



प्रीती नांवरूप धरिती । दीन नरास्तव दीन होउनी ह्या भुवनीं येती ।
हिच्यासम रवि जीच्या वरती । तीच अंगुली मुखीं घालुनी लघु गोष्टीं रमती ॥

A Symbol of Motherhood
- A. D. Thomas

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THE USE AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT
OF AN
INDIGENOUS INDIAN CHRISTIAN PICTORIAL ART

by

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A.B., Wheaton College

A THESIS

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This Thesis is Dedicated to

Raguel Chaudhari,

the little Indian lad, whose talent in
drawing was one of the first
incentives to making
the study.

GIFT OF Author

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JAN. 20, 1944

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. The Statement of the Problem

"I know not why the Poet and the Musician should alone render tribute to the Redeemer. I believe that the tribute of the Painter is as legitimate in itself, and perhaps as acceptable to the Master, as are the crotchets and quavers, the iambs and the trochaics we call Hymns of the Church."¹ This statement of Sir Wyke Bayliss' suggests the problem to be considered in this thesis.

It is understood, to some extent at least, why the Poet and Musician in India have alone been rendering tribute to the Redeemer while the Artist has been neglected and even repressed. Because of the misuse of art which results in the idolatry so rampant in heathen religions on every hand there is fear of encouraging any development of art in Christianity lest, failing to remain subservient to Christ, it should rise up and become a stumbling block instead.

The danger is real, and must be faced. But it is not such as to warrant the utter disuse of art or the discouragement of its development. For "art is still a

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1. Quoted by J. R. Aitken: The Christ of the Men of Art, p. xiv

potent handmaid to faith",¹ and Christianity has need of that particular enrichment which the Artist can provide as well as the Poet and Musician.

That this art should be an indigenous art of India is prima facie condition when one considers the vast difference in style and expression found in the art of the West and the art of the East.

Thus it is the purpose of this work to consider the importance of the use of art in the Christian Church in India, and the need for a further development of an indigenous Christian art there.

B. The Limitation of the Field

It is evident at once that the whole field of art is far too vast to consider in one such work as this. Thus pictorial art has been chosen as the specific field in which to work. Often it is found that general statements regarding art in India may be true of the other arts as well, but for this work all such refer specifically to pictorial art, even though the term "art" may be used alone without the qualifying adjective "pictorial".

Another limitation is geographic. Some consider-

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1. Bailey, Albert E.: The Use of Art in Religious Education, p. 21

ations of East Indian art have included such works as Ceylonese, Burmese, and other related arts. But this thesis is concerned only with that art which is found within the country of India proper today.

C. The Importance of the Problem

Much has already been written about the teaching value of pictures especially in the field of religion.

Bailey points out that:

"Art is a most admirable instrument for teaching religious truth. It is an instrument that has been used in the past by the church for the purpose of helping people to arrive at definite beliefs. It is not used so today, but it should be restored to its teaching function."¹

True, art has been used, and misused by the religions of India in the past, but because it has been misused by some is no valid reason why, when it is such a valuable aid in the expression of spiritual truths, it should not be properly used in Christianity.

D. The Method of Procedure

The subject is approached first by way of a survey of Indian art of the past, noting particularly the use which has been made of it by religion. Any adequate

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1. Bailey, op. cit., p. 81

treatment of the problem should include a study of the nature of art, the problems which arise in regard to its use in India, and the specific need of an indigenous art. A chapter is given to each of these. The concluding chapter suggests suitable ways of using this art and further developing it.

E. The Sources of Data

It is the aim of the writer to consider all the available material which has been written definitely on this subject, as well as contributions from the related fields. Since a rather thorough survey has shown the scarcity of specific material on this subject, it has been necessary to gather data from various works such as histories of Indian art, art in general, Christian Education, and the indigenization of the Indian Church. It is hoped that some supplementary material in the way of pictures and suggestions may be obtained from leaders in India today, but the uncertainty of the post in these days practically precludes such a probability.

CHAPTER II
INDIAN PICTORIAL ART
IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE





ART MAP OF INDIA

THE UNIVERSITY PRINTS
BOSTON

CHAPTER II

INDIAN PICTORIAL ART IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

A. Introduction

"No one can evaluate properly that which he possesses unless he sees it in historical perspective."¹ Such a statement is particularly applicable to a study of the art which forms such an integral part in the unusually long and continuous development of India's civilization, for "the past in India is never entirely past"², and one cannot come to a full understanding of the present day art and what may be expected of it unless he is conscious of the past which inevitably enters so largely into it.

There is no longer any question of the existence of an Indian pictorial art of the past. It seems incredible that a highly developed civilization, spreading over thousands of years and over a vast area like India, which has produced a splendid literature and expressed lofty ideals in building materials, should have lacked the capacity, or found no occasion, for giving them expression in sculpture and painting. Yet as recently as thirty years ago art critics of the West thought just that, and considered India

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1. Quoted by Wilde, H.: Foundation of Modern Education, p.3
2. Hawkrige, Emma: Indian Gods and Kings, p. xiv

definitely deficient in pictorial art, the few examples which did exist being designated as Persian or even Chinese. For the majority Indian art was only a matter of archeological or academic interest.

Such an attitude is not without some explanation. There is the fact of India's comparative isolation from the rest of the world for nearly three thousand years, due to barriers of nature and language. The few visitors who did reach India during these centuries, such as Alexander the Great, Marco Polo, and Vasco Da Gamma, came either as conquerors or merchants looking for material gain, completely ignoring culture. Although her art has influenced, and been influenced by, the art of other oriental countries, her whole culture has evolved independently and her pictorial art is definitely her own. This very fact leads on to the real reason for the low evaluation of Indian art which existed so long in the minds of European art critics. Indian art has been misunderstood, and thus, greatly underrated. A reviewer of Dr. Geomaraswamy's "History of Indian Art" has said,

"Seldom has the art and culture of any country been so profoundly misunderstood as that of India. Before India regained her sense of national self-consciousness, her history, her philosophy, her religion, and her art had been sought to be explained and interpreted by foreigners. That India had an art of its own, autochthonous and idiosyncratic, was not even recognized until a few years ago. Then came the revelation that Indian art was essentially Indian, and had its own ideas, its own characteristics and its own history.

Searching and penetrating enquiries have been directed by scholars and connoisseurs of art - and with the help of the Archeological Department within a comparatively short time - the map of Indian Art has come to be recovered, shining and glowing with many pictures."¹

Someone has said, "You cannot know a people's mind if you do not understand their art". And certainly the reverse is as true. Indian art cannot be understood or judged aright if there is no knowledge of the life and thought out of which it was developed. It was Su Shih, the Chinese art critic of the eleventh century, who gave us the famous dictum:

"To judge a painting by the standard of bodily likeness is as naive as the thinking of the child."²

Yet that seems to have been the criterion used in the judging of Indian art until the recent awakening to its true meaning. Even Ruskin charged Indian art with the inability to represent an actual fact.

As in almost every aspect of the two civilizations no true comparisons can be instituted between the art of the Orient and that of the Occident. Each starts from a different origin, aims at a different object, and arrives at a different end. "The oriental is a philosopher first and an artist afterwards; the Westerner is an

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1. Plotinus: Review of A. K. Coomaraswamy's "History of Indian Art", Rupam, July, 1927, p. 74
2. Hu Shih: A Historian Looks at Chinese Painting, Asia, May, 1941, p. 218

artist first and a philosopher afterwards."¹ To regard all art from the Western point of view only and to condemn it unless it conforms to the academic canons of the West is certainly unfair to Eastern art.

Indian art must be judged according to its own standards and purposes. What these purposes are has been summarized by Dr. J. H. Cousins:

"In the consciousness of India, the beauty which art manifests is not solely a product of human effort but is humanity's reaction to a quality of Universal Being. In the effort to incarnate the cosmic beauty of which it is a sharer, humanity tastes the joy of expanded consciousness and spiritual creation. This experience imbues the works of the artists and lifts them from being merely decorative objects into being instruments of aid in the better fulfilment of one's citizenship through the cultivation of one's higher sensibilities and in the establishment of these higher sensibilities on the throne of one's personal life, which is the Indian idea of liberation. In writing thus I am paraphrasing ancient authority that, because it speaks essential truth is eternally contemporaneous. I am also speaking the experience of many artists in Europe and America who have felt the ascensive pull of this art and recognized in it a spiritual achievement which should also be theirs and will be theirs when the present revolt against formalism and objectivity in western art has attained intelligence - that is to say, the exalted spiritual conception of art which is India's gift to the world."

Thus, it is true that "if we strive for full understanding we have to probe deep into the immense realm of Indian thought. It is only to the one who knows that

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1. Brown, Percy: Indian Painting, p. 6
2. Cousins, J. H.: The Art Revival in India, Asia, July, 1929, p. 590

Indian art reveals its highest beauty."¹ For the purpose of Indian painting is to set forth that which will appeal to the mind rather than that which will call forth adoration.

It is with gratitude then that the world can view today a new interest in and appreciation of Indian art, an art which has existed from time immemorial, and which has rich contributions to make to the world civilization just as Western art has.

Indian painting on the whole may be broadly divided into three main religious divisions - Buddhist, Hindu, and Mogul - but these terms are religious rather than artistic and suggest the subjects the artist painted rather than the place or method of his working.

B. Pre-Buddhist Art

The beginnings of Indian painting are lost in pre-historic antiquity. Evidences of its early form appear in crudely drawn scenes on the walls of natural caves in various sections of the country, and in examples of later Stone Age paintings found in excavations in the Vindhya Hills. Many of these are hunting scenes, depicting human beings and animals, and are accompanied by what appear to be hieroglyphics.

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1. Sen, Bireswar: Mannerism and Tradition, Roopa-Lekha, July, 1939, p. 35

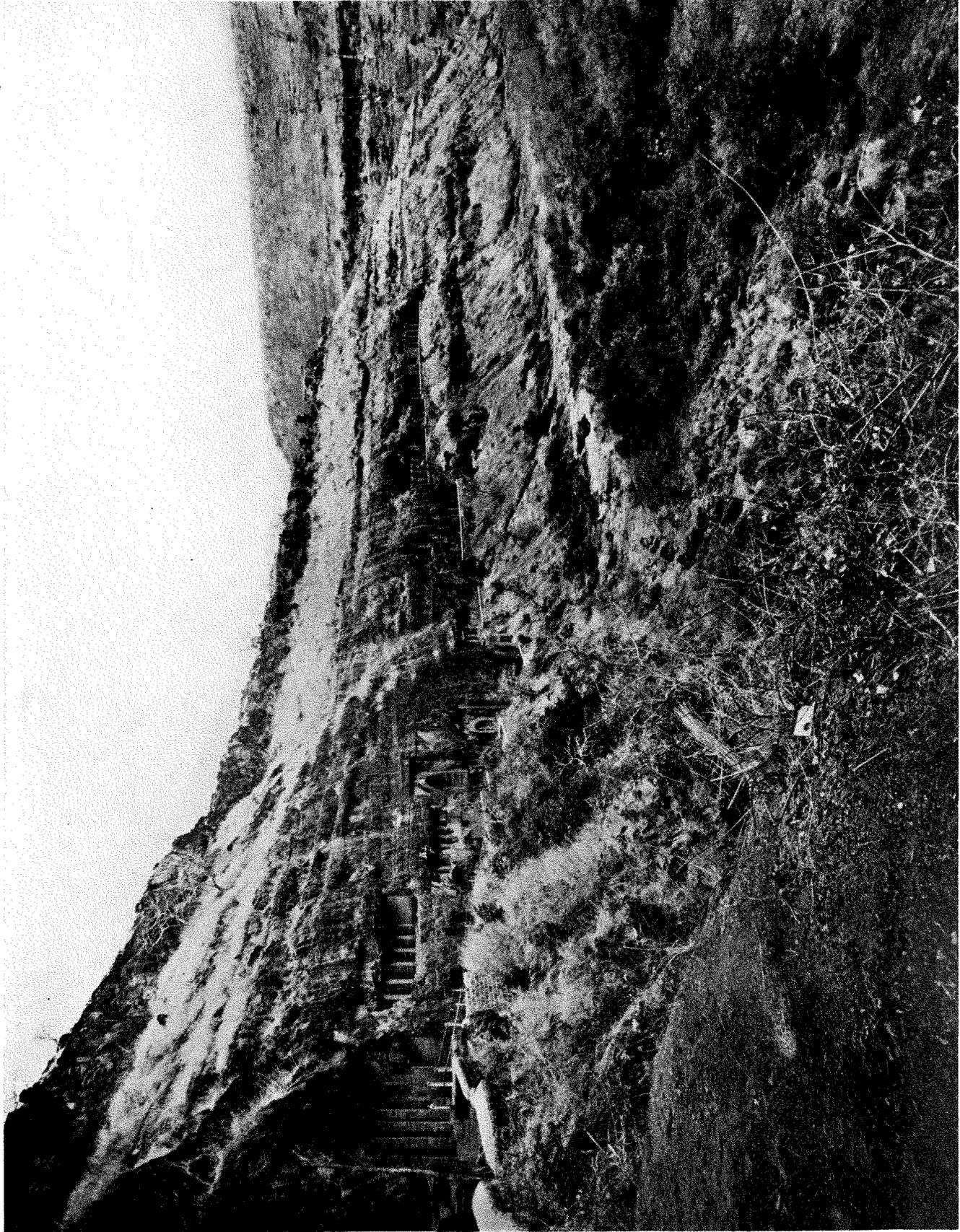


PLATE III

View of the Ajanta valley

Literary references also show that painting had been practiced both as a secular and a religious art from time immemorial. For example, a Buddhist work dating from the third or fourth century before the Christian era makes several references to the pleasure houses of King Pasenada, containing picture-halls, which were adorned with painted figures and decorative patterns. That this was a well developed art is evidenced by clearly defined basic principles and laws concerning proportion, perspective, anatomy and color. There is also indication that such art was used to educate the people.

C. Buddhist Art

But the earliest pictorial art which has come down to us today is that of the period beginning a couple of centuries before Christ and continuing down to 700 A. D., commonly known as Buddhist art. This has been called the classical period in the history of Indian painting. It was a golden age for India. Buddhism was the religion of the country. By it culture was stimulated; and centers of learning flourished in all parts, but in no direction was the influence of the new doctrine more pronounced than in the sphere of art. History contains numerous instances which show the power of religion in the moulding of man's aesthetic productions, but probably none of them are more striking than the effect of Buddhism on the art of the East.



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CHHADANTA JĀTAKA (Drawing After Fresco)
Cave X, Ajantā

**THE UNIVERSITY PRINTS
BOSTON**

II CENTURY B. C.

Tara Nath, the seventeenth century historian, has recorded for us the fact that wherever Buddhism prevailed skilful religious artists were found, and in India this undoubtedly applies to the art of painting. Much has been destroyed through the intervening ages, but enough survives of the work of the artist-priests of the Buddhist period to indicate that this craftsman was the founder of a great school of painting.

