

C R E A T I V E T H O U G H T

It is appropriate I think in these days of mighty conflagrations and upheavals to turn towards the eternal values. The values of man's higher creative aspirations, values which survive every and all conflicts beyond the reach of temporary destruction and confusion.

In order to progress we must always be ready to learn and borrow, never being afraid of losing our individuality. An individuality which must be safeguarded artificially, cannot survive. By studying and absorbing the best in every branch of achievement of every country and every nation, we accumulate that necessary material of impressions, which will eventually reemerge "de novo" transmuted by our own particular individuality into a new and greater expression. Plato said: "By contemplating the beautiful, we elevate ourselves." - and the same truth has been proclaimed by all the great thinkers throughout the ages.

It is of special significance and not an accident that the spiritual impulse was the greatest stimulus to Art. From time immemorial the higher aspirations of mankind have found their noblest expressions, their highest concern in spiritual and formerly religious movements and concepts. Thus beauty and spiritual aspirations blend in one expression and become to us objective representations, a crystallization, so to say, of Higher Life.

We must ever advance, we cannot ^I say still, lest we retrograde - and by placing higher ideals before us, we are drawn towards them, and our consciousness expands beyond the little needs of every-day, beyond the ugliness of ignorance and imperfection. The real values of life become more and

more evident. We can direct our efforts more constructively, we begin to look for beauty and harmony in life; we are ascending and we are moving with the wave of evolution.

Have you ever felt the thrill of beholding a beautiful landscape, a beautiful sunset, or, when listening to the words of an inspired poet? Have you ever felt moved and elevated beholding a beautiful statue or painting? Works of Art are the crystallization of artist's thoughts and emotions, his aspirations and trials. They are a living record left to us by these inspired souls, who have passed onward. These works of Art have a subjective force concealed in their outward aspect, and by turning ourselves to them we respond to the vibrations that have originally called forth the particular image.

We must consciously try to raise our mind to a receptive state, to draw ⁱⁿ towards, so to say, and then we become aware of the influence emanating from a work of Art.

It is not an accident that people like to keep some little keepsake of a beloved hero or leader. Take for instance, some handwriting, an autograph, the character of the writer can be read from his signature or writings. In other words it lives imprisoned in those lines and curves and speaks eloquently to him, who can decipher them. And or those who cannot do so as yet, it remains there still concealed, and radiates its influence unfelt by them. This stored up, but ever present energy is ready to emerge for him, who can attune himself to its influence.

Thus creations of Art are living entities, the living records of the artist's accumulated thoughts and experiences we must value them and respect them, the same as we would any sincere and great emotion in a living person.

But would this not lead to heroworship? Heroworship as such is only the natural evolutionary urge to aspire towards something beyond the manifestations of everyday life. It may degenerate only when it is misplaced as almost any misplaced devotion is apt to, but otherwise it is a most worthy feeling recognition of merit and achievements. Only by aspiring to something better, can we raise ourselves; and in this light, how paramount becomes the need to guard and preserve all the innumerable manifestations of human genius, entrusted to our safekeeping by generations already past.

Let us safeguard jealously and lovingly the living records of all great men. These great souls, who left us their enduring records, will ever radiate their influence on those, who can attune themselves to them. Let us strive and find a worthy purpose in life, not merely to live and improve our material existence. Let us look beyond it, and life will assume a new aspect full of meaning, full of significance.

New and beautiful concepts regenerate our everyday habits. There is infinite interest and tolerance. The aspirations of our brother become full of meaning through the spirit of understanding and co-operation.

War, with all its ugliness, is a direct threat to civilisation in so many different ways; by destroying creations of Art, records of Thought, it deprives us and the future generations of impressions, sources of influence and inspiration.

Violence hesitates under the vaults of a lofty Cathedral, while it will thrive in an ugly den. We must beautify our homes, our surroundings, they will in turn radiate their influence upon us, our children, and repay us a thousandfold.

