A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PLATO AND TAGORE IN RELATION TO ESTHETIC EDUCATION

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PLATO AND TAGORE IN RELATION TO ESTHETIC EDUCATION

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the School of Education of
New York University

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PLATO AND TAGORE

IN RELATION TO ESTHETIC EDUCATION

CHAPTER I

I N T R O D U C T I O N

CHAPTER I

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The Statement of the Problem

The problem of this research is to discover, through a comparative study, the contributions of Plato and Tagore to esthetic education. The principal inquiry concerns the views of Plato and Tagore as related particularly to the aspects of education which are of esthetic significance. A comparison of the findings reveals their contributions to esthetic education.

The Definition of the Problem

The field of esthetic education is conceived so variously that often the major thing in common is only the name. In the study of pure esthetics, the field has been quite definitely defined. The problems of education are rather well clarified also. However, when the two are brought together, just what aspects of education are comprehended by the esthetic? How is it related to art education? An immediate consideration in the study is to define the field of esthetic education.

When the field of esthetic education has been thus defined, an understanding of it may be gained by an historical survey of its development, by a general study of its principles, by an investigation of current practice, by experimental research, or by analysis of the views of its leading exponents. A complete picture of esthetic education is more than theory; it is also more than educational experimentation or didactics. All of these elements are essential to an adequate study of esthetic education. In a comparative study of Plato and Tagore as leading exponents of esthetic education, there is something of the historical approach, of the theoretical, of the experimental and of modern practice. They combine the philosophical, the experimental, and the didactic approaches, hence they are considered in order to determine their contribution to esthetic education.

The problem is thus further defined by its limitation to the study of Plato and Tagore. Plato is a recognized exponent of Greek culture, acclaimed universally for the beauty of its life. Paul Monroe indicates the high value of the Greek contribution when he says:

> Since the aim of education, as limited in the work of our schools to-day, must eliminate the religious element, it can find no higher purpose than that of determining for each individual the things in this life that are best worth living for. Consequently no phase of educational history other than that of the Greek has more significance for the student or will better repay consideration of the means and methods adopted for securing these ends.[1]

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1. A Text-book in the History of Education, p. 39

From the background of this rich educational influence, Plato speaks as a philosopher, the first to write significantly on esthetics. But he is more than a philosopher, for his philosophy enters into the practical concerns of life. John Dewey states significantly that the "values that lead to production and intelligent enjoyment of art have to be incorporated into the system of social relationships."[1] This point of view echoes with something in Plato and invites investigation. Plato has a voice that is worthy to be heard on the proposed problem of study.

To turn from Plato in the fourth century before Christ to Rabindranath Tagore in the twentieth century provides a new approach to the study. Tagore comes from another culture, one which rightfully boasts of more than two thousand years of esthetic theory.[2] Tagore, too, is a philosopher who has expressed himself on the essence of art. But he is more than a philosopher; he is an artist in the field of poetry, music, and drama. Furthermore, he is an educator, the founder of Santiniketan, an experimental school in Bolpur, India, where nature and music are two important teachers. Theory and practice both speak through Tagore.

Either Plato or Tagore alone is a full field for research; hence the limits of this study obviously exclude

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1. Art as Experience, p. 344
2. The Cultural Heritage of India, by One Hundred Indian Scholars; reviewed in The New York Times Book Review, July 17, 1938

much which would ordinarily be considered. The principle of stress or omission in treatment of material is dictated by the two major considerations, esthetics and education. However, sufficient note is taken of general views to make possible an adequate interpretation in the specific field of study.

In thus approaching the study of esthetic education through Plato and Tagore, it is to be expected that certain areas of the field are not touched. It is not the intention of this research to make an exhaustive survey of the problems of esthetic education, but rather to discover what Plato and Tagore contribute. Any major omissions are noted in the final evaluation.

The Importance of the Problem

Mention of the esthetic immediately calls forth an amazing variety of responses. In the minds of many people, the esthetic is related to the esoteric, the connoisseur, the museum, or the neurotic. Hence it is considered by them as undesirable for the normal, balanced mode of life. By others, the esthetic is confined to the experience of the creative artist and thus smacks of a mysterious realm into which common people cannot enter. There is another extreme also which so interprets the esthetic as to make it include all real experience. Further confusion is added, due to the fact that the modern emphasis on the vocational and the

practical in education has seized upon the artistic and made it largely utilitarian. Any one of these views results in only a partial appropriation of the values of esthetic education. There is, therefore, a great need for an adequate study of the full possibilities of the field in order to clarify and establish its relation to education in general and to the whole of life.

This problem is significant in relation to the development of personality. William H. Sheldon, in his analysis of consciousness, indicates that the proper development of "feeling awareness" which includes the esthetic, is essential to a healthy personality.[1] It is generally recognized that the esthetic touches principally the emotions, and Strayer and Norsworthy emphasize the importance of the emotions as a "unifying power."[2] Dr. Leighton says:

> Man is a passional dynamic being. His passional life must be satisfied. If this be not done in an organized, balanced, harmonious fashion, it will happen in a disorganized, unbalanced fashion. There will be inner conflicts, with eruptions or mental disorders.
>
> The cultivation of the aesthetic factor, the satisfaction of the emotions in the experience of beauty, means the development of fineness, fullness, balance in the passional life.[3]

So significant is this relationship of the esthetic to a healthy personality that experiments are being made in the

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1. Psychology and the Promethean Will, pp. 117-32, 217-23
2. George Drayton Strayer and Naomi Norsworthy, How to Teach, p. 127
3. Joseph A. Leighton, Individuality and Education, pp. 123-4

curative values of art.

This problem has a wider social relationship in that the increased leisure time makes a greater demand on the educational process in directing growing interests. Social isolations have been broken down and the bad and indifferent in social environment as well as the good are more generally available, hence the socially minded educator finds his problem intensified. Various aspects of the esthetic enter into the leisure-time problem; therefore the present study ought to contribute to a larger understanding of the possibilities of social values in esthetic education.

Furthermore, the present study is timely from the point of view of education itself, for art studies of a great variety are more generally a part of the curriculum than in earlier periods. The emphasis upon creative expression promoted by progressive education relates this study definitely to recent developments. Special teaching projects, such as the High School of Music and Art and the art work done under the W. P. A. in New York City, and projects like the art education of mountain children in Breathitt County, Kentucky, indicate the growing attention given to specific aspects of esthetic education. John L. Tildsley, assistant superintendent of schools of New York City, made a plea before the National Education Association in annual meeting that "our schools from the kindergarten on through college should set awareness of beauty, the growth of fine

taste, as the sum of the educational universe."[1] These developments with many others indicate the growing interest in various emphases in esthetic education.

In the expression of religious interests, there is a revival of the sense of esthetic values. The esthetic is so like the religious experience that they are often considered essentially the same. Here, then, is need for a basic understanding of the approach to and contribution of beauty to the religious life. Art, as the time-long "handmaid of religion" is being used more effectively than formerly in religious education and is emphasized by the International Council of Religious Education in its standards and publications. The esthetic is vital, therefore, in religious education.

This brief presentation of the importance of the problem has indicated how far reaching are the implications of the study. The need for a clarification of the meaning of esthetic education, a recognition of its contribution to personality adjustment, to growing social need, to modern developments in education, and to the field of religious education, all these indicate the importance of the proposed research.

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1. The Immediate Values of Art Education, National Education Association Proceedings, Vol. 74, 1936, pp. 504-5

The Sources of Data

Because of the nature of the research, the study of Plato and Tagore will deal largely with primary sources. The dialogues of Plato as translated by Jowett are the basic study of Plato. These are supplemented by several dialogues of disputed authenticity in other editions and by the letters of Plato as edited by L. A. Post. Reference is made to the Greek edition by Stephani where further help may be of value on significant passages.

In the interpretation of the dialogues, two principles are observed. First, the dialogues are considered as the expression of Plato's views except where directly indicated otherwise. The Socratic problem is recognized, but the findings of that study are too uncertain to be considered in this investigation. Second, the question of the absolute chronology of the dialogues and the development of Plato's views does not greatly affect the procedure. Where chronology may aid in the understanding of apparent contradiction or evident change in views, it is investigated.

Among secondary sources, there is no single study in English comprehending Plato's esthetics. There are a few studies of special aspects of the problem, chapter treatments in relation to his whole philosophy, or commentaries in relation to particular passages of the dialogues. Several studies have been made in German on Plato's esthetics, but none within this century. Plato's theory of

education has been studied, generally, as set forth in the Republic, with recognition of the esthetic elements, but not in relation to his philosophy of esthetics.

The primary source material for a study of Tagore is extensive. His reminiscences and letters, his poetry, songs, stories, and drama, his many lectures and addresses afford a variety of approaches to his philosophy. The Visva-bharati publications have frequent articles from his pen, as well as from others who are associated with Tagore in his educational ideal. Much of his writing is published in English. Among secondary sources, those which describe his school are of special interest.

The sources for research in esthetic education are of a large variety. So large is the field that most studies, except a few which are not recent, deal principally with a particular aspect of the esthetic. An important source is L'education esthétique de l'enfant by P. A. Lascaris. The major sources are on art education, some of which deal with the broader field of the esthetic. Works on art, esthetics, education, and psychology are also investigated.

The Method of Procedure

This investigation follows the procedure of analysis leading to exposition, then comparison leading to evaluation. In a preliminary step, the field of esthetic education is determined by a synthesis of leading views

regarding it. With this as a basis, the major investigation is to determine with clarity the views of Plato and Tagore regarding esthetic education. Consideration is therefore given to their general views on esthetics and education, then to more specific conceptions of esthetic education as to aims, content, and methods. The findings of each individual study are related in order to discover points of agreement and difference. This comparative study precipitates the essential contributions of Plato and Tagore to esthetic education. These contributions are evaluated in relation to principles set forth by authorities in the field of esthetic education. Thus the research concludes with a formulation of the contributions of Plato and Tagore to esthetic education.

CHAPTER II

E S T H E T I C E D U C A T I O N

CHAPTER II

E S T H E T I C E D U C A T I O N

The study of esthetic education obviously combines two major fields of investigation: esthetics and education. Either subject taken alone furnishes innumerable problems for consideration. Likewise, there are vast possibilities for research in the field delimited by their combination. Since the differentiating element in the present study of education is added by the esthetic, a brief consideration of that field will help to focus the study. Then a preliminary analysis of the scope of esthetic education will lay a foundation for the discovery of the contribution made to it by Plato and Tagore.

The Field of Esthetics Described

When a new field is investigated, a definition is generally formulated at once. But to define esthetics at this point would limit the field and establish a particular philosophical approach which would hinder a scientific attitude. Even the simplest of definitions reveals a particular philosophical bias, as Croce indicates in the following:

> Aesthetics is really the whole of philosophy, but with special emphasis on that side of it which concerns art. Many have demanded or imagined or desired a self-contained aesthetics, devoid of any general philosophical implications, and consistent with more than one, or with any, philosophy; but the project is impossible of execution because self-contradictory. Even those who promise to expound a naturalistic, inductive, physical, physiological or psychological aesthetics --in a word, a non-philosophical aesthetics --when they pass from promise to performance surreptitiously introduce a general positivistic, naturalistic or even materialistic philosophy.[1]

In addition it would be more confusing than clarifying to present the leading esthetic theories. Munro advocates a scientific method in the study of esthetics. In explanation he says:

> Much effort has been spent in arguing that some one sort of experience is <u>the</u> aesthetic experience, as if there were only one; that all other ways of responding to art but the one prescribed are spurious, vulgar imitations. . . . . Rather than to start out with an exclusive definition of what is <u>really</u> aesthetic experience, or a dictum as to how people <u>ought</u> to look at art, an experimental attitude would be to find out in what various ways they <u>do</u> look at art, and what the specific consequences are of each.[2]

The Historical Development of Esthetics

As an independent field of study, esthetics is comparatively new. Although the ancient Greeks expressed a highly refined esthetic sense in their art, their philosophy of beauty was not extensively developed. Plato and Aristotle

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1. Benedetto Croce, Aesthetics, <u>Encyclopaedia Britannica</u>, 14th Edition, Vol. I, p. 266
2. Thomas Munro, <u>Scientific Method in Aesthetics</u>, p. 14

pioneered in the problems of esthetics. In the eighteenth century Baumgarten was the first to present a distinct esthetic theory and was followed by the important treatment on the autonomy of beauty by Kant.[1] While Schiller,[2] Hegel,[3] and Schopenhauer[4] developed further the problem of beauty, Schelling[5] was the first to organize a philosophy of art. The experimental approach was introduced by Fechner in the eighteenth century and has been followed increasingly to the present.[6] A further development, largely by English writers, has been centered in the psychological aspects with emphasis upon beauty as an experience.

The Major Problems of Esthetics

The most helpful approach to this difficult field is thus not to define, but to describe it in terms of the major problems involved. As a primary consideration, esthetics is interested in the nature of beauty as a phenomenon. There follows the problem of the ontology of beauty, whether it is objective or subjective. Then there is the

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1. The Critique of Judgment
2. Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Mankind
3. Aesthetics
4. The World as Will and Idea
5. The Relation of the Arts of Form to Nature
6. A general treatment of experimental esthetics is given by Albert R. Chandler in Beauty and Human Nature. He has also compiled A Bibliography of Experimental Aesthetics. The method is presented by Thomas Munro in Scientific Method in Aesthetics.

ethical consideration which centers in the purpose and value of beauty. The philosophical problems relating to art are of the same general nature.[1] In the experimental approach, the interest shifts from beauty and art as such to the nature of individual reactions to specific stimuli, the appreciation of art objects, and preference for particular types of art. The creative expression of the experience of beauty is also of interest in experimental esthetics. Psychological investigation notes behavior in the presence of beauty and art, and the experience in that behaving, both in appreciation and in creation. Esthetics, then, deals with the nature and value of beauty and art and with the experience derived from them.

Esthetics enters a very difficult field as it proceeds in systematic study of beauty. It deals with the wide range of knowledge and experience from intangible beauty to its tangible presence in the arts. It is concerned with both the object of esthetic experience and the subject experiencing. Since beauty is not an isolated phenomenon the experience of which can be set apart from all other experience, it is not easy to define the limits of the field, or further, when those limits have been determined, to distinguish the relationships which are purely esthetic. Then,

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1. This outline of the problems of esthetics was presented by Felix M. Katz in his course in General Esthetics at New York University, 1937-8.

too, the transient, subjective nature of esthetic experience limits the methods and accuracy of study, for genuine esthetic experience cannot be sustained for the purpose of analysis and the scientific attitude may limit its free expression. Finally, the experience of beauty is so definitely personal that variations and confusion are unavoidable in the attempt to arrive at the sine qua non.

The Methods of the Study of Esthetics

Two major methods of study in esthetics are suggested by Croce when he refers to it as a "philosophical science,"[1] namely; the philosophical and the scientific. The word esthetics is derived from the Greek word αἴσθησις, which means perception, either of the senses or of the mind. Thus the data of esthetics come through perception. Of interest in the philosophical approach are; the nature of beauty and its relation to art; the basis of esthetic value; beauty in contradistinction to truth and goodness, to the ugly, comic, sublime, et cetera. The growing popularity of the science of psychology is seen in the shifting emphasis from beauty as reality to beauty as experience. The scientific approach, in analyzing the data of experience and the individual response to them, is often felt to be sufficient, but its most objective analysis presupposes a phi-

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1. Aesthetics, Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th Edition, Vol. I, p. 266

losophy of beauty and art. Munro recognizes that the scientific methods dealing with art have not been sufficiently tested,[1] hence confusion often results. Though the scientific method offers value more directly, both the philosophical and scientific approaches are essential to the formulation of an adequate conception of esthetic education.

Preliminary to the particular investigation of this thesis, esthetics is viewed from the standpoint of scope and method. In summary, esthetics may be described as the systematic study of the nature and value of beauty and art and the experience of the subject in appreciation and creative expression derived from their perception.

The Field of Esthetic Education Described

From this introduction to the nature of esthetics, the question arises whether it has a very large place in education. While the concept of esthetics has been presented in the abstract, specific implications will be apparent in the following consideration of the aims, content, and methods of esthetic education.

The Development of the Esthetic in Education

Because of the conviction that art belonged to the leisure part of life or the domination of ascetic prin-

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1. Scientific Method in Aesthetics, p. 26

ciples of living, the esthetic has had a long struggle for recognition in the educational process. The early Greeks made a large place for the arts of poetry and music, with the dance and chorus in their education. For centuries afterward the esthetic side of life was suppressed, and where it broke through a formal expression resulted. Not until the Renaissance was any place given to the esthetic, and then only in a restricted sense in the study of grammar and rhetoric.[1] The new freedom of life gave opportunity for the expansion of personality in the direction of beauty and art.[2] Esthetic values were soon sapped by formalism and lay dormant until the new approach to education was made by Comenius and the great pedagogues who followed him. A growing understanding of human nature and the demands of individual and social needs have since brought out varying phases of the esthetic in the educational process.

The Relation of Art Education to Esthetic Education

In the light of the very general use of the term "art education," it is important to appreciate the distinction of meaning in relation to "esthetic education." In some literature, the two terms are used interchangeably and

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1. Paul Monroe, A Text-book in the History of Education, pp. 369-70
2. Rudolf Agricola, 1444-85, forerunner of the new humanism, exemplified these possibilities.

evidently with the same connotation. However, art education generally indicates the more restricted field, as becomes evident in the stated aims, materials, and methods used.

The emphasis of aims in art education reveals that it is more confined in its scope. Art education is concerned primarily with the production and appreciation of art. The stress given these aims varies according to the type of school, whether professional, private, or public. The stress upon the vocational aim in general education which has effected changes in nearly every subject of study has had a perceptible influence on art education in magnifying the practical values above the cultural interests. In contrast, esthetic education emphasizes as the major aim the development of esthetic awareness and taste. This aim is more universal in its scope for it applies to the individual who manifests little or no capacity for constructing art work, but who may still enter the open sesame of an esthetic view of life. This very primary and important value is often unrealized in the process of formal or vocational art education.

