CHAPTER - VI

AESTHETICS
Radhakrishnan's observations on art, literature, music and drama provide ample food for thought. He defines art as a form of knowledge, a disclosure of the deeper reality of things, and an imitation of inner reality. The arts, mechanical or fine are for refinement of the soul and are intended to purge the soul of its defect and lead it to a vision of the eternal. The aim of art is to capture the inner or informing spirit and it is by integral insight or spiritual intuition that the artists attain to the power of artistic expression. Art purifies mind and becomes an instrument of social, economic and cultural change. Thus Radhakrishnan explains art in terms of his metaphysics.

"All art is the expression of experience in some medium." The experience is clothed in forms which appeal to our emotions through senses. Sculpture has for its medium stone and marble, painting colours, music sound and poetry words. The relation between the experience and the medium is closer in some than in others, in poetry than in music, in painting than in sculpture. By means of the work of art the experience is released afresh, in the spectator or the auditor. The enjoyer becomes a secret sharer of the creator's mind.
According to Radhakrishnan, the mind concentrates on the material, becomes thoroughly possessed by it, absorbs it, and remoulds it according to its own ideal and creates a work of art. This act of pure concentration is possible only for perfectly free minds which look at the objects with utter humility and reverence. It is a state in which all the energies of man are heightened and sublimated. He says, "We draw or paint, not with our brains but with our whole blood and being." 

Radhakrishnan states that art is the utterance of life. It is the expression of the soul's vision and it is not wholly rational. The artist's attitude to the universe is more of acceptance than of understanding. He sees the burden of mystery in all things. He tries to pluck the mystery out of the things, and present it to us. He is able to do it by means of his intuitive power, which is the connecting link between appearance and reality, the flesh and spirit. Thus, like Tagore, Radhakrishnan thinks that art must relate us to the mystery of the universe and not cut us away from it.

Radhakrishnan insists on the importance of 'inspiration' in great art. For him, great art is possible only in those rare moments when the artist is transplanted out of himself and does better than his best. In those highest moments, the masters of human expression feel within themselves a spark of the divine fire and seem to think and feel as if God were in them and they were revealing fragments of the secret plan of the universe. But, Radhakrishnan states that, the true work of art is not the expression of mere emotion. "A good deal of
system and symmetry of reflective determinateness is involved in the unfolding of the artist's experience." 

Arts are not concerned with the appearances of the actual. They are directed towards the realization of ideas, of the truth in the objects. They are interested in the spirit of man and things rather than in their material forms. "In all arts there is an imaginative creation." In all arts we can find imaginary satisfactions for our unfulfilled desires and play in fancy the roles we have missed in life. Thus art "becomes a sort of mental self-indulgence, a distraction that takes away the horrid taste of the real." 

Radhakrishnan says that the greatest gifts of art are peace and reconciliation. In those rare moments when we are moved by some beautiful poem or a great work of art, we are not only absorbed by it but our mind is raised to a higher attitude when it beholds vision of things far above sense-knowledge. "Every beautiful statue has a certain air of repose, every great poem conveys a sense of peace."

According to Radhakrishnan, the function of the artist is to induce in us a sense of significance of life. It is not the function of art to give a detailed justification of particular events. It only gives us a sense of meaningfulness of life, evokes in us ideas of the larger beauty, justice and charity of the universe. Artistic activity apprehends the living, pulsating reality, though the artist does not know that he is apprehending. For Radhakrishnan, the artist does not turn his back on the realities of the world. He knows its sorrows and sufferings as well as its virtues and victories. Instead of looking indifferently to the realities of the world, the artist works in it with the sole object of creating better material and spiritual condition. Here Radhakrishnan's reference to Rabindranath Tagore is remarkable. He says, "Being a poet, Rabindranath uses the visible world as a means of shadowing forth the invisible. He touches the
temporal with the life of the eternal. The material world becomes transparent as his spirit moves in it." Moreover, Radhakrishnan says, "The artist's primary aspiration is for a redeemed world." His mind is not a mirror which reflects the glinting surfaces of the given. It is on fire, close to contemplation.

Radhakrishnan says that aesthetic appreciation demands the exercise of our whole mind. For a deeper appreciation, we need insight for sharing the world which the artist presents. Appreciation requires sympathy and understanding rather than belief and agreement. Both aesthetic creation and enjoyment are non-intellectual actions. Aesthetic satisfaction is akin to spiritual joy, the fruit of the fulfilment of the inner joy.