An event of capital importance for the history of Indian civilization took place in the conversion of the great emperor Asoka to Buddhism in the third century B. C. Being master of almost the whole of India, he soon ordered the construction of some of the earliest specimens of the art which have come down to us. These were used as a sort of religious propaganda to teach the Buddhist doctrines to his people.

Buddhism itself is essentially graphic - the early history of the cult lends itself to illustration by the brush more than the pen, and the original traditions were largely pictorial. It is true that in the early stages of the religion the artists were forbidden to portray the actual figure of the Buddha but this was overcome by representing his person with a certain range of symbols. The young elephant represented the conception; Maya seated on the lotus and surrounded by young elephants pouring water



PLATE X

Bodhisattva

(No. 30)

over her was used to represent the nativity; and again a single lotus symbolized this scene; the riderless horse represented the Great Departure, and the wheel of the law was for the preaching of Buddha. Grousset remarks:

"Indeed, nothing could be more remarkable than the ease with which the old masters managed to relate the life of Buddha without ever representing him, thanks to these conventions which they adopted."¹

Eventually, however, symbolism gave way to an actual portrayal of the person of the Buddha himself, and in all the later periods he is found freely depicted in all the various phases of his experience.

As the demand for religious information increased, the Buddhist missionaries used art as a means of teaching their creed to all mankind. They even carried the doctrine of their Great Teacher into distant countries, and used art as their chief instrument of teaching. The language of art was the natural means of communication between nations of different tongues aspiring after the same ideal when the usual means of intercourse was impracticable. Pictorially illuminated scrolls would be a portable agency for carrying the gospel of Gautama to those as yet unreached, and these were probably largely used by the priests on their long journeys.

Buddhist art of this period is represented

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1. Grousset, Rene: The Civilization of India, p. 98



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PALACE SCENE
Cave 1, Ajantā

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BOSTON

GUPTA (OR LATER)
320—600 A. D.

particularly in the remarkable frescoes in the rock-cut temples of Ajanta, situated about four miles south-west of the small village of Fardapur, in the dominions of the Nizam of Hyderabad, some thirty-five miles from the nearest railway station on the Great Indian Peninsular Railway. There in a lonely, wild ravine in the heart of the jungle, excavated in the face of an almost perpendicular scarp of rock, is a series of twenty-nine caves. The term "cave" is a misnomer for they are actually rooms which have been cut out of the solid rock, but the name is a commonly accepted one for ancient excavated shrines in India.

Brown describes them thus:

"The Buddhist 'caves' are all imitations of structural buildings in an advanced stage of development, some of the rock-cut halls at Ajanta being very imposing. These excavations sweep round in a curve of fully a semi-circle, and are some one-hundred feet above the small stream which runs at the bottom of the glen. The situation is a romantic one, as are the majority of Buddhist shrines in India, for an artistic appreciation of natural scenery is particularly noticeable in Buddhist painting, and that the priests as a body were alive to the inspiring influences of a beautiful environment is evident in their invariable selection of picturesque sites."¹

These cave temples are full of interest with regard to both sculpture and architecture, but special interest of this work is in the painted frescoes which adorn the walls of a number of the twenty-nine excavations. Unfortunately the ravages of time have wrought such havoc

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1. Brown, Percy, op. cit., p. 26



PLATE V

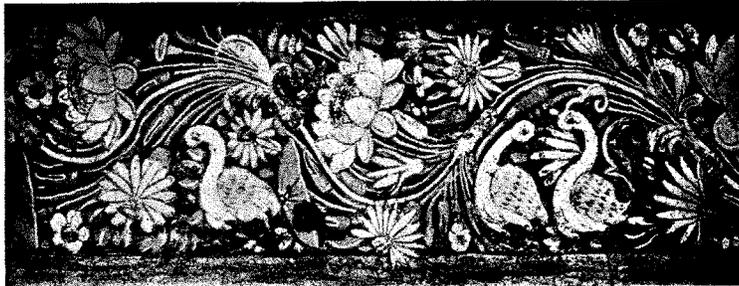
Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara (Padmapani)

(No. 4)

that they are found in only six of the caves today; nearly all, however, bore signs at one time of having been originally decorated in this manner. The extent of the surface covered with the painting is remarkable. It is evident that in each of the six caves where painting remains today the whole of the walls and also the pillars and ceilings have been painted. And the rooms are not small - some of these halls measure over sixty feet square.

Having seen the vestiges of beauty which remain after the centuries of neglect and its accompanying decay one finds the imagination probing back into the silent past, wondering at the splendor which must have been there when the temples were inhabited. Extraordinarily beautiful as they must have been, however, the object of the paintings was not to provide entertainment for, or to gratify the aesthetic tastes of, the artist. The walls were rather "picture-books" used for instructing the pilgrims and novices of the monastery in the events of the Buddha's many existences. The artist was doubtless a priest, or a group of priests, aiming to picture the creed of the Buddha and to illustrate by pictorial parables the sentiments it aroused.

"His purpose was the same as that of the artist who drew the *Biblia Pauperum* of the later Middle Ages - the Bible for poor preachers - suggesting and awakening religious thought by the simple means of drawing and painting



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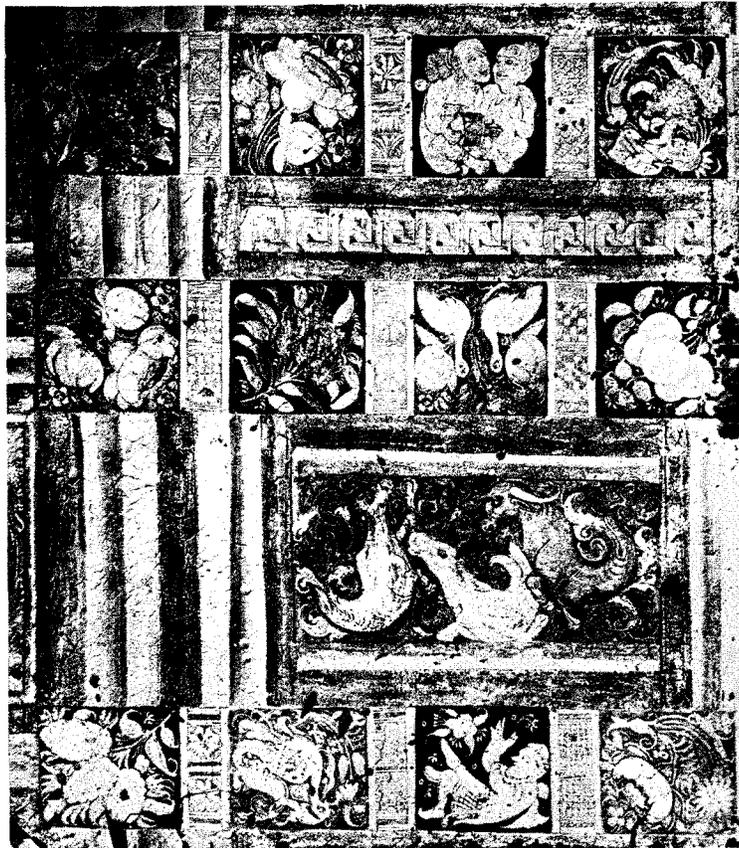


Photo. Johnston & Hoffman

DETAILS OF CEILING
Cave 1, Ajantā

THE UNIVERSITY PRINTS
BOSTON

GUPTA (OR LATER)
320—600 A. D.

the event to be recorded or the sentiment to be inculcated."¹

And he was no mean artist. Taken as a whole, the paintings, which authorities agree are of the oldest period represented here, demonstrate that the art even at this early age had reached an advanced state of development, exhibiting perfected execution and draftsmanship. These are no first attempts of individuals groping in the darkness of inexperience but are rather finished works of a school of artists trained in a high art, manifesting great and ancient traditions. This bears out an earlier reference to the supposition that painting was a fully developed art in India even in pre-Buddhist days. The art of Ajanta is one which has already reached maturity and commands attention by its bold style and singularly vigorous drawing. The scenes are generally well-balanced, the figures skillfully drawn; and the treatment of the hands already reveals that mystic feeling which is the secret of the masters of Ajanta. Mr. John Griffiths records his impressions of them thus:

"The artists who painted them were giants in execution. Even on the vertical sides of the walls some of the lines which were drawn by one sweep of the brush struck me as being very wonderful; but when I saw long delicate curves drawn without faltering, with equal precision, upon the horizontal surface of a ceiling, where the difficulty of execution is increased a thousand-fold, it appeared to me nothing less than miraculous. One of

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1. Paintings and Drawings of Persia and India exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts: Introduction, 1923,24, p. viii



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THE GREAT BODHISATTVA
Cave 1, Ajantā

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GUPTA (OR LATER)
320—600 A. D.

the students, when hoisted up on the scaffolding, tracing his first panel on the ceiling, naturally remarked that some of the work looked like child's work, little thinking that what seemed to him, up there, rough and meaningless, had been laid on with a cunning hand, so that when seen at its right distance every touch fell into its proper place."¹

Mr. Griffiths goes on to say:

"For the purposes of art education, no better examples could be placed before an Indian art student. The art lives. Faces question and answer, laugh and weep, fondle and flatter; limbs move with freedom and grace; flowers bloom, birds soar, and the beasts spring, fight, or patiently bear burdens."²

Just what their origin was and what the circumstances were prevailing during the execution of these great monuments is not known. There are minor indications that Ajanta was a place of almost absolute seclusion where this community of artist priests produced their paintings oblivious of the political and social conditions which were continually changing in the countryside about them. But this is hardly consistent with the evident knowledge of a larger and fuller life revealed in their painting. Here the king is seen surrounded by all the pageantry and splendor of his court. "The scenes throb with vitality and action, and, although fundamentally religious, they reveal an interest in secularism which is distinctly marked."³

In spite of the comparatively limited amount of

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1. Quoted by Blacker, J. F.: The A B C of Indian Art, p.250
2. Ibid.
3. Brown, op. cit., p. 30



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GREAT BODHISATTVA: DETAIL

Cave 1, Ajantā

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**GUPTA (OR LATER)
320—600 A. D.**

painting which remains in the caves there are still representations of a number of distinct groups, showing the various styles or periods which evolved throughout the eight or nine centuries of their development.

Except for some scenes depicting contemporary historical events, the subjects throughout are practically all Buddhist, and are all associated with the Jatakas which were a collection of stories recording the previous incarnations of the Buddha, the main themes used by Buddhist artists all over the East, whether in color or stone. The earliest period, as previously mentioned, is characterized by a simple, bold style of painting emphasized by a spirited and vigorous outline.

The second period represented at Ajanta was not reached until two or three centuries after the first. The pictures express a difference in style, a difference partially effected by the influence of Greek culture imposed upon the country in the intervening years since the first period. They were probably executed during Samudragupta's vigorous administration when stimulus was given to all forms of art.

"Though these works betray a certain conventionalism, the drawing of the figures shows a noble simplicity, a dignity and breadth of attitude, which mark a progress upon the precious series."¹

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1. Grousset, op. cit., p. 147

The third period, representing the sixth century, is characterized by a narrative style, and has been described as "literally a picture-gallery illustrating some of the most engrossing episodes in the birth, life and death of the Buddha. The conceptions of this group denote less idealism, and there is a decided feeling from the dramatic. They seem to have been selected with the object of attracting the observer by means of their direct humanitarianism."¹

That the last group was decorated between 600 and 650 A. D. has been rather accurately determined by the historical event which is illustrated. Among this group is found perhaps the most famous of all the frescoes at Ajanta. The very latest do betray, however, the beginning of a decline of workmanship, showing a lack of unity which is in contrast with the skilful composition of the previous groups.

Such are the paintings of the remarkable cave-temples at Ajanta - strange, wild art to the Westerner who is unaccustomed to Oriental thought and its expression, but filled with meaning for those who understand it. Naturalism there is, but a naturalism which remains passionately mystical. The pictures are full of idyllic scenes of Indian life and flowering jungles, but these only form a setting which will throw the figures of the bodhi-sattvas² into greater relief. And the figures thus

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1. Grousset, op. cit., p. 150

2. One who has entered on the path of Buddhahood and will, generally in a future incarnation, become a Buddha.



ENGRAVED BY HARVARD ENGRAVING COMPANY, BOSTON

BODHISATVA PADMAPANI
(AVALOKITESVARA)

Ajanta — Fifth Century

depicted are amazing for the inner life and emotion which they portray. Grousset in describing these figures says:

"At Ajanta these supernatural apparitions are among the most moving visions that have ever haunted the dreams of man. We need only recall that supreme marvel in cave one, the great picture of a bodhisattva . . . dressed in transparent gauze, wearing on his head a high head-dress on which lotus and jasmine flowers blossom in chased gold, and holding a blue lotus-flower in his right hand with an exquisite gesture: a figure worthy of a place in the art of the world by the side of the sublimest incarnations of the Sistine Chapel, or of such drawings as that of Christ for the 'Last Supper', in which Leonardo da Vinci has expressed the most intense emotions of the soul."¹

A last center of Buddhist painting is that of the grottoes of Bagh, in the state of Gwalior, two hundred and thirty-five miles to the north of Ajanta. They probably date from the close of the seventh century, and so are not far removed in date from the latest Ajanta paintings. In style they show a strong resemblance to these, but are definitely distinguished by the fact that they are no longer exclusively Buddhist, rather appearing in great part to be entirely profane. Such scenes as processions of horsemen and state elephants here are treated for their own sake, and a whole section of the frescoes is given over to representations of scenes from musical dramas accompanied by dances. "This purely mundane influence proclaims the fact that, at the moment when the frescoes of Bagh were painted, Buddhism was on the way towards vanishing

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1. Grousset, op. cit., p. 159

from India. The hour of Hinduism had arrived."¹

D. Hindu Art

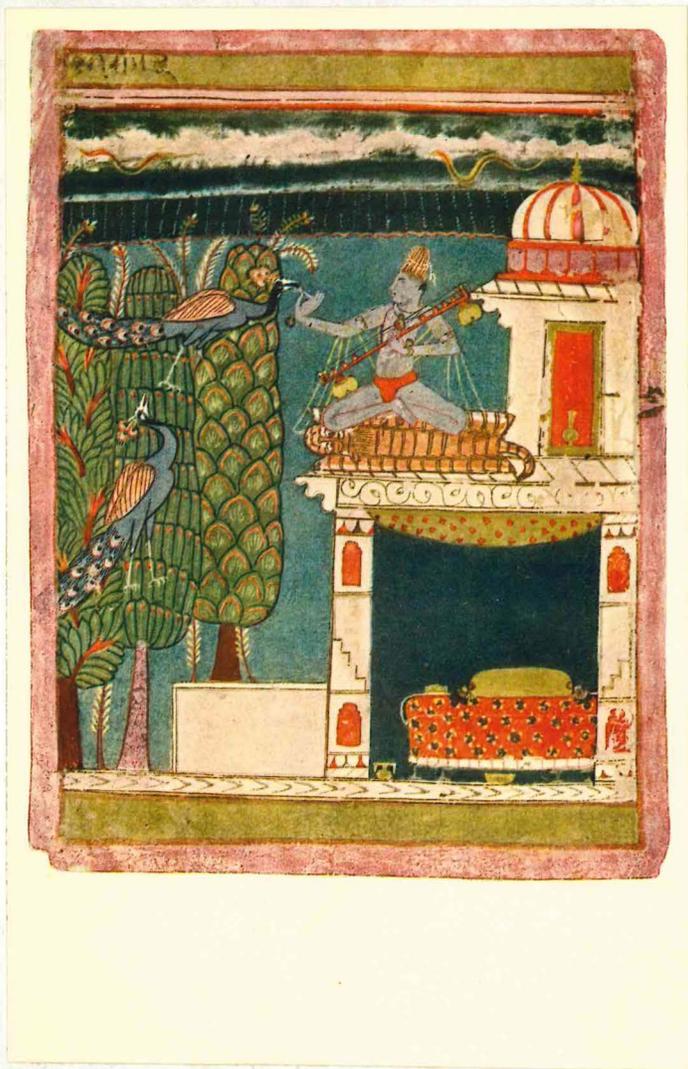
A school of painting such as the Buddhist, developed during the early centuries of the Christian era, would naturally promise still further and greater developments in the succeeding centuries of the country's history. But such was not the case. At least the development did not follow the course one would expect it to. It would seem from the complete lack of any authentic work of the artist's brush of the period between that of the Ajanta Cave frescoes and the Moghul revival, except for a few Jain book illustrations, that the art of painting had come to a complete standstill.

