

“Art at its highest tends to become also the simplest and the most unconventional; and it is then the highest art, precisely because it does not aim at being artistic. The æsthetic motive is totally absent in the *Upanishads*; the sense of beauty is there, but it is attendant upon and involved in a deeper strand of consciousness.”

Verily Art at its highest does not tolerate any conventionality, nor violence. In the very foundations of Being lives the concept of Beauty, in all its convincingness.

We, as builders, do not deny, nor reject.

“In Beauty we are united!

Through Beauty we pray!

With Beauty we conquer!”

Beautiful Unity

By Nicholas Roerich

Colour, sound and fragrance are corner-stones of great synthesis. From times immemorial people have felt the great inner meaning of these expressions of the human soul. Quite recently people have again begun to remember how close are colour and sound and that the three are the basic remedies against human diseases. Thus he who thinks about the conception of colour does not at all associate it with paint as such, but he has in mind one of the greatest concepts of our existence.

The colour value of a painting, indeed, does not mean mere value of paint, but of its harmonic co-relation, as the French say “*valeur*.” What does such co-relation mean? Again we must say, that for him who is ignorant of the concepts of synthesis and symphony such co-relation will be an empty word.

Let us not dwell here on the deep significance of art for human life—this axiom should be clear to everyone. But nowadays we must especially stress the meaning of synthesis and symphony of life. Synthesis will be understood by everyone to whom is close the concept of Culture. If human thinking were to remain but on the level of elementary civilization, then it would be too early to mention sacred synthesis, but where the human spirit has travelled towards

Culture—that is to say, the Cult of Light—there one may already find co-operation and understanding on the basis of synthesis.

If civilization has not saved humanity from disunity and mutual hatred, then Culture has opened the beneficial gates of synthesis, behind which we can find a true co-operation.

The artists do not rest on primitive considerations of paint, but the very understanding of sonority of colour leads them to such beautiful gardens from where may be seen superb vistas of the glorious future. When we speak of synthesis and of the symphony of life, we shall not avoid powerful and enthusiastic expressions. All these domains of synthesis and symphony are uplifting and lead to the summits. Often the human eye can hardly stand the radiance of snowy peaks and it is not for the human eye to judge the splendour of these summits. But we have not been called into this world to criticize, but to labour, to admire and to follow these leading summits in continuous creation.

Create, Create and Create! Create in daytime, create at night; for creation in thought is as essential as our physical expression. In this creativeness you shall overcome the most hideous habits of vulgarity, triviality and quarelling. People sometimes think that creators are very selfish and conceited. But these ugly properties belong to the domain of darkness. When a person “climbs” to the Light, then such an abhorrent husk drops off by itself and man becomes enlightened. His “I,” is changed into the conception of “We.”

On the same path towards the summits, man will understand the true meaning of *Guruship*. From the depth of darkness one can hear at present disgusting cries: “Down with culture,” “Down with heroes,” “Down with teachers.” It is a shame on humanity, but such outcries of crass ignorance one witnesses even nowadays. But he who thinks of such a refined conception as colour and sound, culture and harmony, he will understand the infinite Hierarchy of Beauty and Knowledge and having ascended the majestic stairs of achievement, he will lead also the pilgrims of life following behind.

It is splendid that you all are young. Some in age, and some in spirit. Around creativeness there must be this perpetual feeling of youth, which gives incessant striving towards heroism. Countries measure their glory not by captains of industry, but by artists and scientists. Such a requirement of history places upon us the duty of incessant perfecting. He who never ceases in this ascension, never becomes old.

I send you my heartiest greetings on this path towards the radiant summits and I trust that you, forgetting all petty divisions and small human moods, will progress in continuous creation, cherishing the glorious traditions of your great Motherland, India!

Nolini Kanta Gupta writes in the *Triveni*, in the course of his article on the “Beautiful in the *Upanishads*.”