

# HARMONY

ART CAN EXPRESS ETERNAL TRUTH



SUBIR KUMAR MITRA

CCRT/SF-3/165/2015



## **INTRODUCTION**

### ***“Roop bheda pramanani, Bhava Lavanya Yojanam***

### ***Varanika Bhangam, Sadrisyam, iti Chitre Shadangam”***

Ancient texts were codified during Gupta period. Puranas, shilpashastra, Vishnudharmottarapurana and a large number of plays and epics were produced by eminent poets and writers, Kalidas being the most renowned among them. The concept of Sadangam(six limbs of painting) came to be understood and were applied to sculpture and painting by master painters of Ajanta and sculptors of Mathura and Sarnath.

Meditation and spirituality are the inward journeys to attain perfection and peace.” Human is the result of his/her thought. The mind is everything. What we think we become.” These words by Gautam Buddha highlight the importance of thinking and how we should harness it in a better way. Spirituality is one such technology of consciousness, and the whole world is the play and display of consciousness. Spirituality is a tool to rediscover one’s inner self. It is not trying for perfection because perfection is already there within each of us. Only that it has been clouded beyond our realisation in the normal way. Human beings are imperfect because their consciousness is buried deep. The stress to correct this is to being conscious/aware. And spirituality or meditation eliminates the imperfections to get back to the perfect nature of one’s being. The rediscovery of one’s true self makes one virtuous. Spirituality

symbols and rituals, their significance in different religions.e.g  
Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Jainism, Buddhism and Atheism.

In my last (fourth) report one finds a description of Sufism, Kabir,  
Guru Nanak Dev ji, Buddhism. It is actually about surrender to a  
higher authority.

The research and study has been based on my observations,  
experiences and understanding of various rituals and beliefs of  
different faiths and my artwork has taken a view on them.

## INTRODUCTION

Thus began my journey to explore research and find the intimate relationship between art, religion and civilization. I have tried to delve deep into the philosophies of different religions, their practices and how beautifully each one of them explains and emphasizes one thing in their own unique way.

I felt blessed to witness the **Kumbh Mela** [2016] held in Haridwar and Ujjain. I have mentioned about purush, prakriti, chakras, tantra, kundalini and nadis in my first report. Thus I have begun by paying attention to the physical dimension of the spiritual aspect.



\* Detailed - Report \*

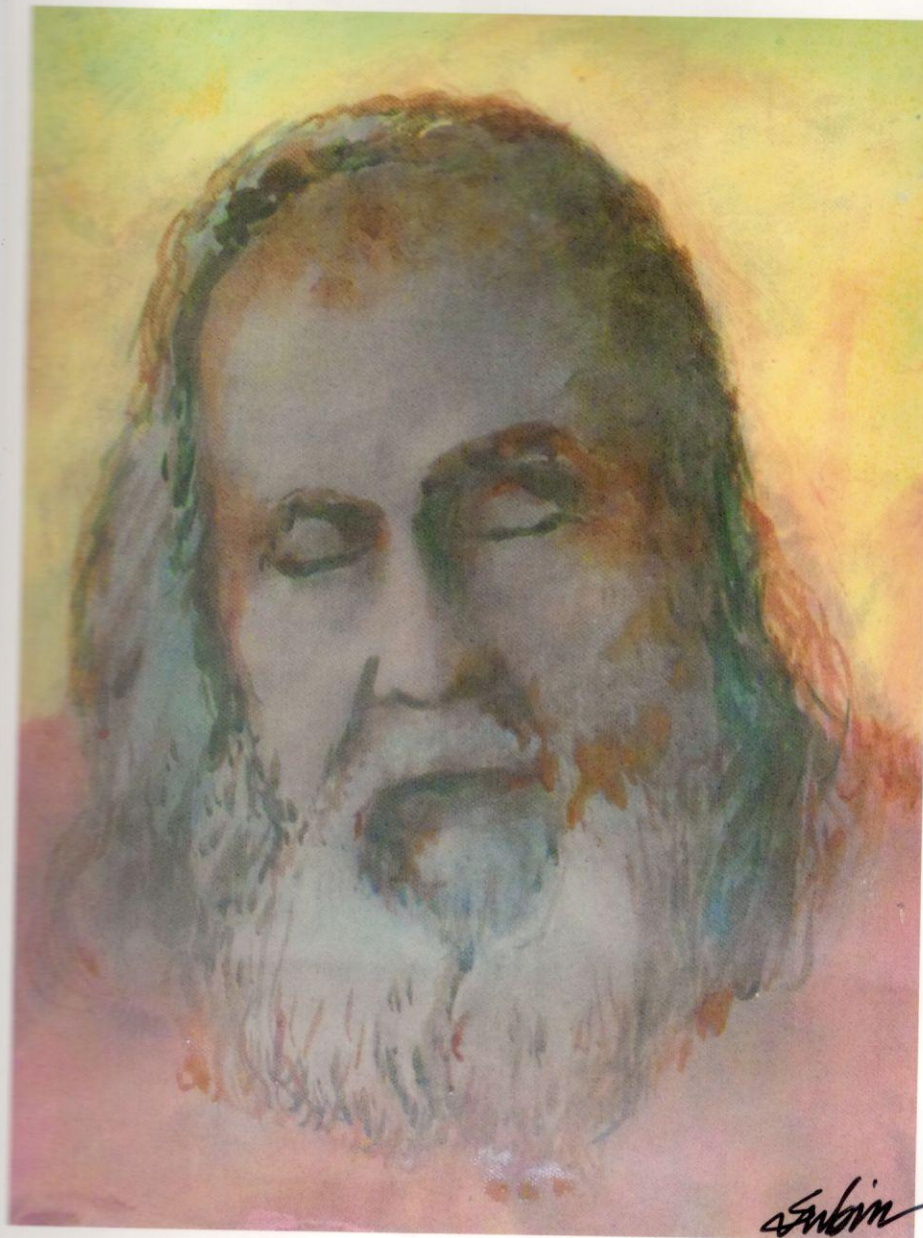
I felt blessed to witness the **Kumbh Mela** [2016] held in Haridwar where I visited to have the holy bath on Maghi Purnima [21/2/16] . I reached haridwar on 20 /2/16. I got blessings from a Sadhvi [ a mother figure for me ] at Kankhal's Sadhna Dham ashram. From here began the journey of my research. Sadhvi Maa took me to Guruji who is Brahma-nisth and stays in Sadhna Sadan. He is 106 years old and has not stepped out since past 27 years.