"From the time that the last painter at Ajanta threw down his brush in A. D. 650, until we come into contact with the art again as it was revived in the reign of the Mogul Emperor, Akbar, in the latter half of the sixteenth century, the story of painting in India remains to all intents and purposes, a blank."²

There are many contributing factors to such a blank however. Political conditions were continually unsettled during this period which has been sometimes referred to as the "Dark Ages" of Indian history. The field of painting is not the only one left unrepresented during this time. In regard to the centuries between A. D. 800

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1. Grousset, op. cit., p. 160
2. Brown, op. cit., p. 38



Peacocks Attracted by the Sound of the Vina
Rajput, Late 16th Century

and 1200 it has been said that India has "records of no great kings, no great dynasties, no great empires. No notable works of art or architecture have come down to us. No great name belonging to science or literature has been handed down. A thick and impenetrable darkness hangs over these centuries in Northern India."¹ And during the latter part of the period, the country was entirely upset by the Mohammedan invasion.

Spiritually, too, India was undergoing transformation during this long period. On one hand we have the decline of Buddhism, and the steady rise of Hinduism in its new and revived form; on the other was the introduction and growth of Mohammedanism. It is not strange then that there was no marked movement in the field of art during the long, turbulent Medieval period of Indian history. And along with this is the possibility that such examples as may have existed then may well have perished from climatic causes, or been destroyed by the fanatical followers of other sects.

And so, remembering the political, spiritual, and climatic conditions of the country, the absence of specimens of this period by no means proves that art was dead.

"Dead things are not capable of evolution and at the beginning of the Revival Mogul artists found disciples but not mere copyists in their Indian colleges."²

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1. Brown, op. cit., p. 38
2. Bihar and Orissa Research Social Journal, Vol. 12, 1926, p. 186

How this main stream of art was continued during these dark ages we do not know. But that it was somehow is certain. Quite possibly that natural conservatism, which is one of the characteristics of the Indian people, was a means of protecting it in certain localities. At least there are proofs that the traditions of Indian painting were maintained during these long years of political and religious reconstruction, and we find the Hindu school of painting which emerged out of the darkness of the Middle Ages under the rule of the Moguls is essentially Hindu in expression, and in many aspects demonstrates that it is the indigenous art of India, a direct descendant of the classic frescoes of Ajanta.

As Buddhist art found its subject material in the stories regarding the events in the life of Buddha, so Hindu art "featured the Hindu religion, its creeds and dramas, and the history, tradition, and literature of the Hindus, and especially their folk-lore, fables, and the customs of the common people."¹ Its scenes are taken almost exclusively from the two great Indian epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Dr. Gangoly has spoken of it as "the pictorial analogue to the great body of Hindu literature, inspired by the renaissance of the Puranic Hindu religion."²

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1. Paintings and Drawings of Persia and India, op. cit., p. viii
2. Venkalachalam, G.: Mirror of Indian Art, p. 101

In purpose also there is a similarity to the Buddhist art, for while the Rajput school (a more common name given to that art which was essentially Hindu) used even more commonly subjects of nature and everyday life, its chief aim was to interpret the abstract in terms of pictorial representations. Human passions, nature's moods, musical melodies - all these were treated in a fascinating and original manner. It is a "peculiar vision in which the spiritual and humanistic outlook are skilfully fused".¹

"It is an art full of fervent piety, inspired by a religious exaltation . . . instinct with tenderness, whose material expression has, however, never been divorced from an eroticism at once sophisticated and innocent."²

But whereas Buddhist art seemed to be directed more toward the education of the ascetic and pilgrim, Hindu art had this one remarkable feature - it was brought home to the common people and made to enter into their lives. It produced small pictures for personal or household use. It has been said that it became to classic art what the vernacular is to Sanskrit.³ It was shared both in the courts and by the peasantry. It furnishes one of the few instances in which art has become vital to the great mass of the community.

Krishna in all his varied characters in every act

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1. Vankalachalam, op. cit., p. 109

2. Grousset, op. cit., p. 394

3. Bonaviez, Henrietta: Lecture on Religious Art in India

and deed is the central figure in much of the Rajput art and some of the best work of the school gathers around the story of this versatile deity. His humaneness especially appealed to the common people. His most common role was that of the divine cowherd in which he was represented as the "friend who speaks to the heart, the divine consoler whose human existence, as we may remember, was spent amid the sports and occupations of village life, in a joyous, tender pastoral setting."¹ The events depicted from his life reflect the devotion of the daily life, Krishna being the beloved incarnation of God among men, and the "gopis" (milkmaids) being souls in quest of God and surrendering their all to him.

In order to present the innumerable graphic aspects of this religion to the people in a portable and popular manner, Rajput art developed into a miniature art but retained at the same time its mural style. In mood it was gentle and lyrical with rhythm running throughout the whole. Lawrence Binyon has beautifully described it in this manner:

"This Rajput art has all the charm of ballad poetry: freshness, spontaneous sweetness, and an entire freedom from academic restraints and ambitions."²

He goes on to state the fact that the corresponding weakness

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1. Grousset, op. cit., p. 394
2. Binyon, Lawrence: Art with the Charm of Ballad, Illustrated London News, September 18, 1928, p. 368

of repetition and prettiness is frequently found, but adds:

"In certain qualities of line-drawing this art will bear comparison with any art in the world... . It is always spontaneous, and animated, and gives often a pleasure like that we have in hearing a clear voice singing in the open air."¹

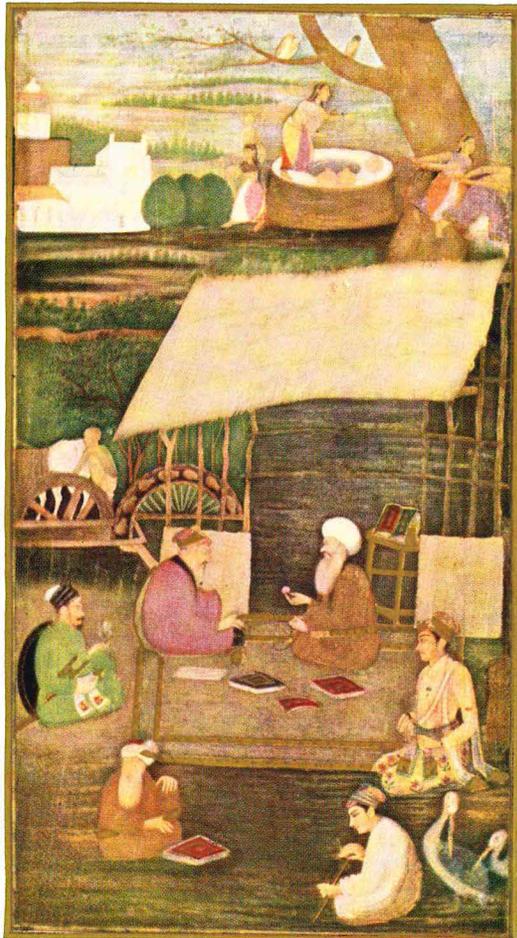
The Rajput period extended in time from the middle of the sixteenth century to the close of the nineteenth. During this time various schools arose within the one greater school. Gradually, however, toward the end of the period the work began to show signs of decline; there was a harder and less sympathetic treatment which took the place of the soft refined quality which was characteristic of the earlier work. Intercourse with the outer world brought to the younger generation of the artistic families an urge to seek their fortunes in other fields, and their hereditary manual skill soon found them remunerative work in the drawing offices of Government departments.

E. Mogul Art

Between the eleventh and eighteenth centuries India was gradually conquered by the Mohammedans who had come down from eastern Iran. By the early years of the thirteenth century a powerful sultanate at Delhi had been founded. This period of the sultanate of Delhi and of the local kingdoms which succeeded it exerted a profound in-

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1. Binyon, op. cit.



C 127. The Emperor Shāh Jahān visiting a Teacher.
Indian. Mogul School. 17th Cent.

British Museum. Printed by Waterlow & Sons Limited, London.

fluence over Indian art. In fact, Islam created a new art in India. And this new art which emerged contemporaneously with the Rajput art was known as Mogul art.

But in spite of its name and origin being so distinctly Iranian, Mogul painting itself was not by any means entirely separate from other indigenous art of the country.

Venkatachalam even says of it:

"Mogul art, so called, was not an exotic plant transported into India from elsewhere but an indigenous art developed and enriched by the Persian culture of the Mogul court."¹

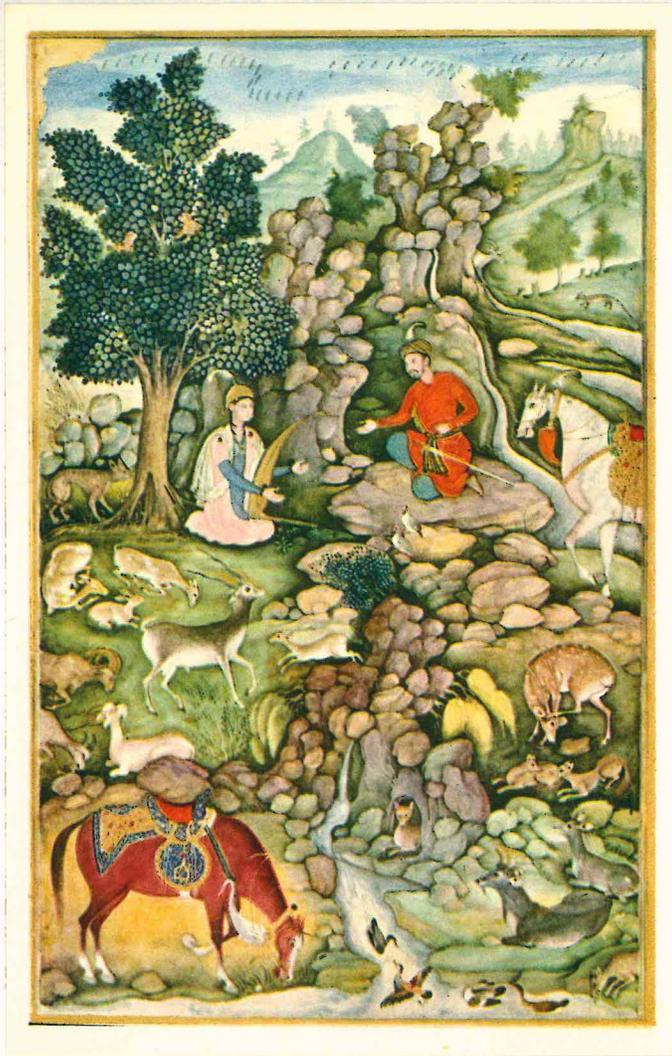
It was, however, a genuinely new art and could be distinguished from the Rajput art by the calligraphic quality of the drawing, and likewise from the Iranian school by its love of realism.

From the beginning this Indo-Persian school was encouraged and very much benefited by the interest of each of the emperors. Akbar is considered its real founder, and he encouraged its development by every means in his power. Jahangir and Dara Shikuh also had a singular interest and influence in the school.

No doubt this royal influence was directly responsible for the fact that as distinctly as Rajput art was an art of the people so Mogul art was an art of the court, the art of an aristocratic society which was interested

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1. Venkatachalam, op. cit., p. 103



A Prince Listening to a Harpist in Paradise
Moghul, Period of Akbar

only in scenes of everyday life in so far as they concern itself. It therefore reproduced none but the acts and gestures of sovereigns and nabobs, their receptions, hunts, and loves, completely ignoring the life of the Hindu people. In spite of and beyond all this, however, we do find in it a naturalistic spontaneity which goes beyond anything found in Iranian painting and brings Mogul art into harmony with the eternal spirit of India, and thus Mogul art joins with the others in making that which is the characteristic contribution of the eternal genius of India - realism.

This realism first found expression in the painting of portraits - miniature portraits of nobility, holy men, dervishes, fakirs, and monks. Most critics seem to feel that Mogul painting is, in direct contrast to the Buddhist and Hindu, entirely void of the spiritual interpretation, and yet there is something very much akin to it in the portrayal of personalities in these miniature portraits. A close study of them will reveal a great spiritual value in the faces and hands which is no doubt a result of the influence of the earlier Indian schools. Grousset says of them:

"All these Mogul portraits are, in general, marvels of delicacy, finish, and psychological fidelity. In spite of the majesty of the attitudes and sumptuousness of the costume, the racial and moral character represented in them is strikingly clear. The delicacy of the drawing, the subtlety of the modelling, and the keenness of the profile reveal the personality with a pitiless precision. . . . Here we have nothing but personality, nothing but the character of the noblemen represented, with his virtues or his vices, his good humour or his harshness, his honesty, his cynicism or his hypocrisy, his weakness,

or his boastfulness."¹

Apart from his attempt to reveal character and personality, however, the Mogul artist indicates no real relationship between Mogul art and religion. In the beginning the depicting of the human figure or anything that had life was, to the orthodox Mohammedan, declared to be sinful by the edicts of his religion in which the old Mosaic law was carried to its extreme interpretation. It is true that under the enlightened Shah Abbas of Persia, and the liberal early Moguls the followers of Mohammed broke away from those edicts, but remarkable as their productions are in their sincerity and in the delight they give to the eye and senses they rarely appeal to the soul. Mogul art was never meant by its patrons to have religious significance; it was solely to glorify and please the king, and religious subjects are studiously avoided.