The attitude toward materials is another point of distinction. In art education, interest is likely to be centered in art objects and skill in expression. Appreciation may have a more or less prominent part in the approach to materials. In esthetic education, the emphasis is more specifically upon the experience in the presence of art ob-

jects than upon the materials themselves, hence esthetic education is a wider field of study. This distinction was indicated by John L. Tildsley in addressing the National Education Association when he said:

> Art education in the schools does not mean merely lettering, free-hand drawing, sketching, design, painting, analysis of color. It means all that, but it means so much more, a feeling for, an awareness of, some understanding of what not only art but also beauty itself has given in richness of living, in exaltation to the race throughout the ages past.[1]

However, there is wide variability at this point, so the criterion of materials may not be final.

A third distinction is recognized in the emphasis given in method. Here again art education is confined more to the generally recognized art activities in either the fine or applied arts. In the curriculum, the teaching is related to particular periods and specialized art activity. The method has been largely academic. On the other hand, esthetic education is more comprehensive. Though the customary art processes are a major contributing factor, the method of esthetic education is as extensive as life itself. Its principles are operative throughout the entire school equipment, curriculum, and personnel. Method in esthetic education tends to be basically psychological.

However, it must be noted that these distinctions are gradually disappearing. With enlarged appreciation of

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1. The Immediate Values of Art Education, National Association Proceedings, Vol. 74, 1936, p. 512

values to be realized through the esthetic approach, the narrower procedures are being abandoned. While all art education is related to esthetic education, not all of it measures up to the full scope of the esthetic. The basic difference may be traced back ultimately to the more inclusive idea of the esthetic in relation to art. The following consideration of the nature of esthetic education will crystallize these concepts.

The Nature of Esthetic Education

What is the nature of esthetic education? If it is to be differentiated from the general conception of art education, upon what basis shall it be? What changes does it effect in education? What are its values? These and ancillary problems will be clarified by an investigation of authorities in the field.

The Aims of Esthetic Education

The aims of esthetic education very directly effect its nature. The earliest emphasis was cultural, looking toward the enrichment of interests in, as well as knowledge and appreciation of, nature and art objects. Training in observation and discrimination tends to be merely pedagogical. On the expressional side, the emphasis is manual dexterity. Economic aims draw out the industrial and vocational interests. Progressive education with its

stress upon freedom has magnified the creative aspects. Each of these has had its part in the historical growth of esthetic education.

What is conceived to be the purpose of esthetic education? Although he entitles his study Art in Education and Life, Davies uses the term "esthetic" extensively. The burden of his very thorough discussion of the problems is:

> What are the aesthetical as distinguished from the intellectual and moral elements of education? What is its function in the discipline of the school and the studies pursued therein? Does it not lie in the perception of the beautiful; in the specific training, therefore, of the creative imagination, the emotions, the judgment; in a word, --in the development of the taste of the pupil? We think it does.[1]

An expansion of this viewpoint is found in De Garmo's statement that the

> purpose of esthetic education is the acquisition by every child of an esthetic view of the world, as he now acquires an intellectual or an ethical view. This does not mean that all things are beautiful, but that all things are capable of being judged as esthetically pleasing, indifferent, or repulsive.[2]

Being somewhat more specific, he suggests later that the "psychological purpose of esthetic education, therefore, is to promote the pure, unselfish joy of life, to enable us to see and appreciate the beautiful wherever it exists, and when possible to produce it where it is not, but should be."[3]

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1. Henry Davies, Art in Education and Life, p. 22
2. Charles De Garmo, Esthetic Education, p. 1
3. Ibid., p. 4

The major considerations here indicated are: the promotion of an esthetic response to life; the formation of a taste for beauty; and the expression of that taste. This same viewpoint is presented by Horne in his statement of a three-fold purpose:

> The primary purpose in aesthetic education is to bring pupils into the enjoyment of the great natural and human artistic products. Secondary to this is the purpose of enabling them to estimate artistic values. And secondary to both of these is the purpose of making them producers of art.[1]

There is yet a more comprehensive emphasis in esthetic education which is fostered by the leaders of The Barnes Foundation. Identifying the esthetic more broadly with all meaningful experience and emphasizing the creative experience, Munro believes that the "chief aim of art education should be the development of the individual's own aesthetic powers, with emphasis on clear, spontaneous feeling and ability to reorganize experience creatively."[2]

It will be helpful, at this point, to suggest more specific values to be realized from the esthetic in education. In addressing the Department of Art Education of the National Education Association, Lester Dix sustained the view that "all educational processes should begin, continue, and end with art experience."[3] To him, there is "no

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1. H. H. Horne, Psychological Principles of Education, p. 239
2. Thomas Munro, A Constructive Program for Teaching Art, in John Dewey et al., Art and Education, p. 218
3. Aesthetic Experience and Growth as an Essential Part of Life and Education, Manuscript, p. 16

more fundamental educational experience than that of the arts and aesthetics"; his reasons are six: first, art activity is integrative; second, "art is a great expander and enricher of experience"; third, it balances experience; fourth, "the arts teach much about motivation"; fifth, "art is a great evaluator"; and finally, "the arts are a great prophesier."[1] Such are the creative values afforded by esthetic education and basic to an esthetic view of life.

A further multiplication of statements will not vitally enlarge the concept of the aims of esthetic education. The adaptation of these general aims to particular grades and types of schools is readily made in terms of material and method. In summary, the aims of esthetic education are: to enlarge the capacity for the esthetic response to life; to develop a taste for beauty; and to cultivate the ability to express esthetic experience creatively.

The Content of Esthetic Education

In the matter of content, esthetic education has wide variation in emphasis. It is at once evident that the type of school is a major determining factor. Though there is a sense in which esthetic experience does not develop until adolescence, much has already been done in the years preceding to determine it.[2] A general survey of materials

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1. Op. cit., pp. 18-21
2. F. V. Nyquist, Art Education in Elementary Schools, p.229; Earl Barnes, Child Study in Relation to Elementary Art Education, p.12; Eugen Neuhaus, The Appreciation of Art, pp. 235-6

and approaches will suffice at this point.

A vast amount of the content of esthetic education is informal and unconscious. The esthetic experience is built out of the whole field of perception, so even before the school has an opportunity, much conditioning has already taken place in feeling tone associated with sound, color, form, movement, and less markedly with taste and smell.[1] Nature in its local flora and fauna is a real educative factor. The community and home with their library, amusement, and radio provide literature, music, pictures, color, and strongly affect the sense of values. The informal content in the school--appearance of room, tone of excellence held by the school, poise, voice, and appearance of the teacher--can be brought more in harmony with the aims of esthetic education. Out of the impressions from these many sources comes much of the material which will be the substance of more controlled esthetic education.

The formal content of esthetic education is organized and presented in a variety of ways. There are the objective qualities which give substance to beauty, such as form, tone, color, and rhythm. In more technical terms, the content is studied as color, rhythm, balance, emphasis and subordination, and proportion.[2] Bailey outlines the course content with major divisions of color, plant growing,

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1. Munro, A Constructive Program for Teaching Art, in Dewey et al., Art and Education, pp. 84-5
2. Margaret Mathias, Art in the Elementary School, pp. 63-99

object drawing, design, and construction.[1] As he suggests, nature provides rich content for formal study as well as the arts.[2] All the fine arts may become part of the curriculum, according to their accessibility. Music, painting, and literature are generally available. Architecture, sculpture, and dancing are less frequently used. Where museums may be made a part of study, many practical arts may be added, such as pottery, costumes, and furniture. While use is made of these arts, not always is it for an esthetic purpose. This fact is most generally true in the study of literature and drama.

Not infrequently is the warning sounded against using materials for technique only. Mathias cautions:

> . . . . technique for the child and not the child for technique. It is not so important that every child in an elementary school has attained certain knowledges and skills at a given time as it is that every child has ideas of 'sensitiveness to environment' and fine satisfaction in expressing those ideas or in creative activity.[3]

With the purpose of appreciation held uppermost, there is to be expected a different choice of content, as well as approach in the general subjects. Relating these two matters, Nyquist says:

> Since the primary significance of art in education is the development of esthetic attitudes toward the visual world, the appreciation of art

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1. Henry Turner Bailey, Art Education, pp. 47-93
2. Cf. G.H. Opdyke, Art and Nature Appreciation, p. 68
3. Mathias, op. cit., p. 178

> should suffuse every art experience in elementary schools. Segregated periods for esthetic contemplation of the fine arts, however, are undoubtedly beneficial for the development of esthetic appreciations. . . . . But appreciation of any sort is essentially within the realm of feeling and outside the field of pure cognition, the underlying distinction between appreciation and intellection being that in the former the factor of a "feeling tone" has entered. The degree to which this "feeling tone" element is present varies greatly, but very often reaches its saturation point in esthetic responses to the fine arts.[1]

Along with this mingling in the content of esthetic education of technique and appreciation, fine and practical arts, observing and creating, the consideration of method is important.

The Methods of Esthetic Education

The methods of esthetic education are of major importance. The techniques of procedure vary greatly but are based upon general principles which are of special interest in this study. They have been selected from the sources according to their special significance for esthetic values in education.

It is not possible to overemphasize the importance of beginning well. The esthetic response is conditioned directly by sensitivity, and early impressions definitely sear or nourish the alertness of the child.[2] Beginning early does not mean taking advantage of the child's plastic

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1. Nyquist, Art Education in Elementary Schools, p. 123
2. Elinor C. Graham, Teaching Art in the Primary School, in Wm. S. Rusk, Methods of Teaching the Fine Arts, pp. 3-4

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nature to force him into a mould; rather, with utmost care, the child should be encouraged to follow his own bent.[1] Beginning early does not refer merely to the first art lesson but very definitely to experiences prior to school attendance.[2] Control before the child attends school is next to impossible, hence to begin well in some cases may mean the unlearning of habits and responses which thwart esthetic growth. Therefore much consideration should be given in order that early impressions will be esthetically constructive.

A second fundamental in method is the direct approach. It seems very obvious that such is the procedure in study relating to the arts, but even in the presence of the beautiful object, this principle may be violated. Yet here rests one of the major contributions of the esthetic in education, for it is pointed out that the

> great experiment of public education in our country will remain crippled and its most potent resources wasted until the whole subject of expression through the arts is properly understood and related to the present over-literary training in which much of the material reaches the student at second-hand. Direct choice of original material from the objective world, independently dealt with and observed, offers possibilities for training the mind and the emotions not yet recognized, chiefly because of the convention that the tools employed belong to art alone, a subject which is still apart from the ordinary human experience.[3]

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1. Ursula Weiss, Creative Education in Central Europe, in Rusk, op. cit., p. 60
2. William H. Sheldon, Psychology and the Promethean Will, pp. 122, 219
3. C. H. Woodbury and Elizabeth W. Perkins, The Modern Art School and Its Sources, in Rusk, op. cit., p. 62

More pointedly, Munro says:

> The first stage, including all work in primary schools, should be devoted to providing the child with experiences which he will immediately enjoy and which will call forth his innate powers of perception and feeling. Little attention should be given at first to relations, designs or formal arrangements. The procedure should be to provide the child with a wide variety of sensory stimuli, preferably such that they can be manipulated and experimented with.[1]

The direct method will awaken a slumbering esthetic sense and constantly feed the growing experiences.[2] Too early an approach to the abstract without the fund of concrete impressions makes empty esthetic experience.

Another principle closely related to the direct approach is the disinterested attitude. As indicated by Münsterberg, there are two interests in education: knowledge for the practical demands and esthetic experience for the purpose of rest.[3] So he says:

> A youth who does not learn early to appreciate the objects in their own meaning, but sees them as causes for effects, cannot be expected to have in later life other than practical interests and must lack that repose which gives the only complete satisfaction, that repose which a mere restless striving for practical ends ever promises but can never give.[4]

With a disinterested attitude, the receptive channels of consciousness are free to respond fully to impressions as

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1. A Constructive Program for Teaching Art, in Dewey et al., Art and Education, p. 231
2. Opdyke, Art and Nature Appreciation, pp. 65-7
3. Hugo Münsterberg, The Principles of Art Education, pp. 30-1
4. Ibid., pp. 31-2

they are without being shunted off early to some category which at once changes the nature of the experience. So Buermeyer observes that for "most of us, and for all of us most of the time, seeing is a mechanical registration of pitiably meagre impressions, and 'interpretation' a hasty consignment to pigeon-holes made for us by others long ago."[1] Esthetic awareness, then, is kept alert by the disinterested attitude.

In the fourth place, method should provide for the growth and expression of esthetic emotion. Art can be taught with the emotional experience neglected or subordinated. Such method is of little significance esthetically.[2] Even the teaching of appreciation[3] may become an intellectual process; it is equally inadequate when it degenerates into an emotional spree. Method in esthetic education gives the affective processes full normal expression.[4] Perception of color, line, mass, tone, rhythm, has an affective element which is essential to their being perceived esthetically.[5] Then follows the method of expressing the experience using the appropriate color, line, et cetera for the emotional

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1. Laurence Buermeyer, Art and the Ivory Tower, in Dewey et al., op. cit., p. 36
2. C. W. Gerwig, The Heart through Art, pp. 34-50
3. For detailed discussion of procedure in appreciation, see Wyquist, Art Education in Elementary Schools, pp. 135-41; Mathias, Art in the Elementary School, pp. 154-61
4. A careful discussion of the place of emotion in esthetic experience is found in H. DeWitt Parker, Principles of Aesthetics, pp. 61-70
5. Parker, op. cit., pp. 53-4; Münsterberg, op. cit., pp. 78 ff.

quality to be embodied. In conclusion, in esthetic education "we must definitely train the emotions. If instead of attempting to teach art as a subject, we undertake to teach children to love beauty, it will call for certain changes in our common methods of procedure."[1]

Though other principles of method which are concerned with imagination, joyful freedom, and unity of the self are of interest, the final consideration here is the importance of environment. Teachers who are aware of the tremendous opportunity which esthetic values offer in education express the necessity of using every avenue possible to enhance those values. By this means the cleavage, too often regnant, between beauty and life tends to be broken down. Accordingly, every teacher is responsible to "promote rather than oppose the sense of harmony, and fitness, and beauty that the workers in art are attempting to awaken and cherish."[2] Thus, establishing the unity of the esthetic with life is basic, for it is "like achieving health thru vitalizing the blood. It means reaching the fountain at its source and charging it with a potency which makes it overflow into unforeseen channels of blessing day after day and throughout life."[3] It is of major importance then, that "the

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1. Ella V. Dobbs, The Gospel of Beauty, in National Education Association Proceedings, Vol. 73, 1935, p. 394
2. Julia C. Harney, The Art Problems of the General Supervisor, in ibid., p. 657
3. Annette J. Warner, Art a Vitalizing Force in Education, in ibid., Vol. 54, 1916, p. 469

study and use of the fundamental principles which make for beauty must be closely interwoven with every part of the school program until they subconsciously or unconsciously function in the child's work and play."[1] This principle, which may have control in the school, is none the less vital in relation to the environment of the home and community.

Summary

The differentiating element in this investigation in the field of education is the esthetic. Through a long development with emphasis upon the philosophical, the experimental, the scientific approaches, esthetics has come to be considered as both a philosophy and a science. Rather than define the field in terms of leading theories, esthetics is described in terms of its major problems. It was found to be concerned with the nature and value of beauty and art and the experience of the individual in appreciation and creative expression derived from their perception.

Developing through a variety of emphases, the esthetic has won an important place in education. Though art education has much in common with esthetic education, the latter is more comprehensive in scope and values. The aims of esthetic education are three: to enlarge the capacity for the esthetic response to life; to develop a taste for

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1. Dobbs, loc. cit.

beauty; to cultivate the ability to express esthetic experience creatively. The content is presented variously, in terms of elements of beauty such as color, sound, form, movement, taste, and smell, or in terms of objects of both fine art and applied art. There is also the large bulk of material in the environment which contributes to esthetic education. The method employed effects the values of the materials. In esthetic education the principles of method emphasize the importance of early impressions, the direct approach, the disinterested attitude, the esthetic emotion, and the environmental influences. With this introduction to the field, it is of interest to discover what has been done specifically in educational theory and practice in the development of esthetic education.

CHAPTER III

P L A T O

PLATO
Museum, Berlin

"Beloved Pan, and all other gods who haunt this place,
give me beauty in the inward soul;
and may the outward and inward man be at one."

Phaedrus 279

CHAPTER III

P L A T O

The "glory that was Greece" shown about the life of Plato in brilliance and warmth. Seldom have creative forces conspired so generally for the enrichment of life. Plato gathered up the vibrant energies of his day, refined them in the alembic of his own virile yet sensitive personality, and treasured the residue for the ages in his immortal dialogues.

"Plato, too, like every great man, consumed his own times," says Emerson.[1] The creative urge which surged through the formative centuries of Greek culture and reached its peak in the Periclean Age was still active in Plato's day. The expression of individual character and hardihood was valued. The pull as of centripetal force can be observed in trends—political, social, personal, and intellectual—toward unity. The close rivalry of personal and state loyalty is apparent. The impending dangers of invasion exalted the place of the warrior. The insidious

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1. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Representative Men, p. 44

elements of degeneracy from within compelled thinkers to search for permanency in an ideal.

However, Plato is more than a mosaic of his times. His dialogues are not merely a report of current views. Contemporary thought is here, but as grist in the mill for the investigation of truth.[1] It is to be noted further, as Field indicates, that we

> shall misunderstand Plato entirely if we think of him as a revolutionary thinker breaking in on an established order of ideas and institutions with a demand for radical reconstruction. On the contrary, in all his most important contributions to moral and political theory he is on the direct line of orthodox Greek thought, and in strong opposition to the new and subversive tendencies.[2]

Yet Plato was forever creating something new, something good out of what he had. Education properly conceived is made the effective means to the desired end for both the individual and the state.

It is evident that the outreaches for investigation concerning Plato are limitless. A careful and constant delimitation has been exercised. A brief survey of his life will present Plato the man. The exposition of his major philosophical views will be related particularly to the problems of esthetics. The final consideration will be his educational views and their esthetic significance.