Radhakrishnan's writings on aesthetics exhibit a few characteristics of art and aesthetic as distinguished from science. He says, "Any two men may hit on the same law of science, as Darwin and Wallace actually did, but no two men can ever produce the same work of art, for art is the expression of the whole self, while science in its ordinary usage is the expression of a fragment of the self." Again, the nature of intuition in science and art is significantly different. Radhakrishnan says, "In aesthetic experience we have a type of intuitive knowledge, a personal relationship with the object which is essentially different from what is found in intellectual cognition."12

Radhakrishnan appreciates India's long tradition in fine arts and in painting. "From the drawings in red pigment of
animals and hunting scenes in the pre-historic caves of
Singhanpur and Mirzapur, it is evident that painting has had a
long history in this country."\textsuperscript{13} The Rāmāyana and the Vinaya
Pitaka refer to citraśalās which answer to the picture galleries
of India. The Buddhist frescoes found on the walls of a cave in
Sirguya in Madhya Pradesh belong to the first century before
Christ. Radhakrishnan's appreciation of Indian painting is
evident when he says that the "art of fresco painting in Ajanta
caves reached perfection never surpassed anywhere else."\textsuperscript{14} For
him, the nobility of the theme, the majestic scope of the
simplicity and the firmness of the line give an impression of the
astonishing perfection of the whole. The new School of Painting
inspired by the master artists of Ajanta, produced a series of
spontaneous masterpieces which revealed the soul of India to the
world. They became famous for their spiritual quality, aesthetic
appeal and inward truthfulness and integrity. In the opinion of
Radhakrishnan, the history of Indian painting presents the
cultural and spiritual history of Indian people.

The purpose of all art is sacramental. In ancient times, art
was used not as a means for public enjoyment, but as an
accessory of worship. The great displays of sculpture and
painting took place in India as in ancient Greece in temples and
were made in honour of the Gods.

The aim of literature too, according to Radhakrishnan, is
to redeem the world.\textsuperscript{15} It is a channel between spiritual visions
and human beings. He defines literature or Sahitya as that which
gives the shock of intellectual and imaginative pleasure and
stimulates the reader. He holds that the Rg Veda, the first literary document in the world, is not merely religion and symbolism but poetry and literature. Similarly, the Bible, the Avesta, and the Quran are not merely classics of religion, but are works of literature. Radhakrishnan states that all literature is the expression of intensity of feeling. By its art and literature, a society is judged at the bar of history. They are the reflection of the vitality of a race. They decline when people suffer from spiritual exhaustion.

Indian writers, says Radhakrishnan, aim at the literary grace and distinction. "Sāhitya includes the classics of religion and philosophy even as Greek literature includes Plato's Dialogues and Thucydide's History." Literature has been one of the major contributions of India to the world. The epics and plays, the tales and folk-lore of India convey the great ideals of harmony with nature and integrity of mind. They have influenced the literature of the different languages of the country. While appreciating Indian drama, Radhakrishnan refers to Berriedale Keith, who holds that the only drama of quality in the world is the Indian drama. Radhakrishnan says that an Indian drama is not merely a play. It is poetry, music, symbolism and religion. Images change one another beyond the speed of thought in the writings of Kalidasa who is known outside our country. He represents the spirit of India even as Shakespeare represents England and both of them belong to the larger literary heritage of mankind.
Great literature lasts much longer than Kings and Dynasties. The political world of Homer is dead while his song is living today. The splendour of Rome has vanished but the poetry of Virgil is yet vital. The dramas of Kalidasa is still moving in India but how many people talk about Vikramaditya or Bhoja? Here Radhakrishnan mentions the worldwide contribution of Rabindranath Tagore in the field of literature. He says, "When our lords and leaders pass into oblivion, Tagore will continue to enchant us by his music and poetry, for though he is an Indian, the value of his work lies not in any tribal or national characteristics, but in those elements of universality which appeal to the whole world." Tagore has added to the sweetness of life and to the stature of civilization.

Radhakrishnan thinks that modern literature is essentially trivial. For him, even the greatest masters like Bernard Shaw and H.G. Wells do not touch the height of genius. They have not given us one epic which brings out the full meaning of life, nor even a single drama of profoundly moving nature which devastates us by its grandeur. It is because they deal with the tumult of the soul and not with its depth. They are predominantly intellectual. No great art was ever made of observation and analysis. So, in the opinion of Radhakrishnan, the writings of these two intellectuals cannot be considered as great art.

The true artists undergo profound experience, and intense suffering. They have no time to preach. They live and love. When they translate their experiences into words, we see in them that inestimable quality of mind, the creative passion, which is not a
mere skilful arrangement of dead flowers. They give us things of beauty and not mere decorations. "A true work of art is an unanalysable one comparable to a lighting flash flung from heaven, which strikes the earth and lifts it into a blaze."2 Art and literature serve to heighten the spiritual consciousness of man. Ignorance of this aspect of life, according to Radhakrishnan, leads to instability, conflict and chaos in society.