We know of the influence colours have on the mood of people. Extensive experiments have been carried out and have clearly demonstrated this reaction on the mentality of men.

Let us be receptive and open minded, let us try to approach consciously the better constructive strivings of mankind and partaking of them, radiate them in turn ^uinto others. ✓

Those countries, which encouraged the Arts most, had the greatest artists. As if to compensate for their strivings towards beauty, the souls of great artists were drawn into the vortex of births, and made to incarnate there where conditions were ready for them. Thus the old saying: "The Master comes when the pupil is ready" - is ever justified.

The wheel of life turns and the efflorescence of culture passes on to some new centre to blossom forth, when the time is ripe. This constant flow and ebb, the rhythm of spiritual life ever pulsates throughout all nations and countries. History ever repeats itself, in order to have great artists, we must prepare the way for them, we must constantly educate the masses to understand and love cultural values and the arts, and slowly the way will be prepared for the great souls to make their appearance.

But what about the artists themselves? The artists must realise the responsibility they have towards humanity. Being conscious of the fact that they influence life and the coming generations, the artists must spare no effort in improving themselves and in trying to acquire as broad a view and perception as possible.

We must know life in all its manifestations in order to portray it and to interpret it correctly. We must

always keep an open mind. Every man and artists in particular must cultivate the art of conscious and creative thinking. We must learn to think consciously. Every minute of our time we should devote to some achievement. Modern civilised and highly complicated life, with all its distractions, tends unfortunately to develop a peculiar mode of thinking. While the accumulation of facts is there, the conscious effort of independent organised thought is often lost.

People live and think from impulse to impulse and when outside stimulation is lacking - there is often distress, restlessness and a craving for excitement. Time must be killed, and one must occupy one's mind.

How often we see people unhappy if they cannot go to some place of amusement every night. They positively exhibit signs of mental distress, simply because they are left to their own resources, there is no one to think for them and thus to stimulate their own latent mental effort.

Necessary as is the accumulation of facts and impressions, they must be assimilated consciously, otherwise there is a danger in a constant ever increasing desire or craving to stimulate our own thinking by outside factors and artificial excitements: it is a positive process devoid of the inner creative impulse. I like to stress that in order to develop our own thoughts, we must absorb facts and impressions, and consciously assimilate them by comparing and pondering over them, thus we shall enrich our process of thinking. Only thus we can really create new conceptions and new forms ^{and} our subconscious mind, stimulated into activity by a conscious creative impulse, will combine and recombine our impressions, and endlessly we can draw on them and thus develop mentally, not ^{as} merely thinking machines, but ^{as} consciously thinking individuals. How often do we meet people loaded with facts and impressions, but the real meaning of which is never grasped; their relative position in life is not properly appreciated,

and distortions and misconceptions often follow.

Creative and conscious thought in all the domains of human life is the heritage of every human being. Science has pushed back the limits of our conceptions. What philosophy proclaimed ages ago, science now begins to demonstrate practically. We are standing ^{at} on the threshold of momentous discoveries, but how many of us realise the full scope of these facts?

We usually make use of these inventions and discoveries mechanically, as a matter of course, we make them serve our needs, but how often do we stop to ponder over the real purport and importance of a discovery in its bearing on the concept of life in its universal significance?

Let us turn on the radio, let us listen to a broadcast, a lecture, a recital, a football match, the results of some racing - do we often stop to think of the tremendous vistas opened before us by this momentous discovery? Our brain is found to emit waves, and telepathy steps forward from the realm of mere hypothesis.

In this light how paramount it becomes to cultivate constructive thoughts.

By cultivating creative, conscious and independent thinking, pondering over problems and conceptions, we realise our own relative position in life; life assumes a different meaning and the clamour for mechanical stimulation disappears. We learn to consciously select those impressions we wish to receive, we analyse them and assimilate them. They will serve to stimulate future ^{thought} and widen our perceptions.

