Abstract

The urban settlements of the Kathmandu Valley offer a cognitive experience for not only her people in the past but also the visitors of today. Such property displays a dimension which resists changes in time.

The term \textit{aesthetic} has been used to describe Nepali architecture often, but what are the properties of this \textit{aesthetic}? Of what value will aesthetics be to the development of Architecture. This paper aims to look at Nepali architecture of the Kathmandu Valley in the light of aesthetics and aesthetic experience. The scope of aesthetic study has been restricted to that immediate to architecture. The aesthetic experience, which is the subject, defines the aesthetics, that is, the object. Readings have been made into the character and possible manifestations of aesthetics. In the instance of which the aesthetics may not be physically defined, the perception in undertaking the piece of work is understood instead.

The Nepali artist engages the pure throb of life in three aspects:

1) he understands the limitation of material life, therefore aims for a cosmic truth beyond,
2) recognizing his existence in nature, he reconciles,
3) the beauty of his environment results in his imitation of nature.

One of the objectives of the paper is to establish descriptive aesthetics by generalizing facts and describing the properties of the aesthetic object, to explain why "beauty" acts in certain ways and adopted certain forms, at the same time making reference to philosophical, historical and sociological perspectives.

The Nepali people traditionally did not build only to satisfy immediate contemporary needs, but they build out of devotion to the search for truth, and they build their spaces for inner contemplation. They built for a permanence far greater than that of an individual. The architectural object produced not only serves their spiritual needs, but also leaves us with a spiritually evocative environment.