- While talking to me Maharaj ji threw some light on Samsara ,Sharira and Aatmaa . According to him this body is like a mobile phone which has a memory card called 'Aatmaa 'or Aatman or the soul. The soul is a very small subtle being which has stored Sanskaras , Karmas ,etc . It has its small place like in that of our finger.
- I also happened to see a fresco of Dakshina murti . It has been described in the **dakshina murti stotra** of the **Shankaracharya** . Lord Shiva gave his darshan in the form of dakshina murti as a result of the ' tap ' by the four rishis -**Sanak ,Sananda, Sanatan and Sanat kumar** . In that picture Lord Shiva has pressed the doubt (bharanti] under his feet. Without saying anything this God removes all doubts of the bhakta and imparts knowledge to him. General experts have described the word HINDU in their own ways.
- During the **Chaitra navratras** [7/4 / 16 to 10 /4 /16 ] I had an opportunity of being blessed by Sri 1008 Swami Vishudhananad Saraswati maharaj ji at the Dakshina Kali ashram in the village Beed of the Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. These were various reasons for this special visit . The first being that swami ji's age is 135 to 140years and he had the darshan of Shri Ram Krishna

Paramhansa at the age of 6 to 7 years . Swami ji is the disciple of Sarada devi. Secondly on the Darshan day, with his bhaktas and disciples during chaitra navrtra Swami ji organizes a religious meet and addresses his bhaktas and disciples . According to swamiji, the word Bharat is made up of two words "**bha**" which means the light or illumination and "rat", which means that something that will exist forever .

- He describes the word **Hindu** as follows: Hi-which is symbolic of Himalayas and
- "**indu**" symbolises the crescent moon like shape formed by the ocean in the lower part of India.
- According to the Indian scriptures the age of a man is 120 years after which he is eligible for free to die according to his own wish ie ICHAAMRITYU.
- The knowledge given by such devarishis will be a big contribution in my fellowship. I pray to God for the same.