Radhakrishnan tried his hand at a novel during his stay in the University of Mysore as the additional Professor of Philosophy. The title of the novel is "The Crime of Leela". The plot of the novel is simple. The writing of the novel is not stylish, falters at times in idiom and occasionally descends to cheap melodrama. But Radhakrishnan was attempting a novel of ideas. His interest lies not in the narrative or depiction of personalities but in the dialogue and the exchange of thoughts. The main theme of the novel is the role of woman. In "Radhakrishnan - A Biography", S. Gopal holds that the influence of R.N. Tagore, Ibsen and Bernard Shaw can easily be seen in Radhakrishnan's characterisation of the New Woman in the Indian context.22 Radhakrishnan wished the novel to appear under the pseudonym, 'R.S', because he felt that it would seem undignified for a Professor of Philosophy to write romantic novel. But the idea of publication fell through, as his publisher would only consider it if the author's name was disclosed. "The Crime of Leela" reveals that Radhakrishnan did not have the imagination and style appropriate to a novelist. In this novel, he could not move out of academic elitism. To sum up, it can be said, "The novel certainly
did not come up to the standards Radhakrishnan later set for creative literature -- that it should be not intellectual but spiritual, that it should bring out the full meaning of life, and shake, exhaust and cleanse the reader. Thus "The Crime of Leela" seems to prove Radhakrishnan's ineffectiveness as a novelist. A good critic need not himself be good artist.

Through poetry and drama man reveals himself to himself. He mirrors his soul; he expresses the desire, the urges, the hopes, the successes and failures in his struggle to make himself at home in the world. The dramatist or the playwright delights us by the perfection of his art, its variety, its music and its mood. Radhakrishnan says, "A dramatic performance became an art when recitation, gestures, movements, dance were used to rouse sentiments in the minds of the audience."

If drama is to be one of the most powerful manifestations of the human mind, there must be maturity of mind and greatness of soul. Without these, the affection of people cannot be won. If any literary work is to have enduring quality, the author should have magnificence of mind and intensity of vision. The deeper feelings of life find no adequate expression if one works too much on the surface-plays. "A great drama" according to Radhakrishnan, "overwhelms, devastates, annihilates us and yet exhausts us and makes us new." The actor in a drama must be able to inspire in his audience the feelings of the character he represents. The actor must not be overwhelmed by emotions but interpret them in intellectual terms.
Drama has been with the people of India for a long time past. Indian tradition preserved in the Nātya-Sāstra claim for the drama a divine origin. While describing Indian drama, Radhakrishnan states that the stage properties were few and simple in Indian drama. Instead of elaborate scenery, effects were produced by gesture. Watering a plant was done by a gesture imitation of the process. For this purpose plants were not brought on the stage and watered. There are actors and actresses. Sometimes a hero’s part is performed by a girl. In Indian drama there are no tragic endings. Because the writer knows that suffering is not the final end of life. Moreover, the writer has faith in the ultimate decency of things.

Radhakrishnan believes that Indian drama has a great future. He hopes that lasting works may be produced in this age. Indians have a natural gift for acting. Here, both writers and actors are found in plenty. By watching the theatre movements in other countries, one may profit from them. For Radhakrishnan the artist should be encouraged to try new experiments and not always follow the beaten track.

Though artists are born and not made, training is necessary for them. Radhakrishnan thinks that every school and college should have a dramatic society. "Drama is education, entertainment and recreation."26 Drama must be developed in consistency with traditions.

Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that in poetic experience we have a knowledge by being as distinct from knowledge by knowing. The mind grasps the object in its wholeness, suffuses
it with its own spirit, and becomes one with it. In this experience there is a deliberate suspension of individuality, an utter submission to the real, a complete absorption in the object as it is in order to breathe its life and enjoy its form.

A poet always puts his whole being in the centre of the object contemplated and interprets the nature from the centre outwards. "Poetry" says Radhakrishnan, "is a form of life, a realization of the meaning of common life by living it more intensely." It is a ripe nature as organic as life itself. It is life come to utterance. It is utterly spontaneous. True poetry which is rich with a word of suffering and experience has the fullness and mystery and depth and authority of life itself. It is because the poet sees so intensely that he is able to communicate to people his feelings and judgements. The poet believes that his work is not due to his intellectual skill or imaginative boldness but due to his 'inspiration'. Since it comes into the poet's life and fades out of it regardless of his inclination, he traces it to an unconscious power.

Poetic experience is momentary. The poet attempts a translation of the ineffable experience into word. Radhakrishnan distinguishes between poetry and poem in the following way: "while poetry is in the soul, the poem is a pale reflection of the original, an attempt to register in words an impression which has become an image in memory." For him, the poetic temper is in all of us though only a few develop it.