How much unhappiness and misery could be avoided by the spirit of better understanding? But this understanding

can really never come unless we try to realise the problems that govern life, and meditate on them consciously, not as automations, stimulated by the ^Kchaleidoscopic rush of mechanical impressions. We must realise that craving after pleasure, as well as any blind gratification of our desires and instincts, cannot lead to lasting happiness and contentment.

The craving after pleasure and excitements grows with gratification and we must increase the dose. Our mind is so organised that the process of thinking must go on. But whether it becomes a creative thought propelled and guided by a conscious effort ^{of} our inner self, or a mere mechanical reaction to outside stimulation, depends on the path we choose to follow.

Turning to Art, let us study the workings of creative thought. If we take art in its usual aspects, we can very clearly see the difference that lies between real creativeness and mere mechanical imitation. One is the basis of real art in the full significance of this word, it is the hall-mark of every true artist, the other is nothing, but blind craftsmanship.

The creative artist having become familiar with form and colours, rhythms and light effects wields them by the power of his individual thought and transmutes them into new combinations and meanings. Everything he sees goes through his individual process of assimilation to re-emerge as his own particular interpretation. It is a continuous process this creative thinking, it can be developed like any other faculty and it must be constantly and consciously exercised.

Blind craftsmanship is nothing but a mechanical repetition of what has been once the product of a creative process, that is to say, all the samples and standards used by craftsman were once produced by creative artists and are

now repeated only for the sake of production, used as matrix for the craftsman to work from, without any idea of actually creating something new giving some new expression to old standards.

Craftsmanship is necessary indeed, but it must not be blind. It must not kill our creative impulse. We must always encourage creative expression and provide the facilities and stimulus to develop new styles. Every epoch had its own special style, every period developed its own standards of beauty and form - life moves ever onward.

Civilisation arise and fall; they give birth to great philosophies and art and when the apex is reached when a nation can develop no further, the propelling impulse shifts elsewhere, is, so to say, transferred from one nation to its successor. A civilisation can never repeat itself under the same circumstances. The forms of the past are only the stepping stones of Tomorrow.

Let us be open minded, without prejudice, this insidious reptile of by-gones, while developing the best in us, let also guard ourselves against blind ^{chauvinism} shovinizism. Blind shovinizism tries to exclude outside influence for the sake of developing only those already existing in some particular place. But who can draw the line and say with certainty that these already existing standards have not been borrowed from somewhere at some remote time, most probably they have been.

The necessity to learn and borrow freely from all great sources was emphasised by the great men of all time. The great French Artist Ingres said:

"Nothing worse could happen to us than to remain with our own impressions only, for we would be forced by circumstances to repeat them ad infinitum."

Thus style develops together with the growth of nation. The national style is the objective signature of the inherent faculties of the nation. Every race has its own specific tendencies inborn and transmitted as a patrimony, and by developing them to the fullest capacity we fulfill our special evolutionary mission.

What wonderful opportunities lie here in India with the achievement of India's past, the achievement of the entire world to draw from, how great may be the results! I can almost see the former decorative concepts assuming a new life, approached from a new angle, a blending of decorative-ness with synthesis and ^{new} realism.

The great sculptures of Kajuraho, of Ellora, ^{Mahabalipuram} Elephanta, Bhuvaneshvar, Sanchi, Amaravati, what a marvellous heritage! What a wonderful patrimony! Time alone can weave the design of the future. Our mission lies in a constant search for and the gradual evolution of a new expression. We must never be afraid of, or condemn some new sincere experiments in expression; all these experiments, all the infinitudes of schools and "Time" they will find their proper place, and time will reveal their real merits. Every sincere search will be of value to the coming generations of artists. Every new concept, every new theory, whether living in itself or not, will find its appointed place and will in time contribute to the great evolutionary wave which carries over onward our endeavours.

It would be wrong and nearsighted to condemn any experiment as such. We may condemn a fashion, when something becomes predominant to the exclusion of everything else. But this has nothing to do with the experiment itself, and every experiment as such is worthy of independent life and individual consideration.