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1. G. C. Field, Plato and His Contemporaries, pp. 189-96
2. Ibid., p. 91

The Life of Plato

Various attempts have been made to cause the dry bones of Platonic writing to take on flesh and walk again with the grace of the beloved philosopher-teacher of the fourth century before Christ. As a result, the student of today finds available, on the one hand, a realistic picture with every detail of Platonic lore carefully weighed in scientific precision,[1] and on the other, an impressionistic picture with the spirit of Plato made vibrant.[2] There is a wealth of material, but the biographer is soon embarrassed by the necessity of deciding what is fact and what fiction. What is the reality behind the well-worn name, Plato?[3]

The Background of Early Years

In the first year of the 88th Olympiad on the 7th of Thargelion, which is May 21, 427 B.C. in terms of our calendar, Plato was born. Since his parents were of noble lineage, the family background is not obscure. His father,

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1. Eduard Zeller, Plato and the Older Academy, and A. E. Taylor, Plato the Man and His Work
2. Frederick J. E. Woodbridge, The Son of Apollo. His viewpoint is stated on pp. 28-31.
3. It is not deemed necessary for the purposes of this present study to enter into the controversial matters, but to present materials on which there is rather common agreement, so as to give a coherent story of Plato's life.
4. Tradition has it that Plato was named after his grandfather, and that ΠΛΑΤΩΝ was a nickname given by his teacher of gymnasium for his breadth of forehead or shoulders.

Ariston, and grandfather, Aristocles, were descendants of Codrus, the last king of Athens. Perictione, his mother, was the sister of Charmides and cousin of Critias through whom the ancestral line was traced to Solon. Plato had a noble heritage.

In his home, Plato was probably the youngest of four children. His two brothers, Adeimantus and Glaucon, who appear in the Republic, were much older than he. His sister was Potone, whose son, Speusippus, became head of the Academy upon Plato's death. There was also a step-sister, Demus, who was recognized for her beauty, and a half-brother, Antiphon, who appears in the Parmenides.

Of the early life of Plato there is little known which is attested. However, the viewpoint of Woodbridge seems tenable that scientific research may be sure, but biography manufactured out of the material of the times may be no less true or credible.[1] Parents of aristocratic lineage living in the time of Pericles would have a home of culture and advantage. His father having died, Plato early had a step-father, Pyrilampes, "a personal intimate of Pericles as well as a prominent supporter of his policy."[2] That there was wealth in the family is generally conceded, so Plato's quick and sensitive nature doubtless was enriched by the fine opportunities of his day. Withal, there

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1. Woodbridge, op. cit., pp. 4, 7
2. Taylor, op. cit., p. 2

> may have been much or little peculiarly distinctive in Plato's childhood, but it is an agreeable occupation to imagine what that childhood might have been in so noble a household with the Age of Pericles still a vivid and living memory. Plato must have been a child in his time. We know nothing of the child. We know something of the time.[1]

The Preparation of Youth

As a child of his time, Plato followed the customary education of Greek youth.[2] According to Grote, he began his literary training under Dionysius, a schoolmaster, and studied music under Dracon[3]; thus he became familiar with the poets as is evidenced by the readiness with which he quotes from Homer. He also had the customary gymnastic and is reported to have won some honors in the contests.

The time of Plato's youth was turbulent with war, when every loyal citizen fulfilled his service to the state. With older brothers, and parents, and relatives in public affairs, Plato heard in the home discussions of the problems and progress of the situation. At eighteen years of age, the Athenian youth enrolled on the public register as a Greek citizen, took the memorable military oath, and served his country for two years. In this way Plato played his part whether on the sea, on foot, or on horseback. He

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1. Woodbridge, on. cit., pp. 7-8
2. Zeller discusses the sources for Plato's education, on. cit., p. 6, fn. 6
3. George Grote, Plato and the Other Companions of Socrates, Vol. I, p. 115

saw the fleet go out in glory and felt the despair upon its destruction; he felt the privation of the famine due to the long Spartan blockade; he followed the struggle of the Tyranny of Thirty and the final restoration of the democracy. Thus, for about seven years his youthful energies were given in public services.

It is quite natural that such situations should challenge young Plato to a profession of public affairs. Charmides, his uncle, and Critias belonged to the oligarchic party which was hostile to the democracy and had a strong influence upon Plato for a time. In reflecting upon this experience, Plato writes:

> Once upon a time in my youth I cherished like many another the hope, directly I came of age, of entering upon a political career. It fell out, moreover, that political events took the following course. There were many who heaped abuse on the form of government then prevailing, and a revolution occurred. In this revolution fifty-one men set themselves up as a government, eleven in the city, ten in the Piraeus . . . . Some of these happened to be relatives and acquaintances of mine, who accordingly invited me forthwith to join them, assuming my fitness for the task. No wonder that, young as I was, I cherished the belief that they would lead the city from an unjust life, as it were, to habits of justice and really administer it; so that I was intensely interested to see what would come of it.
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> Of course I saw in a short time that these men made the former government look in comparison like an age of gold. . . . . When I observed all this — and some other similar matters of importance — I withdrew in disgust from the abuses of those days.[1]

Thus Plato was early acquainted with problems of the state.

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1. Epistle VII, 324c-325

The final matter of significance in these years was the philosophical influence which provided an absorbing purpose when disillusionment came in his political hopes. Plato early learned from Cratylus the doctrines of Heraclitus some ideas of which carried over into his own philosophy,[1] but of signal importance was Plato's relation to Socrates. Though they may have met earlier, their real friendship began not later than 407 B.C., Plato's twentieth year. When the political situation was so distraught, there may have been some relaxing of their relationship; otherwise Plato was devoted to Socrates until his death in 399 B.C. The approach and method of Socrates were a wholesome restraint for Plato's imaginative nature, for, as Zeller suggests, "Plato needed this schooling to give him the repose and certainty of the scientific method and to develope him from a poet into a philosopher; nor did he in the process permanently lose anything for which his natural temperament designed him."[2]

The condemnation of Socrates made a deep wound in Plato's spirit and further sapped his confidence and interest in politics. He expresses his deep admiration for Socrates and keen hurt from the political maneuver in his letter:

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1. Field, Plato and His Contemporaries, p. 3
2. Zeller, Plato and the Older Academy, Vol. I, p. 12

> Among other things they sent an elderly man, Socrates, a friend of mine, who I should hardly be ashamed to say was the justest man of his time, in company with others, against one of the citizens to fetch him forcibly to be executed. Their purpose was to connect Socrates with their government, whether he wished or not. He refused and risked any consequences rather than become their partner in wicked deeds.[1]
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> As it chanced, however, some of those in control brought against this associate of mine, Socrates, whom I have mentioned, a most sacrilegious charge, which he least of all men deserved. They put him on trial for impiety and the people condemned and put to death the man who had refused to take part in the wicked arrest of one of their friends, whose exile had coincided with their own exile and misfortunes.[2]

About the name of Socrates there was associated for Plato not only the warmth of personal friendship, the direction in philosophical thinking and discipline of abilities, the disillusionment in political affairs, but more radiantly—a moral ideal, personalized in Socrates himself, a righteous man.[3] Thus the circumstances of these formative years made an irresistible impression.

The Years of Obscurity

The years from 399 B.C. to about 387 B.C. are quite barren of either fact or basis for conjecture. Plato offered with friends to pay the bail for Socrates, but to no avail. He beheld philosophic truth consecrated by the

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1. Epistle VII, 324e-325
2. Epistle VII, 325e
3. Field, op. cit., pp. 9, 11

martyr death of his beloved teacher and friend. From then on Plato's mind was set in the direction of solving political problems by the philosophical approach. In his own words:

> I was forced to say in praise of the correct philosophy that it affords a vantage-point from which we can discern in all cases what is just for communities and for individuals; and that accordingly the human race will not see better days until either the stock of those who rightly and genuinely follow philosophy acquire political authority, or else the class who have political control be led by some dispensation of providence to become real philosophers.
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> This conviction I held when I reached Italy and Sicily on my first visit.[1]

Doubtless his thoughts were maturing in this direction during these years.

Plato, with other followers of Socrates, after his death retired to the near-by city of Megara where they met in the home of Euclid. How long Plato remained there is uncertain. He then spent some time in travel including Egypt, Cyrene, Magna Graecia, and Sicily.[2] How much of the time he spent in Athens is not known, but he probably returned about 394 B.C. for military service. While in Cyrene he doubtless met and studied with Theodorus, the geometrician, and in Italy associated with the Pythagorean philosophers.

At about the age of forty, Plato went to Sicily,

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1. Epistle VII, 326b
2. There are some accounts of visits to Persia, India, and Judea, but this is probably fiction; Zeller, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 15-16, fn. 28; Theodor Gomperz, Greek Thinkers, Vol. II, pp. 255-69

possibly attracted by the volcano of Mount Etna. While there he made a friendship with Dion whose sister had married Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse. This contact had no little significance in Plato's later years. Of it he writes:

> Perhaps it was chance, but certainly it looks as if a higher power was at that time contriving to lay a foundation for the recent events in which Dion and the city of Syracuse were concerned, for more too, I fear, unless you now follow the advice I am giving you the second time. But what can I mean when I say that my visit to Syracuse at that time was the beginning of everything? In my intercourse at that time with the young Dion, as I set before him in theory my ideals for mankind and advised him to make them effective in practice, I seem to have been unaware that I was in a way contriving, all unknown to myself, a future downfall of tyranny. At any rate Dion, who was very quick of apprehension and especially so in regard to my instruction on this occasion, responded to it more keenly and more enthusiastically than any other young man I ever met, and resolved to live for the remainder of his life differently from most of the Greeks in Italy and Sicily, holding virtue dearer than pleasure or than luxury. On that account the life he led until the death of Dionysius vexed somewhat those who passed their time in accordance with tyrannic wont.[1]

As Plato observed the sort of life pursued in Syracuse[2] he became convinced that it was not in harmony with his ideal and spoke freely against the practices. Dionysius was offended by his open suggestions and caused Plato to be sold in the slave market of Aegina where he was ransomed by a Cyrenian and set free for Athens. Thus, about 386 B.C., the exploratory years of Plato's life came to a close, and he

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1. Epistle VII, 326e-327b
2. Epistle VII, 326c-d

gave himself devotedly to a few major interests.

The Contribution of Mature Years

The seemingly inauspicious turn of events in Syracuse brought Plato to Athens again at the beginning of the second half of his life. These last forty years were marked by three major activities, the Academy, the experiment in Syracuse, and extensive writing.

The Academy

"The founding of the Academy is the turning-point in Plato's life, and in some ways the most memorable event in the history of Western European science," says Taylor.[1] Isocrates had been carrying on his school, but Plato introduced the method of scientific study. Thus, he hoped to realize his ideal of the "union of political power and genuine science."[2]

The exact date of the founding of the Academy is not certain, but it was doubtless soon after Plato's return from Syracuse. The location was his house and garden situated a short distance from the "Double Gate" of Athens and adjacent to a section sacred to Academus.[3] Instruction was gratuitous though it is certain that gifts were made by rich

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1. Taylor, Plato the Man and His Work, p. 8
2. Loc. cit.
3. Grote, Plato and the Other Companions of Socrates, Vol. I, p. 122

SCHOOL OF ATHENS

Camera della Segnatura, Vatican, Rome

RAPHAEL. 1483—1520

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students.[1] They were not the common group which hung upon the words of Socrates, but in general of higher standing. "Finely and delicately clad, nice in their person and even to affectation, with elegant caps and canes" is the description given in the middle comedies of Antiphanes and others.[2] The Academy became known generally and drew its students from all Greece. Some important names related to the Academy were: Speusippus, Xenocrates, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Hyperides, Lycurgus.[3] Eudoxus of Cnidus, the first mathematician of the times, and Theaetetus, "who practically created solid geometry," were members of the Academy and helped to make it the "real centre of mathematical study in Greece."[4] Further, the counsel of Plato was sought by Perdiccas, king of Macedon; the Sixth Epistle indicates his relation with Hermias, tyrant of Atarneus, while the Eleventh Epistle is a reply to a request for help in drawing up laws for a new colony. This glimpse at personnel indicates that "the Academy became a training ground in statecraft as well as in science, and by the end of Plato's life it had become a real political influence in the Greek world."[5]

Conjectures have been made regarding the curriculum and method of study which may as easily be true as not.

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1. Epistle XIII
2. As quoted by Grote, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 125
3. Ibid., p. 122
4. Field, Plato and His Contemporaries, p. 41
5. Ibid., p. 43

From what is known of Plato's writing and his training under Socrates, it is believed that the method of teaching was largely dialogue, or "conversation-discussion,"[1] which may have turned to exposition at proper points. An indication of method may be found in Plato's statement on the study of virtue and vice. He writes that it

> must be accompanied by an inquiry into what is false and true of existence in general and must be carried on by constant practice throughout a long period, as I said in the beginning. Hardly after practising detailed comparisons of names and definitions and visual and other sense-perceptions, after scrutinizing them in benevolent disputation by the use of question and answer without jealousy, at last in a flash understanding of each blazes up, and the mind, as it exerts all its powers to the limit of human capacity, is flooded with light.[2]

There may have been some variations of procedure with the younger students while the more advanced did independent research.[3] Beside the strong emphasis upon study of mathe-

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1. Ernest Carroll Moore, The Story of Instruction, Vol. I, p. 213
2. Epistle VII, 344b
3. Epicrates, the comic poet, tells a story which is probably more than interesting:
   'A. Tell me about Plato and Speusippus and Menedemus. What are they working at now? What deep idea and what great argument is being examined by them? For the land's sake tell me truly, if you know anything about it.
   'B. I know all about it and will tell you plainly. At the Panathenaea I saw a group of boys in the gymnasia of the Academy. And there I heard strange and indescribable things.
   'They were defining and dividing up the world of nature, and were distinguishing the habits of animals and the natures of trees and the species of vegetables. And there in the middle of them they had a pumpkin and were inquiring of what species it was.
   'A. And what did they decide that plant to be, and what species is it? Tell me, if you know.

matics, there was much energy given to the pursuit of philosophical truth and its expression in experience. Though it is not certain to what extent, there was some investigation in the general fields of science.[1]

For about twenty years, Plato gave his energies uninterruptedly as teacher and leader in the Academy, the moving spirit among artists, scientists, poets, and philosophers. So well was the Academy begun that it continued for nine centuries, having been closed in A.D. 529 by an edict of Justinian.[2] Plato interrupted his teaching only with reluctance at the invitation to put his theories into practice in Syracuse. During his absence the work in his beloved Academy was carried on by others. After two short intermissions he returned and probably gave most of his time until his death in 347 B.C. to writing and an occasional lecture. Plato's nephew, Speusippus, then became head of the Academy.

'B. Well, at first they all stood silent and bent over it for some time considering. Then suddenly, while they were still bending over it and examining it, one of the boys said that it was a round vegetable, and another said it was grass, and another that it was a tree. On hearing this a Sicilian doctor who was there exploded with wrath at the nonsense they were talking.

'A. I should think they must have been very angry at that and shouted him down as a scoffer. For it was a rude thing to do in the middle of such talk.

'B. It didn't worry the boys. But Plato, who was there, told them very kindly, without being in the least disturbed, to try again from the beginning to define its species. And they went on with their definition.' — Field, op. cit., pp. 38-9

1. Ibid., p. 42
2. Woodbridge, The Son of Apollo, p. 26

The Experiment at Syracuse

After about twenty years in the Academy, Plato made an attempt to work out his ideas in an actual situation.[1] Upon the death of the tyrant of Syracuse, his young son, Dionysius II, came into control. Dion, friend of Plato and his ideal, and brother-in-law of Dionysius I, sensed how crucial this change was under existing conditions and felt this to be an opportunity to save the situation with Plato's direction. Dion persuaded the young tyrant of the value of Plato's assistance, whereupon the invitation was given.[2]

Thus, at sixty years of age, Plato set out on this new venture. His motive is revealed in his own writing:

> As for my decision, on the one hand I feared the outcome in the case of the young men; for young men have sudden impulses and often quite contradictory ones. On the other hand I knew that Dion had naturally a solid character and that he had now reached middle age. Hence as I considered and debated whether I should hearken and go, or what I should do, the view nevertheless prevailed that I ought to go, and that if anyone were ever to attempt to realise my ideals in regard to laws and government, now was the time for the trial. If I were to convince but one man, that in itself would ensure complete success.
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> Such were the considerations that inspired and emboldened me to leave hom on this journey. I was not guided by the motives that some men attributed to me, but chiefly by a concern for my own self-respect. I feared to see myself at last altogether

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1. In the Seventh Epistle is Plato's detailed account of the matter. Much is revealed here of Plato's character and high sense of justice.
2. Epistle VII, 327c-328

> nothing but words, so to speak, —a man who would never willingly lay hand to any concrete task, for I should practically have been guilty of disloyalty —in the first place to the ties of hospitality and friendship that bound me to Dion.[1]

Upon arrival, Plato was received with proper ceremony and banqueting, and won the affection of Dionysius. However, Dionysius had been neglected by his father both in education and discipline, so he did not hold steadily to Plato's plan of teaching.[2] Dion, being a stronger personality, became the center of suspicion by Dionysius and his friends. The counsel of jealousy against Dion controlled the young ruler and "in about the fourth month, on the ground that Dion was plotting against the government, Dionysius put him aboard a small boat and expelled him dishonourably."[3] This act caused strained relations between Plato and Dionysius who was hurt not to be in the center of Plato's affections, as was Dion. But Plato could not support such injustice. Though Dionysius tried every means to mollify him, Plato persuaded him to give him leave to go home. The final agreement as Plato left for Athens was that both he and Dion were to return upon Dionysius' invitation when Sicily was again at peace.