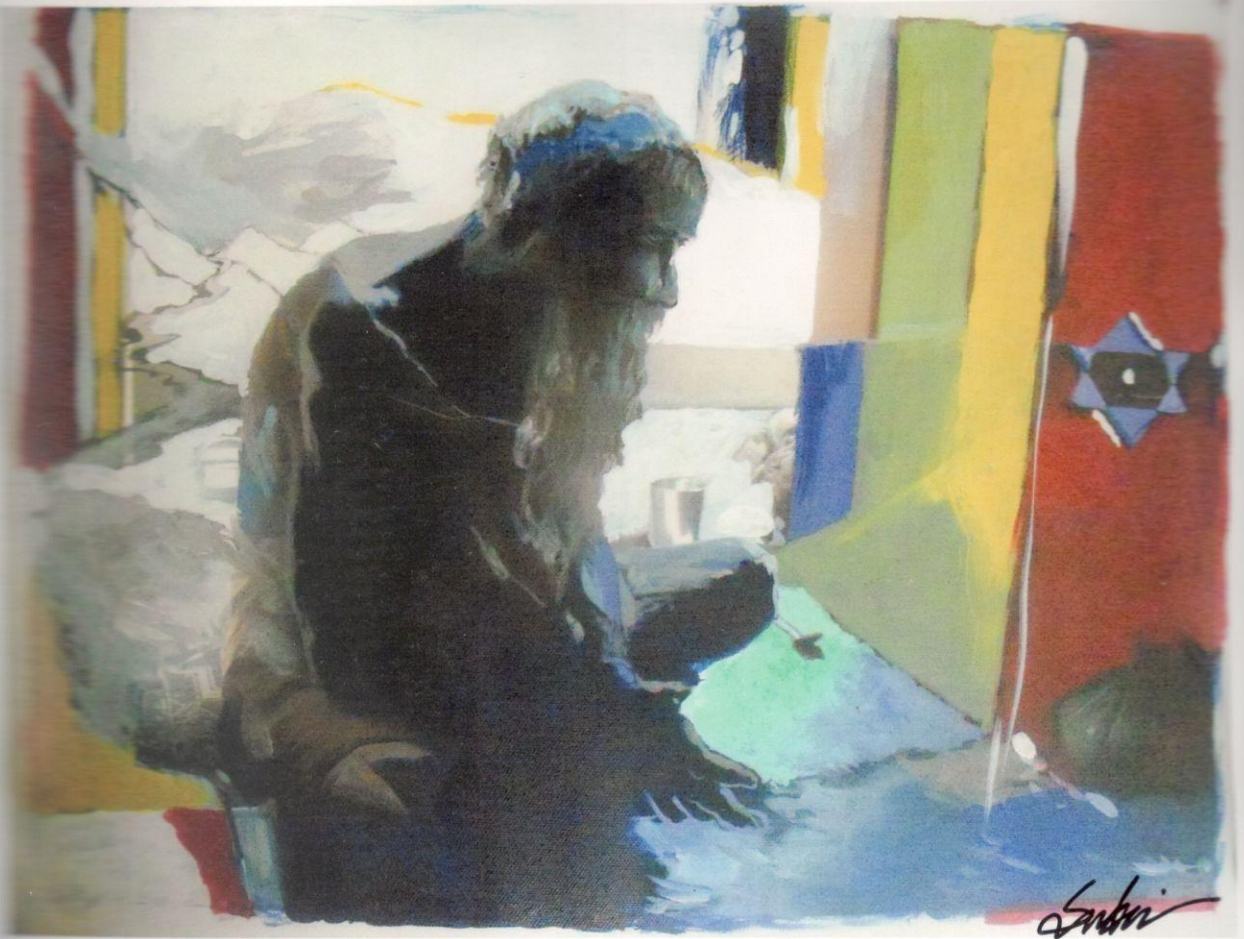




- Title-Rishi-I
- Medium-Acrylic on canvas
- Size-8"x12"

— This painting is dedicated to Swami Vishudhanand Saraswati ji. It is based on the vedic rituals (karmakanda) performed by Swamiji. Swamiji performed the puja of Maa Bhagwati in the "shodasprachar" way. I got an opportunity to stay in the presence of Swamiji during the Chaitra Navratra (2016). i.e. (from 14<sup>th</sup> April to 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2016) and this portrait of Swamiji is an imitation of Swamiji's photograph clicked at the time of Purnahuti offered by Swamiji in the Dharmasabha organized by him.