If we survey the evolution of all the Arts, we can see that the general tendency or aim, throughout the ages, was to come closer to real living quality, to better express life a synthesis of life and emotions more forcibly, in other words to infuse life into a work of Art.

Let us take, for instance, the evolution of Sculpture in Europe, from Greece onward. I take Greece as a starting point, because in Greece sculpture has reached such an exalted perfection. Looking at some of these works, one could really ask oneself the question; could perfection of form, execution and visualisation go any further, could it reach a higher standard of perfection along the same lines of development? It seems, as if the very perfection and excellence have been reached and perhaps it has. The evolutionary trend seems to confirm this view. The Greek Culture began to decay. The high standards of art having attained a relative perfection, after a period of hesitation at the summit, began to show signs of decadence. The wave of evolution was ready to move elsewhere.

The Greek Sculptures were taken to Rome, the nascent new Centre, and on these priceless foundations grew the new Roman Art. New problems presented themselves, life dictated new standards, they were sought after and found.

It is not as yet quite clear whither the tide was carrying the artist's quest. But the renaissance in Italy has already marked clearly the path for future generations of artists to follow. It was the quest after a more eloquent expression of life, to solve the problems that led to a greater illusion and eloquence.

Through the brilliant array of sculptors with Donatellos and Verrochios, the zenith was again reached in Michael Angelo, this giant of creativeness, this incomparable

genius; as if Phidias himself came again to search for new forms of expression; and they were found. The old traditions of Greek and Rome achievements served to develop Michael Angelo's vision, and we notice the synthesis of suggestion making its appearance.

Such phenomenal minds, as Leonardo da Vinci, ever engrossed in probing the mysteries of life, the laws governing life and the ways of interpreting life - they paved the way for a better understanding of the principles, that serve to express better that fugitive ever present living quality.

But it was only for a man, like Rodin, to synthesise and transmute these innumerable lessons of the past. His marble assumed quite a new life, it became warm, living. It began to live its own life. He liberated form, and made form serve its purpose, and no one did before him. The sense of rhythm the sense of motion, the sense of mass, details only sufficiently suggested to stimulate our own mind, he made them his in the full sense of the word.

Innumerable are the experiments carried on in the domain of more eloquent expression. Some of them led us into abstractions, where form was suppressed altogether and only subjective rhythm remained. It will be for another coming synthetic giant, like Rodin, to make use of all these experiments, and again transmute them into something still greater, still more expressive.

An ugly face can be beautified by transcendental emotion. The rays of the Sun suddenly illuminating bleak and barren rocks, infuse a new beauty and glory into an otherwise lifeless landscape. These problems of Art and expressions, if studied from the point of view of historical development, all seem to indicate that greater realisation of life in all its purport is the quest followed by all great

Artists and Movements collectively.

I have often pondered over the cycle of development of great artists, the line of development they followed in their individual artistic efforts. Is it not significant that within the short span of their own lives, they followed or repeated the same evolutionary development, as exemplified by the trend of the great cycle of Man's achievements, which we have just attempted to describe.

If we study this and compare, we, perchance, can ever clearer see the trend of life and evolution. Man's cycle of life is repeated in the life of a nation and nations make up the life of a race. Compare the chronological development of a few great artists, it is easy to follow their progress from year to year. How clearly we perceive a common line of search and growth, the beginning, the apex and the close of their career; these great men all passing through the same stages of development.

Take such artists as Rembrandt, Frans Hals, Velasquez, Titian, El Greco, let us follow their gradual development. We first see a certain preoccupation with form, a kind of hesitation as if the Artists were not quite certain or familiar with the functions of forms, their relative importance and handling. They were all very careful about their statements. They tried to depict the details, as they appeared to them, and they delighted in the search after beautifully designed forms and blended colours.