About four years later[4] Dionysius sent an urgent entreaty to Plato to return, but did not fulfill his promise

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1. Epistle VII, 328b-c
2. Epistle VII, 332d-e
3. Epistle VII, 329c
4. Epistles II and XIII indicate the friendly relations which pertained during this time and Plato's encouragement of Dionysius in his philosophical study.

with regard to Dion, wishing to postpone it a year. Dionysius sent a trireme for Plato with a "very long letter" promising to do as he wished with regard to Dion. Plato returned to Syracuse again under sense of duty, as he says:

> Now when I was thus urgently sent for,—when my friends in Sicily and Italy were pulling me, while those at Athens were, you might say, by their entreaties actually shoving me out of Athens,—once more came the same message, that I ought not to betray either Dion or my friends and companions in Tarentum. Besides, I knew anyway without being told that no one need be surprised if a young man on hearing a really great enterprise suggested, quick to grasp the idea, had yielded to the spell of the ideal life. It seemed accordingly my duty to make the experiment so as to arrive at a definite conclusion one way or the other; for I must not be guilty of betraying that very ideal and of exposing my beliefs to the reproach they would deserve if there were any truth in the reports I had received.
>
> So I did set out under cover of these arguments, full of fears, as you might expect, and foreboding no very good result.[1]

Plato soon discovered his supposition to be true that Dionysius was not serious about philosophy and schemed unjustly in relation to Dion. But, to give a fair test, he remained a year. Though they were friends in the eyes of Sicily, the breach between them personally was made wider by Dionysius' manipulations with Dion's property. Upon his protest of this injustice Plato was taken in charge by the mercenaries and was freed by the intervention of Archytas of Tarentum. Thus at the age of sixty-eight years, in 360 B.C., Plato returned to Athens to his friends, the Academy,

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1. Epistle VII, 339e-340

and his writing.[1]

Though Plato had no further dealings with the situation at Syracuse, the end was not yet, for Dion returned and took control by force.[2] However, he was not able to carry through in face of difficulties and fell the victim of treacherous murder.[3] From the standpoint of immediate results, the experiment at Syracuse bore no fruit. However, by it is felt the seriousness with which Plato held his ideal. The comment of Woodbridge is certainly apropos:

> We may thus see the man who put the perfect city in the sky after he had described it in a book, trying to put as much of it on the earth as the stubborn wickedness of men might allow, and so proving by practice that the conditions of education must first be right before rulers can be expected to appear who will properly govern a city.[4]

The Writings of Plato

Plato the person may seem a fiction, but Plato the writer is a fact. After students of the manuscripts have done their most critical study, there comes the solemn pronouncement from Woodbridge, "The inexplicable preservation of the Platonic canon is imposing."[5] It gives one pause to

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1. In Epistle III Plato tries to make clear to Dionysius the truth regarding calumnies generally noised around about him.
2. Epistle IV is Plato's congratulation to Dion.
3. Taylor, Plato the Man and His Work, p. 8
   Epistles VII and VIII are Plato's advice to friends of Dion how they may carry on for the benefit of Sicily.
4. The Son of Apollo, p. 20
5. Ibid., p. 37

receive intact from one pen such a library kept from the fourth century before Christ. "Plato is the one voluminous writer of classical antiquity," says Taylor, "whose works seem to have come down to us whole and entire. Nowhere in later antiquity do we come on any reference to a Platonic work which we do not still possess."[1] When it is realized that writing was "a wholly new art in Plato's day,"[2] such a literary phenomenon opens vistas for interesting investigation.

The group of Platonic writings has had a spasmodic career. The commonly accepted canon comprises thirty-six works, considering the collection of epistles as one dialogue. The earliest arrangement known is that referred to by Diogenes Laertius and attributed to Thrasyllus. Though his collection is lost, his arrangement in tetralogies has been carried over.[3] This grouping by Thrasyllus was doubtless that "currently regarded as genuine by the librarian and scholars of the third century B.C."[4] But these are lost, and extant sources are some ancient papyri and manuscripts of which none are earlier than the ninth century. In 1513, the Aldine Press at Venice presented the first printed edition in Greek of Plato's writings through the

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1. Op. cit., p. 10
2. Ernest Carroll Moore, The Story of Instruction, Vol. I, p. 219
3. For this arrangement including spurious works see the chart in David George Ritchie, Plato, p. 226
4. Taylor, op. cit., p. 11

work of Musurus, a Cretan scholar. These two volumes, which follow the arrangement of Thrasyllus, were an effort to bring together in one corpus the Plato that had been "wandering in plura dissectus membra."[1]

This early work of the collector has provided material for the critic. Doubts regarding the genuineness of a few of the dialogues were current in antiquity. However, Platonic criticism had its heyday in the middle of the nineteenth century, particularly in Germany, when the corpus was dismembered and reduced by some to as few as nine genuine dialogues. There has been a resurgence in acceptance, until now there is rather general agreement that nearly every dialogue of the list of thirty-six is genuine, that certain lesser ones are spurious. Opinions still differ on a few.[2] The epistles, both as to genuineness and time, are generally agreed upon with a very few exceptions.

The critical problems concerning Plato's writings are their genuineness and their chronological order.[3] On the basis of tradition, external evidence, and internal evidence, though here many further problems arise, the canon has been quite satisfactorily determined. A few hints from

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1. Woodbridge, op. cit., p. 33
2. Taylor, op. cit., pp. 11-2
   Un-Platonic: Alcibiades II, Hipparchus, Amatores, Theages, Clitophon, Minos. Difference: Alcibiades I, Ion, Menaxenus, Hippias Major, Epinomis, Epistles.
3. See Theodor Gomperz, Greek Thinkers, Vol. II, pp. 375-87, for discussion of intricacies of problems involved. Woodbridge presents the dilemma which the critic must face; The Son of Apollo, pp. 37-58

history collated with internal evidence[1] make it possible to determine a rather satisfactory arrangement of the dialogues in groups, if not the absolute order within the group. Apparent contradictions make the chronology important, if any reliable analysis of the development of Plato's thinking is to be determined.[2]

The form of Plato's writings, excepting the epistles, has fixed to them the name "dialogues." To the Greek the dialogue concerned a group, "the listening of its members, interrupted by their questions, doubts, difficulties, assents and dissents, to a leader who propounds a theme to them and largely controls its development."[3] The gradual change in style and form is apparent to the most casual reader, for the dialogue easily becomes an extended address. Each dialogue is a literary unit in itself. Though there may be deduced a general philosophy held by Plato, it was not his intent to produce a system of theories.[4] Writings which cover fifty years of a man's mature thinking reveal development and change of viewpoint.

The dialogues are a "veritable drama of the mind."[5] In the early Socratic dialogues, one is stirred to think

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1. Three items have been of most help—the decline of dramatic power, graces of style, and use of connecting particles; Gomperz, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 285-7.
2. See A. E. Taylor, Plato the Man and His Work, pp. 20-2, for a discussion of the writing periods in Plato's life.
3. Woodbridge, op. cit., p. 47
4. G. C. Field, Plato and His Contemporaries, p. 58
5. Woodbridge, op. cit., p. 56

over problems of temperance, friendship, courage, and virtue. Derivations of words are analyzed in the Cratylus; various viewpoints on love are expounded in the Phaedrus; the nature of learning, of being, of knowledge are considered in weighing current philosophies in Timaeus, Parmenides, and Theaetetus. The great efforts to make possible the realization of his highest dreams issued in the creation of the Republic and the formulation of the Laws. In all his idealism, he was a realist; in his modernity, he was rooted in the past. In summary, Woodbridge suggests that

> Plato's dialogues present man in the concrete, the political, learning, loving, dying man, with a body which walks the earth, is born and dies, needs nourishment and shelter, craves indulgence, has friends and enemies; and with a soul which has the habit of caring for the body in a strange way, restless, curious, questioning, never satisfied, and yet aspiring, looking up, that is, to the stars, those everlasting symbols of that which does not suffer change or decay or death.[1]

As a result,

> the reader of Plato is pretty sure to have a personal experience, to find his own thoughts involved in a rather intimate way, which is far more the way of self-reflection than the way of criticism of what he reads. A probe goes into him exploring places in his mind and character which are sensitive to the touch. Or, if he does not experience this inward revelation, he may experience an outward one and behold the human scene with a sense of irony, sympathy, or concern. He may smile or be stirred to think of doing something. For the effect produced by Plato is easily a wistful detachment from life or an earnest desire to enhance it. Both motives may interplay, so that one works while one smiles.[2]

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1. Woodbridge, op. cit., pp. 255-6
2. Ibid., pp. 53-4

Summary

Plato gave the heritage of an aristocratic family to the welfare of his state. Nurtured in the traditional Greek education, surrounded with vital civic problems in home and state, stimulated by the teaching and friendship of Socrates, broadened in understanding by travel, he was equipped to face life as it was and to lift it to a higher level. Out of his deep conviction that philosophy ought to be part of life, he learned the struggle of trying to realize an ideal. Through his activity in the Academy and his writing in the dialogues, he gave himself to his own age and to the ages.

The Philosophy of Plato

Other than Plato, there are few names with which philosophy seems well-nigh synonymous. All roads in philosophy lead back to Greece. Though his is not the completeness of some subsequent philosophers, Plato's themes are fundamental. In studying any part, one is constantly kept in the presence of the whole. What, then, is his philosophy of beauty and art? Before a direct investigation of that problem, it is well to consider briefly some points in method of studying the dialogues.

An Approach to Plato's Philosophy

To safeguard against the misinterpretation of Plato's philosophy, certain matters are to be noted. In the first place, Plato has not prepared in his dialogues a finely wrought system such as the modern scientific mind expects in a philosophy. Philosophy meant to Plato something infinitely more vital than a statement of a point of view; it meant "a life spent in the active personal pursuit of truth and goodness by the light of one or two great passionate convictions."[1] Plato's philosophy, as a result, is a live thing, "largely tentative and provisional."[2] This living quality is easily lost in a formulation of Plato's philosophy. The essence of Plato's writing may be recast into common moulds of philosophic thought to simplify the problem; but to give an adequate story of his philosophy the living quality must be preserved. "There is a constant temptation," says Frye, "to force him verbally into a straiter garment than that which he actually wore and to cramp the freedom and flexibility of utterance which is not the least of his qualities as a moralist and philosopher, and which serves to moderate and humanize even his digressions into metaphysics."[3]

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1. A. E. Taylor, Plato the Man and His Work, p. 23
2. Loc. cit.; Republic V, 474 through VI; Vol. III, 171 ff.
   Note: The form of footnotes referring to the dialogues gives the name of the dialogue, the section, and the volume and page in B. Jowett's edition.
3. Prosser Hall Frye, Plato, p. 16

The problem is complicated, however, for as really as he was a philosopher, Plato was also a poet. His form of expression must, therefore, be interpreted in the light of the poet's approach, i.e. an appreciation based on "taste as well as intelligence."[1] Parts of Plato, particularly the Symposium, Phaedrus, and some of the Republic, cause great difficulty if this is not taken into account. Further, being a poet, Plato writes not definitively, but descriptively.[2] His inquiry into a subject does not culminate in a series of concise conclusions, but rather a picture with many details placed in contrast giving an experience of the whole rather than isolated parts. Closely akin to the poetic is the mystical element. "Sympathy with mysticism" is, according to Jowett,[3] essential to entering into an understanding of the dialogues.

Another consideration in understanding Plato's philosophy is the form in which he presents his views—the dialogue. Of the many speakers, which is the mouthpiece for Plato's own viewpoint? Again, the dialogue is a very free literary form, and Plato does not force it as a carrier of a formal treatise of philosophical themes. Nowhere does he attempt to give an exhaustive treatment of a subject. This freedom of conversation, permitting digression and consideration of other views without stating one's own, requires

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1. Frye, op. cit., p. 15
2. Alfred Fouillee, La philosophie de Platon, Vol. I, p. 355
3. B. Jowett, The Dialogues of Plato, Vol. I, p. 423

careful interpretation of passages in terms of the whole dialogue, as well as the immediate context.

Finally, such extensive writing over a period of about half a century by a vigorous thinker such as Plato, obviously presents a growth or change in viewpoint. Withal, it is paramount to remember that Plato

> did not build a system of philosophy; he did much more than build a system, for he laid bare the springs from which all later streams of philosophy have flowed. His work then could never be finished or completely consistent. . . . . What makes our study so difficult is that the whole problem is not a mathematical puzzle but the workings of a human personality, the least ponderable of all things. We can set forth all that is certain; the rest can not be explained till personality can be explained.[1]

The inquiry into Plato's contribution to esthetic education must therefore be directly conditioned by the above considerations. Since Plato is not primarily an esthetician, what he has to say about beauty and art is strongly influenced by the major passion of his writing. Nowhere does he attempt to set forth a comprehensive theory of the esthetic. He does, however, come upon many aspects of the esthetic in relation to other considerations.

Beauty in Relation to the Good

From the great panorama of Plato's thought the dominant impression is a sense of moral value. Under the

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1. William Chase Greene, Plato's View of Poetry, p. 75

spell of Socrates' ripe years, Plato was grounded in the ideal of the virtuous life. Whether he is setting up his ideal state or formulating laws, dealing with number and form or with the sophist, Plato touches directly or indirectly an impelling moral strain. The good is inseparable from Plato's great themes.

The organizing center of Plato's metaphysics is the good (τὸ ἀγαθόν). This good is not to be measured by pleasure, in as much as "pleasure, like everything else, is to be sought for the sake of that which is good, and not that which is good for the sake of pleasure."[1] The value of good comes by the presence of the ultimate good.[2] The good is the source and purpose of human action. It is understood "that the good is the end of all our actions, and that all our actions are to be done for the sake of the good, and not the good for the sake of them."[3] This good is a reality

> which every soul of man pursues and makes the end of all his actions, having a presentiment that there is such an end, and yet hesitating because neither knowing the nature nor having the same assurance of this as of other things, and therefore losing whatever good there is in other things.[4]

It is the "highest knowledge" from which all other things derive their value.[5] It is the cause of science in that it "imparts truth to the known and the power of knowing to the

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1. Gorgias 500; II:390; Philebus 60; IV:636
2. Gorgias 497; II:386-7
3. Gorgias 500; II:390; cf. ibid. 468; II:350
4. Republic VI, 506; III:206
5. Republic VI, 505; III:205-6

knower."[1] Continuing, Plato says, "In like manner the good may be said to be not only the author of knowledge to all things known, but of their being and essence, and yet the good is not essence, but far exceeds essence in dignity and power."[2] It is possible to know this good, "full perfection of being,"[3] but such knowledge

> appears last of all, and is seen only with an effort; and, when seen, is also inferred to be the universal author of all things beautiful and right, parent of light and of the lord of light in this invisible world, and the immediate source of reason and truth in the intellectual; and that this is the power upon which he who would act rationally either in public or private life must have his eye fixed.[4]

While the good is the highest of the forms of reality, it does not displace God[5] who is soul (ψυχή) and who creates according to the forms.[6]

In Plato's philosophy reality is interpreted in terms of value.[7] To such a conception, the Greek mind was no stranger. In summary, Greene says:

> Plato had good authority in Greek usage for giving to the word ἀγαθός more than a merely moral or

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1. Republic VI, 508; III:209
2. Republic VI, 509; III:210
3. Republic VII, 526; III:227
4. Republic VII, 517; III:217
5. Plato's view concerning God and the gods is a study by itself. It directly touches this investigation in Republic II, 378 to III, 392; III:61-76. See also Laws X; V: 283-98; also Jowett's digest, V:422-3. For an able discussion of the relation of the idea of good and God, see Taylor, Plato the Man and His Work, pp. 231-2, 285-9, 441-2, 459-94; cf. Ritter, The Essence of Plato's Philosophy, pp. 370-90.
6. Republic X, 597; III:309
7. E. L. Lodge, Plato's Theory of Ethics, p. 87; Constantin Ritter, op. cit., pp. 375-6, fn. 2

> eulogistic meaning—something perhaps more akin to what is implied in the idea of fitness for a particular use. Plato, however, was the first to attempt to unite the whole content of the universe in one orderly scheme, in which the operation of things was to be not mechanical but rational; in which existence and goodness were to be merged; and in which each part to be explained not as separate, but as deduced from one permanent principle which was the reason and cause of all things. Thus to know anything would be to explain its relation to this principle.[1]

Though the good is self-sufficient,[2] Plato proceeds to discover its nature "in the life which is well mixed."[3] Of primary importance in this mixture are measure and symmetry. In the recognition of these, the beautiful is introduced, "for measure and symmetry are beauty and virtue all the world over."[4] The elements in the mixture by which good is known are "beauty, symmetry, and truth."[5]

There is, therefore, a close kinship between the good and the beautiful. Here the beautiful is found to be one of the qualities that is related to the good. In earlier dialogues, Plato states definitely that "the good is the beautiful."[6] This very close association of the good and the beautiful is suggested more particularly in relation to the well-being of the soul.[7] In the Laws Plato speaks more of the forms of art in which beauty is expressed and finds them related to virtue, hence of great educational

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1. Green, Plato's View of Poetry, p. 46
2. Philebus 60; IV:635
3. Philebus 61; IV:637
4. Philebus 64; IV:641-2
5. Philebus 65; IV:640
6. Lysis 216; I:65; Symposium 201; I:571
7. Republic III, 400; I:87; Republic IV, 444; III:138

value.[1] The question, "What is beauty of figure, or beautiful melody?"[2] is answered by reference to the final standard of pleasure as determined by the taste of the one "who is pre-eminent in virtue and education."[3]

What, then, is the relation of the beautiful and the good? To say that "the good is the beautiful" created no problem in Plato's mind. When he is in the presence of the good, he is aware also of that which he knows as beautiful. Knowledge of the good contributes to true knowledge of the beautiful.[4] Plato does not dwell on that which makes them separate, but on that which makes them akin. Grace, harmony, and symmetry are found with beauty and are also qualities of a "rightly and nobly ordered mind and character."[5] Considering this problem, Lodge says:

> Essentially a matter of rhythm and balance and ordered recurrences of accent, in a word, the introduction, into sensuous experience, of an intellectually apprehensible principle of order (symmetry) in such a way as to bring about a relatively intense emotional reaction, aesthetical quality, is, of course, an attribute of whatever exhibits these characteristics. Ethical character, for instance, is an organization of sensuous experience in terms of an intellectually apprehensible principle; it is orderly, balanced, and harmonious, and makes a certain appeal to the emotions; it thus possesses aesthetical quality, and this is fully recognized by Plato.[6]

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1. Laws II, 655; V:33; Laws IX, 859; V:242
2. Laws II, 655; V:32
3. Laws II, 659; V:37
4. Republic VI, 506; III:206
5. Republic VII, 400, 444; III:87, 138
6. Op. cit., p. 84

Plato would not have one think that all pleasure has esthetic quality, even as it may not have ethical quality.[1] Nevertheless,

> a maximum of pleasure is produced by situations which are ethical, so that the pleasure experienced by the ethical character is demonstrably superior to that of the others. But with aesthetical quality, while any situations which are orderly in such a way as to stimulate emotion, have this quality, actually the maximal emotional reaction is produced, not by ethical stituations and character, i.e. not by what is orderly as such, but rather by what is emotionally exciting.[2]

Lodge concludes that the "final standard, then, to which the occasional use of aesthetical quality in this way points is objectivity, or the extent to which a given character or situation reproduces the orderliness of the ideal world."[3]

Herein lies a suggestion of another approach to the problem which demands a slight adjustment of viewpoint. When Plato deals with ultimate reality, beauty and goodness seem to come together more closely. The relationship is such that many have declared the "absolute identity" of the form of good and beauty.[4] They can hardly be separated in our quest for realization. "The lover of beauty aspires not only to know the truth but to embrace it ardently and

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1. Philebus 12; IV;576; Laws II, 655; V:33
2. Lodge, Plato's Theory of Ethics, pp. 84-5
3. Ibid., p. 85
4. Taylor, Plato the Man and His Work, p. 231; cf. Fouillee, La philosophie de Platon, Vol. I, pp. 353, 357, 351 (fn. 2). Karl Justi considers them as two views of the same unity; Die aesthetischen Elemente in der Platonischen Philosophie, pp. 74 ff. See also Th. Strater, Die Idee des Schönen in der Platonischen Philosophie, p. 36

to beget true virtue," says Greene. "His path, like that of the διαλεκτικός, leads to the summit of the same mountain; the mountain to him, however, is known as beautiful, to the διαλεκτικός it is known as good."[1] The discussion of absolute beauty which follows will clarify further this identity with the good.