Poetry is the language of excitement. For in recollecting the exciting experience, the poet recreates the conditions of its
happening and identifies himself with it. The spell of the experience is still on the poet and under its influence he employs intuitive words and images which possess emotional value. While poetry is not the vision itself, but only the image of it, still its quality depends on the degree with which he calls up the vision.

The experience of a poet is larger and his verbal control is greater than a non-poet. Poetry is often reduced to technical power. Some like to speak of poetry even as a mechanic talks about his engine. For these people there is no more mystery in poetry than there is in engineering. If certain techniques are employed, poetry will result. But Radhakrishnan repeatedly puts emphasis on poetic inspiration and holds that technique without inspiration is barren. Intellectual powers, sense facts and imaginative fancies may result in clever verses and repetition of old themes, but they are only manufactured poetry. Those who depend on them are designers of verses and not poets. "True poetry has that maturity of experience, that magnificence of mind, that touch of the soul which escapes one who lives on the surface."\(^{29}\) Value of poetry is measured by the depths of its roots in reality. For Radhakrishnan, unless the poet speaks from the depths he cannot engage the depths in others.

According to Radhakrishnan, though verbal music and logical meaning are present in poetry, they are not all. "Its essential quality is that emotional fervour, that strength of passion, that integrity of life, which burst out in ecstatic utterance."\(^{30}\) The poet’s word must establish a natural sympathy with the reader and induce in him the mood of exaltation.
favourable to the implicit apprehension of the idea. The reader must insinuate himself to the mood of the poet, see with his eyes, feel with his heart and judge with his mind.

Though the importance of the subject does not matter, yet all themes are not equally good for poetry. Radhakrishnan says that only great themes can give great poetry. Here Radhakrishnan makes a difference between prose and poetry. Prose, for him, is not competent to deal with the highest themes. Poetry is the language of the soul, while prose is the language of science. "Poetry is the language of mystery, of devotion and of religion." Prose lays bare its whole meaning to the intelligence but poetry has nothing to do with intelligence. It suggests the truths that cannot be stated. An atmosphere of the numinous envelopes all poetry.

Radhakrishnan thinks that poetic truth is different from scientific truth. Poetic truth reveals the real in its qualitative uniqueness and not qualitative universality. It does not speak of material qualities that can be measured, but inward graces that can only be felt. The truths of poetry cannot be set out in elaborate arguments but are conveyed more subtly.

Radhakrishnan comments on songs too. For him, our sweetest songs are of our saddest moods. What is learnt in suffering is given in song. 

From Radhakrishnan's consideration of aesthetic experience, it can be seen that he is not concerned with the formal structure of art. The inner essence of art is his sole concern. He thinks that art is a reflection of the self and not an
objective experience. He is concerned mainly with the attainment of mystical vision rather than the production of art or the appreciation of beauty for beauty's sake.

SRI AUROBINDO:

Sri Aurobindo, the poet and the seer, holds that aesthetics is concerned mainly with beauty but more generally with rasa. It is the response of the mind, the vital feeling and sense to a certain 'taste' in things which often may be but is not necessarily a spiritual feeling. Aesthetics belongs to the mental range and all that depends upon it. Ordinarily aesthetics is supposed to be concerned with beauty. But Sri Aurobindo says that it is concerned with many other things also. It is the universal Ānanda that is the parent of Aesthesis. This universal Ananda takes three major and original forms, viz., beauty, love and delight.

The highest aim of the aesthetic being, according to Sri Aurobindo, is to find the Divine through beauty. The highest Art is that which opens the doors of the spirit. But in order that it may come to do this greatest thing, it must first endeavour to see and depict man and nature and life for their own sake and in their own characteristic truth and beauty. Because the beauty of the Divine in life and man and nature lies behind these first characters. Art may make use of religion, ethics, scientific truths or philosophical ideas as elements, but it has its own swadharma.
its essential law. It will rise to the widest spirituality by following out the intimate law of its own being.

Sri Aurobindo points out that art is interpretation and not creation. Everything is manifested. Man is the psychic instrument through whom God manifests that which He had previously arranged in Himself. Thus, art can interpret what was manifest in the past, it can fix for us that which is and it can interpret the future manifestation. Art is not "an imitation or reproduction of outward Nature, but rather missioned to give something more inwardly true than the external life and appearance."³⁴

The leading of the inmost psychic being is not found sufficient until it has succeeded in raising itself out of the mass of inferior nature to the highest spiritual level. For, there is the full spiritual consciousness in its purity, freedom and intense wideness. Sri Aurobindo says, "All beauty in the world is there the beauty of the Beloved, and all forms of beauty have to stand under the light of that eternal beauty and submit themselves to the sublimating and transfiguring power of the Unveiled Divine Perfection."³⁵