F. Modern Art

It is difficult to give a proper estimate of art in India today. Until the past decade or so it has presented a dismal outlook. Many critics during the first twenty or thirty years of the present century thought the future of Indian art was utterly hopeless. It seemed to them that no artists were left to carry on the work of the

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1. Grousset, op. cit., p. 370

old masters of color, harmony, and line. And this despair was not without reason. For one hundred and fifty years this ancient, highly complex civilization which is India's has been subject to powerful outside influences which have profoundly modified and are everyday modifying its character.

Unfortunately, though officially strong and beneficial in many ways, until recently this influence has been anti-Indian in regard to art, both positively so in its encouragement of western standards and methods, and negatively so in its neglect of indigenous modes.

"It had imposed on the pictorial genius of India the point of view and technique of South Kensington, emphasizing the personality and physical forcefulness that are alien to the Indian temperament and employing the oil medium that is as foreign to the genius of India as drums and trumpets are to the still small voice of the soul."¹

This has inevitably had a deadening effect on the creative faculties, and has removed all stimulus which comes from the strenuous upholding of higher ideals.

Ordinarily outside influence in the proper degree is an invigorating element in the development of any civilization, but to have such an utterly different civilization imposed so forcefully upon a land, and to have at the same time an economic revolution within the land which has effected the traditional bases of society in an unprecedented way is enough to thwart and bewilder the development of the

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1. Cousins, op. cit., p. 589

arts in any land.

Happily, however, a new spirit has come in the last few years. Dr. Cousins writes with enthusiasm:

"But the new century brought a new stir into the life-stream of the world. India, sensitive as always to new impulses, though ignorantly visualized as remote and unchanging, felt the stir; and its history for the past thirty years is a record of growing recovery of its own vision and expression, first in art, and later in political life. In painting, India came back to the tempera method, as the true means for the visual expression of its spiritual sensitiveness and turned away from the mere objectivity of western painting to the pictorial interpretation of its ancient but never aging dream. But its reversion to tradition is not that of a slave or a mimic. It is a return to true affinities of mood and method, but it does not preclude the personal freedom that makes the works of the artist appear as individual variations of a fundamental theme."¹

Havell also speaks encouragingly of the "healthy sign that a new school of artistic criticism has arisen in India which seeks to appraise Indian art by its own standards rather than by the verdict of European assessors."²

And there are numerous others who write with the same spirit of hopefulness concerning the definite renaissance in Indian painting which is in process today. True, there is much to be desired as yet. It is only a beginning, and some have expressed the fear that the storms of the political, religious and economic upheaval of the present time may prove too strong a test for the yet unstable spirit of revival in the field of art. We stand too close to it all to say what will emerge from it, but this

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1. Cousins, op. cit., p. 589

2. Havell, E. B.: Indian Sculpture and Painting, p. 5

one thing is sure - it is the opinion of all the critics:
"if modern India is to evolve a new art of her own it must
have its roots in the Indian past and appeal to Indian
sentiment."¹

G. Conclusion

We have then in India a remarkable heritage in the
realm of pictorial art. The present frustration in its
progress only seems to throw into bolder relief the fact,
that Indian art of the past has been effective, not when
it has been an "art for art's sake", but when it has been
born out of a deep desire to represent and make clear
great spiritual and theological conceptions, beliefs, and
principles. Its vital force has always been the religious
instinct. It is Havell who says:

"Indian art, soaring into the highest empyrean, is
ever trying to bring down to earth something of the
beauty of the things above."²

That it has been successful as an avenue of spiritual power
is witnessed by one who writes:

"Hindu art has held up and sustained Hindu culture,
history and spiritual experience for the masses through
the darkest pages of our history, as nothing else has
done. It has nursed and solaced millions of souls when
gloom surrounded man, and material decay and spiritual
death faced him everywhere. Art and religion have thus
come to be fused into one indivisible whole."³

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1. Smith, Vincent A.: A History of Fine Art in India and
Ceylon, p. 7
2. Havell, op. cit., p. 7
3. Olan, David, Ed.: Indian Murals and Sarkis Katchadourian,
p. 13

This question must certainly be asked in response to such a statement: If pictorial art has been so powerful an instrument in the portrayal of the spiritual truths in such religions as Buddhism and Hinduism, why should it not be proved far more effective in revealing to the Indian mind Him who said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life"?

And a companion question follows directly: If Buddha and Krishna could inspire such beauty at the hand of the Indian artist down through the ages, how much richer must be the treasures of art still waiting to be unlocked and released to the world by the same genius when it represents in the wild, precious delicacy that is Indian art the Truth as it is in Jesus Christ?

"So, Buddha, beautiful! I pardon thee
That all the All thou hadst for needy man
Was Nothing, and thy Best of being was
But not to be.

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But Thee, but Thee, O sovereign Seer of time,
But Thee, O poets' Peet, Wisdom's Tongue,
But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
O all men's Comrade, Servant, King, or Priest, -
What if or yet, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
What least defect or shadow of defect,
What rumor, tattled by an enemy,
Of inference loose, what lack of grace
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's or death's -
Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
Jesus, good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ?"¹

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1. Lanier, Sidney

CHAPTER III
THE NATURE OF ART

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THE NATURE OF ART

A. Introduction

What is art? What is its purpose? What does it really do? What is its nature that can give it such great value in the spiritual realm? These questions beset one as he considers the great task of encouraging the development of a Christian art in India. This chapter seeks to answer them.

B. What Art Is Not

Tolstoy has said, "People will come to understand the meaning of art only when they cease to consider that the aim of that activity is beauty, i. e. pleasure . . ."¹ The misunderstanding of the nature and purpose of art in the world today, even among people of learning, is appalling. This mechanized age with its materialistic philosophy of life, remarkable as it is in many respects, seems to have almost crushed and spurned out of existence any consciousness of the aesthetic values of life. Men and women in their mad rush for material needs and luxuries attempt to appreciate snatches of beauty here and there. But such appreciation can only be superficial, and inevitably leads

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1. Carritt, E. F.: *Philosophies of Beauty*, p. 191

to the misconception that art is something separate from life, that beauty is its only excuse for being created, and that it has no more useful function than to provide a few moments of pleasure in a busy day. It becomes merely incidental to a busy life. And the very busy-ness of that life directly opposes any true appreciation and understanding of art.

"Beauty is found where there is leisure. Necessity, force, and pressure of life are not productive of art."¹

The artist takes days, months, perhaps even years to produce his picture for the world. What disillusionment to think one can walk through an art gallery of an afternoon and feel he has done the artist justice with scarcely more than a glance at his work.

C. What Art Is

If this common view of the nature and purpose of art is erroneous, what then is art, and what its purpose? The answer has come from many pens. The great Michelangelo said of it:

"True painting is only an image of God's perfection - a shadow of the pencil with which He paints, a melody, a striving after harmony".²

Dr. Coomaraswamy, speaking of religious art says it is

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1. Garber, Helen Lisa: A Comparative Study of Plato and Tagore in Relation to Esthetic Education, p. 233
2. Quoted by Kline, Elizabeth Yerkes: The Place of Pictures in the Christian Education of Early Adolescents, p. 34

"simply visual theology." Browning has beautifully expressed the quintessence of art in his lines:

"The emulous heaven yearned down and
made effort to reach the earth.
And the earth had done her best in her
passion to reach the skies."¹

True and suggestive as these descriptions may be, however, they leave one with a still somewhat vague conception of that which we are seeking to define. Mr. Ruskin, probably the greatest art critic of all time, has struck the keynote in determining what art really is in his statement regarding it:

"But I say that the art is greatest, which conveys to the mind of the spectator, by any means whatsoever, the greatest number of the greatest ideas, and I call an idea great in proportion as it is received by a higher faculty of the mind, and as it more fully occupies, and in occupying, exercises and exalts, the faculty by which it is received. If this then be the definition of great art, that of a great artist naturally follows. He is the greatest artist who has embodied, the sum of his works, the greatest number of the greatest ideas."²

The same essential element is expressed by various others.

John Pope of Columbia University has said:

"All art is ultimately a material manifestation of the human mind, and thus is a faithful mirror of the thoughts of those who produced it."³

Dudley and Faricy in their book, "The Humanities", express it as follows:

"The artist has at his command only the physical mediums of his art but through them he can express something

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1. Quoted by Garber, Helen Lisa: A Study of Pictures in the Christian Education of Children, p. 20
2. Ruskin, John: Modern Painters, Vol. I, p. 78
3. Pope, John: The Sculpture of Greater India, p. 11

that is greater than the line, color, rythm, imagery, form or melody; something for which we have no word but which represents the meaning of that work of art. It is the sum total of all that the artist is saying through that work, 'the message', 'idea', or 'meaning' of his work. . . #1

Harold Newton Lee speaks of art as a "vehicle which conveys aesthetic values" or a "vision of value".² Van Loon says simply:

"A painter is merely someone who says, 'I think I see', and who thereupon reveals to us what he thinks he has seen in such a way that we too may see it if our eyes happen to be attuned to his own vision."³

But the most satisfying definition of all, particularly as one thinks of portraying Christ to India, is found in Bailey's simple, yet comprehensive statements:

"A work of art is a message from the artist to the world, his attempt to say something so beautifully and therefore so compellingly that all men will listen, and, having listened, will feel and understand."⁴

And again:

"The simplest thing one may say of art is this: It is a kind of language. The artist is trying to say something to us, and in so doing he has to make use of a definite vocabulary and grammar. The elements in this vocabulary include lines of various kinds, lights and darks, colors, masses, symbols, spots, and empty spaces. The grammar has to do with the way these elements are put together - rythm, balance, symmetry, unity, pattern. With these words and phrases only he must get his message across to us."⁵

All these definitions point to a far deeper meaning and function of art than is commonly realized. It becomes another "mode of speech, another form of soul expression,

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1. Dudley, Louise and Farley, Austin: The Humanities, p. 533
2. Lee, Harold Newton; Perception and Aesthetic Value, p. 148
3. Van Loon, Hendrik Willem: The Arts, p. 16
4. Bailey, Albert E.: Art and Character, p. 34
5. Ibid., p. 11

symbolic writing in color".¹ It is something which may be employed as a vehicle of revelation, a means of accomplishing a certain end. Gladden has remarked that "the function of art is service. Its end is not in itself. It is the minister of life."²

D. What Art Does

What, then, does art as a vehicle of revelation seek to express? Surely we miss the function of a work of art if we look to it only for a literal reproduction of subject-matter or documentary information. Mere imitation knows nothing of what is essential or characteristic, and a work of a documentary character always has an ulterior and practical purpose. If the artist attempted nothing more than imitation in a painting the camera would have outmoded the artist years ago both because of the element of time and accuracy. But art has been referred to as insight made visible.

"We ask of a work of art that it reveal to us the qualities in objects and situations which are significant which have the power to move us aesthetically. The artist must open our eyes to what unaided we could not see, and in order to do so he often needs to modify the familiar appearance of things and so make something which is, in the photographic sense, a bad likeness. What we ask of the painter is that, for example, in a landscape, he should catch the spirit of the scene; in a portrait, that he should discover what is essential or characteristic of the sitter."³

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1. Aitken, op. cit., p. 2
2. Gladden, Washington: The Relations of Art and Morality, p. 63
3. Barnes, Albert C.: The Art in Painting, p. 3

Obviously these are matters for a human mind to observe, judge, and portray, and not for a mere mechanical reproduction of an image caught by a camera lense. Writing further of the artist and his work Barnes points out:

"The artist gives us satisfaction by seeing for us more clearly than we could see for ourselves, and showing us what an experience more sensitive and profound than our own has shown him . . . The man who is an artist because the interest in understanding and depicting things is a master passion with him, sees more deeply and more penetratingly than we do, and, seeing better, can also show better. His interests compel him to grasp certain significant aspects of persons and things of the real world which our blindness and preoccupation with personal and practical concerns ordinarily hide from us."¹

Greene in his work states that: "In a work of art, a reality is interpreted and expressed in a distinctive way."²

He then goes on to characterize the artist in this way:

"The true artist, I shall argue, has never conceived of art as an escape from reality into an ivory tower. He has attempted to come to grips with reality in his own way, and the more serious the artist, the more resolute has been this attempt. Only the 'aesthete' has subscribed to the thesis of 'art for art's sake'; the motto of the conscientious artist has been 'art for life's sake'. In attempting to apprehend reality in his own way the artist resembles the scientist and the philosopher, the moralist and the theologian. Art is one among other significant human enterprises, and, like them, derives its significance from the artist's preoccupation with what man accepts as real . . . but the true artist has never striven to merely duplicate reality or to copy it with slavish fidelity. He has recognized the need for interpretation."³

Still another writing of the artist has said:

"The hand that paints is guided by the spirit which the finished work expresses. The artist is the medium and his 'art' is his faculty of conceiving the divine vision

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1. Barnes, op. cit., p. 12
2. Greene, Theodore Meyer: The Arts and the Art of Criticism, p. 267
3. Ibid.

and the process of shaping this vision into visible form."¹

Thus it is evident that the artist can no longer be considered someone who merely provides the world with the luxury of beautiful paintings to be hung on palace walls or in art galleries soliciting admiration from the comparatively few who may pause a moment to glance at them. The artist becomes a man with a message for the world. He must be placed along side the poet, the hymn-writer, the author and the evangelist. His work is not something apart from life; it is rather another mode of expression, another means of revealing truth to his fellowman. The artist "adds his own unique and individual vision to the world's heritage."²

E. The Universality of the Nature of Art

This conception of the artist and his work has by no means been a recent development in the philosophy of art. Indeed, many of the artists of the present day seem never to have comprehended this true significance of art at all - or else their art bespeaks a woefully distorted conception of truth and reality which they are attempting to portray to the world. But in all the art-epochs of the past the artist has conceived his work to be a means of setting before

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1. Sen, op. cit., p. 29

2. Bailey, Albert E.: Art and Character, p. 50

the world his own interpretation of the reality of life. This is particularly true of the Medieval period in Europe - that period which has given the world some of its greatest art. Dr. Fleming speaks of it as a representative art which, "along with literature, formed part of the ways of knowing God. This art was charged with meaning - its function was mediatory."¹ Sorokin speaks of the same as "the art of the human soul conversing with its God. As such it was not designed for the market, for purposes of profit, for fame, popularity, or other sensate values, or for sensual enjoyment. It was created as Theophilus has observed, 'nec humane laudis amore, nec temporalis premii cupiditate . . . sed in augmentum honoris et gloriae nominis Dei.'"²

Westcott, writing in the last century, said of the artist that he

" . . . has both to interpret and to embody. He has to gain the ideal of his subject, and then he has to present it in an intelligible shape. He has to give the right effect and to call out the right feeling. He has, as it were, to enter within the veil, and coming forth again to declare his heavenly visions to men. He is not a mirror, but a prophet. The work of the photographer may help him, but it in no sense expresses his aim, which is not reproduction but translation. He has abdicated the office of an artist who simply repeats for the mass of men what they see themselves. The artist bids them behold the ideal as it is his privilege to realize it. He strives to make clear to others what his keener sensibility and penetrating insight have made visible to him. There is, as in every true poem, an element of

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1. Fleming, Daniel Johnson: Christian Symbols in a World Community, p. 13
2. Sorokin, Pitirim A.: The Crisis of Our Age, p. 40

infinity in his works. They suggest something beyond that which they directly present: something to be looked for, and felt after, thoughts which they quicken but do not satisfy."¹

Nor is this conception confined purely to occidental thinking. Hu Shih writes of Chinese art:

"Realistic delineation of the object was consciously considered secondary to the impressionistic grasp and expression of the idea and the spirit . . . While art had its origin in professional artisans and craftsmen, it has achieved the greatest altitude and depth only when it has become the medium of expression of the thought and experience of the great cultivated minds of the times. The achievement of the Chinese painting has been possible only because it embodies the best contribution of the best minds of the nation throughout the ages."²

Likewise, Indian art critics express this same philosophy. Dr. Garber, in summarizing Tagore's view of art, says art is "not imitation of objective reality, nor is it copying or photography. Art is creation in which the artist interprets experience."³ In his own words Tagore has written: "Art is the response of man's creative soul to the call of the Real", and, "This building of man's true world - the living world of truth and beauty - is the function of art."⁴

Dr. Coomaraswamy has given it particular emphasis in his writings:

". . . in a traditional art where the object is merely a point of departure and a signpost inviting the spectator to the performance of an act directed toward that form for the sake of which the picture exists at all.

