Western art and culture over the Indians. At this situation famous painter like Raja Ravi Varma, Abanindra Nath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Asit Kumar Haldar and M.A.R Chugtai came out with their excellent art work to establish the purity of Indian art over lifeless Western painting. The great artist gave a tremendous moral boost to Indian National Movement. Indian Society of Oriental art was established in 1907 by renowned people and art lover of Bengal. Abanindranath painted the picture of 'Bharat Mata' which was praised everywhere as patriotic art. He started teaching Indian classical art. Thus he was able to generate Nationalism in young generation and avoid western culture and western style. Indian sentiments were deeply rooted in the Bengal School. They were struggling in an era of independence of self respect and self determination in socio, economic and polit sphere. This way the Indian artist contributed in the national freedom movement.





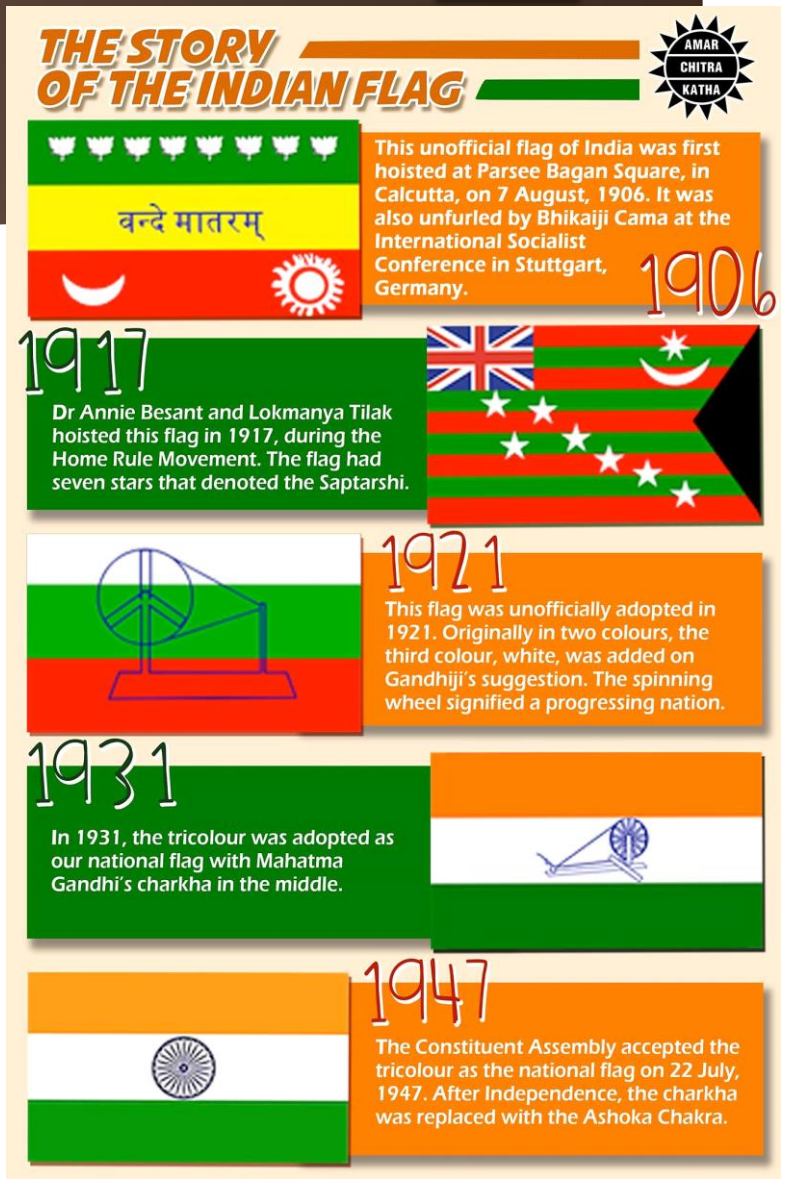






NATIONAL FLAG OF INDIA - EVOLUTION

- It is believed that the first Indian National Flag in India was hoisted on August 7, 1906, in the Parsee Bagan Square (Green Park) in Calcutta.
- In 1917, during the home rule movement, this flag was raised by Lokmanya Tilak and Dr. Annie Besant.
- In 1921, Bezwada session of the All India Congress Committee Pingali Venkaiah designed a flag made up of two colours, red and green signifying the two main communities - Hindus and Muslims. Gandhi recommended the addition of a white stripe to symbolize the remaining communities of India and the spinning wheel to signify the development of the Country.
- In 1931 a resolution was approved accepting a tricolour flag as our National Flag. This flag had three stripes-saffron, white and green with spinning wheel of Mahatma Gandhi in the middle.
- On July 22, 1947, the Constituent Assembly embraced the Indian flag with three trips and Asoka chakra in the middle. Consequently, the tricolour flag of the Congress Party ultimately became the tricolour flag of Independent India.