Their technique is tight. The statement of facts guarded but as they progressed and mastered the relative relations of forms, the blending of colours, values and the problems of light and shade, they turned to a more synthetic and direct interpretation; in other words, having conquered the problem of form and having reached their respective apexes of mastery in the sphere of finished expression and composition,

they began to look for other problems to solve or rather, perhaps, their achievements failed to satisfy them.

Thus they came to this individual search for anew and more eloquent expression, as if realising that finished design and outward form in pictorial representation lacks something. Independently they all came to the same conclusion and their research has led them all through the same progressive stages to solve individually the same problems.

I repeat individually, for they were strikingly removed from each other, as far as their technical approach was concerned. It is wonderful indeed to see these great artists independently of each other striving towards the same and using each his own means to solve the identical problems.

What were these problems then? To achieve a more eloquent expression, a greater rendering and understanding of life, not the outward form only, but the real meaning of it, the hidden character. They all came to this through the mastery of outward form and now having reached this apex they deliberately began to make form serve their purpose, they were not subservient to it as formerly. Light and shade began to play a more important role, and the meaning of colours became more apparent.

The great Chinese artists have also come to this same truth ages ago, the truth of abbreviated statement. They have found the same principle that one forcibly expressed, colourful word is worth ten carefully chosen but weak, nebulous sentences.

All this led to the search and perfection of unfinished statement. The greatest art of all the Art - how to omit. This is the last and the most difficult lesson to learn.

By mastering this last word in statement, we achieve the great miracle of living works of Art. Light and shade colours are the vivifying principles abbreviated statement gives the dynamic and living quality to design.

Thus the great Artists, all learned the same lesson, went through the same cyclic development, after careful mastery of form and texture, after studied and blended colours and compositions, they began the search for the inner character. A certain freedom appears, a freedom from tradition, a very pronounced suggestion of facts, an indefinite treatment, which leaves a great deal to our imagination. In other words, their art-process has evolved until the painting itself becomes a constantly creative object for every one who looks at it. It has emancipated itself of the shackles of physical limitation, it has transcended beyond into the realm of Spirit, and it carries with it into that realm everyone, who looks and meditates upon it.

This realm is individual indeed. It speaks to every one in his ^{own} language, there are only a few essentials to guide our mind. Thus, the onlooker becomes his own creator, and the painting is ever living for every individual who may look upon it.

To awaken this creative genius in man is one of the greatest and highest aspects of Art. And we find that these great Masters have all come to this realization, and their paintings have become vibrant with suppressed definition and expressed emotion and thought.

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CREATIVE THOUGHT.

By

- SVETOSLAV

ROETICH -

It is appropriate I think in these days of mighty conflagrations and upheavals to turn towards the eternal values. The values of man's higher creative aspirations, values, which survive every and all conflicts beyond the reach of temporary destructions and confusion.

In order to progress we must always be ready to learn and borrow, never being afraid of losing our individuality. An individuality, which must be safeguarded artificially, cannot survive. By studying and absorbing the best in every branch of achievement of every country and every nation, we accumulate that necessary material of impressions, which will eventually reemerge "de novo" transmuted by our own particular individuality into a new and greater expression. Plato said: "By contemplating the Beautiful, we elevate ourselves" and the same truth has been proclaimed by all the great Thinkers throughout the ages.

It is of special significance and not an accident that the spiritual impulse was the greatest stimulus to Art. From time immemorial the higher aspirations of mankind have found their noblest expressions, their highest concern in spiritual and formerly religious movements and concepts. Thus Beauty and Spiritual Aspiration blend in one expression and become to us objective representations, a crystallization, so to say, of Higher Life.

We must ever advance, we cannot stay still, lest we retrograde - and by placing higher ideals before us, we are drawn towards them, and our consciousness expands beyond the little needs of everyday, beyond the ugliness of ignorance and imperfection. The real values of life become more and more evident, - we can direct our efforts more constructively, we begin to look for Beauty and Harmony in life; we are ascending, and we are moving with the wave of evolution.