Sri Aurobindo was admitted to St. Paul's School in England. There, his interests were in literature. He used to take active interests in the literary activities of the school. He earned proficiency in the classics and secured the Butterworth second prize in literature. At the age of seventeen, Sri Aurobindo translated from the Greek a passage entitled "Hecuba".³⁶ These shows that Sri Aurobindo had talent in literature since his childhood.
Sri Aurobindo was disturbed by the derogatory remarks against Indian culture, religion, art and literature made by the dramatic critic William Archer in his book 'Jeu d'esprit' where he assailed the whole life and culture of India and condemned her all greatest achievements, philosophy, religion, poetry, painting, sculpture, Upanishads, Mahābhārata, Rāmāyana etc. as a repulsive mass of unspeakable barbarism. These remarks probably had acted as catalyst in the Indian nationalistic mind of Sri Aurobindo leading to certain works of the Rishi on Indian culture, religion, art, literature and polity as can be seen in some of the articles published in series in "Arya" from December 1918 to January 1921, and later published as a book under the single connecting title "The Foundations of Indian Culture".

Sri Aurobindo, however, hailed the book by Sir John Woodroffe, written as an answer to 'Jeu d'esprit' of William Archer, where Sir Woodroffe upheld the Indian civilization as having distinct meaning and value, and its preservation to be of immense to mankind, while admitting that it was in fact in danger.

In a somewhat retaliatory remark to William Archer, Sri Aurobindo denigrates European civilization as materialistic and totally void of harmony of the inner and outer man. He says, "Since some centuries Europe has become material, predatory, aggressive and has lost the harmony of the inner and outer man which is the true meaning of civilization and the efficient condition of a true progress. Material comforts, material progress, material efficiency have become the god of her worship.
The modern European Civilization which has invaded Asia and which all violent attacks on Indian ideals represent, is the effective form of its materialistic culture. India, true to her spiritual motive, has never shared in the physical attacks of Asia upon Europe; her method has always been an infiltration of the world with her ideas, such as we today see again in progress.\(^{39}\)

According to Sri Aurobindo the art in India was of pre-Buddhistic origin.\(^{40}\) For him, all Indian art is a throwing out of a certain profound self-vision formed by finding out the secret significance of appearance, the giving of all soul-form to that vision and a remoulding of the material and natural shape to express the psychic truth of it with the greatest possible concentrated rhythmic unity of significance in all the parts and invisible artistic whole.

The excellence of Indian arts and crafts has always been beyond dispute. The generalised sense of beauty which they imply is one of the greatest proof that there can be of the value and soundness of a national culture. In this respect Indian culture need not fear any comparison. If it is said that it is less predominantly artistic than that of Japan, it is because it has put first the spiritual need and made all other things subservient to the spiritual growth of the people.

According to Sri Aurobindo, beauty and delight are spiritual things. Truth and life have not their perfection until they are suffused and filled with the power of delight and beauty. The spirit has no full revelation without these two satisfying presences. Beauty and delight are the very soul and origin of art
and poetry. These two fundamental things, viz. beauty and delight tend to be one for the mind of the artist and the poet though they are often separated in our vital and mental experience. For Sri Aurobindo it is the function of art and poetry to liberate man into pure delight and to bring beauty in his life.

Sri Aurobindo states that the poet can be a seeker and lover of truth as well as a seeker and lover of beauty. Truth is not merely a dry statement of fact, it can be a thing of beauty that is a joy for ever. The poet can feel a poetic and aesthetic joy in the expression of true as well as the expression of the beautiful. He does not make a mere intellectual statement of the truth. It is his vision of its beauty, his thrilled reception of it, his joy in it that he tries to convey by an utmost perfection in word and rhythm.

Sri Aurobindo is popularly known as a 'Yogi,' a philosopher and a nationalist. But, even now it is only a few who knows that he is, above all, a great poet. "A leader in more fields than one, his successive role as a nationalist, a metaphysical thinker and laterly a Yogi has tended through his work as a poet into the background." The reason of his confinement as a poet to a few may perhaps be the lack of his recognition abroad.