- *Title-Rishi-II*
- *Medium-Acrylic on canvas*
- *Size-8"x12"*

This composition is dedicated to Swami Ambikananda ji, who stays in Sadhana Dham, Kankhal, Haridwar. He is 106 years old 'Taponisth' monk who has not stepped out of this ashram since 25-26 years. He lives in a very small room and is completely independent for his daily chores and routine. In this composition Swamiji's abode, river, wide open sky and hills have been depicted in a surrealistic way. There is also a depiction of the elements of **YANTRA- BINDOO**(dot). The juxtaposition between a small walled abode and an open sky has been depicted in a very subtle way. It expresses the fact that one can experience the wideness of an open sky or nature in a small cemented room also. The 'BINDOO'(dot) in the middle of 'YANTRA' is a symbol of concentration, light and enlightenment. It has been said by great saints – "Man chaga to katauti mein ganga" -(If the heart is pure, any water would appear as auspicious as the water of the Ganges)





"PRAKRITI-I" (DETAIL)

- The Yoga Sutra states, "Liberation is when there is equality of purity of the Purusha and Sattva (intelligence/ Buddhi)". What is observed, Prakriti as intelligence, can be tuned so as to reflect the pure light of consciousness. Descriptions and thoughts about Prakriti, any conditions from which they might have arisen, and any reactions they might produce are also Prakriti. Prakriti apprehends Prakriti. When the Prakritic vehicle of Sattva (intelligence) is free of epistemological confusions the very process of Prakriti appears, to the delight of the Purusha, as the delicate flowering of truth.



Artist with his creation



"AWAKNING-III" ACRYLIC ON CANVAS 96"x120"



# HARMONY

ART CAN EXPRESS ETERNAL TRUTH

## Sri Aurobindo on *religious* harmony

In one of his essays on Indian culture, Sri Aurobindo writes emphatically, "[Hinduism] is in the first place a non-dogmatic inclusive religion and would have taken even Islam and Christianity into itself, if they had tolerated the process" (The Renaissance in India and Other Essays on Indian Culture, CWSA, vol. 20, p. 147). This statement, when taken literally by the so-called liberal, leftist intelligentsia of today might be interpreted through their lens of what they define as Hindu chauvinism. On the other hand, those on the other side of the political spectrum who would like India to become a so-called 'Hindu nation' may view it as an endorsement of their narrow Hindu-religio-political ideology. This essay tries to take the reader beyond any of these two surface-level readings of this statement and instead attempts to explore the relevance and significance of this deeply layered statement for present-day religiously diverse India while keeping in full consideration its implications for the future of inter-religious harmony in the country.

Sri Aurobindo through his writings helps us see that human nature is very complex and this complexity also explains why different people need different ways or paths on their spiritual journey. Each religion has captured some essential aspect of the Great Truth and each has made some important contribution to the overall march of humanity. The Supreme Being and Nature will not want any uniformity; diversity is the principle of Truth. So there will always be diverse paths, diverse religions and diverse teachers of the Truth showing different ways to the Truth. Sri Aurobindo has explained that this multiplicity is also the truth of the Overmind, and because before the advent of Sri Aurobindo that had been the highest Truth established on the earth, the result is that at present we see an even greater diversity of paths and ways to God. As we begin our analysis about the necessity for a healthy co-existence of diverse religions, it might be intellectually satisfying and also liberating to know some of these deeper reasons for the necessity of diverse religions.

Humanity's response to a diversity of religions has either involved a sense of disharmony and conflict, or in recent times, a somewhat more tolerant but often aimless, postmodern religio-moral relativism resulting in an ethical void. Sri Aurobindo tells us that the truth of the Supermind will surely and gradually compel more and more sections of humanity—and signs of this awakening are already there all across the world—to strive toward a greater harmony between the diverse religions and spiritual paths. This may be accomplished either through something like a world-religion which will include the truths emphasized by different religions but harmonized in the light of a greater supramental truth that has not been a part of any religion so far, or through something that is sort of an a-religious spirituality that transcends all religions. In fact the first may be a beginning step for the second. But regardless, a diversity of paths and ways will be there.

In an essay titled "Religion in the Post-Modern Condition: Some Lights from an Interesting Correspondence of Sri Aurobindo", Supriyo Bhattacharya (2009)<sup>1</sup> reminds us of a fundamental teaching of Sri Aurobindo that the spiritual truth is a truth of the spirit, a truth of the Infinite, which is one but expressed in an infinite diversity, and thus can assume an infinite variety of aspects and formations. He argues that the religio-ethical relativism of the postmodernist readily dissolves in the light of the deeper truth of the spirit that Sri Aurobindo speaks of in these words:

...the domain of pure spiritual self realisation and self-expression need not be a single white monotone, there can be a great diversity in the fundamental unity;