Of initial importance in understanding Plato's theory of the beautiful is an appreciation of the relation of the beautiful to the good which is the heart of his philosophy. The good has characteristics which are qualities of the beautiful such as harmony, symmetry, and grace. For this cause they often seem to be identical, as commonly experienced. Yet, in their very own existence, beauty and goodness are distinguishable.

Beauty in Relation to the Idea

When a scientist comes upon a new force or element in his experience, as for example the cosmic ray, he busies himself in discovering its nature and in describing that experience and formulating the laws by which it operates. The experience is the same though the explanations which grow up around it may vary ever so widely. As a participant in the early surge of philosophical thought, Plato inquires into the nature of the basic experience of

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1. Greene, Plato's View of Poetry, p. 22

reality and knowledge. The dialogues picture a master mind at work on a great problem; they do not give a formal statement of his assured findings. Plato recognizes the thinking of others on the point, examines the difficulties of hypotheses,[1] and looks at the problem through symbol, myth, parable, and revelation. It is an injustice to the spirit of Plato, therefore, to make him propound a nicely ordered, closed doctrine of the idea. He opens doors whereby we may enter and investigate for ourselves.[2]

The idea becomes for Plato the organizing center of his thinking about reality and knowledge. The idea (ἰδέα, εἶδος) is known also as the universal in relation to the particular, the one in relation to the many, the absolute to the relative, the permanent to the flux. It is intelligible and not sensible.[3] By participation in it, the objects of the sensible world have form and meaning. The idea may be related to experience as a general idea, a law, or an ideal.[4] In its own nature, the idea is transcendent and self-existent,[5] yet it participates (μέθεξις) in the sensory world. It is dynamic in character, acting, not as

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1. Parmenides, Sophist
2. See the considered exposition and evaluation by B. Jowett, The Dialogues of Plato, Vol. II, pp. 13-25; Vol. V, pp. 440-2.
3. It is a temptation to identify Plato's self-existent idea with pure concept. Such identification does injustice to the Greek mind which uses ἰδέα.
4. Will Durant, The Story of Philosophy, pp. 37-8; J. A. Stewart, Plato's Doctrine of Ideas, pp. 9, 119, 179
5. Timaeus 51C-52; III:471-2

a force driving, but as a reality which attracts, controlling by aspiration.[1] Reality is to be found in the idea, not in the world of sense experience. Suffice it to say in general regarding the idea that it gives the framework for the imposing structure of Plato's idealism.

A direct approach is made to the problem, "What is beauty?" in the Hippias Major.[2] This imaginary inquiry proceeds to discover what that something (εἶδος) is which makes beautiful things beautiful. What is beauty in itself (αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν)? In the beginning Hippias does not respond directly to the question, but gives an illustration of beauty rather than a definition. Failing in this approach, Hippias suggests that gold added to things makes them beautiful, but finally agrees that it must be appropriate or becoming. When it is found that this principle does not stand the test, the profitable and the pleasurable are investigated, but are found inadequate bases for the judgment of beauty. Though the discussion makes no very great contribution to esthetic theory, it indicates that the senses participating in esthetic experience are almost exclusively sight and hearing and that there is danger in a utilitarian theory. Other sources further an understanding of the real nature of beauty.

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1. Francis Macdonald Cornford, Before and After Socrates, pp. 63-4
2. This dialogue is Platonic in spirit, though there is a question as to its authenticity. For discussion of the problem, see Dorothy Tarrant, The Hippias Major.

In Plato's metaphysical approach to beauty there is no question regarding the existence of absolute beauty. It is referred to frequently and in association with the absolute just, and absolute good.[1] Things are beautiful because they participate in the idea of beauty.[2] Plato writes:

> . . . . if a person says to me that the bloom of colour, or form, or any such thing is a source of beauty, I leave all that, which is only confusing to me, and simply and singly, and perhaps foolishly, hold and am assured in my own mind that nothing makes a thing beautiful but the presence and participation of beauty in whatever way or manner obtained; for as to the manner I am uncertain, but I stoutly contend that by beauty all beautiful things become beautiful. This appears to me to be the safest answer which I can give, either to myself or to another, and to this I cling, in the persuasion that this principle will never be overthrown, and that to myself or to any one who asks the question, I may safely reply, That by beauty beautiful things become beautiful.[3]

Plato is not disturbed by the fact that some people do not agree with this point of view and consider reality to be in the sensible object itself.[4] There are many who enjoy forms, colors, and tones as they occur in various aspects. If these are led to the absolute beauty and have no sensitiveness for it, they are as in a dream. In contrast is the one "who recognizes the existence of absolute beauty and is able to distinguish the idea from the

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1. Parmenides, 130; IV:49
2. Gorgias 497; I:387; Republic V, 476-9; III:174, 178-9
3. Phaedo 100; II:246
4. Republic VI, 494; III:192

objects which participate in the idea, neither putting the objects in the place of the idea nor the idea in the place of the objects."[1] Again, he who holds the beautiful to be in the many and not the one will admit that the beautiful things are also ugly to some. But in answer, Plato declares that true being is in absolute beauty[2] which is above the relative value of flux.[3] Sensible beauty is not to be despised, however, for it arouses the memory of true beauty.[4]

While the way of knowing the idea of beauty will be presented in the following section, it is well to note here the quality of the experience. No exception is made regarding the idea of beauty, so it is experienced by the mind rather than by the senses.[5] Those who behold true beauty have a most satisfying experience and enter into divine relationship and immortality.[6]

Beauty according to Plato, then, exists as one of the great realities which are knowable. That which is commonly experienced in sensible objects is not true beauty. Things are beautiful because they participate in the absolute beauty which is intelligible, but none the less real. Beauty, therefore, is objective.

But to stop here is to be satisfied with the

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1. Republic V, 476; III:174
2. Republic V, 479; III:178-9
3. Cratylus, 439; I:387-8
4. Phaedrus 254; I:461
5. Phaedrus 65; II:204
6. Symposium 210-2; I:580-2

formula only. The essence of the esthetic lies in absolute beauty for those whose awareness responds to it. Stewart indicates the possibilities in his approach, believing that:

> The Experience to which Plato gave expression in his Doctrine of Ideas was a double one—not always, I think, recognized by himself as double: it was the Experience of one keenly interested in, and highly capable of taking, the scientific point of view in all departments of knowledge; and it was also the Experience of one singularly sensitive to aesthetic influences. It was the experience of one who was a great man of science and connoisseur of scientific method, and also a great artist.[1]

The scientist reaches reality through analysis, the artist experiences it through contemplation. The thing becomes real as it <u>is</u>, not entirely as it <u>appears</u>. So Stewart summarizes:

> The object of aesthetic contemplation, we have seen, is something framed apart by itself, and regarded, without memory or expectation, simply as being itself, as end not means, as individual not universal. This something, we have seen further, is not the actual picture, or other sensible product of the artist's workmanship, presented to our waking consciousness, but the dream-image of this, which appears and reappears in quick alternation with the sense-presentation, its original—so that we find ourselves looking at the actual picture with eyes which see, not it, but another within it: and it is that other within it which arrests us by its individuality and amazes us, and is, in fact the <u>beauty</u> of the actual picture on the actual canvas. To be 'beautiful' is to be an object seen thus, that is, to be an object of which rêverie, alternating quickly with waking consciousness, is always making and remaking the dream-image.[2]

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1. Stewart, <u>Plato's Doctrine of Ideas</u>, p. 3
2. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 145. So close are the two esthetic conceptions of Aristotelian universal and Platonic participation of the idea in the sense object that one may slip into the other almost imperceptibly. Stewart's terminology at times causes one to question whether he remains purely Platonic in his explanations. However, his penetration into the esthetic aspects of Plato's philosophy is unusual.

Thus there is gathered up in the idea of beauty the dynamic reality which inspires esthetic experience.

Beauty in Relation to Knowing

In the search for a definite statement of the nature of beauty, the inquirer is left rather unsatisfied. How is beauty known? What is one's experience in relation to beauty? Here, again, some of the primary problems of esthetics have no direct answer, for Plato nowhere purposed to set forth a philosophy of beauty. However, the way of knowing beauty is considered so that each may find it for himself.

For knowledge of beauty we unconsciously turn to sensible objects which appeal principally to sight and hearing. Plato recognized people of his day who loved beautiful sights and sounds. They responded to "fine tones and colours and forms and all the artificial products that are made out of them, but their mind is incapable of seeing or loving absolute beauty."[1] This is the level upon which most people experience beauty. Such experience is the percept without the concept, experience which is blind, a "dream."[2] But perception is not knowledge.[3] Through the

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1. Republic V, 476; III:174
2. Loc. cit.
3. See Plato's inquiry into this problem in Theaetetus 163-4; IV:219 ff.

senses the percepts are brought to the mind as materials from which to derive knowledge. "Then knowledge," writes Plato, "does not consist in impressions of sense (τοῖς παθήμασι), but in reasoning about them (ἐν τῷ περὶ ἐκείνων συλλογισμῳ); in that only, and not in the mere impression, truth and being can be attained."[1] What can be said, then, of those who do not go beyond the sights and sounds, the sensible experience? It is clear that they do not know beauty and "that the many ideas which the multitude entertain about the beautiful and about all other things are tossing about in some region which is half-way between pure being and pure not-being."[2] These persons have opinion (δόξα) but not knowledge.

What contribution, then, does sense perception make to a knowledge of beauty? According to Plato's belief about being, reality has supersensuous existence and is known by the soul. Hence Plato has Socrates say as he waits the moment for the hemlock that the philosopher in acquiring truth and knowledge does not trust the senses but seeks to be free from the body. The senses are a hindrance; the mind alone attains to knowledge of true being. If these conclusions be true, then one may welcome death.[3]

But Plato does not by this one stroke sever the vital relation of sense perception and knowledge. In the

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1. Theaetetus 186; IV:247
2. Republic V, 479; III:178-9
3. Phaedo 65, 66, 67; II:204 ff.

same dialogue the senses are the means by which there is recalled to the soul the knowledge possessed before birth.[1] Plato does not deny the existence of the sensible world. Being part of the flux, the many, sense objects only express or imitate true essence, the one. They make visible the invisible. But true knowledge consists in knowing the invisible—the absolute, the one, the idea.[2]

This being the case, how can one experience beauty in its essence? The object of the experience is

> a nature of wondrous beauty . . . . —a nature which in the first place is everlasting, not growing and decaying, or waxing and waning; secondly, not fair in one point of view and foul in another, or at one time or in one relation or at one place fair, at another time or in another relation or at another place foul, as if fair to some and foul to others, or in the likeness of a face or hands or any other part of the bodily frame, or in any form of speech or knowledge, or existing in any other being, as for example, in an animal, or in heaven, or in earth, or in any other place; but beauty absolute, separate, simple, and everlasting, which without diminution and without increase, or any change, is imparted to the ever-growing and perishing beauties of all other things.[3]

An experience of this beauty does not come without preparation. At the end of a gradual ascent of experience is the highest beauty, verily beauty itself. The process begins with the beauty of earth—such as a beautiful form, first one, then others—, the beauty of form in general, the beauty of the mind, beauty of institutions or laws, the beauty of the sciences, then finally to the vision of the

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1. Phaedo 75-7; II:216-9
2. Philebus 15; IV:580-1
3. Symposium 211; I:581

ultimate science—that of beauty. Each one of these is to be a step only, not a final goal, except the consummate vision.[1] Reaching the end of this experience of beauty, man is enabled to "bring forth, not images of beauty, but realities (for he has hold not of an image but of a reality), and bringing forth and nourishing true virtue to become the friend of God and be immortal, if mortal man may."[2]

Let it be noted further that this description of the experience of beauty comes at the climax of an encomium on love. Plato uses the analogy of the marriage relationship. The soul and beauty are "married by a far nearer tie and have a closer friendship" than the common relationship.[3] This creative union of the soul and beauty brings forth immortal offspring.[4] Love,[5] therefore, is a helper, better than which it is difficult to find, to realize in experience the apprehension of beauty itself.[6]

This description of the pursuit and realization of beauty is supplemented by the myth of the charioteer and his two horses in the Phaedrus. There are difficulties and

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1. Symposium 210-1; I:580-1; cf. The Banquet, 224-6
2. Symposium 212; I:582
3. Symposium 206; I:576-7; Symposium 209; I:580
4. Symposium 209; I:579
5. In Plato's mind, "true love is a love of beauty and order—temperate and harmonious"; Republic III, 403; III: 89. In this context love is defined as "The love of the everlasting possession of the good." To realize this object, there must be generation, birth in beauty. "Wherefore, love is of immortality." Symposium 204-7; I:574-7
6. Symposium 212; I:582

inconsistencies in the path of understanding this myth, but they become relatively insignificant when the figure is not forced beyond its purpose. It is an inspired vision of the esthetic experience. It is expressed in concepts and patterns of Plato's time; hence, it may confuse the modern mind. Jowett well advises that the "first impression of such a passage, in which no attempt is made to separate the substance from the form, is far truer than an elaborate philosophical analysis."[1]

The philosopher--the one whose soul has beheld true beauty, wisdom, goodness, and other realities--becomes forgetful of tradition and earthly interests, being transported by the recollection of the essence he finds expressed in the beauty of earth. Those who do not share the experience call him mad. It is madness (μαντικὴ), but madness which is divine: he is inspired (ἐνθουσιάζων).[2] This madness is of four kinds: prophetic inspired by Apollo; initiatory madness of Dionysus; poetic of the Muses; and love inspired by Aphrodite and Eros.[3] This last kind of madness is the inspiration of the one who is transported when recalling true beauty[4]; "he who loves the beautiful is called a lover because he partakes of it."[5] The soul of the philosopher is presented in the figure of the charioteer with a pair of

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1. The Dialogues of Plato, Vol. I, p. 415
2. Ion 533-5; I:501-3
3. Phaedrus 265; I:473
4. Phaedrus 219; I:456
5. Loc. cit.
6. Phaedrus 246; I:452-3

winged horses, one being of noble, the other of ignoble breed. The wing symbolizes the corporeal element which constantly reaches out to the divine and is so nourished.[1] The soul soars upward and, if the conflict between the steeds permits, beholds the wonders of true being. According to its attainment in revelation, the soul then comes to birth in man of fitting nature.

Of all the celestial forms which the soul experiences directly, beauty is the one most clearly presented to the senses, --"being the loveliest she is also the most palpable to sight."[2] Some people beholding earthly beauty may give themselves over to the pleasure it affords with a certain wantonness. The true experience of beauty, on the other hand, brings to the spectator the remembrance of the celestial glories. The ecstasy renewed is mingled with a sense of awe and reverence. "Receiving the effluence of beauty through the eyes,"[3] the soul is warmed and the divine growth and nourishment is symbolized by the budding of the wing.[4] Thus, again, the madness of love is akin to the experience of divine beauty.

Plato follows this same path of experience in the training of the philosopher in dialectics. Again, the approach is not made by the senses, but by "pure intelligence."[5]

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1. Phaedrus 246; I:452-3
2. Phaedrus 250; I:457
3. Loc. cit.
4. Phaedrus 246; I:453
5. Republic VII, 532, 534; III:235, 237-8

In this case, the ultimate reality is the good, "the universal author of all things beautiful and right, parent of light and of the lord of light in this visible world, and the immediate source of reason and truth in the intellect."[1] The soul presses on from the visible objects to the intelligible and perceives the supreme good.[2] This designation on the part of Plato is not a confusion in thinking, but a clear indication of the ultimate unity of reality. Greene concludes that "the absolute for him, is both a principle of existence and a principle of goodness and beauty, and hence, in theory, can be approached either by a hypothetical science of dialectic or by the direct intuition of the lover of beauty."[3] In the dialectic process the philosopher arrives at the good; in love the philosopher beholds beauty. The way of knowing the reality is the same; the psychological quality of the experience is alike in either case.