Through Yoga, Sri Aurobindo aimed at life's complete transformation into the Divine. His poetry has sometimes been called the Poetry of Yoga and sometimes the poetry of Vision. Sri Aurobindo is not a religious poet. There is also no playing with ideas, no scholasticism in his poetry. What is important in his poetry is the insight of the poet and not the calculation of the thinker. Though Sri Aurobindo had to play many parts during
his lifetime, it was as a poet that he consistently saw himself. "His first verses were published when he was a boy of about ten and shortly before his death in his 78th year, he was concentrating on the revision of his great epic, Savitri." 43

The creative talents of the poet in Sri Aurobindo are evident in his numerous poems and the Epic, Savitri. The Mahābhārata legend of Savitri and Satyavan is entirely transformed in the hands of Sri Aurobindo. In his Epic this legend is raised from the individual to the cosmic plane. "It is no longer a story of the fortunes of the husband and the wife but it becomes a story of the entire race of a man and the whole universe. It acquires a cosmic and not merely an individual significance." 44 Savitri is the greatest work of spiritual adventure. It is based on such vision and experiences that do not come in everybody's way. It is the finest florescene of Sri Aurobindo's poetic genius. 45 This epic is a record of Sri Aurobindo's ideal of the growth of the perfect man who attains to divine nature. It is in acquaintance with the cardinal thought of his theory of evolution.

Most of the beauty of the Epic is concentrated in Book V (The Book of Love) where the meeting of Savitri and Satyavana is described. Here, Sri Aurobindo describes the beauty of nature as:

"Below there crouched a dream of emerald woods
And gleaming boarders solitary as sleep:
Pale water ran like glimmering threads of pearl."
A sigh was straying among happy leaves;
Cool perfumed with slow pleasure-burdened feet
Faint stumbling breezes faltered among flowers
The white crane stood, a vivid motionless streak,
Peacock and parrot jewelled soil and tree,
The Dove's soft moan enriched the enamoured air
And fire winged wild-drakes swam in silvery pools.\textsuperscript{46}

Thus, Savitri is a successful experiment in poetic art. Its theme is of great significance in the context of the present-day world-situation. "At a time when the egoistic forces of national pride and selfishness, armed with the destructive achievements of science, are threatening the extinction of humanity, and when the average man's faith in the power of the spirit is flickering, Savitri's victory over Death may usher in a new note of hope."\textsuperscript{47}

According to Sri Aurobindo, the greatness of literature lies first in the greatness and worth of its substance, the value of its thought and the beauty of its forms. It also lies in the degree to which it avails to bring out and raise the soul and life and mind of people through the genius of some of the greatest or most sensitive representative spirits. Describing Indian literature, Sri Aurobindo says that India has not only the Vedas, Upanishads and Gītā but also the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata expressing poetic literature and the life of long formative age. This long, continuous vigour of creation did not cease with the loss of vitality by the Sanskrit tongue. It was carried on in a mass of beautiful work in her other languages such as in Pāli and Prākrit,
Tamil, Hindi, Bengali, Marathi and other languages. In Indian literature, says Sri Aurobindo, the fundamental tendency is spiritual, intuitive and psychic. It has included intellectual, practical and vital activity.

Sri Aurobindo expresses himself as a dramatist too. 'Persues the Deliverer', 'The Viziers of Bassora', 'Prince of Edur', 'Eric', 'Vasavadutta' and 'Rodogune' are some of the plays which bear the instances of Sri Aurobindo's mastery of the dramatic art. Most of his plays are romance plays and their happy endings is remarkable. As a successful dramatist Sri Aurobindo has treated his subjects creditably well. Though he was not beset by the problems of the stage and the actability of his verse, yet it does not mean that his plays are unsuitable for the stage. "Given proper facilities, they can also be successful plays for the stage, for they have almost all requisite elements of a stage play."48

Sri Aurobindo was also a translator. He translated several Indian works into English. He translated Kalidasa's play Vikromorvaśie giving it the title "The Hero and the Nymph", some portion of Kalidasa's Mālavikagnimitra, Bhartṛhari's Nīti Sātaka naming it "The Century of Life", and C.R. Das's "Sagar Sangeet" which he entitled "Song of the Sea". Other short pieces translated by him include Hymn to the Mother, a translation of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's Bandemataram; Vidula, a translation of four chapters from the Mahābhārata with a distinct patriotic fervour; and two more poems from Bengali, one being Mother India - a song with a remarkable patriotic zeal by Dwijendralal Roy, and the other Mahalakshmi - a poem with a
mystic note. The purpose behind these translations was perhaps his desire to introduce India's literary wealth to a wider reading public. There might also be the patriotic considerations behind such translations as Vidula and Mother India. Sri Aurobindo seems to succeed as a translator. "His success as a translator was mainly because of his own competence as a poet and his thorough knowledge of the languages concerned." 49

According to Sri Aurobindo, the sculptor must always express in stastic form. The idea of the spirit is cut out for him in mass and line which is significant in the stability of its insistence. He can lighten the weight of this insistence but not get rid of it. For the sculptor eternity seizes hold of time in his shapes and arrests it in the monumental spirit of stone or bronze. The painter, on the contrary, expresses the spirit in colour and there is a liquidity and a fluent grace of subtlety in the line that necessitates a more mobile and emotional way of self-expression. The more he gives us of the colour and changing form and emotion of the life of the soul, the more his work glows with beauty, masters the inner aesthetic sense and opens it to the thing his art intends to give.