Have you ever felt the thrill of beholding a beautiful landscape, a beautiful sunset, or, when listening to the words of an inspired poet ? Have you ever felt moved and elevated beholding a beautiful statue or painting ? Works of art are the crystallization of the artist's thoughts and emotions, his aspirations and trials. They are a living record left to us by these inspired Souls, who have passed onward. These works of Art have a subjective force concealed in their outward aspect, and by tuning ourselves to them we respond to the vibrations that have originally called forth the particular image.

We must consciously try to raise our mind to a receptive state, to draw inwards, so to say, and then we become aware of the influences emanating from a work of Art.

It is not an accident that people like to keep some little keepsake of a beloved Hero or Leader. Take, for instance some handwriting, an autograph, the character of the writer can be read from his signature ⁷ of writings. In other words it

lives imprisoned in those lines and curves and speaks eloquently to him, who can decipher them. And for those, who cannot do so as yet, it remains there still-concealed, and radiates its influence unfelt by them. This stored up, but ever present energy is ready to emerge for him, who can attune himself to its influence.

Thus creations of Art are living entities, the living records of the artist's accumulated thoughts and experiences. We must value them and respect them, the same as we would any sincere and great emotion in a living person. But would this not lead us to hero worship? Here worship as such is only the natural evolutionary urge to aspire towards something beyond the manifestations of everyday life. It may degenerate only when it is misplaced, as almost any misplaced devotion is apt to, but otherwise it is a most worthy feeling - recognition of merit and achievements. Only by aspiring to something better, can we raise ourselves; and in this light, how paramount becomes the need to guard and preserve all the innumerable manifestations of human genius, entrusted to our safekeeping by generations already past.

Let us safeguard jealously and lovingly the living records of all great men. These great Souls, who left us their enduring records, will ever radiate their influence on those, who can attune themselves to them. Let us strive and find a worthy purpose in life, not merely to live and improve our material existence. Let us look beyond it, and life will

assume a new aspect full of meaning, full of significance.

New and beautiful concepts regenerate our everyday habits. There is infinite interest and tolerance. The aspirations of our brother become full of meaning through the spirit of understanding and co-operation.

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Let us be receptive and open-minded, let us try to approach consciously the better constructive strivings of mankind, and partaking of them, radiate them in turn into others.

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comes when the pupil is ready" - is ever justified.

The Wheel of Life turns and the efflorescence of Culture passes on to some new centre to blossom forth, when the time is ripe. This constant flow and ebb, the rythm of spiritual life ever pulsates throughout all nations and countries. History ever repeats itself, in order to have great Artists, we must prepare the way for them, we must constantly educate the masses to understand the love cultural values and the Arts, And slowly the way will be prepared for the great Souls to make their appearance.

But what about the Artists themselves ? The artists must realise the responsibility they have towards humanity. Being conscious of the fact that they influence life and the coming generations, the Artists must spare no effort in improving themselves and in trying to acquire as broad a view and perception, as possible.

We must know life in all its manifestations in order to portray it and to interpret it correctly. We must always keep an open mind. Every man and artists in particular must cultivate the art of conscious and creative thinking. We must learn to think consciously. Every minute of our time we should devote to some achievement. Modern civilised and highly complicated life, with all its distractions, tends unfortunately to develop a peculiar mode of thinking. While the accumulation of facts is there, the conscious effort

of independent organised thought is often lost.

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Necessary as it is the accumulation of facts and impressions, they must be assimilated consciously, otherwise there is a danger in a constant ever increasing desire or craving to stimulate our own thinking by outside factors and artificial excitements: it is a passive process devoid of the inner creative impulse. I like to stress that in order to develop our own thoughts, we must absorb facts and impressions, and consciously assimilate them by comparing and pondering over them, thus we shall enrich our process of thinking. Only thus we can really create new conceptions and new forms - our subconscious mind, stimulated into activity by a conscious creative impulse, will combine and recombine our impressions, and endlessly we can draw on them and thus develop mentally, not merely thinking machines, but consciously thinking individuals. How often do we meet people loaded with facts and impressions, but the real

meaning of which is never grasped; their relative position in life is not properly appreciated, and distortions and misconceptions often follow.

