

Q1. Describe in your own words one painting from this chapter which suggests that the British were more powerful than Indians. How does the artist depict this?

Ans: One of the history paintings was made by Francis Hayman in 1762. In that picture Lord Clive is meeting Mir Jaffar, Nawab of Murshidabad after the Battle of Plassey. The British defeated Siraj – ud – dullah in the famous Battle of Plassey and installed Mir Jaffar as the Nawab of Murshidabad it showed that how British were more powerful than the Indian local rulers.

In that painting artist has depicted that how Mir Jaffar wanted to please Lord Clive which meant that Mir Jaffer was just a puppet in the hands of British.

Q2. Why did the scroll painters and potters come to Kalighat? Why did they begin to paint new themes?

Ans: Scroll painters and potters left their villages and came to Kalighat in the early 19th century. This was the time when city was expanding as a commercial and administrative centre and appeared as a place of opportunity where people could make a new living.

In earlier times, scroll painters and potters had worked on mythological themes and produced images of gods and goddesses.

But after 1890's, they started to produce paintings on social and political themes.

Q3. Why can we think of Raja Ravi Varma's paintings as national?

Ans: Raja Ravi Varma mastered the western art of oil painting and realistic life study, but painted themes from Indian mythology. He made pictures of characters of Mahabarta and Ramayana. Responding to the huge popularity, he decided to set up a picture production team and printing press in Bombay. There religious paintings were produced on the large scale. Even the poor were in a position to buy these cheap pictures. That is why we can say that paintings of Raja Ravi Varma were national.

Q4. What way did the British history paintings in India reflect the attitudes of imperial conquerors?

Ans. Some of the European painters made pictures which depict the British victory over local rulers e.g painting made by Francis Hayman in 1762 depict the British victory in the Battle of Plassey and the Mir Jaffar, the Nawab of Murshidabad shown as standing nearby Robert Clive. These imperial historical paintings were made to create a public memory of imperial victories. In the same way when Tipu Sultan was defeated in the battle of Sirangapatnam. Then a painting

was made by David Wilkie which showed the body of Tipu Sultan and General Sir David Baird standing nearby. The painting dramatizes the event and glory of British victory.

Q5. Why do you think some artists wanted to develop a national style of art?

Ans. Some artists produced cheap popular prints so that colour prints of religious painting could be bought even by the poor people. Such prints would have had a positive influence on the minds of the people who looked at them. Colour prints of the religious paintings became mass products. The poor people could also buy these cheap prints.

Q6. Why did some artists produce cheap popular prints? What influence would such prints have had on the minds of people who looked at them?

Ans. This has the following reasons:

1. Raja Ravi Varma was one of the first artists who tried to create a style that has both modern and national. He painted themes from Indian mythology. He dramatized on canvas, scene from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

2. In Bengal, a new group of nationalist artist led by Abnindranath Tagore, rejected the art of Ravi. They felt that a genuine Indian style of painting had to draw inspiration from a non – western art tradition and try to capture the spiritual essence of the west.
3. After the 1920, new generation of artists rejected the art of Tagore also. They felt that artists had to explore real life instead of illustration of ancient books and look for inspiration from living folk art and tribal designs rather than ancient art form.