What is the quality of this experience which we shall call the esthetic, considering it primarily from the standpoint of the beautiful rather than the good? The esthetic experience is inspired by the presence of a sensible object which is the expression of the ideal beauty. Qualities of the sensible object mentioned in connection with the experience are color, sound, form, rhythm. There is a

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1. Republic VII, 517; III:217; see also Republic VI, 508-9; III:210
2. Republic VI, 505-7; III:205-7
3. Plato's View of Poetry, p. 75

pleasure derived from the mere presence of the beautiful object which is sensuous. This is not esthetic experience, for esthetic experience must sense absolute beauty, knowledge of which is recalled by the beautiful object present to the senses. In making this distinction, Stewart says:

> In Plato's language, the artist is always looking away from, and we, reproducing the artist's experience as we contemplate his work, are always looking away from the actual picture to the 'ideal pattern,' and then again back from the 'pattern' to the picture. Continuous reverie, mere contemplation of the 'ideal pattern,' without recurrent reference, on the part of the artist, to his model and canvas, on the part of the spectator, to the finished picture, would be ordinary dreaming, or ecstatic trance, not aesthetic experience; while, on the other hand, mere 'looking at' model and picture, without recurrent reverie, would be sensation, not esthetic experience.[1]

This experience of something beyond the sensible presence is commonly recognized as the essence of the esthetic, but variance arises in the explanation of the experience. According to Plato, it does not arise from that which is intrinsic to the object nor to a value created by the object itself, but from the reality which exists independently of it and has been expressed in it, or in which the object participates.[2]

The attitude of the subject in the esthetic experience is that of contemplation. He is not absorbed in the thing in itself, in its utility, in practical appropriateness, in the pleasure to be derived. He holds a detached

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1. Stewart, Plato's Doctrine of Ideas, pp. 146-7
2. Ibid., p. 145; quoted above, p. 74

attitude toward the sensible object and that which it may suggest. The bond between the immediate object of the experience and the subject comes in the recollection in the soul of beauty in its essence known in previous existence. Beholding celestial beauty, the subject is moved with ecstasy. As Plato describes the experience in a figure, he writes of "rapt amazement," "awe," "reverence," "madness," "inspiration," and refreshing.[1] This ecstasy, expressed by Plato as madness (μαντική), has the psychological quality of concentration. The ordinary concerns of life for the moment are completely neglected in the absorption by the compelling presence of beauty. The experience fully matured breaks suddenly in a moment of intuition. The fulfillment of the esthetic experience is in essence of divine quality and is creative.

The vital problem thus arises as to the possibility of attaining this experience. Plato is quite sure that not many come to a knowledge of beauty in its essence.[2] It is the end for which the philosopher is educated. In some respect the experience is not complete until the soul is freed at death from the limitations of the body.[3] The only other experience of beautiful objects which Plato recognizes is really not an experience of beauty, but of sensuous qualities; the pleasure thus derived is therefore

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1. Phaedrus 250-2; I:456-8
2. Republic VI, 494; III:192
3. Phaedo 65-6; III:204-5

outside the esthetic experience. Is there nothing between the experience of the sensible object and the exalted experience of beauty in its essence? This problem is bound up with Plato's ontology and his theory of art, hence will be dealt with finally when his whole theory is viewed.

Beauty in Relation to Art

When beauty is regarded as an objective absolute, it is not easy to arrive at a philosophy of art which is generally acceptable. There are two dangers, that of underestimating qualities of the sensuous world, or of compromising the position of absolute beauty. In all that Plato says about art, what appears to him to be the relation of beauty to art?

The Definition of Art

Plato writes not a little about art. However, there is a sense of strangeness to one with specialised esthetic interest, for there was not yet the distinction between fine and useful art.[1] Plato's word for art (τέχνη) includes the craft and suggests the rules, system, or method of doing or making anything. He differentiates an art from mere experience and practice without knowledge and principles (ἐμπειρία).[2] Of cookery, he says it "may seem to

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1. S. H. Butcher, Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art, p. 115
2. Gorgias 501; II:391

be an art, but, as I maintain, is only an experience or routine and not an art."[1] Though the word "art" is used rather freely, there are some definite classifications in Plato's thinking. All art may be divided into the creative and the acquisitive.[2] The acquisitive arts are "hunting, contents, merchandise, and the like."[3] The creative arts are mentioned earlier with such suggestions as "weaving, embroidery, architecture, and every kind of manufacture" as well as sculpture.[4] In its general sense, art is, therefore, organized or ordered purposive activity. As Plato presents it, there appears a close resemblance to the ideal of Dewey, namely: the continuity of art with normal processes of living.[5] Plato shows no concern for the techniques themselves in the production of these arts, but for their value in relation to living.

Obviously, Plato is not greatly concerned with the acquisitive arts or the lesser creative arts, except as instances for illustration. We, therefore, turn to those which have since become known as the fine arts. Of these, music is of paramount interest to Plato. Because of the nature of Greek music, poetry is important. Others specially noted are painting, sculpture, architecture, and

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1. Gorgias 463; II:344
2. Sophist 265; IV:401-2
3. Loc. cit.
4. Republic III, 401; III:87
5. John Dewey, Art as Experience, pp. 10, 25-6

dancing. In all these are seen order, harmony,[1] rhythm,[2] form, and color.

The Creation of Art

Plato is blazing new trails of thought in his inquiries into the nature of art creation. Referring to art as imitation, he deals with one of the major problems in the philosophy of art, i.e. the relation of the art object to its original in nature or life. The suggestion as developed further by Aristotle[3] has become a major idea in esthetics. Imitation involves a consideration of the objective quality of artistic creation. What is art as a phenomenon?

Before Plato goes far in his discussion of art as imitation, he recognizes that nature is already given. Before human creation there was the divine creation of the world and all of nature—the work of God.[4] Given the world of nature, how do we arrive at art, the human creation? Looking at the dramatic element in epic poetry, Plato finds the poet speaks in the person of another, and in so doing he assumes another character in voice and gesture. In this respect, poetry is imitation (μίμησις), some wholly so as tragedy and comedy, some with none of the imitative element

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1. Gorgias 504; II:87
2. Republic III, 398; III:84-86
3. Poetics 1447a,ff.
4. Sophist 265; IV:402-3; Laws X, 889; V:295

as the dithyramb, and some mixed as the epic.[1] Since poetry was for the Greeks an art to be heard and not read, Plato thinks of the poet himself as an imitator of human action and moods.[2] There developed the "mimetic art," so that one person imitated many types of character[3] and even such things as thunder, neighing of horses, sounds of musical instruments and the noises of animals.[4] Thus far, what Plato affirms about the imitative aspect of poetry seems perfectly obvious--the fact that objectively, the creation of art copies things of nature and experience. It remains to be determined whether the imitation is of things as they are or in some other respect.

Plato considers the painter's art as well, and finds it to be an imitation. In seeking a definition of imitation, he uses the particular instance of a bed in relation to which he discovers a triple creative process: God, the creator of the idea, bed, the "real maker of the real bed, not a particular maker of a particular bed"; man, the carpenter who builds the actual bed; and man, the artist who paints the picture of the actual bed. Of the three, the last is the imitator in the person of the artist or poet.[5] In this fact, Plato indicates what he considers the great limitation of painting and poetry, for they are twice

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1. Republic III, 393-4; III:77-8
2. Republic X, 603; III:318
3. Republic III, 394-8; III:79-80
4. Republic III, 396-7; III:81-2
5. Republic X, 596-8; III:308-10

removed from reality. The painter and poet are given to making images which resemble the true thing.[1] With a true philosophic passion for knowledge of reality, Plato's only explanation for their being satisfied with something less than the real is that the "imitator or maker of the image knows nothing of true existence."[2] He says:

> The real artist, who knew what he was imitating, would be interested in realities and not in imitations; and would desire to leave as memorials of himself works many and fair; and, instead of being the author of encomiums, he would prefer to be the theme of them.[3]

Further classifying his view, Plato says that one may hold a mirror up to nature and life, but what he has as a result is only an appearance. Even so, the painter is "a creator of appearances."[4] Likewise the maker of "beds" does not create reality, but only the "semblance of existence."[5] The dialogue continues:

> Now let me ask you another question: Which is the art of painting designed to be—an imitation of things as they are, or as they appear—of appearance or of reality?
>
> Of appearance.
>
> Then the imitator, I said, is a long way off the truth, and can do all things because he lightly touches on a small part of them, and that part an image. For example: A painter will paint a cobbler, carpenter, or any other artist, though he knows nothing of their arts; and, if he is a good artist, he

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1. Sophist 240; IV:368
2. Republic X, 601; III:314
3. Republic X, 599; III:312
4. Republic X, 596; III:309
5. Republic X, 597; III:309

> may deceive children or simple persons, when he shows them his picture of a carpenter from a distance, and they will fancy that they are looking at a real carpenter.[1]

What does imitation contribute to Plato's esthetic theory? The mere copying of sensible appearance is not art. Imitation does not have that finer connotation given it by Aristotle. Plato is not criticising painting as an art, but imitation as a type of painting. The same standard pertains to poetry which is imitation.[2]

When in pursuit of the sophist, Plato comes again upon the idea of imitation and suggests there may be "an imitative art of reasoning."[3] There seem to be two kinds of imitation, the likeness-making and the phantastic. A copy which reproduces the original in matters of color, size, and the like, is likeness-making. But there is imitation which involves deception, for the copy does not follow the original; this is phantastic, or the art of making appearances. The image which results from such imitation "is in reality really unreal."[4] In solving "the ridiculous contradictions" which inevitably arise, Plato proceeds in the lines of the early philosophers rather than as an esthetician.[5] The conclusion of the matter is that some arts may have an element of falsehood as well as truth. This

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1. Republic X, 598; III:311
2. Republic X, 601-8; III:314-24
3. Sophist 234; IV:361
4. Sophist 240; IV:369
5. Sophist 242 ff.; IV:371 ff.

kind of imitation is classified under phantasy (φαντασία) or imagination.[1] It is significant to note that Plato defines phantasy or imagination as "the union of sense and opinion."[2] As he proceeds further to subdivide phantasy, he leaves that which is other than mimicry by a person for someone else to describe.[3]

In summary, the process of art creation is imitation. The work of art is a reproduction or likeness of an original already existing. The likeness does not imitate the essence (οὐσία) of the original, but as it appears to the senses. In some arts, even the objective reality is not really reproduced. The imagination or phantasy, by an interworking of the senses and the mind, creates an art which Plato does not describe. Thus without development, he touches the fringes of the esthetic creation by which the artist imitates objective reality and yet adds an element of the unreal.

The Inspiration of Art

There is a subjective quality to esthetic creation corresponding to the objective quality of imitation. Plato finds the artist controlled by something outside of set rules or method. He recognizes it particularly in the poet.

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1. Sophist 264-5; IV:401-2
2. Sophist 264; IV:400
3. None less than Aristotle caught the idea and followed up the problem in his Poetics and in De anima.

> The third kind is the madness of those who are possessed by the Muses; which taking hold of a delicate and virgin soul, and there inspiring frenzy, awakens lyrical and all other numbers; with these adorning the myriad actions of ancient heroes for the instruction of posterity. But he who, having no touch of the Muses' madness in his soul, comes to the door and thinks that he will get into the temple by the help of art--he, I say, and his poetry are not admitted; the sane man disappears and is nowhere when he enters into rivalry with the madman.[1]

Similarly, he describes Ion's ability to interpret Homer as inspiration. If it were an art only, knowing the technique, Ion could do the same with all poets.[2] Plato explains:

> The gift which you possess of speaking excellently about Homer is not an art, but, as I was just saying, an inspiration; there is a divinity moving you, like that contained in the stone which Euripides calls a magnet, but which is commonly known as the stone of Heraclea . . . . In like manner the Muse first of all inspires men herself; and from these inspired persons a chain of other persons is suspended, who take the inspiration. For all good poets, epic as well as lyric, compose their beautiful poems not by art, but because they are inspired and possessed. . . . . For the poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind is no longer in him: when he has not attained to this state, he is powerless and is unable to utter his oracles.[3]

The rhapsodist in reading by inspiration produces in others the same experience of being lifted out of himself.[4]

The terms used by Plato to describe the subjective experience of the artist in his creation at first blush seem forbidding. Is esthetic inspiration a case of being mad?

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1. Phaedrus 245; I:451
2. Ion 533; I:501
3. Ion 533-4; I:501-2; see also Ion 536; I:504
4. Ion 535; I:503

possessed, out of one's senses? By these seemingly exaggerated terms, we are convinced that esthetic inspiration is not the common experience. The poet is lifted out of his immediate experience and circumstance into a sense of the reality of the experience of the poetry.[1] It is not by wisdom (σοφία) but by genius (φύσις) that he creates.[2] Recognizing this fact, the Greeks

> assumed that some one else must have suggested it to him—a Muse or a god. So the poet was not his normal self; he was ἔνθεος, or the victim of ἔκστασις. . . . . Plato at all periods of his life attributes inspiration to the poets in utter seriousness as giving forth wisdom in a way that can not be reduced to a τέχνη.[3]

In the creative process, then, inspiration comes to the artist in some way strange to the general rational processes, which even the poet himself does not comprehend. That which comes to the poet in inspiration is transmitted to others to some degree so that they experience something akin to the original inspiration. Plato speaks only of the poet in such terms. Would he admit any of the other arts to be so inspired?

Beauty and Art

In Plato's inchoate esthetic philosophy, the relation of beauty to art is inherent, but not indicated. He disparages the art of the painter, for imitation removes

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1. Ion 535; I:803
2. Apology 2; II:114
3. Greene, Plato's View of Poetry, p. 17

the artist to a third position from reality. No suggestion is offered that he may have a special vision of the real beauty. Plato does not even venture the possibility that the artist may know the idea of a thing as he creates even as the carpenter or weaver knows it when he makes his product. From this theory of imitation,[1] it would seem that beauty in the absolute has little to do with art. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that Plato does not absolutely close it out, for the artist is inspired and the beautiful thing participates in absolute beauty. "But of beauty," says Plato, "I repeat again that we saw her there shining in company with the celestial forms; and coming to earth we find her here too, shining in clearness through the clearest aperture of sense."[2]

The relation between beauty and art becomes more obvious in the consideration of esthetic inspiration. The madness which is the inspiration of the poet is in quality like the possession of one beholding true beauty. It is an experience outside of the rational functions of man, but is yet really vitally his own experiencing. If beauty is in the inspiration of art, it must surely be in it objectively —in the only way beauty can be objective —and awaken an experience of ideal beauty in those who contemplate the art. Further, the end to be realized by art is identical with

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1. Sophist 235 ff.; IV:363 ff.
2. Phaedrus 250; I:457

that realized by beauty.

Summary

The philosophy of Plato centers in value. This value is dependent metaphysically and independent experientially. The eternal ideas in which all things participate give meaning and value that persist regardless of their being experienced. This objective value is predominantly moral and esthetic, being derived from the ideas, good and beauty. In their essence, these two are very close, though artistic beauty and moral goodness are never confused. Sensible objects are beautiful by virtue of their "participation" in the idea. Yet beauty is not to be identified with the physical qualities of color, rhythm, form, and the like; beauty is intelligible, not sensible.

The mystical element enters Plato's philosophy in his epistemology. The idea of beauty is apprehended directly as in a vision. Things are recognized as beautiful by the memory of this vision. Beautiful sensible objects provide steps by which one may progress to the knowledge of the absolute. Pleasure may be realized through the physical qualities of beautiful objects, but cannot be the norm for beauty since it is a subjective value. Love and ecstasy are the quality of heightened experience of beauty.

Of the large field of art, Plato is interested principally in the creative arts which are produced under

the inspiration of the Muses. Art which is mere imitation is of no special value esthetically. Art which is created with esthetic inspiration in turn may draw the observer to the same quality of experience. The esthetic experience is creative of beautiful character—order, harmony, and grace—and, on the part of some, of beautiful art.

The Platonic philosophy of beauty and art presents a rather consistent theory of objective beauty. However, in his passion for order and unity, Plato at times comes dangerously near making no place for the phenomenal world. The weakness of his theory is his silence on the relation of line, color, harmony, rhythm, and form to beauty. He admits that he does not know how absolute beauty is expressed in particular beautiful things. He is persuaded that beauty is a part of being, that becoming participates in this beauty, that beautiful things nurture virtuous character. On the basis of this philosophy, Plato builds his views of education.

The Educational Views of Plato

So universally is Plato's theory of education considered a part of a Utopian plan that it comes as a surprise to find how much grows directly out of his own background in Greek education. The old Greek education of the historic period is in general the scaffolding upon which Plato builds his educational structure. Of special note are

systems developed in the city states of Sparta and Athens. The aim of education was to develop individual worth in terms of worth to the state. After early tutoring, there were gymnastic, music, and literary training. Through all there was a strong moral purpose with a dominant place for doing in the learning process. This type of education had prevailed in the Greece before Plato's time and contributed to the Greek culture of the fifth century before Christ.

Plato very evidently recognizes the values of the old Greek education, as well as the weaknesses which appeared in the fourth century before Christ. He not only uses the educational structure,[1] but discusses what grew to be an educational problem--how to develop virtue in character.[2] Having been through the strenuous political disturbance of the Reign of Terror, he is concerned with finding a means of stabilizing the state. Education is his hope. Plato's educational theory, therefore, focuses upon these major interests: virtue in the individual, justice in the state.

It would be misleading to expect in Plato an educational theorist in the modern sense. His omissions are obvious and quite natural. His major treatments of education are in the Republic and the Laws and hence are subordinate to another purpose. This fact does not mean that

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1. Republic II, 376; III:80-9
2. See Laches, Protagoras, Meno

education to him is of minor importance; quite to the contrary, it is the only means to the end which he sought in the state, and in the state by virtue of its realization in the individual. Again, Plato must be safeguarded from misinterpretation by the modern, for his approach and terminology come out of his own time. Yet while Plato is a man out of his time, he is also a man for all time, but only as he is understood in his time. He may seem puritanical, paternalistic, and reactionary. He must be interpreted first in terms of the life and ideals of the Greece of the fifth and fourth centuries before our era.

General Education

To isolate those views of Plato which pertain to beauty and art in education would be a relatively simple matter. However, by such procedure, there would be lost the force of their place in the whole. Therefore, a survey of his general system of education precedes an examination of the specifically esthetic elements.