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Turning to Art, let us study the workings of creative thought. If we take Art in its usual aspects, we can very clearly see the difference that lies between real creativeness and mere mechanical imitation. One is the basis of real Art in the full significance of this word, it is the Hall-Mark of every true Artist, the other is nothing, but blind craftsmanship.

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What wonderful opportunities lie here in India, with the achievements of India's past, the achievement of the entire world to draw from, how great may be the results ! I can almost see the former decorative concepts assuming a new life, approached from a new angle, a blending of decorativeness with synthesis and realism.

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If we survey the evolution of all the Arts, we can see that the general tendency or aim throughout the ages, was to come closer to real living quality, to better express (life) a synthesis of life and emotions more forcibly, in other words to infuse life into a work of Art.

Let us take, for instance, the evolution of Sculpture

in Europe, from Greece onward. I take Greece as a starting point, because in Greece sculpture has reached such an exalted perfection. Looking at some of these Works, one could really ask oneself the question; could perfection of form, execution and visualization go any further, could it reach a higher standard of perfection along the same lines of development? It seems, as if the very perfection and excellence have been reached - and perhaps it has. The evolutionary trend seems to confirm this view. The Greek Culture began to decay. The high standards of Art, having attained a relative perfection, after a period of hesitation at the summit, began to show signs of decadence. The wave of evolution was ready to move elsewhere.

The Greek sculptures were taken to Rome, the nascent new Center, and on these priceless foundations grew the new Roman Art. New problems presented themselves, life dictated new standards, they were sought after and found.

It is not as yet quite clear whither the tide was carrying the artist's quest. But the Renaissance in Italy has already marked clearly the path for future generations of artists to follow. It was the quest after a more eloquent expression of Life, to solve the problems that led to a greater illusion and eloquence.

Through the brilliant array of Sculptors, with Donatello and Verrochio, the zenith was again reached in Michael Angelo, this giant of Creativeness, this incomparable Genius; as if Phidias himself came again to search for new forms of expression; and they were found. The old traditions of Greek

and Roman achievements served to develop Michael Angelo's vision, and we notice the synthesis of suggestion making its appearance.

Such phenomenal Minds, As Leonardo da Vinci, ever engrossed in probing the mysteries of Life, the laws governing Life and the ways of interpreting Life - they paved the way for a better understanding of the principles, that serve to express better that fugitive ever present living quality.

But it was only for a man, like Rodin, to synthesise and transmute these innumerable lessons of the Past. His marble assumed quite a new life, it became warm, living, it began to live its own life. He liberated form, and made form serve his purpose, as no one did before him. The sense of rythm, the sense of motion, the sense of mass, details only sufficiently suggested to stimulate our own mind, he made them his in the full sense of the word.

Innumerable are the experiments carried on in the domain of more eloquent expression. Some of them led us into abstractions, where form was suppressed altogether and only subjective rythm remained. It will be for another coming synthetic giant, like Rodin, to make use of all these experiments, and again transmute them into something still greater, still more expressive.

An ugly face can be beautified by transcendental emotion. The rays of the Sun, suddenly illuminating bleak and barren rocks, infuse a new beauty and glory in an otherwise lifeless landscape. These problems of Art and expression, if

studied from the point of view of historical development, all seem to indicate that greater realization of Life in all its purport is the quest followed by all great Artists and Movements collectively.

I have often pondered over the cycle of development of great Artists, the line of development they followed in their individual artistic efforts. Is it not significant that within the short span of their own lives, they followed or repeated the same evolutionary development, as exemplified by the trend of the greater cycle of Man's achievements, which we have just attempted to describe.

