cism often entering the bounds of mysticism. In Rajputana schools of painting flourished in Mewar (Udaipur), Malwar, Marwar (Jodhpur), Bikaner, Amber-Jaipur, Bundi, Kotha, and in Bundelkhand in the Himalayas at Bashohli, Kangra, Kulu, Jammu, etc. A similar, but less emphatically popular art developed in Bengal, Orissa (Cat. 464—466), in the Panjab, central India, Maharashtra, and other places. In the course of the nineteenth century nearly all these styles died out, and in its place, since the end of the century, a modern Indian art has begun to form, first imitating the old styles of architecture and painting, then imitating Gupta art (the Bengal School) in a way similar to our classicism, finally turning to modern trends.

Nature and Assessment of Indian Art

If one wishes to assess Indian art with justice one must realise that like any other form of art, Indian art has not produced a very large number of really great masterpieces, but can offer a large number of fine works, a very large quantity of excellent craftsmanship and even more examples of typical provincial works. It is true that Indian writings on artistic theory require that the master should only create after long meditation and from the deepest inspiration. There are such works, but they can be counted. In practice it was the same as in Europe. Behind the fine words of the manifestos there is often enough only routine, work hastily thrown together, plagiarism and callous mass production.

One must also look at the works in their context. Very many pictorial works which we study in isolation in museums once formed a subordinate part of a large Stupa or temple decorative scheme. What we see at a short distance by reduced light was once conceived to be looked at from a great distance in glaring sunshine; what appears to us to be rough stonework was once covered with fine stucco and painted.

False standards must not be applied to Indian art. Being the art of a tropical country, it was in its classic period the conscious antithesis of ancient Greek and Roman art. Indian art will be more justly assessed by baroque standards, whether one takes Pergamenic sculpture, or Bernini or Rubens. Rubens' exuberantly powerful sensuality comes nearest to the Indian ideal of the human figure, while the elegance of the "Grand Siècle" corresponds to the Indian court style. The peak period of the Indian Middle Ages can best be grasped by references to Gothic art with its cathedrals — which of course, in contrast with Indian art, start from the interior. The mediaeval Italians, particularly the masters of Siena, form a bridge to Rajput art.

On the other hand, we must not simply take the religious literature of India which is known to us as a starting point; it shows only one aspect of life. The same princes who built huge temples and testified their reverence for world-denying monks, lived in unbounded luxury, maintained great harems and tens of thousands of dancing-girls, invited great courtisans to their courts, enjoyed theater performances, and hunted, in the intervals between the political intrigues and campaigns which kept them almost continually busy. The middle-class citizen, too, often regarded his pious duty as done by reserving his candidature for salvation to a later life, meanwhile enjoying the pleasure of this world and subsequently those of heaven. This was because Indian religion demands no single decision; the transmigration of souls permits salvation to be accomplished in stages; only the truly pious chose the shortest road. Ancient Indian art is filled with the joy of living. It has to be seen between the poles of acceptance or rejection of life, the lust for sensual experience and power and their renunciation.

It is, however, as dangerous to attempt a definition of Indian art as are all such experiments designed to squeeze the boundless wealth of a world of culture into a single formula. All attempts so far have simply rejected decisive phases as "decadent" and allowed recognition only to "classic" periods, selecting now art of the early period, now the Gupta period, now the art of the Middle Ages. The formula of "mystical" Indian art holds good only for the late Gupta period and the Middle Ages, and then only for religious art. It must of course be admitted that these ideas had begun to form in earlier times, and that they persisted, much weakened and wholly re-cast, in the Islamic period as well. What can best be said about Indian art is that it reveals boundless pleasure in and love for nature and a strong but healthy sensuality. This explains its musical quality, its dancing rhythm, its sensitivity to the expression by the body of the finest shades of spiritual meaning. It also explains the strong religious feeling, the living mythological language. Divinity is experienced in all things, divine love in all experiences. Renunciation of the world does not grow from contempt for the world as such but from the realisation that even all that is most beautiful and glorious is but a feeble reflection of what is divine; but a reflection it is, and its experience bridges the way to divinity.