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1. Westcott, Brooke Foss: Essays in the History of Religious Thought in the West, p. 335
2. Hu Shih, op. cit., p. 218
3. Garber, Helen Lisa: A Comparative Study of Plato and Tagore in Relation to Esthetic Education, p. 188
4. Tagore, Rabindranath: Personality, p. 31

The spectator is not so much to be 'pleased' as to be 'transported' to see as the artist is required to have seen before he took up brush or chisel."¹

Another writer describing the magnificent treasures in the cave paintings of Ajanta speaks of the Indian artists and craftsmen of old who "put their souls' all on the walls of the temples they built and decorated and adored."²

F. Conclusion

Thus art, when understood, becomes a unique and powerful language to use in reaching the mind and heart of man the world over. Few people realize its power either for good or bad. Few, it is true, if it were called to their attention, would deny the powerful effects of an evil picture on the mind, yet many see much more slowly the equally powerful effect of a good picture. Surely the Christian Church in India cannot afford to repress such a power or even to be content to let it remain dormant.

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1. Coomaraswamy, A. K: Introd. in Rowland, H.: Wall Paintings of India, Central Asia and Ceylon, p. 11
2. Olan, op. cit., p. 14

CHAPTER IV

OBJECTIONS TO THE USE OF ART IN INDIA

CHAPTER IV

OBJECTIONS TO THE USE OF ART IN INDIA

A. Introduction

No one can deny that there are problems which will arise in the use and development of art in India. Such problems will arise anywhere, but there are some which are peculiar to India to a degree in which they might not be elsewhere. It is the purpose of this chapter to consider a few of them.

B. Fear of Idolatry

Having come to realize the power of art as a means of revealing spiritual truths, one must remember at the same time that "a good servant may become an unruly master."¹ Because art has been misused in India as perhaps in no other country there are many who are certain to feel that it is something to be repressed rather than used in Indian Christianity.

The danger is real. It cannot be denied. The question immediately comes to mind, "Will the development of a Christian art in India lead to idolatry?" And those who have seen the hopelessness and degradation which

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1. Fleming, op. cit., p. 31

inevitably prevails in a land bound by idolatry as India is shrinks from the thought of using anything which might savor of idolatry in relation to Christ.

But, Christ came not to destroy but to fulfil. Surely He at whose feet have been laid the finest tributes of all the fine arts has not come to India to destroy the riches of Indian art! In this also Christ has come to fulfil. He has come to quicken the soul of the artist and cause him to paint for India and for the world, in the exquisite use of line and color that is Indian art, beauty and truth which could not otherwise be comprehended. And He has come to quicken the souls of the artist's audience that they may comprehend his message and be led by it into a deeper experience with Christ.

While there is danger of art in India being misused there is also the danger of failing to make use of one of the most potent means of revelation God has given man - the art of painting. And who can deny that the painter's genius is as much God-given as any other? Surely the danger of its misuse cannot preclude the possibility of its rightful and effective use. Nor can one think that God has given such an instrument to man without likewise giving the ability to counteract the dangers which it will encounter. Thus, the only logical conclusion must be that Christian leaders recognize the dangers in regard to its use and prepare to meet them, while they allow and encourage the artist of India to lay his gift at the feet of Christ. A gift capable

of ministering so rich a service is worthy of a great effort to insure its rightful use. To allow it to remain paralyzed by fear of dangers would be far more dangerous.

The question will be raised as to how one may guard against the danger of a retrogression of Christian art to idolatry. Shillito answers clearly:

"There is no security against such a return except to let the spirit of Christ take these gifts from out of the past and purge them from all error and brutality . . . It will be only at His touch that the artistic tradition of the races of mankind will find their true crown."¹

This could not mean that the work is to be entirely left to the spirit of Christ to the extent that man need make no effort himself. The first responsibility of Christian leaders in India is to realize for themselves the full import, both of the effectiveness of art as a medium of expression and of the very real danger which attends its use. And having realized it themselves the leaders must be careful to educate the people in the proper attitude toward it. The people must be made to see that the danger lies in too closely identifying religion and art; that these must never be considered the same and art must not be substituted for religion. It must always be subordinated to religion and made to serve it. People must be made to realize that art is a representation of life, truth, and the spiritual, but the reality of these is only found in Christ; that to use

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1. Shillito, Edward: *Craftsmen All*, p. 78

only the eyes in looking at a picture is just as bad as to use only the ear in hearing a sermon. They must be taught to recognize and use art forms merely as signposts inviting worshippers to an inward experience with Christ.

Some may point to the Jewish people as a proof of the fact that art is not a necessity in the worship of the one true God, but even the Jews used art in their worship at the direction of God Himself.

"And Moses said unto the children of Israel, See, the Lord hath called by name Bezalel, of the tribe of Judah; and he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding; and to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones for setting, and in carving¹ of wood, to work in all manner of cunning workmanship."

It is true that for them imitative art had practically no public existence. In the absence of satisfactory evidence it is not possible to say to what extent architecture and music found expression in their community. But, in spite of the very narrow range within which Jewish art was confined, that which did exist was an integral part of their religion and worship. The commandment forbidding the making of any graven image or likeness was not observed in the Sanctuary itself, either of the Tabernacle or the Temple. Commenting upon this Dr. Westcott has said,

"By this exception it was made evident that the enactment was directed against accidental abuses of imitative art and not against the art itself. . . The Jew learnt from

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1. Exodus 35:33

the records of the Old Testament that it was the Divine will that in the unapproachable darkness of the Holy of Holies the costliest works of Art should render service before the revealed Presence of the Lord. . . In no other way could the truth be more eloquently or solemnly enforced that the end of art is to witness to the inner life of Nature and to minister to God. . . By that offering of the best which he could command simply for the Divine glory Solomon declared to his people for all time the consecration of art, and he declared not obscurely that it is the office of Art to reveal the meaning of that which is the object of sense."¹

Thus we have art used in its highest form by those whom we seek to emulate when we would guard against any form of idolatry.

Again, some may point to the antagonism shown toward art in the early church as an indication that the same aversion should be displayed today in a land such as India. But a close study of this situation will reveal that from the beginning Christian art has been shown to be a necessary expression of the Christian faith. The early antagonism of Christianity to ancient art was essentially an antagonism to the idolatry, the limited earthliness, of which it was the most complete expression. "There was no chasm of separation between Christianity and art except that which was fixed by the ordinary subservience of art to idolatrous purposes,"² and from the first beginnings of the Faith there were strivings after an art which should interpret nature and life as a revelation of God.

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1. Westcott, op. cit., p. 281-3
2. Ibid., p. 292

It was no doubt because of, and not in spite of, the jealousy with which the early church guarded the development of its art that out of it emerged an art which was to become a rich contribution not only to world civilization but to Christianity itself. This early Christian art was developed in the midst of the idolatry of that day. Cannot such an art be developed, under the power of the Spirit of Christ, in India today?

C. Art Must Await a Mature Christianity

Besides those who sincerely fear a retrogression to idolatry through the use of art in Christianity there will be those who feel that art is something which must wait until Christianity has been fully established and has reached a state of maturity. They will argue that there is no time now to develop an art. Essentials must be attended to first.

The answer to this argument is suggested in Tagore's analogy of the timber merchant who "may think that the flowers and foliage are mere frivolous decorations of a tree; but if these are suppressed, he will know to his cost that the timber too will fail."¹

Writing of the need of a development of Christian art throughout the Orient Shillito asks, "Can the answer of

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1. Quoted by Garber, Helen Lisa: A Comparative Study of Plato and Tagore in Relation to Esthetic Education, p. 231

China to the Gospel be complete till out of its new Church artists have brought to Christ their lucid and delicate art? Can the answer of India be heard till the same vision and the same daring and patient craftsmanship which gave the world the Taj Mahal are offered to Christ?"¹ And one might add - "or until the same devotion and timeless patience which we find manifested on the walls of Ajanta have been laid at His feet?" True, the essentials of the Christian faith must always have the preeminence. But art has been given as one of the means by which they may be effectively presented to India; it is not something which must wait until all the hard work is over.

Drummond has considered this objection with a rather unique illustration.

"Excluding exceptional cases of such selfish individualism, there is a Lamp of Sacrifice which not even the insistent claims of Evangelism and Social Justice can extinguish, for we have the precedent, never to be forgotten, of that woman who broke the alabaster box of ointment and poured it on the Master's head (Mark 14:3-9). It might have been sold for a great price and the proceeds given to the poor. Yet Jesus considered the action so significant, that He declared that wheresoever the Gospel was preached, this deed should be commemorated. This is surely a sufficient justification for aesthetic expression, despite the call of human need, so long as it is a sincere offering to Christ and no mere expression of individual or communal pride. A beautiful act, moreover, is enriched by an appropriate setting. Did not Peter and John heal a lame man at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful?"²

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1. Shillito, op. cit., p. 71
2. Drummond, Andrew Landale: The Church Architecture of Protestantism, p. 148

D. Illiteracy a Barrier to Its Effective Use

Still another objection to the use of art in India may be that, being of a cultural nature, it can reach so small a minority of the millions of illiterate who must be won to Christ that the effort which a development of art will entail is not warranted. A couple of quotations from Havell's books serve to answer this objection effectively:

"That Hindu art was successful in its educational purpose may be inferred from the fact known to all who have intimate acquaintance with Indian life that the Indian peasantry though illiterate in the Western sense are among the most cultured of their class anywhere in the world. A very competent and independent European witness, Dr. Lefroy, Bishop of Lahore, has testified from his long personal experience to the extraordinary aptitude with which even the poorest and wholly illiterate Hindu peasant will engage in discussion of or speculation in the deepest philosophical and ethical questions."¹

"The Hindu artist was both a court chronicler and a religious teacher . . . Though the Hindu painter imbues such subjects with a sensitiveness and artistic charm which are peculiarly his own, the appeal which he makes to the Indian mind is not purely aesthetic. His is no art for art's sake, for the Hindu draws no distinction between what is sacred and profane. The deepest mysteries are clothed by him in the most familiar garb. So in the intimate scenes of the ordinary village life he constantly brings before the spectator the esoteric teaching of his religious cult, knowing that the mysticism of the picture will find a ready response even from the unlettered peasant. That which seems to the modern Western onlooker to be strange and unreal, often indeed gross, is to the Hindu mystic quite natural and obviously true."²

The very nature of art is in accord with the Hindu philosophy of life and thought, and, if used under the power, and guidance of the Holy Spirit, art may well prove to be

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1. Havell, E. B.: Indian Sculpture and Painting, p. xix
2. Havell, E. B.: A Handbook of Indian Art, p. 209

one of the most effective means of reaching the Indian peasantry.

E. Conclusion

These few problems in regard to the use and development of a Christian art in India are only indicative of many more which will have to be dealt with in the process of such a growth. But surely it were folly to miss the painter's contribution in the revelation of Christ to India. There must be an answer to every problem if the art from which they arise suggests the aspiration "to Thy great glory, O Lord"!

CHAPTER V

THE NEED OF AN INDIGENOUS ART IN INDIA

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A. Introduction

"The water of life must be offered to India in an Indian cup".¹ This significant statement of Sadhu Sundar Singh's well expresses the attitude which is being manifested throughout all of India today. It is the same as expressed by the International Missionary Council at Tambaram in India in 1938:

"We strongly affirm that the Gospel should be expressed and interpreted in indigenous forms, and that in methods of worship, institutions, literature, architecture, etc., the spiritual heritage of the nation and country should be taken into use. The Gospel is not necessarily bound up with forms and methods brought in from the older churches . . . There are valuable cultural elements which ought to be preserved and integrated into the life of the new Christian community from its very beginning. An adequate understanding of the religions will recognize in them the presence of such valuable elements, side by side with other elements which are wholly opposed to the Christian revelation . . . The inner life of worship becomes incarnate in words and acts and in the wordless speech of architecture and the other arts . . . We would urge upon missionaries the duty of helping the younger churches to express their Christian life in forms that are part of their nation's heritage."²

B. Christagraha Inevitable in a Vital Christianity

In the early days of missionary work in a non-Christian country, the first impressions were naturally

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1. Fleming, op. cit., p. 33

2. Quoted, Ibid., p. 3

of the contrast between the heathen and Christian customs of worship. The missionaries knowing little of the worship of the people to whom they had come, and finding that little bad, used the western forms familiar to themselves, and taught their converts to worship in like manner. With the passing of the years, however, the missionaries have been able to better observe the non-Christian life and worship around them, and to find elements in it which offer lines of approach or expressions of worship. Because of the great dangers involved in taking over that which has been identified with heathenism it is only right that the transition should be made slowly and with great care. But that it must finally come is inevitable. Dr. Fleming has said with emphasis:

"No religion that remains borrowed or that is mechanically imitative can ever become powerful enough to change the stream of thought and life in a civilized nation."¹

Hendrik Kraemer writing on the same subject declares:

"That on which the whole matter hinges is not that it is dangerous, but that it must be done for the sake of a vigorous Christianity. . . . If one stands with both feet firmly planted the world of Biblical realism, the risk of becoming, in the close contact with Indian life, overwhelmed by the grandeur and profundity of Indian thought and religious experience, or by the subtly pervading polytheistic atmosphere in India, or by the deeply impregnated apprehensions of karma, maya and samsara, all entirely in contrast with the fundamentally Christian apprehension, will not merely be escaped, but will be met in the most fruitful way. Unless it faces these risks, Christianity in India will try to grow isolated from its living environment, in confronting

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1. Fleming, op. cit., p. 41

which it has come to spiritual maturity. In the same way the Primitive Church by confronting, wrestling and commingling with the world of mystery-religions, Oriental Hellenistic philosophy and gnosticism in which it lived, got its peculiar grasp of the Christian revelation."¹

But Dr. Kraemer does not leave the problem there. Later on in his discussion of the Christian Mission in relation to its environment he sets forth the fact that a vital Christianity in any community will give freedom and courage to use the heritage existing there and to use it creatively and critically.