If we study this and compare, we, perchance, can even clearer see the trend of Life and Evolution. Man's cycle of Life is repeated in the life of a nation, and nations make up the Life of a race. Compare the chronological development of a few great Artists, it is easy to follow their progress from year to year. How clearly we perceive a common line of search and growth, the beginning, the apex and the close of their career; these great Men all passing through the same stages of development.

Take such Artists as Rembrandt, Frans Hals, Velasquez, Titian, El Greco, let us follow their gradual development. We first see a certain preoccupation with form, a kind of hesitation, as if the Artists were not quite certain or familiar with the functions of forms, their relative importance and handling. They were all very careful about their statements. They tried to depict the details, as they appeared to them, and they

delighted in the search after beautifully designed forms and blended colours.

Their technique is tight. The statement of facts guarded, but as they progressed and mastered the relative relations of forms, the blending of colours, values and the problems of light and shade, they turned to a more synthetic and direct interpretation; in other words, having conquered the problems of form and having reached their respective apexes of mastery in the sphere of finished expression and composition, they began to look for other problems to solve or rather, perhaps, their achievements failed to satisfy them.

Thus they came to this individual search for a new and more eloquent expression, as if realising that finished design and outward form in pictorial representation lacks something. Independently they all came to the same conclusion, and their research has led them all through the same progressive stages to solve individually the same problems.

I repeat individually, for they were strikingly removed from each other, as far as their technical approach was concerned. It is wonderful indeed to see these great Artists independently of each other striving towards the same end and using each his own means to solve the identical problems.

What were these problems then ? To achieve a more eloquent expression, a greater rendering and understanding of Life, not the outward form only, but the real meaning of it, the hidden character. They all came to this through the mastery of outward form and now having reached this apex they deliberately began

to make form serve their purpose, they were not subservient to it as formerly. Light and shade began to play a more important role, and the meaning of colours became more apparent.

The great Chinese Artists have also come to this same truth ages ago, the truth of abbreviated statement. They have found the same principle, that one forcibly expressed, colourful word is worth ten carefully chosen but weak, nebulous sentences.

All this led to the search and perfection of unfinished statement. The greatest Art of all the Art - how to omit. This is the last and the most difficult lesson to learn. By mastering this last word in statement, we achieve the great miracles of living works of Art. Light and Shade, colours, are the vivifying principles, abbreviated statement gives the dynamic and living quality to design.

Thus the great Artists, all learned the same lesson, went through the same cyclic development, after careful ^amystery of form and texture, after studied and blended colours and compositions, they began the search for the inner character. A certain freedom appears, a freedom from tradition, a very pronounced suggestion of facts, an indefinite treatment, which leaves a great deal to our imagination. In other words, their art process has evolved until the painting itself becomes a constantly creative object for every one who looks at it. It has emancipated itself of the shackles ~~f~~ of physical limitation, it has transcended beyond into the realm of Spirit, and it carries with it into that realm everyone, who looks and meditates upon it.

This realm is individual indeed. It speaks to everyone in his own language, there are only a few essentials to guide our

mind. Thus, the onlooker becomes his own creator, and the painting is ever living for every individual, who may look upon it.

To awaken this creative genius in man is one of the greatest and highest aspects of Art. And we find that these great Masters have all come to this realization, and their painting have become vibrant with suppressed definition and expressed emotion and thought.

Thus the realization of the inner life, the awakening of creative thought was the quest of all great Artists and Men. We find in all the realms of Art and domains of Thought the same problems, that occupied Philosophers and in a way occupy the great Scientists of today, the problems of Life in its essence. These same problems from another angle were common to all leaders of Mankind. We find this trend in the larger Cycles of Nations as well as in the short span of an exalted individual life.

The search for the inner life, the search for self-realization can only come through conscious and creative effort.

India with her treasures of Thought, India with her enormous Heritage in every field of Culture, - this India will transmute the vast accumulations of efforts and achievements, and will give to the World a new aspect of Wisdom and Beauty.

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