Sri Aurobindo attributes the greatness of the Indian sculpture to the artist's familiarity with philosophy, religion and aesthetics. Indian sculpture is closely connected with experience. It is the product of spiritual realisation and is comparable to the Upanishads and the Epics. The Gods of Indian sculpture are cosmic beings and embodiment of some great spiritual power. Everything in the figure, the face, the hands, the posture of the
limbs and the turn of the body, every accessory helps to carry out the rhythm of the total suggestion. On the other hand, everything is suppressed which would defeat this end, specially all that bears obvious suggestions of the human figure. About Indian sculpture Sri Aurobindo says, "Not the ideal physical or emotional beauty, but the utmost spiritual beauty or significance of which the human form is capable is the aim of this kind of creation."50

According to Sri Aurobindo, rhythm is the premier necessity of poetical expression because it is the sound movement which carries on its wave the thought movement in the word. For him it is the musical sound-image which helps most to fill in, to extend, subtilise and deepen the thought expression. The peculiar power of music always carries the sense beyond itself into an expression of the intellectually inexpressible. Sri Aurobindo thinks that song is the first discovery of the possibility of a higher. "It wells out from the intensity of touch and the spiritualised emotion of a more delicate or a deeper and more penetrating sight and feeling in the experience, captures and sustains the inevitable codeness of its joy or its attraction, sets the subtle measure of its feeling and keeps it by the magic of its step in sound vibrating on the inner strings and psychic fibres."51

Sri Aurobindo thinks that we always read our mentality into that of our ancient forefathers and it is therefore that we can find in them nothing but imaginative barbarians. He says, "To us poetry is a reveal of intellect and fancy, imagination a
plaything and caterer for our amusement, our entertainer, the
nautch girl of the mind. But to the man of old the poet was a
seer, a revealer of hidden truths, imagination no dancing
courtesan but a priestess in God's house commissioned not to
spin fictions but to image difficult and hidden truths..."\textsuperscript{52} For
him, even the metaphor or simile in the Vedic style is used with
a serious purpose and expected to convey a reality and not to
suggest a pleasing artifice of thought. To these seers, the image
was a revelative symbol of the unrevealed and it was used
because it could hint luminously to the mind what the precise
intellectual word, could not at all hope to manifest.

Poetry, like the kindred arts of painting, sculpture, and
architecture, appeals to the spirit of man through significant
images.\textsuperscript{53} The poet, according to Sri Aurobindo, is a soul
expressing the eternal spirit of Truth and Beauty through some
of the infinite variations of beauty with the word as its
instrument. Then the poet makes an appeal to a similar soul in
man seeking the same spirit and response to it. When a man can
get this response at its purest and in its most direct and
heightened awakening that his faculty of poetic appreciation
becomes surest and most intense.

Sri Aurobindo states that the poet has in him a double
personality. "There is in him a normal man absorbed in mere
living who thinks, and feels and acts like others, and there is
the seer of things, the supernormal man, the super-soul or delight
soul in touch with the impersonal or eternal fountains of joy and
beauty who creates from that source and transmutes by it
alchemy all experience into a form of the Spirit's Ananda."\(^54\) It is easy for him to subject this deeper and greater power to the lower and general demand and put it at the service of his superficial mental experience. He has then to rely on the charm and beauty of word and form to save the externality of his substance. But the genius in him knows that this is not his high way of perfection nor the thing his spirit gave him to do. It is the spiritual transmutation of the substance got by sinking the mental and vital interests in a deeper soul experience which brings the inevitable word and the supreme form and the unanalysable rhythm. The poet is than something more than a maker of beautiful word and phrase. He becomes a spokesman of the eternal spirit of beauty and delight and shares that highest creative and self-expressive rapture, the Divine Ananda.

Sri Aurobindo says that the ancient communities who created the fine many-sided cultures, had the instinct for beauty. But in the mind of later people the sense of beauty works with a certain effort and is clogged by many heavier elements which prevent the sureness of the aesthetic perception. And then, the modern mind, the inheritor of all this past, strives at its best to get back at the old things on a larger scale and realise some oneness of its many strands of experience, but has not found the right meeting place. He hopes, "The day when we get back to the ancient worship of delight and beauty will be our day of salvation...."\(^55\) Only then there can be an assured nobility and sweetness in poetry and art, a satisfied dignity and fulness of life and a harmonious perfection of the spirit.
Sri Aurobindo is of the opinion that modern poet is perfectly right in a way in breaking down the bounds erected by the past poets around their magic palace and its grounds. The poet must claim all things in heaven or earth or beyond for his portion. He must preserve and satisfy all that he finds in his wider field in that profoundest vision which delivers out of each thing its Spiritual Ānanda, the secret of truth and beauty in it for which it was created. Here Sri Aurobindo refers to the English poet Keats. He says that it is in the sense of that spiritual joy of vision that "Keats phrase becomes true for the poet, beauty that is truth, truth that is beauty...."56 This, according to Sri Aurobindo, is all that one should know as the law of one's aesthetic knowledge. Regarding the function of the future poetry, Sri Aurobindo says, "....poetry and art are born mediators between the immaterial and the concrete, the spirit and life. This mediation between the truth of the spirit and the truth of life will be one of the chief functions of the poetry of the future."57