**“Saints are like trees. They do not call to anyone, neither do they send anyone away. They give shelter to whoever cares to come, be it a man, woman, child, or an animal. If you sit under a tree it will protect you from the weather, from the scorching sun as well as from the pouring rain, and it will give you flowers and fruit. Whether a human being enjoys them or a bird tastes of them matters little to the tree; its produce is there for anyone who comes and takes it.”**

**~ ANANDAMAYI MA**



**QUESTION:** In your view, are there specific traits that make an individual better suited for Kriya Yoga?

**YOGIRAJ SATGURUNATH SIDDHNATH:** Definitely. The first is humility. The second is, do not fault-find with others. There's a key in the mystic circles, "Mind your own business." See the darkness within yourself before you can talk of light and darkness in others. This is a very important point. The third is, unconditional love, Ishvar Pranadam, towards the Master who awakens you—an offering of your heart and soul. This is absolutely very important. Then the last is, you need, concentrated persistence. And that determination, that "fixity of purpose and flexibility of approach" is one of the great qualities that a devotee or traveller on the yogic path must have.





## Photos from Swami Tatpara...



**Swami Tatparananda** added 6 new ... photos.

5 Jun at 11:19am • 👤

Revered Swami Akamanandaji maharaj of Haridwar Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama made his final sankalpa to give up his body . He told this just two days ago. Sadhus here are saying that he announced long ago that he would leave the body consciously at his will. And he is now doing exactly as he said. He is neither taking food nor drinking anything for last two days.

Fully aware internally, he is now totally indrawn but highly alert. He is responding to every question that is being asked to him now, but saying that he is going to leave this world very soon.

His face lights up with extraordinary joy, and he flashes a divine smile when he hears the word "Ananda" from us - absolutely conscious, the miracle monk with vedantic words on the mouth. The word "Ananda" is his favourite word all through. What a sight...

I only read such signs of Brahmajnanis in the

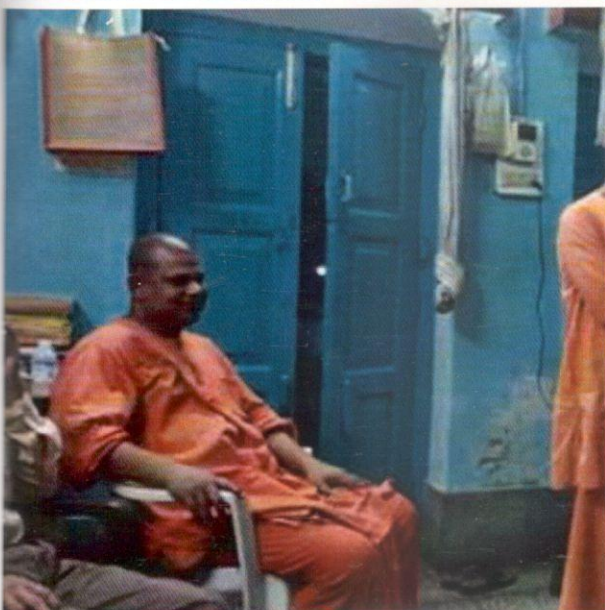
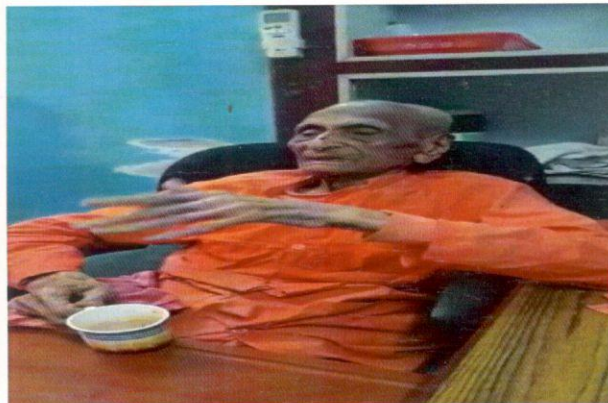
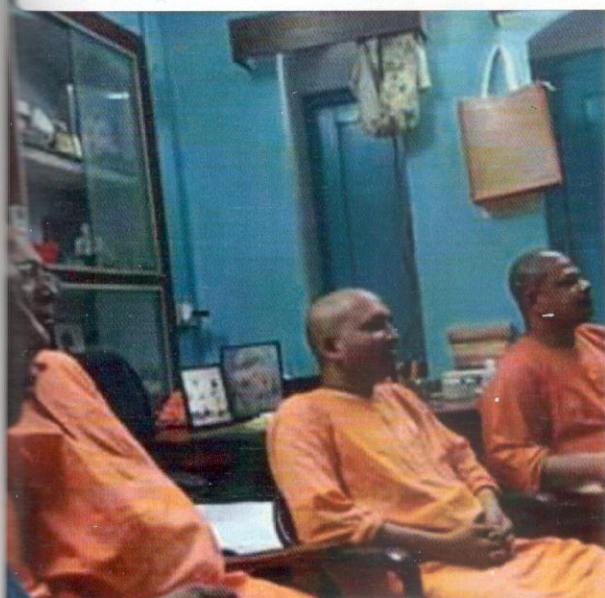


Write a comment...