"To do so is simply an act of obedience to the peculiar historical situation in which a new growing Christian Church is set, provided the impelling and primary motive is to express the Gospel and its invariable essence. This is the most energetic way of being Christian and indigenous. If the impelling motive is harmonization and accommodation, it results ultimately in an injury to the character of Christianity and a wrong indigenization."²

In other words, if Indian Christianity is vital and real one of its natural and inevitable fruits will be a true indigenization of the whole system, including art. And if the primary interest of the Church is that of a divinely-willed fellowship of the believers in Christ, "the necessity of making a creative and critical, but free and courageous, use of existing and serviceable indigenous social forms and of methods of fostering spiritual life for the building of the Church, is at once self-evident and stringent."³

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1. Kraemer, H.: The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World, p. 374
2. Ibid., p. 421
3. Ibid.

Dr. Kraemer goes on to say that this is so, not because indigenous forms and methods are invariably best and the most serviceable to Christian life, but simply because

" . . . the indigenous has the right to be considered seriously and sympathetically as the vehicle of life-expression before any other possible vehicle. Just as a man expresses himself best in his own language, however many other languages he may master, so communities and social groupings express their life best in forms congenial to their temperament and tradition, better than by the imposition of alien forms."¹

Thus the criterion for adopting or rejecting either indigenous or Western forms, must lie in determining what are the most "fertile ways of expressing their own spiritual life and their own attainments in Christ."²

The ultimate aim, then, in indigenizing the Christian Church of India must be to foster a creative, spiritual life, so that the richness of the knowledge of Christ and the fruits of the Spirit may develop ever more fully; so that Christ will become so real, so wonderful to the artists, and His claims on their talents so irresistible that they cannot but express their love and devotion to Him in warm, natural ways, unhampered by a foreign medium. It must go without saying that the church can never really express all that is in her of worship as long as she uses alien forms.

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1. Kraemer, op. cit., p. 421
2. Ibid., p. 422

It could be wished that the importance of indigenizing the Church in India had been realized at its inception, that it might have developed free from cumbersome alien forms as did the early church, expressing itself naturally in the typically Indian modes of expression, and, in the process, filling these modes whose genuine Indian content and temper is different from the essentially Christian apprehension, with new Christian content.

C. Christagraha Essential in a
Vital Christianity

Some may say that this would have had little effect upon the development of art, anyway, since art in India has shown a definite decadence during the past century. But it appears from many critics' writings that this decadence, even in art in general, is a direct result of the influx of European civilization, with its insistence upon conformity to Western standards and ideals of art. How different the development of India's civilization might have been if during the past century the Christian Church had realized the importance of India's responding to the call of Christ in her own language of art. Havell bluntly says:

"Christianity would have been better served and India would have gained more, if instead of forcing upon India's living craft the cold formal pedantry of our dead Gothic and Classic styles we had allowed the Indian builder to glorify God in the fabric of our churches and cathedrals in the same deep religious spirit which he brings to the building of Jain and Hindu temples or Mohammedan mosques. The Indian craftsman's artistic principles in every century before

British rule have fitted every sectarian dogma, Buddhist, Jain, Brahmanical or Mohammedan. It is deplorable that Christianity of all world religions has been the only one which has helped to degrade rather than to spiritualize the art of building in India. We sometimes forget Christianity is an Eastern religion and that here in India we are much nearer to original inspirational sources of Christian art than we are in Western Europe."¹

That there is a very great difference between the art of the Orient and the art of the Occident was indicated in the first chapter of this thesis. Brown has contrasted them as follows:

"As the painting of the West is an art of 'mass' so that of the East is an art of 'line'. The Western artist conceives his composition in contiguous planes of light and shade and colour. He obtains his effect by 'play of surface', by the blending of one form into another, so that decision gives place to suggestion. In Occidental painting there is an absence of definite circumscribing lines, any demarcation being felt rather than seen. On the other hand, the beauty of Oriental painting lies in the interpretation of form by means of a clear-cut definition, regular and decided; in other words, the Eastern painter expresses form through a convention - the convention of pure line - and in the manipulation and the quality of this line the Oriental artist is supreme."²

There are other differences also which must be considered such as those found in the cultural background of the different countries. For example, the use of color and design in clothing is very important in many oriental countries. The Western artist, even though he may use an Oriental setting, may quite unintentionally paint " a Madonna in colors that would be worn by a dancing girl; or

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1. Havell, E. B.: The Himalyas in Indian Art, p. 85
2. Brown, op. cit., p. 7

he may make a chasuble (as was done by early Jesuits in Java) on which is a design ordinarily employed only on a woman's kain or skirt and hence, to the cultured Javanese mind, out of place on an article of worship."¹

With these and other great contrasts of technique, style and background it is not surprising that neither the Indian nor European can orient himself at once in the other's art. The Westerner who is supposed to be the more progressive has long looked upon Indian art as something which is hardly art, a result of failure to understand and appreciate another artistic language. It is small wonder, then, that the Indian has not been able to adapt and appreciate Western art standards to a greater degree.

And the world can be grateful that he has not. For apart from all that it will mean to the Indian church to have the message of Christ expressed in her own art, there is the very real contribution which the Indian artist can and should make to the Church universal. As Shillito has well said,

"Christ is too wonderful for any one of the nations, or group of nations, to express Him perfectly. Not until all come with their offerings will the answer of humanity be perfected. . . . In its long history the Christian Church has won for its service the art of Rome and Byzantium. Why may it not receive new glories from the artists of China and Ceylon? There are many traditions of art in the story of the nations, and each of them has some new language to bring for Christian devotion. . . . Not till

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1. Fleming, Daniel Johnson: Each With His Own Brush, p. 6

the Church in every land has put a new song in our mouths and built for us new temples, and explored with its own insight the hidden things of God, shall we know the fulness of Christ."¹

Anyone who has learned to read a foreign language knows the enrichment that often comes to one's conception of the truth through the expressions peculiar to that language. Just so will another artistic language enrich the conception of truth in the Church universal when that artistic language is developed and the Church gives itself to an understanding and appreciation of it.

D. Christagraha Creates Problems

The development of an indigenous art will doubtless present problems. One must be ready for unusual interpretations resulting from differences in environment, historical circumstances, natural aptitude, and understanding of the crucial problems of life. The charge of anachronism will be made. But Professor Bireswar Sen writing of this reminds one that:

"Anachronism cannot take away anything from the real merit of a true work of art. Think of the countless Italian painters who have painted the Madonna and a thousand other scenes from the Holy Bible. Are not all their Biblical paintings wholly anachronistic? Do the innumerable Madonnas appear to you to be Jewish women dressed in the Semitic garbs of Caesarian times; are they not Italian maidens with an Italian child in arms robed in the contemporary dress of the Italian artists who painted them? And do you see the arid

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1. Shillito, op. cit., pp. 11,12

sun-scorched land of Judea in the background or the rich Roman Campagna set with tall poplars swaying gently with the breeze of the blue Italian skies?"¹

If anachronism cannot spoil the message or the charm of Italian masters - or Spanish or Flemish or any of a number of other European artists who have treated their subjects in like manner - neither can it detract from that of the Indian artist. The art of any nation should be allowed the same liberty as long as its message is clear and sincere.

Another real danger to be guarded against is that of the artist who may be more interested in the adaptation than in true interpretation, thus dimming or suppressing the true message in spite of a true Indian setting. Such an artist must be dealt with as should any other messenger of the Gospel; his work must be criticized in a spirit of love and understanding, especially in regard to his desire to present the Indian background and technique. But far more important than such criticism will be the effort which must be made through prayer and teaching to make Christ in all His beauty so real to the artist that setting and technique will quite naturally take their rightful place in his art, that of secondary importance always to the true message of Christ.

"Accommodation to a particular culture is secondary to the imparting of a specifically Christian meaning - and this presupposes that the artist has caught the

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1. Sen, op. cit., p. 22

meaning. Important as it is to express Christianity in Japanese or Indian modes, the first essential is to know and experience what it is saying to mankind."¹

Because the artist's inspiration must come from within the heart as does the evangelist's it is obvious that an indigenous Indian Christian art cannot be forced into existence, but it can be encouraged and guided in its growth.

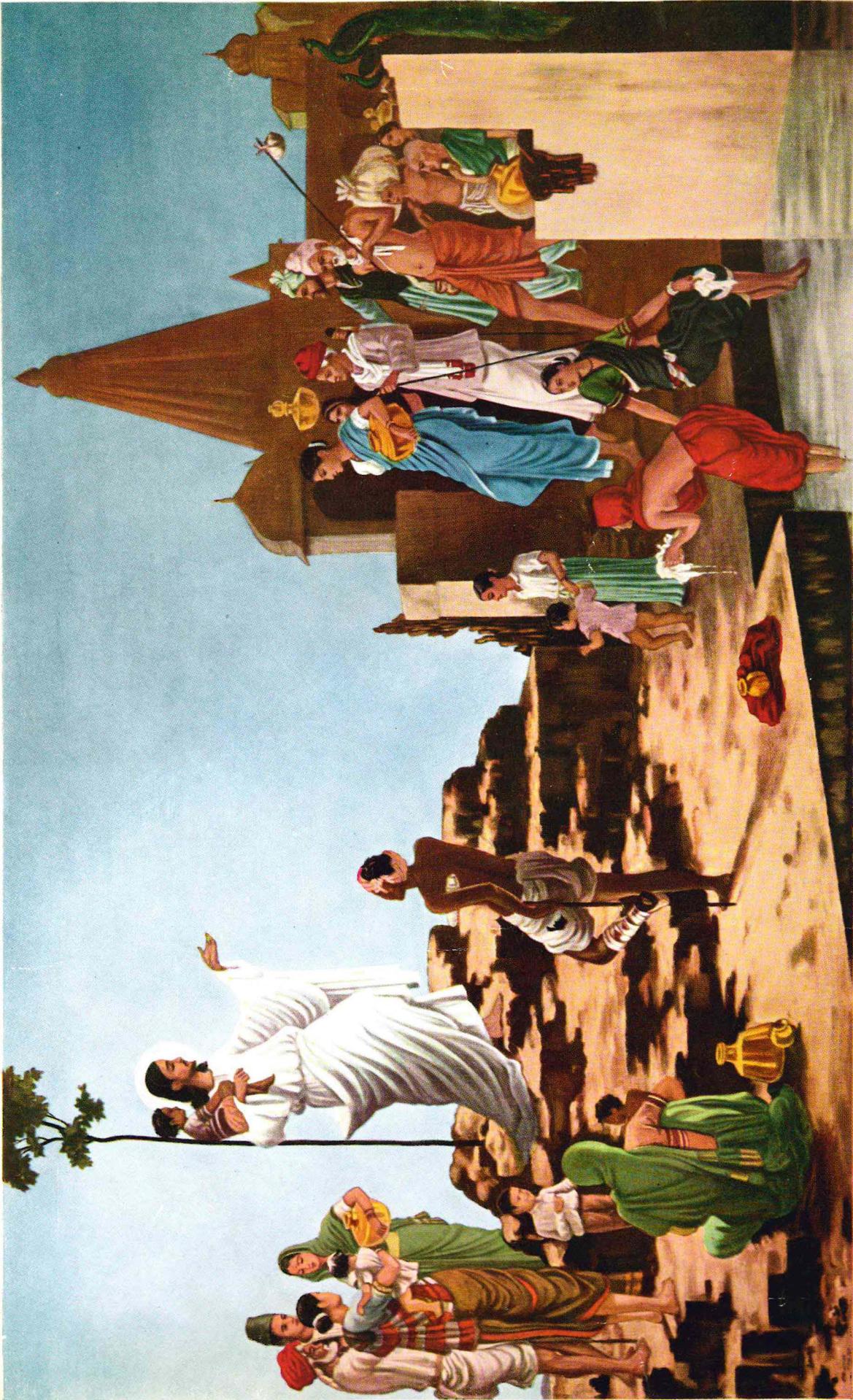
E. Conclusion

It may be concluded, therefore, that it is important that an indigenous Indian Christian art should become an integral part of the development of the Church in that land. First, it will be a proof of a vital, growing Christian church; second, it will provide a means of expression and worship by which the individual will be able to express his highest worship; and lastly, it will enrich the whole world community by giving it the Christian message in still another light than it has seen it before.

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1. Fleming, Daniel Johnson: Each With His Own Brush, p. 3

CHAPTER VI
SUGGESTIONS FOR ENCOURAGING THE USE AND
DEVELOPMENT OF A CHRISTIAN ART
IN INDIA



CHRIST, THE DAWN.

CHRIST THE DAWN

A WONDERFUL PICTURE

Dr. and Mrs. L. H. Beals of Wai and Mr. A. D. Thomas, the well-known Christian Artist of Delhi, have united to give to India a very beautiful picture, which has a real evangelistic message. On the wall of the new Library in the Willis F. Pierce Memorial Hospital at Wai is a full-size mural painting which Dr. and Mrs. Beals asked Mr. Thomas to paint in memory of their son, Theodore Lee Beals.

The artist spent several weeks in Wai at the riverside, making sketches of the temples and the people who come to the river for ceremonial baths and for worship. He then worked almost constantly night and day for one month, locked in alone with his picture, that he might have the very Presence of Christ with him as he sought to depict Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, dawning upon folk of every caste and creed in a setting that is very typically Mahatshtrian. The result is most impressive.

At the right, in semi-darkness, are Hindu temples with *ghats* leading down to the river. A throng of people is moving out of the darkness toward the light of the central figure. Among them are high caste

and low caste, old and young, rich and poor, Muslim and Hindu; one is blind, one carries a great burden. A beautiful young girl, the very figure of Innocence, is in the forefront of this throng, as she advances down the steps of the temple. All are drawn toward the Christ though they do not yet seem aware of Him. Below these figures sits a Brahmin woman, resting for a moment from her task of ceremonial washing of her garments. She, too, seems unaware of the Light behind her.

To her left, however, is the striking figure of a high caste widow, motionless, with bent body and upraised head, arrested by the face of Jesus Christ. *She has seen* the Light and begins to understand its meaning. Following her gaze we look up to see the gracious figure of our Lord in glowing white garments, standing on the rocks above the riverside, a little Indian child cradled in His right arm, His other hand outstretched in loving invitation to all men. Light radiates from Him toward every one. He *is* the Light, the Light of the World.

To His right stands a group of those who have come into the Light and

fellowship with the Saviour. Here too are men and women of different castes and creeds, now become one in the Light of Christ. Little Theodore Beals smiles happily at all his friends as he offers a flower to a child near by directly in front of Jesus.

