

## A. *Rendezvous with Ray.* class x

It was a unique friendship that developed between a French-Canadian priest and one of the world's greatest film directors, and had a singular impact on Bengali films both academically and practically. It was enroute to India in 1961, at a stopover in New York, that 26-year-old Fr. Gaston Roberge was acquainted with the works of Satyajit Ray through the Apu Trilogy. He found the world of Apu so fascinating that he saw all three films in one sitting; and there began his longstanding love affair with the people of India and Bengali cinema and culture, which led to path-breaking work in those fields. In his latest book, *Satyajit Ray, Essays: 1970-2005*, a compilation of his essays as the name suggests, being published by Manohar Publishers, New Delhi, Roberge provides a scholarly, original analysis of Ray's works, giving an insight into the greatness of Ray both as a person and as an artist.

1. What does the expression in route?

A] In the way    b] on the way    c] the way which is very far

2. The meaning of the word path-breaking

A] Totally new    b] totally old    c] familiar

3. What is Robert's background?

A] He belongs to Canada    b] he belongs to America

c] He is Canadian priest but of French origin

**Answer the following questions**

1. How did Robert feel when he saw the three films?

2. How was Robert attracted towards Ray?

3. One thing led to path-breaking work in the fields. What was that?

\*\*\*“The Apu Trilogy was, in fact, my first portal to West Bengal and its people,” he told Frontline. In his youth , all he knew of Bengal was through Mircea Eliade’s La Nuit Bengalie, some of Tagore’s poems, and a Reader’s Digest article on Mother Teresa. If the harsh image of poverty brought out by the article on the “Saint of the Slums” haunted him, Apu’s world came as a reassurance. “No. Apu, Sarbajaya, even Harihar did not need my help-but how not to love them? I thought it was fortunate that I would soon be among them,” he wrote. Roberge does not endorse the accusation of Ray’s detractors that the master director made his reputation selling India’s poverty to the West. “What struck me most was not the material poverty depicted in the films, but the enormous spiritual poverty of some rich people is much more deplorable than material poverty,” he said. Roberge does not speak with the arrogance of the West. “ I was here on a quest to know the world and in the process know Gaston Roberge myself. I did not come here to convert. In fact, I am the one who got converted,” he said

1. Who is the speaker of the first sentence?

- A] Roberge                      B] Satyajit Ray                      C] Tagore

2. What do you understand by the expression 'Trilogy'?

- A] A set of 3 films with different artistes and characters  
B] a set of two films with different artists or characters  
C] set of three films with the same artistes or characters

3. Whose poverty is mentioned in the passage?

- A] Canada's                      b] France's                      c] India's

4. Who was considered as the 'saint of the slums'?

- A] Tagore    b] Mother Teresa    c] Satyajit Ray

### Answer the following questions

1. How did Robert come to know about India's poverty in his youth?
2. What impact does the Apu trilogy have on the speaker?
3. ".....Apu's world came as a reassurance." What does this mean according to the speaker?

\*\*\*\*But it took him nine years after reaching Calcutta (now Kolkata) and joining St. Xavier's College, to muster up the confidence to meet Ray in person. "Although I wanted to meet him right away, I didn't want to just go and see him like he was a living museum piece. I wanted to prepare myself, get to know his works more, so that when we met, there could be a worthwhile dialogue," he said. When they finally met, it was the beginning of a close friendship that lasted 22 years- until Ray's death in 1992. "It was a very quiet friendship that developed over the years. Manikda [as Ray was affectionately called by his friends] was a shy person and always very discreet about displaying his emotions," said Roberge. Though to outsiders, Ray's massive stature- physical and intellectual- might have made him come across as cold, aloof and even intimidating, he was in reality a very simple and unassuming man with a subtle sense of humour. It was an unspoken arrangement between the two of them to meet on Sundays at 9 a.m. at Ray's residence on Bishop Lefroy Road, Kolkata. Ray would invite Roberge over for private screenings of his latest films and welcomed comments on them. But this happened only after the friendship had cemented, for in the early days of their dialogue Ray's shyness prevented him from talking about his own films.



1.'When they finally met.....' which year did they probably meet?

A]In 1970                      b]in 1974                      c]1973

2'.But it took him 9 years.....' what does 'it' refer to?

A] It refers to Roberge's Arrival to India b]it refers to Roberge's meeting with Ray

C] it refers to Roberge meeting with Ray

3..... is an idiom.

A] muster up confidence      b] close friendship      c] right away

4.Who is the 'living Museum piece' referred to here ?

A] Apu                      b]Ray                      c]Thakur

Answer the following questions

1.Why did Robert take 9 years to meet RAY? what would you do if you were in his place?

2. Why did the writer want to know Ray's works more?

3. Do you think there was a worthwhile dialogue? how can you say?

\*\*\*"He was even shy of receiving compliments," said Roberge. To Roberge, the greatest mark of Ray's appreciation for him was that he often addressed the French-speaking priest in Bengali, "in spite of my lack of elegance in that language, and the fact that Ray knew both English and Bengali so well." "Ray's screenplay manuscripts were an art by themselves," Roberge says, "handwritten in Bengali, with notes in English for his set-designer, with sketches here and there, and occasional staff notation of fragments of music". One Sunday morning, Roberge found Ray in a disturbed mood. A few well-known personalities of the city had visited him earlier to go through some of his manuscripts. After they left Ray found the Charulatha screenplay missing. Ray was almost sure who the culprit was. "I asked him whether

he was planning to take any action, and he said no, and explained to me that he did not want to hurt the reputation of the person. I was absolutely stunned by his humane concern," said Roberge

1. Who disturbed the person?

- A] Roberge                                      b] some directors                                      c] some visitor

2. Ray was a ..... person

- A] mature                                      b] immature                                      c] gullible

3. The context discusses certain artistic pieces. They are.....

- A] asset papers                                      b] screenplay films                                      c] screen play manuscripts

4. What kind of text is this passage?

- A] report                                      b] article                                      c] narrative

\*Answer the following questions

1. Why was the person in a disturbed mood ?

2. Who made the above observation?

3. 'I was absolutely stunned by his humane concern'. why did Roberge say like that?