The Aims of Education

The Platonic educational theory is the outworking of three major aims. The problem which Plato faces first is how to secure virtue in individual character. Though he soon turns from the individual to the state, he does not confuse the issue. The aim of education for the individual

is not information or skills, but "manly virtue" in action.[1] Education is nurture so that man may become what he would not by nature alone. The perpetual aim before youth is "a rightly and nobly ordered mind and character."[2] Such training "leads you always to hate what you ought to hate and love what you ought to love."[3] This notion of virtue does not mean "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not"; rather it is basically the due proportion and harmony of soul and body,[4] what the modern psychologist means by integration of personality in the finest sense. Education, then, has a personal aim--virtue in character. In the Laws, Plato adds the practical aim of preparing one for his vocation in life.[5]

Believing that virtue in individual character is discerned more easily in the large, he considers the state which is the individual writ large.[6] The ideal for the state is justice; it is realized when each member in the state is prepared for and functioning in the full expression of his powers.[7] Education is not purely individualistic, but civic; it aims to train the citizen, for in the state the individual comes to the full expression of his own self. It, therefore, becomes a major responsibility of the state

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1. Protagoras 325; I:146
2. Republic III, 87; III:400
3. Laws II, 653; V:30
4. Timaeus 87; III:510; see also F. J. E. Woodbridge, The Son of Apollo, pp. 132-3
5. Laws I, 643; V:21
6. Republic II, 369; III:46
7. Republic IV, 423; III:111-2; Woodbridge, op. cit., p. 80

to provide a system of education which realizes for the individual, virtue, and for the state, justice.

There is a final consideration which grows out of Plato's philosophy of ideas: namely, knowledge of the good. If the finest state is to be achieved, a philosopher must be king.[1] And who is this philosopher? He is the one who because of his innate gifts has gone through the full system of education and beheld the essence of good itself.[2] This is the highest goal of education, the only real knowledge of which all other is an approximation. However, Plato wisely does not press this upon all as the end of education, although it is essential for the maintenance of the state that this aim be realized on the part of some.

In summary, Plato states clearly his conception of education:

> Then let us not leave the meaning of education ambiguous or ill-defined. At present, when we speak in terms of praise or blame about the bringing-up of each person, we call one man educated and another uneducated, although the uneducated man may be sometimes very well educated for the calling of a retail trader, or of a captain of a ship, and the like. For we are not speaking of education in this narrower sense, but of that other education in virtue from youth upwards, which makes a man eagerly pursue the ideal perfection of citizenship, and teaches him how rightly to rule and how to obey. This is the only education which, upon our view, deserves the name; that other sort of training, which aims at the acquisition of wealth or bodily strength, or mere cleverness apart from intelligence and justice, is mean and illiberal, and is not worthy to be called

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1. Republic V, 473; III:170-1
2. Republic VI, 503-6; III:203-5

> education at all. But let us not quarrel with one another about a word, provided that the proposition which has just been granted hold good: to wit, that those who are rightly educated generally become good men. Neither must we cast a slight upon education, which is the first and fairest thing that the best of men can ever have, and which, though liable to take a wrong direction, is capable of reformation. And this work of reformation is the great business of every man while he lives.[1]

The Curriculum of Education

When Plato develops his scheme of education for the citizens of his state, he begins with familiar Greek procedure. He enlarges its extension with principles some of which have become practice only within very recent centuries. He deepens its intention with an insight the values of which have been severely criticized but have yet to be tested fully. In the Republic, he describes his plan carefully. More details and some new ideas are added in the Laws. In both, the major emphasis is upon music and gymnastic.

The Plan of the Curriculum

Plato's plan for education comprehends the whole span of life. "The beginning is always the most critical part of education," he says.[2] Consequently he advises prenatal care, and for the child he suggests safeguards for growth which determine habit. During the next three years, the nurses oversee the children in their sports and

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1. Laws I, 643-4; V:22
2. Laws VII, 792; V:173

play.[1] At the age of six, the Laws would separate boys and girls and give each training in weapons and instruments they will use. This education is under the supervision of the magistrates so that "boys and girls alike, may be sound hand and foot, and may not, if they can help, spoil the gifts of nature by bad habits."[2]

The next period up to twenty years of age is given over to the study of music and gymnastic. This is a very rich period of study, as will develop later. Plato suggests that the child may learn to read and write from ten to thirteen years; then the lyre for three years. Following, there is doubtless arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. Study is compulsory for both boys and girls.[3] Through the whole process those who have reached the limit of their capacity for formal education are dropped out and fitted into their place of service in the state. Between the ages of twenty and thirty, study brings together the sciences in order "to see the natural relationship of them to one another and to true being."[4] At thirty, again there is a selection of those who will continue, and for five years these pursue the study of philosophy or dialectics, leading to a knowledge of the good.[5] The citizen is then ready to spend

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1. Laws VII, 789-94; V:169-75
2. Laws VII, 795; V:176
3. Laws VII, 804; V:186; also Laws VII, 810; V:192 ff.
4. Republic VII, 537; III:240
5. Republic VII, 539; III:244

fifteen years in actual service of the state.[1] Plato concludes:

> . . . then let those who still survive and have distinguished themselves in every action of their lives and in every branch of knowledge come at last to their consummation: the time has now arrived at which they must raise the eye of the soul to the universal light which lightens all things, and behold the absolute good; for that is the pattern according to which they are to order the State and the lives of individuals, and the remainder of their own lives also; making philosophy their chief pursuit, but, when their turn comes, toiling also at politics and ruling for the public good, not as though they were performing some heroic action, but simply as a matter of duty.[2]

This general plan of education will now be analyzed in detail in relation to its content.

The Content of the Curriculum

Plato's description of his educational curriculum does not give a whole picture. It is characterized by the incompleteness of conversation and elaboration of personal interest. Festivals, games, and drama all become part of the educational process. The nature of each is obviously dictated by the aim to be realized.

Plato frequently mentions the importance of the right beginning in early life. Prenatal care has both physiological[3] and psychological[4] aspects. The early years bring the child direction through play and songs.[5] He re-

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1. Republic VII, 540; III:244-5
2. Loc. cit.
3. Laws VII, 789; V:169
4. Laws VII, 792; V:173
5. Laws II, 659; V:38

quires some sports, but is also let free to find his own amusement when he meets with other children at the village temple.[1] The child may play at the thing which may be his vocation later; thus, the "soul of the child in his play should be guided to the love of that sort of excellence in which when he grows up to manhood he will have to be perfected."[2]

Plato's major concern is the significance of music and gymnastic in Greek education. They play so vital a part that he disregards the limits of formal education and considers their impact in toto upon the nurture of citizens of the state. He observes the effect music and gymnastic have upon individual growth and the welfare of the state. Upon the basis of these observations he recommends their content in education.[3]

To the early Greek, music (μουσική) in education comprehended much more than occurs to us. In general, music included all the arts under the care of the nine Muses (Μοῦσαι). They were mathematics, astronomy, poetry, literature, reading, and writing. Music, in the modern sense, of varied and elaborate harmony and as an independent art was not known to the Greek.[4] Music accompanied poetry or the dance

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1. Laws VII, 793-4; V:74
2. Laws I, 643; V:21
3. Anyone who holds an autonomous view of art is at once in disagreement with what Plato says about the educative value of the arts. However, his psychological approach is not unworthy of attention.
4. To understand this fact is to soften the shock to the

and was appreciated, not because of understanding of technique, but for the "listener's immediate and familiar experience of it."[1] Further, to the Greeks generally music represents character qualities.[2] Music, as Plato uses it, is more nearly equivalent to art in the modern sense; not "art" with the connotation it had for Plato. He hints that he is not well informed in matters of music, and we are not much more favored, for early Greek music is very nearly a closed book.

Plato first considers literature as a part of the musical content in education. The poets were commonly considered the teachers of Greece.[3] Literature is either true or false, and the children should have stories of both kinds. Because they come to the child at an impressionable age, their selection is an important matter. Plato believes that the tales about the gods which are not true give the young a wrong standard of character. The poets should present God as he is, the author of good, and immutable.[4] Further, tales in which gods or men reveal definite weakness of

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modern when Plato censors solo music and discusses poetry at length as the major factor in music; Laws II, 669; V:49.

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th Edition, Vol. XIX-XX, p. 72
2. S. H. Butcher, Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art, p. 129
3. The poetry used was mainly "the epics of Homer and Hesiod, the elegiacs of Tyrtaeus, Solon, Theognis, etc., the iambics of Archilochus, Simonides, etc., and the songs of the numerous lyrists, Terpander, Arion, Alcaeus, Alcman, Sappho, Simonides, etc."; Thomas Davidson, Aristotle and Ancient Educational Ideals, p. 72
4. Republic II, 377-83; III:61-7

character, such as fear of death, excessive weeping or laughter, lying, intemperance, and impiety "are likely to have a bad effect on those who hear them; for everybody will begin to excuse his own vices when he is convinced that similar wickednesses are always being perpetuated by —

> 'The kindred of the gods, the relatives of Zeus, whose ancestral altar, the altar of Zeus, is aloft in air on the peak of Ida.'"[1]

The same principle pertains to the poet's confused presentation of the character of men.

In his consideration of the style of poetry, Plato analyzes the effect upon the poet who recites. If it is imitative, he must assume the character of those for whom he speaks. He observes "how imitations, beginning in early youth and continuing far into life, at length grow into habits and become a second nature, affecting body, voice, and mind."[2] One person can hardly represent well more than one type of character, and guardians or citizens ought not to imitate that which is out of harmony with the ideal. Imitation which is constructive may be permitted. Only poets and story-tellers using narrative style may perform in the state.[3]

Plato next determines what of melody and song will contribute to education. Music consists of words, melody, and rhythm. That which has been said of words pertains to melody as well. The quality of the melody and rhythm de-

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1. Republic III, 391; III:75
2. Republic III, 395; III:80
3. Republic III, 393-98; III:77-83

pends upon the words, since they were generally written together. Therefore, melodies were as suggestive of character to the Greek as were words. Applying the same standards used for words, Plato accepts only the Dorian and Phrygian melodies.[1] In like manner, musical instruments are considered, and only the lyre, harp, and pipe are acceptable.

The final element is rhythm. Here, too, the standard is that which expresses "a courageous and harmonious life." This technical problem is not detailed, but referred to Damon with the conviction that "grace or the absence of grace is an effect of good or bad rhythm."[3]

It is highly probable that there was music in Plato's day which was a far cry from his ideal. He writes:

> Music is more celebrated than any other kind of imitation, and therefore requires the greatest care of them all. For if a man makes a mistake here, he may do himself the greatest injury by welcoming evil dispositions, and the mistake may be very difficult to discern, because the poets are artists very inferior in character to the Muses themselves, who would never fall into the monstrous error of assigning to the words of men the gestures and songs of women; nor after combining the melodies with the gestures of freemen would they add on the rhythms of slaves and men of the baser sort; nor, beginning with the rhythms and gestures of freemen, would they assign to them a melody or words which are of an opposite character; nor would they mix up the voices and sounds of animals and of men and instruments, and every other sort of noise as if they were all one. But human poets are fond of introducing this sort of inconsistent mixture, and so make themselves ridiculous in the eyes of those who, as Orpheus

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1. Republic III, 398-9; III:84-5; also Laws II, 670; V:49
2. Republic III, 400; III:85-6
3. Loc. cit.

> says, 'are ripe for true pleasure.' The experienced see all this confusion, and yet the poets go on and make still further havoc by separating the rhythm and the figure of the dance from the melody, setting bare words to metre, and also separating the melody and the rhythm from the words, using the lyre or flute alone.[1]

But such cannot be tolerated if Plato's aim for the individual and the state is to be realized. Hence, he provides for supervision of the arts by the minister of education according to established laws.[2] He encourages choruses for children, youth, and adults.[3] Standards for songs and music are recommended in the Laws.[4]

Following music, gymnastic becomes the major content of education until the age of twenty. Though some training has continued from early years and will carry on through life, now is the period for the development of the body in all its capacities. The training includes both men and women and is referred to as "military gymnastic" for the "warrior athletes." Plato has little patience with the training which prevailed for the athlete.[5] The purpose of gymnastic is not muscular development, but "the excellence of the body" in vitality and grace.[6]

Plato submits that the origin of gymnastic is the natural movement of the body, seen both in the animal and

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1. Laws II, 669; V:48-9; see also Laws III, 700-1; V:82-3
2. Laws VII, 809-12; V:191-4
3. Laws II, 664-5; V:43-4
4. Laws VII, 800 ff.; V:181 ff.
5. Republic III, 403-4; III:90-1
6. Republic III, 410; III:98; also Laws II, 673; V:52-3

human being. But with all the motion, man alone has attained a "perception of order" which he expresses in a variety of ways.[1] The content of gymnastic training, according to the Laws, is:

> . . . . all military exercises, such as archery, and all hurling of weapons, and the use of the light shield, and all fighting with heavy arms, and military evolutions, and movements of armies, and encampings, and all that relates to horsemanship.[2]

Wrestling is to be pursued in relation to the military art. Dancing, too, is a part of gymnastic. It is closely associated with music and preserves bodily freedom and dignity and produces health, agility, and beauty.[3] The Pyrrhic dance, giving the action of war, and the Emmeleiai, the dance of peace and order, are to be used, while the Bacchi is condemned.[4] Further salutary measures in gymnastic are regulation of diet and abstaining from intoxication.[5] This training will produce such physical well-being that there is no need for medicine.

The remaining part of the curriculum, which now enters the area of knowledge in contrast to opinion, purposes to complete the training of the philosopher who is to be the king or guardian of the state. During this study of the sciences, the student is to keep in active life as a

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1. Laws II, 665, 673; V:43, 53
2. Laws VII, 813; V:196
3. Laws VII, 795; V:176
4. Laws VII, 814-6; V:197-9
5. Republic III, 403-4; III:90-2

citizen. It is obviously a "longer and more circuitous way," but the end is knowledge of good which gives value to all other knowledge.[1] The five years of dialectic are preceded by a thorough correlation of the sciences.[2] Arithmetic is first dealing with the matter of number and calculation[3] and developing quickness; geometry tends toward the good encouraging quick apprehension[4]; astronomy is a study of solids in motion while solid geometry considers solids in themselves[5]; then harmonics deals with motion which appeals to the ear. When the intercommunication of these sciences is realized, then their value appears. This background of the sciences is essential to an apprehension of true being through dialectic. The senses are no longer called upon, but the reason alone in pursuing this "coping-stone" of the sciences. Only the select have the high honor of this study. This same experience is presented in another figure in the words of Diotima describing the steps which lead to the science of beauty. Having thus reached the highest in study, this select group, the philosopher-guardians who make the laws and set the standard of taste for the state, now give themselves to active public service for fifteen years. Thus is made possible the realization of the

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1. Republic VI, 504-5; III:204-5
2. The word science for Plato and the Greek has the larger connotation of any organized field of knowledge.
3. Republic VII, 522-6; III:223-8
4. Republic VII, 526-7; III:228-9
5. Republic VII, 527-30; III:230-3

aims of education for the state and for the individual.

Thus far the objective content of the curriculum has been considered. To stop here would be to miss completely the real essence of education according to Plato. What does it matter that the youth of Greece is taught geometry, reading, writing, the lyre, wrestling, medicine, or cookery? To be sure he has learned a skill of practical value to him as a citizen. However, if he has not become withal by that much a virtuous character, he has been badly educated. Shrouded within the material of education is that which orders character in harmony and grace, or distracts it and makes it at odds with itself. Training in virtue or vice is a concomitant which education cannot escape, but may control. The real content of education is ultimately, then, the quality of virtue as it is mediated through the various aspects of the curriculum.

The Methods of Edusation

The secret of Plato's appeal which is ever new rests in the fact that he was not absorbed in the particulars which belong to time and place, but penetrated to the taproot which sends nourishment wherever there is growth. Thus in considering method in education, it is found that Plato sets forth basic principles which are universally applicable.