Leaning upon a crutch, with his torn rags and the stains of his wounds showing through his bandages, is an 'untouchable' cripple wrapt in adoration of his Saviour. His back is toward us, but every line of his figure expresses eloquently the wonder and joy that are dawning in his heart as he understands that this Light of Love is even for him. Upon him and upon the Brahmin widow in the water Christ *has dawned*, and all the devotion of India's God-hungry heart pours through them in response to His Love. The tiny flowers, springing from the rocks at Jesus' feet, give promise, too, of New Life and Joy and Hope.

This is a great picture. We hope that many will visit Wai to view it and feed upon its inspiring message. Let us all seek to make known more vividly the Light of Christ to India. *L. P.*

CHAPTER VI

SUGGESTIONS FOR ENCOURAGING THE USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF A CHRISTIAN ART IN INDIA

A. Introduction

Because art has been so valuable in Religious Education in India in the past, because its nature is such that it has great potentialities as a means of expressing truth, in spite of problems which arise regarding its use, and because an indigenous art is naturally the most effective, some suggestions as to how such an art may be encouraged must be worthy of consideration.

B. Suggestions in Regard to the Artist

1. Artists we know

Although the interpretation of Christian themes through the medium of Indian art has been long delayed, the Church in India is fortunate today in having at least a few artists who have made a real beginning in this field.

Mr. Alfred David Thomas, a young Indian Christian from Agra, has real talent in painting, and "in his work, more than in that of any other one painter, the Christian Church of India has at last found artistic expression. The Christian training of his childhood has been his inspiration in later life, and his subjects are largely those of the

Bible."¹ Having studied art in Lucknow, Calcutta, and Florence his style is a combination of Indian and Italian. An Indian art critic has been quoted as saying of his work,

"European masters have portrayed Christ as a Divine Being, a World Saviour . . . Thomas's pictures of the Christ as child, man and divine-man are no less valuable, and they are unique in their true oriental colouring and sentiment. The stately figure of Jesus, the compassionate expression on the face, the simple loose garments that clothe His body, all these are treated in an idealistic manner in the usual Indian way. They are highly suggestive of the spiritual nature of the subject and they make a universal appeal irrespective of faith, caste or colour."²

Another Indian Christian artist who is making a real contribution to the church is Angelo da Fonseca who belongs to an Indian Christian family in Goa and whose ancestors were converted from Hinduism by St. Francis Xavier. He has studied under Dr. Abandindranath Tagore and Mr. Manda Lal Bose, who trained him in the best Indian traditions of line and color; and since 1934 he has been devoting his life to the realization of the ideal which he expressed in writing at the beginning of his career:

"We, who have embraced Christianity for centuries, have given up our painting, music and architecture. Having labelled them 'paganism', we have turned to the products of Europe. I hope in the future we shall learn to treasure what is our birth-right and receive it in our churches."³

Very little information is available here concern-

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1. Fleming, Daniel Johnson: Each With His Own Brush, p. 54
2. Quoted in: Son of Man, p. 3
3. Ibid.



Isa ka Janm (Birth of Christ)
- Mr. S. Bose

ing a Marathi Christian, Mr. Masoji, but he has contributed at least one very beautiful picture of "St. Mary the Virgin", the original being painted in pale colors on tussore silk. It is said that the artist while attending the services at St. Mary's Church, Bhowanipore, Calcutta, where the only religious pictures were by Western artists, was quick to see that the Indians seldom appreciated these pictures, the reason being that they had no appeal and no message to the Eastern mind. It was then he determined to paint a picture of the Virgin which should express her holiness and surrender in terms that India could understand.

Dr. Fleming has included in his collection of Indian Christian paintings a work of Joseph V. Ubale, an artist recently deceased who was a medalist of the Bombay School of Art, and Mrs. E. G. MacMillan who has painted a very sincere picture of the Annunciation in a true Indian setting. Still another artist represented in his book is Sion Bala Das, a gifted teacher in the United Missionary Girls' High School, Calcutta. He tells of how "her first classes in the school were in the nature of adventures undertaken by teacher and pupils together for she had not had much training in art. Later on professional art training became available. At the end of the first year she painted this picture ("Thirst") based on an incident in 'The Hidden Years', and was awarded a prize for the best

picture by a woman in India. Finding that the Hindu influences of the art school stifled her impulse to express her Christian faith in painting, she left the school, and only casual guidance has been available since."¹

2. Discovering latent talent.

Thus an Indian Christian art has begun. Real talent and ability has been discovered in these few artists just noted, and one is grateful for them; but these are obviously few compared to the number there ought to be throughout the whole of the Christian Church in India.

One great task of leaders in India today, then, is to seek out and train the potential talent which no doubt lies dormant in many an Indian Christian boy or girl, man or woman. The schools are naturally the first place to look for this hidden talent, and the first step to take in finding it will be to create an appreciation for art among the pupils in all the schools. This can be accomplished to a great extent by a definite study of paintings; the masterpieces of the world should be included but particular use should be made of the Indian Christian art which is available. Interpretations of the pictures should be emphasized, and a study of the lives of many of the artists will give to boys and girls a vision of what a life dedicated to interpreting the Christian message through art may mean to the world.

Indian school rooms, even the little one-room

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बालों के लिए



DAILY WORSHIP.
कौटुंबिक प्रार्थना

jungle schools with their mud walls and floors, must have pictures on the walls. The children love them! As far as it is possible every effort should be made to use the best art in decorating even the most primitive jungle school room. There will be little appreciation at first, but as the interpretations are learned and integrated in their daily Bible lessons and applied in their every day lives boys and girls from the humblest homes in India are bound to gradually acquire an appreciation for good art.

And such a study may well awaken an interest in some of these boys and girls to see what they themselves can do in expressing their inmost thoughts through drawing and painting. The wise teacher will be on the alert to sense in such work any unusual talent which may be manifested. (To be able to do this the teachers themselves must know and appreciate art which calls for the suggestion that art appreciation be included in the teacher training colleges also.) There will never be great numbers of artists discovered, it is true. Such is never the case. But if the talent of even a few can be brought into the service of the Church it will have been worth all the effort; and at the same time many boys and girls who will be the spiritual leaders of tomorrow will have learned a true appreciation of the best art Christianity has given the world.

Encouragement may also be given the development

of any latent talent by sponsoring contests and exhibitions, perhaps annually or so, with prizes to be awarded for the best contributions. This can be very easily overdone or poorly done, thus hindering its effectiveness, but if properly conducted it could prove of real value in the general effort of encouraging young artists.

Another possible means of bringing the artist's talent into the service of the church is that of employing non-Christian artists. This suggestion will be opposed at once by many, and it is granted that the suggestion is one to be followed with great precautions. But the account of how God used this very method in China, not only to give the world some very exquisite Chinese Christian art but also to lead the artists themselves to Christ, surely substantiates the fact that such a suggestion should at least be considered. This unusual story is quoted from Dr. Fleming. His Excellency is Archbishop Costantini, first apostolic delegate to China (1922-33), and a great lover of art.

"In 1928, while visiting an exhibition in Peking, His Excellency discovered a non-Christian artist, Ch'en Hsu, in whose work was a light of inspiration and a delicate sense for representing not so much the material object, as its poetic aspect according to the finest traditions of Chinese painting. Archbishop Costantini gave him the New Testament to read and begged him to paint his impressions, leaving him free to depict them in whatever way he pleased. Some of the best works of Western Christian art were shown him. Mr. Ch'en's study of the Gospels to be illustrated led, after several years, to his conversion (1932), the Archbishop giving him at baptism the Christian name of Luke. Mr. Ch'en writes: 'I

believe that when I paint the wonders of Christianity according to the ancient rules of Chinese art, the painted object exerts an externally new and strange effect, so that at the same time I enrich to a marked degree the old laws of Chinese painting . . . If I can represent the teachings of our holy church in pictures according to Chinese art, and by means of such natural impressions draw the Chinese to know God, why should I not render so useful and enjoyable a service?'

"Luke Ch'en became one of the professors in the Catholic University of Peking. Several of his students began the study of the Bible and the catechism and tried to fix on canvas what they had read and heard. It is significant that almost all of the original members of this school became Christians through their work in art."¹

Such a thing as asking a non-Christian to paint a Christian theme is not altogether unknown in India today. Mr. S. Bose, an artist who is a Hindu by religion and an instructor in the School of Arts and Crafts in Lucknow was commissioned by a missionary to paint a picture of the Visit of the Wise Men. The picture he painted on that subject is remarkable in that he has represented one of the three Magi as an Indian priest presenting the trident of Hinduism to the Christ Child. This picture is one which has been chosen for cheap reproduction by the Committee on Christian Literature for Women and Children in Mission Fields, Inc. (New York) in cooperation with the National Christian Council of India. Commissioning non-Christian artists to interpret the Christian message is, without doubt, a thing which must be done with great care, but these illustrations indicate

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1. Fleming, Daniel Johnson: Each With His Own Brush, p. 12

possibilities in that direction.

3. Developing latent talent

Discovering such talent is only the beginning. Effort must be made to train those who give promise of ability. And because art is of the nature that it is there can be no question of the great importance of the spiritual training which which the artist must have. If he is to interpret Christ to the world he must know Christ in his heart. This general principle is expressed by Dr. Coomaraswamy in regard to the Hindu artist and may well be adapted to the Christian artist.

"The artist is first of all required to remove himself from human to celestial levels of apperception; at this level and in a state of unification, no longer having in view anything external to himself he sees and realizes, that is to say becomes, what he is afterwards to represent in wrought material. This identification of the artist with the inimitable form of the idea to be expressed is repeatedly insisted upon by Indian books and answers to the Scholastic assumption as stated in the words of Dante, 'No painter can paint a figure if he have not first of all made himself such as the figure ought to be.'¹

If the artist is to give the world a "vision of value" he must first have that vision himself. Writing of artists and their work, Aitken has said,

"They speak to us best when they make something real to us we had else passed by. They paint their noblest pictures when they give us a Christ, or a scene from His life, that appeals to our deepest sense of reality. They come to their greatest influence when they touch some hidden depths of life that leap instinctively to

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1. Introduction to Rowland, op. cit., p. 22



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Christ Blessing the Children
- da Fonseca

recognize the truth of the "word" they have painted. And they win the gratitude of God and man alike when they clothe the Christ-thoughts in flesh and blood, give them new meaning, and make them speak to us again the words of life eternal."¹

A thorough knowledge of God's Word and the appropriation of its teachings in everyday life is as essential for the artist as for the evangelist. And alike their prayer must be:

"Lord, speak to me, that I may speak in living echoes
of Thy tone;
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek Thy erring children
lost and lone.
O lead me, Lord, that I may lead the wandering and the
wavering feet;
O feed me, Lord, that I may feed Thy hungering ones
with manna sweet!
O teach me, Lord, that I may teach the precious things
Thou dost impart;
And wing my words, that they may reach the hidden depths
of many a heart.
O fill me with Thy fullness, Lord, until my very
heart o'erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word, Thy love to tell,
Thy praise to show.
O use me, Lord, use even me, Just as Thou wilt, and when,
and where;
Until Thy blessed face I see, Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy
glory share."

Only when the artist realizes his complete dependence on Christ as the source of his talent and inspiration, and is willing to yield his life, talent and all else, to the service of Christ will we receive from him his richest art.

As in every other realm, however, the development of the artist's spiritual life must be accompanied by a

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1. Aitken, op. cit., p. 5

development of his cultural life as well. Havell gives an interesting comment on the Indian artist's cultural life:

"The important part which craftsmen, more especially oriental craftsmen, have always played in the world's history as missionaries of civilization, culture, and religion, is not generally recognized by bookmen. Even at the present day the Indian craftsman, deeply versed in his Silpasastras, learned in folk-lore and in national epic literature, though excluded from Indian universities - or rather, on that account - is often more highly cultured intellectually and spiritually than the average Indian graduate. In medieval times the craftsman's intellectual influence, being creative and not merely assimilative, was at least as great as that of the priest and bookman. The Founder of Christianity was Himself a craftsman, and in those noblest monuments of the Christian faith - the Gothic cathedrals of medieval Europe - we can see that the splendid craftsmen of the Middle Ages preached and practised a religion like their Master's, pure and undefiled before God, while philosophers and bookmen wrangled over its dogmas."¹

The Indian artist must be encouraged and helped to secure as thorough a general education as possible along with his spiritual training.

Another thing which the artist must be urged to keep in mind is that India is a country of the common people, and if he is to reach the greatest number he must paint in terms which will be understood by the common folk. It was indicated in an earlier chapter of this work how commendably the Rajput art accomplished this very thing. Havell has said:

"In the villages of India the true artistic spirit

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1. Havell, E. B.: Indian Sculpture and Painting, p. 186

still survives, and, if we and educated Indians would know what true Indian art is we must go there where the heart of India beats, where the voices of her dead myriads still are heard and learn a lesson that neither London nor Paris can teach."¹

These and other suggestions will be a part of the guidance which the young artist must be given. Perhaps they might best all be summed up in the Craftsman's Creed which Dr. Fleming has quoted:

"I hold with none who think not work a boon vouchsafed to man that he may aid his kind with offerings from his chisel, wheel, or loom, fashioned with loving heart and loving mind. All of the fine traditions and the skill, come from my elders through the long line down, are mine to use to raise our craft's renown and mine to teach again with reverent will. Thus do I live to serve, though least for pay, with fingers which are masters, of the tool and eyes which light to see the pattern's play as it unfolds, obedient to each rule of our dear art. So all my craft is praise to God - at once part homage and part song. My work's my prayer, I sing the whole day long as faith and beauty shape the forms I raise."²

C. Suggestions in Regard to the Artist's Audience

Although it is important to discover and develop dormant talent, even this is not adequate in the effort which must be made to further the cause of an indigenous Indian Christian art, for as Dr. Fleming has well expressed it, "It takes two things to make an artist: genius and a public wanting it."³ It is to be regretted that the demand for Christian art in India today is so

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1. Ibid., p. 247
2. Fleming, Daniel Johnson: Christian Symbols in a World Community, p. 23
3. Conversation with Dr. Fleming

negligible that even the few artists who would like to give their time and talent to producing a Christian art are not able to make a living by doing so.

Here, again, the first suggestion for developing a public that will want art is to create in them an appreciation for art. In many cases this will necessitate the Christian leaders, missionary and educated Indian alike, first creating within themselves this appreciation of the value and effectiveness of art, and of the place it should have in the development of the Christian Church of India today. Such an appreciation will include an acquaintance with Indian art and its characteristics. The common attitude even among many learned people that art is something apart from the ordinary man's experience and something to be appreciated only by those who have a natural aptitude for producing it themselves is definitely a mistaken one.

Barnes has likened the acquiring of an appreciation for art to the learning of a foreign language or to understanding the working of a great machine. At first there is only a babel of voices, vowel sounds and consonants, inflections and gestures, as we hear the foreign language, but they mean little or nothing until a real effort has been made to learn what to listen for and how to interpret it. The machine is a blur of wheels and shafts with little relationship to one another until a careful study has been made of their function; it is not until one has learned to

know each part and its purpose in relation to the others that he will see the connections which are made to produce power. Likewise, when one has learned the grammar and vocabulary of the foreign language and knows what to listen for the finer shades of sound begin to stand out and take on meaning. So it is with art.