EVOLUTION OF
THE INDIAN NATIONAL FLAG
FIRST – 1906, MIDDLE – 1921, FINAL STAGE - 1947

- **FIRST STAGE (1906) : The first National Flag of India was hoisted on August 7, 1906** in the Parsee Bagan Square (Green Park), Kolkata. The flag was composed of three equal horizontal stripes of green, yellow and red. The green stripe on the top had eight white lotuses embossed in a row. The word Vande Mataram was inscribed in deep blue on the middle yellow stripe at the bottom had the sun in white on the left and the crescent and a star in white on the right.
- **MIDDLE (1921) : The second important stage after a few minor ones came out in 1921**; Pingali Venkaiah (an Andhra youth) prepared a flag and handed it to Gandhiji. It was in two colours, red and green representing two major communities and a large charkha extending to both the bands as a symbol of progress. Gandhiji apparently was pleased with the Flag and suggested to the youth to introduce a white stripe in the middle and superimpose the charkha in blue on it.
- **FINAL (1947) : On July 22 1947**, Constituent assembly adopted a new Flag as free India's National Flag with saffron at the top, white at the middle and green at the bottom in equal proportions and the chakra in navy blue on white stripe (Chakra which appears on the lion capital of Ashoka at Sarnath as Dharma Chakra). The diameter of the wheel (Chakra) shall be approximate to the width of the white band at the middle. The ratio of the width and length of the Flag shall ordinarily be two breadths by three lengths.

Symbolic significance of its form and colours :



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

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

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

4) **Navy blue** colour of the Ashok Chakra in the centre of the white strip represents the coloUr of the sky and the oceans.

5) **Dharma Chakra** is the wheel of cosmic law, it stands for constant change and dynamism

6) **24 spokes** in the centre represent the 24 precious hours of the whole day.

- The symbolism of the tricolour his endless implications from communal to secular and from historical to modern. Since India has always been a land of diverse religions and faiths it became mandatory to give it a neutral and secular meaning which everyone could associate with.

Paintings to be Discussed

- Tiller of the Soil - Nand Lal Bose
- Journey's End - Abanindranath Tagore
- Rasa-Lila - Kshitindranath Majumdar
- Shiv and Sati - Nandla Bose
- Radhika - M. A. R. Chughtai
- Meghdoot - Ram Gopal Vijaivargiya

Journey's End



- **Painter : Abanindranath Tagore**
- **Medium : Water colour on Paper (Wash Technique)**
- **Period : 1937 A.D.**
- **Collection : National Gallery of Modern Art ,New Delhi**

SUBJECT MATTER : This painting shows a tired and overloaded camel on the edge of death. In fact, the artist is showing a reflection of human life through this painting.

DESCRIPTION-In this painting at has used red, brown and a bit of yellow orange colour giving the effect of sunset with wash technique. In the foreground, the loaded Camel has a kind of cloth tied with rope on his back, showing that the work done by camel is more than its capacity, The combination of colours has been extended to the foreground adding dark tint in blues for the stones where the loaded camel is just about to fall. There is an impression of the desert, giving a very mystical effect to the whole composition. It is a symbolical painting that reaches beyond the explicity pictorial elements of the work. The crouching, gasping camel set against an arid desert in the twilight hours has a relevance to life in general
The theme of painting gives an effect of poetic deliberation, wherein a loaded camel after a long journey in about to die and fall on a stony ground. The dying camel is a master study of the animal and reflects keen observation of the artist. The expression of the camel's face is tremendous.

Shiv and Sati- Nandlal Bose



- **Medium : Water Colour on paper (Wash Technique)**
- **Period : 1908 A.D (Bengal School)**
- **Collection : National Gallery of Modern Art (New Delhi)**

SUBJECT MATTER : The subject matter of the painting depicts Lord Shiva is shown seated and carrying Goddes Sati in his arm and the scene is related to one of the main episodes of Shiva & Sati. Here Sati is dead. This painting is a narrative mythology by modern Indian artist Nand Lal Bose.

DESCRIPTION: This monochromatic painting seems to be inspired from Ajanta paintings. A halo is shown around the head of Shiva for representing him as God. Expressions are very good. The shades of light in white colour have been depicted on foreheads of both figures and also on body of Shiva. The painting has been made in brownish monochromatic effects.
The effects of clouds in the foreground are very impressive. The background is quite attractive.
Sati has sacrificed her life for the sake of her husband Shiva' self respect. Sati's father Daksha who was against their marriage spoke abusive words for Shiva in a great party (yajna). So, Sati ended her life through her intrinsic powers by burning her body through fire. So, in this painting, Shiva is carrying Sati in his arms. He is in a sitting pose. It is one of the best paintings of Nand Lal Bose.