Thus the aesthetics of Sri Aurobindo reveals the potencies of the spirit. It has extended our doors of perception to include both the visible and the invisible. Sisirkumar Ghose, in his "Sri Aurobindo - Poet as Seer" is right when he says, "Revealer of the potencies of the spirit, of man's creative evolution, Sri Aurobindo is the poet of tomorrow, the poet's poet. That is why we say, he is not only as he claimed, first and foremost a poet, but also - as he did not claim - first and foremost among poets. Not Kavi but Kaviraj."58
COMPARISON:

A review of the aesthetics of Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo shows that both of them offer more or less similar views on art, literature, music, poetry and sculpture. They try to explain art in terms of their metaphysics. Keeping in view the Indian tradition of spiritualism both of them hold that art is not wholly rational. Art is such that helps to unseal the doors of the spirit. It discloses the inner reality of things. The aim of the artist is to penetrate into the inner nature of reality and make others to know the same. The view of Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo resemble each other when they hold that an artist's primary concern is to give people things of beauty. Sri Aurobindo seems to be more elaborate than Radhakrishnan in his analysis of the concept of beauty and delight. As he thinks universal Ānanda to be the parents of aethesis, he regards beauty and delight as the very soul of art.

That the greatness of a literature lies in the value of its thought or the intensity of its feeling is the opinion of both Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo. They are able to prove the richness of Indian Literature. For them, starting from the Vedas uptill now Indian literature has been contributing a lot to the world.

Radhakrishnan offers a noteworthy discussion on drama. For him, the dramatist delights us by the perfection of his art and its variety. He is of the opinion that Indian drama has a great future. In India, both writers and actors are found in plenty.
What is remarkable is that there is no tragic endings in Indian drama. Though Radhakrishnan analyses drama in its depth, he himself is not a playwright. Of course, he has tried his hand at the Novel "The Crime of Leela" the theme of which contradicts his own view that creative literature should not be intellectual and spiritual. The novel has not been published and it shows Radhakrishnan's ineffectiveness as a novelist. Sri Aurobindo, on the other hand, proves himself as a successful dramatist. As an Indian he bears an optimistic outlook which is evident from the happy endings of his drama. He reveals himself as a translator too. Thus, unlike Radhakrishnan, Sri Aurobindo has been able to exhibit his talent as a man of literature.

These two contemporary Indian philosophers have appreciated Indian sculptures and paintings nicely. Both of them agree that Indian sculpture and painting have become famous for their spiritual quality and aesthetic appeal.

Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo think that in poetic experience there is a knowledge by being as distinct from knowledge by knowing. What is important in poetry is the insight of the poet and not the calculation of the thinker. Both of them hold that poetry appeals to the spirit of man. The poet is a soul expressing the eternal spirit of truth and beauty taking word as instrument. For them, value of poetry is measured by the depth of its roots in reality. Moreover, they agree in holding that the poet's words should establish a natural sympathy with the reader. The poet should make an appeal to a similar soul in man seeking the same spirit and response to it.
But Sri Aurobindo differs from Radhakrishnan when he lays stress on rhythm as the premier necessity of poetical expression. According to Radhakrishnan, though verbal music is present in poetry, it is not all. For Sri Aurobindo, the peculiar power of music carries the sense beyond itself into an expression of the intellectually inexpressible. But for Radhakrishnan, not verbal music, but emotional fervour, strength of passion, intensity of life which burst out in ecstatic utterance is the essential quality of poetry.

Sri Aurobindo’s analysis of poetry seems to be more comprehensive than that of the analysis of Radhakrishnan. Because Sri Aurobindo himself is a poet. The widely appreciated work of Radhakrishnan outweighs his basic art works. On the other hand, Sri Aurobindo is himself an artist in true sense, though he seems to consider art as a means for conveying his philosophical thoughts. He wrote numerous poetry including his epic Savitri. He recognises the double personality of a poet and points out the function of future poetry. Of course, though Radhakrishnan may not be a poet, his analysis of poetry in its depth has great significance. In short the valuable aesthetic contribution of both Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo satisfies the lover of beauty to a great extent.

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