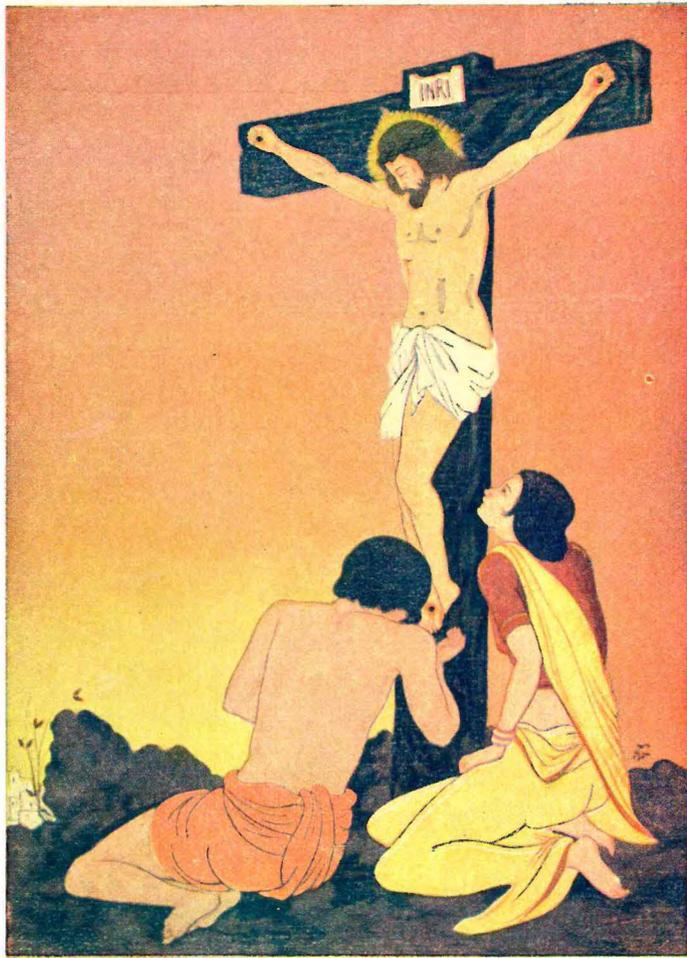
"We perceive only what we have learned to look for, both in life and in art. The artist, whether in paint, words, or musical tones, has embodied an experience in his work, and to appreciate his painting or poem or symphony, we must reconstruct his experience, so far as we are able, in ourselves. . . . To see as the artist sees is an accomplishment to which there is no short cut, which cannot be acquired by any magic formula or trick; it requires not only the best energies of which we are capable, but a methodical direction of those energies, based upon scientific understanding of the meaning of art and its relation to human nature. . . . What has made the study of science valuable and fruitful is method, and without a corresponding method of learning to see the study of art can lead only to futility."¹

When the leaders have realized the truth here expressed they will realize also that much can certainly be done in developing an appreciation for the artist's work even among the common folk of India.

As in the search for latent talent so also in the developing of the public's appreciation of art the schools are the place to begin. Much can be accomplished here by such efforts as supplementing Bible study with the study of great works of art, decorating the walls with really good art as far as possible, and giving courses in art appre-

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1. Barnes, op. cit., p. 7



Crucifixion
A. D. Thomas

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ciation.

But schools are not the only place to develop this appreciation, and to cultivate a desire for a Christian art. Here it is well to consider a method which was popular in Hindu Religious Education for centuries, that of the minstrel-painter. It is true that the method is used in a modified form by many of our present day evangelists, but it is also true that the method could be more Indianized by the use of distinctly Indian art and a closer integration of the story, picture and music.

The "picture-showman" seems to have made his first appearance in Indian literature in the early centuries of the Christian era. Accounts of them down through the years reveal a variety of types. One group, known by the name of Nakha, was a class of Brahmans; another, known as the Chitrakathis (picture-showmen), was an illiterate peasant type from the Deccan. The group reputed to have been the most popular of all was that known as the Yamapatakas who specialized in paintings delineating the rewards and punishments awarded after death for acts done in life.

An interesting account of the Chitrakathis describes them as those whose occupation was to exhibit puppet plays and to chant ballads illustrated by their pictures. They were very similar to their neighbors, the farmer caste, in dress, customs and habits, but they had a separate caste organization which enforced discipline among the members:

among other things it . .

" . . . compelled each family, on pain of fine, to maintain at least one complete set of pictures. They carried these folded in cloth and slung on their shoulders, and wandered from village to village. An assistant carried a drum, beating it now and then, and inquiring if people would like to hear the exploits of the gods. If consent was given and a crowd collected, the Chittrakathi squatted in a convenient corner and opened his package in which the plates were arranged in their proper sequence. He began training in the profession at the age of ten and within two years or three was word-perfect in his narration. With experience he sometimes also acquired the art of repartee."¹

The narration of his story was usually accompanied by subdued music of a stringed instrument, and sometimes interspersed with singing and preaching. He would show each plate to the spectators as the story proceeded. A prosperous Chittrakathi, of course, would have several sets in his repertoire and each of these would comprise thirty-five to forty pictures.

The stories which they illustrated were all taken from their sacred scriptures, but very often freely improved to obtain greater effectiveness in telling. The Chittrakathis were an illiterate group, but their evident understanding of the psychology of story-telling and the use of pictures supplementing it is remarkable.

The continued popularity of teaching religion by illustrated stories down through the centuries has proved its effectiveness as a means of religious propaganda among the illiterate masses. Havell deploras its present state

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1. Murdeshwar, B. G.: Chittrakathis, The Times of India Annual, 1940

of disuse.

"The moral and religious teaching of the great Hindu epics was, and still is to a certain extent, popularized in a similar way by minstrel-painters wandering from village to village, but the scheme of modern progress elaborated by the educated townsman has no use for this traditional method of popular culture, so the Indian villager desirous of recreation or edification must wait patiently until the cinema points the modern way to spiritual enlightenment, or prostitution."¹

Some characteristics of the minstrel-painter of other centuries would not be desirable carried over into Christian Education today, but the general idea is so "Indian" and has apparently been so effective through the years that it would seem highly advisable to adopt it to an even greater extent than it has been by the Christian evangelist. If the pictures used by the evangelist were truly Indian art would they not have greater appeal to the Indian mind and heart?

Drummond in discussing the use of the arts in the church building deals with the possibility of painting on church walls. He calls to mind the fact that mural painting especially may present its subject-matter with great dramatic force and spiritual insight. He suggests that if the lines of the church building permit, an effort should be made to paint scenes from the Gospel story after the manner of Mr. William Hole,

" . . . who shows Jesus standing out against the background of His own country and His own age. Something

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1. Havell, E. B.: Indian Sculpture and Painting, p. 181

of the color of Palestine, the strong sunlight, the far horizons of a land of hills and valleys, of stones and olives and close-built villages gleaming on the mountainsides - might be imparted to the bare walls of our churches, and thus assist the preacher in his task of making Jesus real to people who are apt to form flat and conventional view of Him . . . Fresco can bring before the people the Christ of Experience as well as the Jesus of History."¹

Such a use of art in the church would be probably the first to call forth criticism of those who fear idolatry and that danger should certainly be guarded against with great care, but not necessarily to the exclusion of such a use. Other objections also must be faced in regard to mural paintings in churches, such as the problem of prohibitive cost, the difficulty of obtaining craftsmen, and the difficulty that mural paintings are apt to fade, though this latter problem may be solved by the proper use of fresco. Among the more primitive churches is the very basic difficulty of the impermanent nature of the walls of the church building itself. Nevertheless, the idea of mural paintings on the walls of the churches which are architecturally adapted to it might well be considered by individual congregations. Where it was found advisable it would serve the three-fold purpose of being a teaching aid, a means of developing art appreciation, and a means of income for the artist.

The home is still another very important place

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1. Drummond, op. cit., p. 303

where the effort should be made to implant a love and appreciation of good Christian art. Miss Clementina Butler, Chairman of the Committee on Christian Literature for Women and Children in Mission Fields, Inc., has already begun a very splendid work with this particular interest in mind. Finding that Christians were using the cheap pictures of Hindu religious themes and gods, which were abundantly available in color, simply because they love "pretty pictures" she resolved to do something about it.

What could be done for these color-loving Indian folk? The problem was to find pictures which would be understood by the Indian mind. Western symbolism even in the best pictures was apt to be unintelligible; and at the same time it helped to associate Christianity too much with white supremacy. She finally determined to secure pictures by Indian artists on some of the simple Christian themes. Prizes were offered for the best pictures by Indian artists on some of these subjects. She soon had a series of ten of these pictures which she had printed in a size ten by fourteen inches; they sell at the very reasonable price of one anna (about two cents) a piece. This has already helped to meet a very definite need for cheap but good Indian art to place in the homes. It is to be hoped that this work may continue to develop.

Other possibilities of placing good Christian art before the people would be its use in hospitals, especially

by the Bible women who have opportunity to give the message there. Where pictures are to be used for decoration the best Indian art possible should be chosen. The contests and exhibitions mentioned earlier in the chapter would serve this same purpose also if they were properly publicized and conducted. Still another possibility would be that of having a series of Christian pictures with their interpretations printed in current Christian magazines from time to time.

When by these and various other methods the Indian public has been awakened to a true appreciation of good Christian art, and that appreciation results in a desire to consume such art, one of the Indian Christian artist's greatest problems will have been solved. This economic difficulty is manifestly one of the chief hindrances to the development of an Indian Christian art, in spite of the fact that art is not in any sense a commercial vocation. But the artist does have to live. And until this problem does right itself in the natural course of such a development it is imperative that some means be provided to enable the artist to live and be able to give his time to the production of his work.

This is not easy to do. The simplest thing would be for the artist to receive foreign support while pursuing his art, but this is definitely to be avoided. It is bound to engender slothfulness or too great a sense of dependence,

or both.

Dr. Fleming's suggestion regarding this problem is well worth considering. Recognizing the need for art in the younger churches, he also suggests that homes and churches in the West would be greatly enriched by some beautiful originals by an Eastern artist. Such originals are available and their sale in the more wealthy West is almost a matter of life or death for Christian art in several lands of the Orient today.

This involves at once the necessity of the Western Church learning to appreciate the Eastern art, but that necessity is certainly to be welcomed rather than deplored. Any effort expended in that direction can result only in an enriching of the culture of the Western church, in a fuller insight into Truth as it is conceived by the Oriental mind, and in a stronger bond of understanding and love between the two lands.

D. Conclusion

It is cause for real wonder that there is even as much indigenous Christian art as is found in India today. That which exists has been produced with practically no encouragement or concern on the part of the Church as a whole. But the fact that it has developed as it has, in spite of this lack, should be a great inducement to put forth every

effort possible in the future, not to force a further development but to encourage and guide it. If so much has come with no encouragement, what may we not expect from the artist's brush when the Church does all it can to give art its rightful place in Indian Christianity?

CHAPTER VII
GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER VII

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A. Restatement of the Problem

Art is recognized as a valuable aid in modern religious education in the West, and there is a definite place for its use in that field, but little heed has been given to it in India. The general attitude toward it has been more to suppress its use and development than to encourage it. The problem of this thesis has been to discover the use which has been made of art in India in the past, to show that an indigenous Indian art should be an integral part of the development of the present day church, and to give some suggestions for furthering this development.

B. Summary of Findings

Research has shown that art as a means of expressing religious truths and morals is no new thing in India; that, in fact, with the exception of Mogul art, its one chief purpose has always been to propagate the religion sponsoring it, whether Buddhist, Jain or Hindu. The continued use of it for this one purpose has proved its effectiveness as a means of Religious Education among India's teeming millions. It has also been found, looking back into the past, that a really great art, comparable in quality to much of the best

European art, has been developed in India at several periods of her long, continuous development of civilization, establishing the fact that she is capable of producing a great art as well as appreciating it.

A study of the nature of art has made clear the reason why art is appreciated as it is in a land of so much illiteracy as India. In spite of their illiteracy, the Indian people as a whole are a philosophical people, and even the peasantry respond to the use of art because they are accustomed to a philosophic approach to life. "Artists pierce through incidents and trappings to the soul underneath"¹, and the Indian, who is a philosopher first and an artist afterward, responds naturally to the type of message the artist purports to give.

It has been found, however, that there is a real difference in Western and Eastern art, and that each is better adapted to the comprehension and appreciation of its own people than of others. It has also been pointed out that if Christianity in any land is a vital organism it will reveal itself as such in the natural development of indigenous social forms and methods of fostering spiritual life. Thus the development of an indigenous Christian art is both inevitable and essential in a living, growing, and properly developing Church in India.

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1. Son of Man, p. 1

Research has also revealed a number of problems which will necessarily arise with the use and development of art in India. But it has been found that every problem which has so far come to mind has had its counterpart in the development of Christian art in the West, and has served rather as an aid to art than a hindrance in that it has helped to keep the artist and his audience aware of the values of art, and on the alert against its misuse. Many have not heeded the signposts along the way, and art has, even in the West, been too often used to serve a purpose for which it was never intended, but this has not kept the Western Church from giving the world its greatest art.

In seeking for ways in which to encourage the use and development of art in India it has been found that there are two chief aspects of the need, one in regard to the artist himself, and the other in regard to his public. Already the seeds of an indigenous Christian art have been planted in India by a few artists who realize the need, and desire to give their lives and talent to meeting that need. But their number is small, and there is need of discovering and training latent talent. It is imperative also to find a means of meeting the economic needs of the artist until his Indian public will have come to the place where it can consume his work and make it possible for him to exist while executing his art. The specific need of the Christian public is that it be trained to appreciate art and to use

it properly as an aid to teaching and worship. Some suggestions have been made for meeting these needs in the various avenues of the work of the Church, in her schools, her village work, her hospitals, homes, and churches.

C. Conclusions

In the light of these findings, one is justified in coming to the following conclusions:

1. On the basis of history, art is a potential means of religious education in India.

2. On the bases of the nature of art and of the philosophic nature of the Indian mind, art is particularly appropriate as a means of portraying the truth of the Christian message to the Indian people.

3. Because of the marked difference in the character of European and Indian art, the latter being far better suited to the comprehension of the Indian mind, every effort should be made to use and further develop an indigenous Christian art in India.

4. The problems which will arise with such a use and development should not be ignored, neither should they be permitted to stifle it; but they must be met and overcome as they have been in the growth of European art.

5. Because of its nature, the development of an art cannot be forced but it can be encouraged and guided.

6. Numerous ways of using and encouraging an

indigenous Christian art in India are possible, and should be employed to this end.

Therefore, in the light of this study and of these evident conclusions, it is apparent that an indigenous Christian art would be of great value in the Church in India, and that it could be and should be developed as an integral part of that body.

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