Radhika - M.A.R. Chughtai

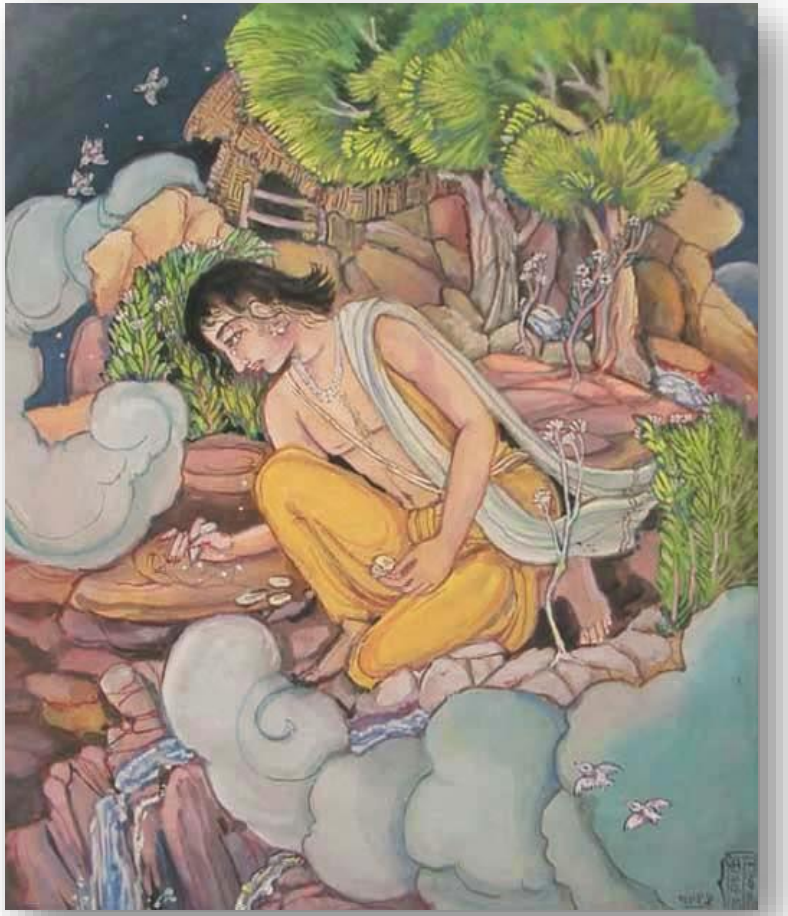
- **Medium** : Water Colour on paper (Wash Technique)
- **Period** : Bengal School
- **Collection** : National Gallery of Modern Art (New Delhi)

SUBJECT MATTER- This painting is based on a typical Indian young girl in standing pose going out of her room. She is feeling shy.



DESCRIPTION : It is a vertical painting of M.A.R. Chughtai (A Pakistani Artist) having the size 52.7 x 73 cm.
This is a painting of typical Indian young girl in standing pose going out of her room. Her head is down. Her left foot is forward and toe in shows nicely while the right foot is shown with three fingers with a dominating little finger of the foot. Her left hand and right hand are holding the lotus flowers, left hand is bent normally near her neck while right hand is folded in a typical pose, and an ant is walking on a lotus flower near her right hand. The ant is with wings, may be an insect. In the background a lamp stand with flame is shown with a burning flame and smoke is going upwards. Near the lamp some insects are shown dead on the ground.

MEGHDOOT-Ram Gopal Vijaivargiya



- **Medium** : Water Colour on paper (Wash Technique)
- **Period** : Bengal School
- **Collection** : Lalit Kala Academy (New Delhi)

SUBJECT MATTER- This painting is based on a lyrical poem '*Meghdoot*' written by Kalidas. *Meghadota* is a story of a *Yaksh*, who lives in the beautiful mythical city of *Alaka* in the Himalayas. He was exiled by his master King *Kubera* for one year for neglecting his duties. The poet is set about eight months after the exile. when the Yash yearning for his beloved convinces a passing cloud to become his messenger (*dúta*)and carry his message to his beloved wife waiting his return.

DESCRIPTION :**Here the handsome Yaksha is sitting on rocks in a forest and writing his feelings. His features are beautifully modelled with youthful softness, He is writing on a leaf with right hand and holding a flower in his left hand. His expressions are somber with tears in his eyes as he longs for his beloved & his home while writing the message. He is wearing a yellow Dhoti and a long stole hangs on his left shoulder. He is also wearing necklace. His hair are long curled upward at the ends.**

In the background there is a thatched hut and thick forest trees in green and yellow colours. The hut, trees and rocky terrain are painted in light and dark brown colour. Two wave like clouds are swirling into the composition from back and front towards the Yaksha. They are painted with sky blue in the starlit dark sky. A few small birds are also flying amongst the clouds. The nature seems to be participating in his yearning to reach his beloved

The colors are soft and light giving this painting a subtle glow. Lines are sharp with tonal variations in brown colour. The story was as important s the technique of the painting. Even in modernism he sticks to his preference for people as subjects of literary works.