Silent mode



Like



Comment



Nilendra Nath Chatterjee and 506 others



Load previous comments



Write a comment... 262





## ← Photos from Swami Tatpara...



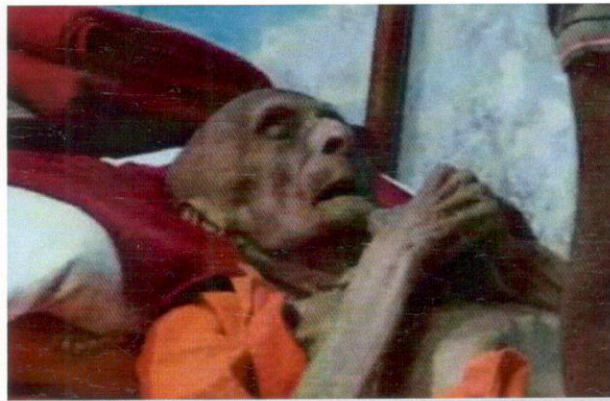
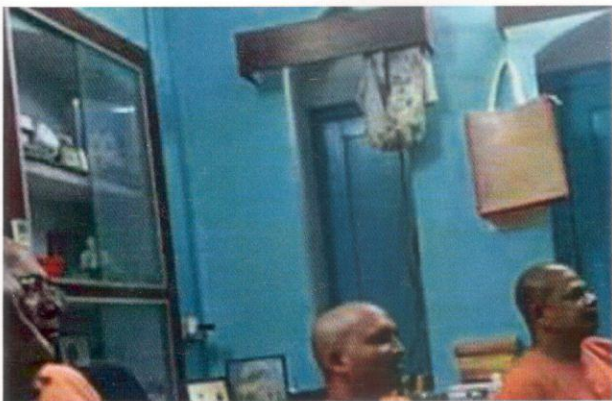
I only read such signs of Brahmajnanis in the books, but now I see all these in front of my eyes - the rishi as described in the upanishad, or a "Sthitaprajna" of the Bhagavad Gita.

Sadhus and visitors are pouring in from different parts of the India to have last darshan of his mortal frame.

We are feeling sad yet at the same time feeling so joyous to see such a monk of extraordinary calibre. He attained the state of "Jeevanmukti" long ago. Now he is casting away his mortal coil.

On 1st June he stepped into 105 years of his age. On 2nd, he announced his willingness to have complete withdrawal, and from 3rd he stopped all food intake including liquids. He is lying on his bed, with no disease, fully aware, floating in the bliss of Brahman...

Glory to Thakur and Maa and Swamiji. 🙏🙏🙏



Write a comment... 263





### CONCLUSION

It was astonishing to notice as to how each religion being practised has a unique way of performing rituals and the arrangement of various objects, motifs used seem like an installation which has a spiritual significance.

I feel that I have been partially successful in presenting my report on Art and Harmony of religions. However I strongly feel that there is a lot to explore. I wish to work further deeply and travel to various faraway lands /places to be able to study more about their art, culture, rituals having spiritual significance. This will help in enriching my knowledge which I would share with the world in the form of my paintings. As Tagore says:

*"I remain silent even as my pictures are; it is for them to express and not to explain"*

Rabindranath Tagore, 1938

*While I present my report I remember the following cote by Sri Ramakrishana Paramhansa -*

*"When the salt-doll ceases to be, it becomes one with the ocean. When the individual gives up all the limiting adjuncts (UPADHIS) he becomes one with the Absolute. The Absolute cannot be known, but one can become one with it."*



## Bilbliography

- Ramakrishana Vivekananda Vedanta Sahitya
- Wings Of Freedom – Yogiraj Gurunath Siddhanath
  - Autobiography Of a Yogi – Sri Yogananda
- Reference from Yogoda Satsanga Society Sahitya
  - Sri Aurobindo's literature
  - Reference from Wikipedia
  - Reference from Socialmedia
- THE SPEAKING TREE - Times Of India