In the first place, educational method should provide for the body and soul in due proportion. Neither

one can be perfected without the other. If, through music, nurture is confined to the soul, it softens and wastes and the individual becomes irritable and uncontrolled.[1] Likewise, through gymnastic in training the body alone, animal characteristics develop without grace or learning.[2] If both gymnastic and music are pursued for the benefit of the whole being, a psyche-somatic organism, the proper balance and harmony will eventuate. While the soul is the dominant element, being eternal, the effect of the one upon the other is interchangeable.[3] The strength of one should not be permitted to destroy the strength of the other.[4] Plato recommends:

> that we should not move the body without the soul or the soul without the body, and thus they will be on their guard against each other, and be healthy and well balanced. And therefore the mathematician or any one else whose thoughts are much absorbed in some intellectual pursuit, must allow his body also to have due exercise, and practise gymnastic; and he who is careful to fashion the body, should in turn impart to the soul its proper motions, and should cultivate music and all philosophy, if he would deserve to be called truly fair and truly good.[5]

Hence, "when a beautiful soul harmonizes with a beautiful form, and the two are cast in one mould, that will be the fairest of sights to him who has an eye to see it."[6]

In the second place, educational method should

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1. Republic III, 410-2; III:98-100
2. Loc. cit.
3. Laws VII, 791; V:171-2
4. Timaeus 87-9; III:509-12
5. Timaeus 88; III:511
6. Republic III, 402; III:89

take into account the harmonious ordering of the soul. Even as justice in the state is realized when its three classes of citizens are happy in their own work, so is there virtue in character when the three elements of the soul are active in their proper relation. Vice and crime raise their head when these are in discord.[1] Describing the ways the soul expresses itself, Plato names these principles: reason, passion, and desire.[2] Reason and passion are rational principles; desire is irrational. All represent active aspects of personality. Desire (ἐπιθυμία), the lower principle, is characteristically appetitive, expressing itself in various ways in the interest of bodily satisfaction or wealth. The next, called passion (θύσει, θῦμος, θυμοειδές), is the "spirited element" and is generally assertive in nature. The highest is reason (λογιστικόν), or the philosophic element. It is more than the bare intellect and should be the ruling factor above the others. No one of these is to be destroyed, for each, when harmonized, makes a peculiar contribution to personality. This accord of the elements of the soul is realized by proper participation in music and gymnastic.[3] As a result,

> the just man does not permit the several elements within him to interfere with one another, or any of them to do the work of others,—he sets in order

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1. Laws IX, 863; V:246-7; see also Republic VIII, 550; III: 254-5; Republic IX, 571-2; III:280-1; Republic IX, 579; III:290
2. Republic IV, 439-41; III:131-4
3. Republic IV, 442; III:134-5

> his own inner life, and is his own master and his own law, and at peace with himself; and when he has bound together the three principles within him, which may be compared to the higher, lower, and middle notes of the scale, and the intermediate intervals --when he has bound all these to ether, and is no longer many, but has become one entirely temperate and perfectly adjusted nature, then he proceeds to act, if he has to act, whether in a matter of property, or in the treatment of the body, or in some affair of politics or private business; always thinking and calling that which preserves and cooperates with this harmonious condition, just and good action, and the knowledge which presides over it, wisdom, and that which at any time impairs this condition, he will call unjust action, and the opinion which presides over it ignorance.[1]

In the third place, method should follow the requirements of nature. This principle is evident in the development of the curriculum, beginning with play and coming to a climax in dialectics.[2] Education is compulsory, but when one has reached the extent of his ability, he is freed from this law.[3] The small child is taught through play and games.[4] Since pleasure and pain are the first criteria of value for the child, he should be helped early to have pleasure in the good and pain in the evil.[5] Materials are to be adapted to the interests of the children in order that taste may be moulded early. Learning should not be forced, either in training the body or mind, for thus harm is done.[6] When interest controls early education, the "natural bent"

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1. Republic IV, 443; III:137
2. Republic VI, 498; III:197
3. Republic VII, 537; III:241
4. Laws I, 643; V:21; Laws II, 659-60; V:38
5. Laws II, 652; V:30
6. Republic VII, 536; III:240

is more easily determined.[1] In the light of this principle, it may appear strange to require of women the same as of men, especially in gymnastics; Plato would have the women participate with the men "as far as they are able."[2]

That education should be disinterested in the beginning is another principle of educational method. In his early years, the child gives himself unreservedly to that which he studies. He does not discriminate or weigh the value of that which he receives and choose to reject it; he feels no personal responsibility. After a basis of taste has thus been established, the mature person may apply the test of reason.[3] The keen sensitivity of the child is free to experience fully the environment put about him. His restrictions are those which he himself finds to control the order and harmony of life. This he learns from direct experience and not the concepts formulated in textbooks. Woodbridge finds that it is

> disinterested schooling which Plato puts first, the study of those subjects in which personal opinions do not count. He would have children play and dance and sing and even go to church, for such exercises he thought cultivated their bodies, their sociability, and their sense of reverence. But he would have them taught very little about God or virtue. He would not let them think that such matters were in their province to decide, but he would cultivate in them the habit of making decisions. . . . . It was a disinterested decision, the kind of decision which the young should be encouraged to make as a preparation for

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1. Republic VII, 536; III:240
2. Republic I, 466; III:162
3. Republic III, 402; III:88; Laws II, 653; V:30

making decisions which are not disinterested.[1]

A fifth principle is that the environment should make a contribution which is constructive. The completeness of Plato's censorship in the state causes criticism, but indicates how vital is this principle, how susceptible we are to what we observe and to that in which we participate.[2] The wandering poet is to be recognized courteously, but not admitted.[3] Festivals, choruses, and drama are to be supervised according to the highest standards. The kinds of music and poetry are limited. The various arts which are a part of the environment and nature itself may instill grace and harmony even as music and gymnastic. On that account, Plato advises:

> We would not have our guardians grow up amid images of moral deformity, as in some noxious pasture, and there browse and feed upon many a baneful herb and flower day by day, little by little, until they silently gather a festering mass of corruption in their own soul. Let our artists rather be those who are gifted to discern the true nature of the beautiful and graceful; then will your youth dwell in a land of health, amid fair sights and sounds, and receive the good in everything; and beauty, the effluence of fair works, shall flow into the eye and ear, like a health-giving breeze from a purer region, and insensibly draw the soul from earliest years into likeness and sympathy with the beauty of reason.[4]

Again, the power of imitation in educational method cannot be ignored. "Did you never observe," says Plato,

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1. F. J. E. Woodbridge, The Son of Apollo, p. 146
2. Republic X, 616; III:321
3. Republic III, 398; III:83
4. Republic III, 401; III:87-8

"how imitations, beginning in early youth and continuing far into life, at length grow into habits and become a second nature, affecting body, voice, and mind?"[1] He finds the principle of imitation difficult to reckon with, since it operates unconsciously, and unescapable in that it persists. Hence, Plato raises objection to promiscuous imitation of parts in drama and poetry. One should imitate only that which is consonant with his own character as expressed in rank, sex, virtue, and mood. Too often the poet or actor imitates action which he avoids for himself and gives vent to passion and sorrow which he does not tolerate in his normal life. How can one escape the transference to real life of that which one imitates in play, is Plato's problem in relation not only to the actor, but also to the spectator.[2] For Plato observes that "Few persons ever reflect, as I should imagine, that from the evil of other men something of evil is communicated to themselves."[3] Such concern lest one become like that which he beholds or imitates seems greatly exaggerated to the modern who has learned to be a detached observer and who rarely memorizes poetry. To remember that poetry was more universally recited than read, and to appreciate the strong tendency to identification in the early Greek is to accept the seriousness of the matter as

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1. Republic III, 395; III:80
2. Republic III, 395-7; III:80-2; Republic X, 603-6; III: 318-22
3. Republic X, 606; III:321

Plato pictures it. It may be that the modern is nearer to the Greek in his own unconscious response than he is aware.

A final basic principle of Plato is that educational method should develop a proper standard of taste. The importance of proper taste looms so large in Plato's mind that it appears to be the essence of education in the Laws.[1] Taste is developed whether or no; the principle is so to cultivate the sense of pleasure and displeasure that it will be expressed in the proper direction. Taste is definitely a matter of cultivation. It begins very early[2] and continues through life.[3] On this account, a careful censorship is absolutely essential, for if the formation of taste is not controlled, character is degraded, institutions and customs degenerate, laws become loose, and the state finds justice a stranger. The opposite is true where good taste is developed in education.[4] The control of taste in this manner does not eventuate in the extermination of pleasure; it necessarily changes the quality of the pleasure, but to the advantage of both the individual and the state.[5] The determining standard is not moulded according to the choices of the common group or chance person, but is to be "that which delights the best and best educated, and especially

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1. Laws II, 653; V:30-1
2. Laws II, 653; V:31; Republic III, 377; III:59
3. Laws VII, 802; V:184
4. Republic IV, 423-5; III:112-3
5. Laws VIII, 802; V:184

that which delights the one man who is pre-eminent in virtue and education."[1] It is to be noted at this point that this method of education is not logical but psychological, not only intellectual and conceptual, but also emotional and perceptual, not of the mind alone but of the whole being. Taste is the spontaneous, unreasoned sense of value rising out of the store of impressions. It is colored largely by the affective quality of experience. When education cares adequately for the development of taste, the problem of laws is greatly simplified in the state, for the citizens have a satisfactory basis for choice and control.[2]

Esthetic Education

In stating the significance of Greek education, Monroe makes special note of the esthetic emphasis which unites theory with conduct. "Here individuality is defined on the esthetic side," he writes, "and possesses the power of appreciating the general truths embodied in concrete form of reality, of which the highest expression is the art of so living as to embody in the concrete the general laws of moral life."[3] Thus, again two values are juxtaposed, the esthetic and the moral. This being true, what is their relation? In what way is the esthetic made operative in

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1. Laws II, 659; V:37
2. Republic IV, 423; III:112
3. Paul Monroe, A Text-book in the History of Education, p. 58

Plato's educational system?

The Esthetic Significance of the Aims of Education

Though the balance may swing easily from the individual to the state, the principal aim in Plato's view of education is the nurture of virtue in personality. This aim has a two-fold significance esthetically, the individual and a vital quality. The esthetic is primarily personal. It does not thrive under mass control or mechanical procedure. Freedom and sense of individual worth encourage its development. To be sure the social aspects of esthetic experience are strong, yet the appreciation and expression of beauty are distinctively personal. Individual initiative makes possible esthetic growth.

A basic aspect of the esthetic is its vital quality. That which is static is of a contradictory nature. The esthetic presupposes awareness. It requires the alertness of the whole nature. When genuine, it touches the deep recesses of personality. An education which masters only formal principles or techniques is not a wholesome atmosphere for esthetic development. Where education is concerned for dynamic value, art does not become esoteric, but remains a vital part of experience. Plato's emphasis upon that which effected the active springs of life necessarily involves the esthetic.

Plato's consideration of the social group also has a bearing on esthetic education. Art and culture are

inseparable. While the esthetic takes form in the individual, the group is necessary for its expression. It is effected by social values and falls into the moulds of the group mores and cultus. It adorns the social life with beauty. Social aims afford rich opportunity for esthetic awareness and expression.

But the point of interest in the individual and in the state is virtue and justice. Did Plato rightly expect these as an outgrowth of esthetic education? Is virtue an associated or direct value in relation to beauty? According to Plato, the characteristics of beauty are order, harmony, and symmetry. Because beauty is of this nature, the individual who experiences beauty unconsciously develops in his own self the qualities of order, harmony, and symmetry. Virtue in character is basically order, harmony, and symmetry. If knowledge of techniques and intellectual appreciation are legitimate outcomes of esthetic education, these other very real outcomes must be recognized. While it could not be true in many philosophies of beauty, with Plato's conception of beauty, virtue is a direct value to be realized in esthetic education.[1] This being true, Plato did not order his educational theory according to an external ethical standard; the essence of beauty itself is his governing principle. "What shall be the end of music if not

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1. Raphael Demos, The Philosophy of Plato, pp. 233-7

the love of beauty?" he asks.[1] Beauty being what it is, the outcome of education should be virtue in character.

The Esthetic Significance of the Curriculum of Education

More than for anything else, Plato's theory of education is considered of esthetic significance because of the large place given to music in the curriculum. However, there are other elements of esthetic value to be noted.

Plato says very little regarding the materials used in early education. The child is permitted to play with objects which may relate to his later vocation. His senses are thus developed, giving him awareness of such things as form, color, weight, and balance. The use of games and songs involves rhythm, melody, and the imagination. Thus the natural capacities of the child are developed and sensitiveness is kept keen.

In the next period of education, music receives prime consideration. Its value Plato indicates in the following:

> . . . . musical training is a more potent instrument that any other, because rhythm and harmony find their way into the inward places of the soul, on which they mightily fasten, imparting grace, and making the soul of him who is rightly educated graceful, or of him who is ill-educated ungraceful; and also because he who has received this true education of the inner being will most shrewdly perceive omissions or faults in art and nature, and with a true taste, while he praises and rejoices over and receives into his soul the good, and becomes noble and

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1. Republic III, 403; III:90

> good, he will justly blame and hate the bad, now in the days of his youth, even before he is able to know the reason why; and when reason comes he will recognize and salute the friend with whom his education has made him long familiar.[1]

Since music has such a deep influence, it must be of the finest type. Its three elements of words, harmony, and rhythm should fit together to make one impression. If the words are of courage and bravery, the harmony and rhythm of the music proper should have the same quality. Likewise the musical instrument should be adapted.[2] This sense of the fitness of words and harmony and rhythm is keen for the Greek youth since he is trained to compose music as an appropriate accompaniment to words. Any music, considering its three elements, or any musical instrument which breaks down the standard of virtue in character is not worthy of a place in education of citizens and must be banished from the state. The dialogue continues:

> But there is no difficulty in seeing that grace or the absence of grace is an effect of good or bad rhythm.
>
> None at all.
>
> And also that good and bad rhythm naturally assimilate to a good and bad style; and that harmony and discord in like manner follow style; for our principle is that rhythm and harmony are regulated by the words, and not the words by them.
>
> Just so, he said, they should follow the words.
>
> And will not the words and the character of the style depend on the temper of the soul?

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1. Republic III, 401-2; III:88
2. Protageras 326; I:473; Republic III, 398-9; III:84-5

> Yes.
>
> And everything else on the style?
>
> Yes.
>
> Then beauty of style and harmony and grace and good rhythm depend on simplicity,—I mean the true simplicity of a rightly and nobly ordered mind and character, not that other simplicity which is only an euphemism for folly?
>
> Very true, he replied.
>
> And if our youth are to do their work in life, must they not make these graces and harmonies their perpetual aim?
>
> They must.[1]

All other arts, and nature also, are considered by the same principle, for "ugliness and discord and inharmonious motion are nearly allied to ill words and ill nature, as grace and harmony are the twin sisters of goodness and virtue and bear their likeness."[2] But why must the esthetic content be referred to these qualities of character? Primarily because they depend upon the "temper of the soul" for their tone as they are created, then bear the influence of their creator. Hence, this dialogue:

> Even so, as I maintain, neither we nor our guardians, whom we have to educate, can ever become musical until we and they know the essential forms of temperance, courage, liberality, magnificence, and their kindred, as well as the contrary forms, in all their combinations, and can recognise them and their images wherever they are found, not slighting them either in small things or great, but believing them all to be within the sphere of one art and study.

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1. Republic III, 400; III:86-7
2. Republic III, 401; III:87

Most assuredly.

And when a beautiful soul harmonizes with a beautiful form, and the two are cast in one mould, that will be the fairest of sights to him who has an eye to see it?

The fairest indeed.

And the fairest is also the loveliest?

That may be assumed.

And the man who has the spirit of harmony will be most in love with the loveliest; but he will not love him who is of an inharmonious soul?[1]

Musical education really has two aspects, the intellectual and the emotional, as Nettleship so ably points out.[2] In the above, Plato suggests that music helps us to learn the "language of life," that we may know what is right and wrong not only in art objects, but also in the actual world. The emotional element is found in the sense of order and "true love" of beauty realized, "the former being the more passive condition of which the latter is the more active expression."[3]

In establishing the standard of music to be used in education, Plato refers to the long and successful practice in Egypt with set patterns from which there are no innovations. This idea appeals tremendously to him as a means of sustaining the standard of esthetic quality in music and

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1. Republic III, 402; III:88-9
2. Richard Lewis Nettleship, The Theory of Education in the Republic of Plato, pp. 62-4
3. Ibid., p. 63

of maintaining virtue in the state.[1] The value of such a standard is not only its guidance in the creation of art. In addition it has a psychological force in reducing the change and uncertainty which encourages "licence" and "recklessness."[2] This suggestion of control for creative effort is immediately disapproved by moderns; Plato himself was not unaware of its dangers. How is this standard to be determined? If the plan is to be successful, it "must be the work of God, or of a divine person." With a standard of such origin, there ought to be acceptable the necessary adaptation and nuances which would not violate the rightness of the fixed form. In fact, the Greeks did this very thing in the realm of architecture, for in over two thousand years nothing better or more beautiful has been found than the three orders of columns which they gave to the world.[3]

Plato introduces a real problem for Greek education when he declares unequivocally that poetry, even the revered Homer, must be banished from his state, and grants admission only to "hymns to the gods and praises of famous men."[4] This startling declaration climaxes a discussion of

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1. Laws II, 656-7; V:34-5
2. Republic IV, 424-5; III:112-3
3. Rhys Carpenter, The Esthetic Basis of Greek Art, p. 163
4. Republic X, 607; III:322
   It is of interest to note that Tagore picks up Plato's banishment of the poets and imagines a romance which brings the philosophers and poets together again; see Letters to a Friend, C. F. Andrews, ed., pp. 45-7

imitation in relation to the arts.[1] In imitation--by which Plato really means impersonation and mimicry in poetry and copy in painting--the artist caters to the plaudits of every epicure. Such art can make no contribution in esthetic education both because of illusion and unwholesome emotional stimulation. But Plato's severity is not set against poetry in its esthetic capacity; he cannot tolerate its weaknesses which are not inherent in poetry itself. He knows its charms, but cannot let it "betray the truth."[2] Whenever poetry is in accord with the high purpose of esthetic education, it may be given its rightful place. Thus Plato concludes:

> Shall I propose, then, that she be allowed to return from exile, but upon this condition only -- that she make a defence of herself in lyrical or some other metre?
>
> Certainly.
>
> And we may further grant to those of her defenders who are lovers of poetry and yet not poets the permission to speak in prose on her behalf: let them show not only that she is pleasant but also useful to States and to human life, and we will

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1. See above, pp. 88-90
2. Taylor believes that Plato's censorship really excludes what we now consider the great Greek art, but by Plato's willingness to do so, he reveals how dear is his great purpose in education. "We shall not appreciate his position," Taylor says, "unless we understand quite clearly that he is in downright earnest with the consideration that the connexion between esthetic taste and morality is so close that whatever tends to ennoble our aesthetic taste directly tends to elevate our character, and whatever tends to foster a 'taste' for the debased in art tends equally to deprave a man's whole moral being." --A. E. Taylor, Plato the Man and His Work, p. 280

> listen in a kindly spirit; for if this can be proved we shall surely be the gainers—I mean, if there is a use in poetry as well as a delight?
>
> Certainly, he said, we shall be the gainers.
>
> If her defence fails, then, my dear friend, like other persons who are enamoured of something, but put a restraint upon themselves when they think their desires are opposed to their interests, so too must we after the manner of lovers give her up, though not without a struggle. We too are inspired by that love of poetry which the education of noble States has implanted in us, and therefore we would have her appear at her best and truest; but so long as she is unable to make good her defence, this argument of ours shall be a charm to us, which we will repeat to ourselves while we listen to her strains; that we may not fall away into the childish love of her which captivates the many. At all events we are well aware that poetry being such as we have described is not to be regarded seriously as attaining to the truth; and he who listens to her, fearing for the safety of the city which is within him, should be on his guard against her seductions and make our words his law.
>
> Yes, he said, I quite agree with you.
>
> Yes, I said, my dear Glaucon, for great is the issue at stake, greater than appears, whether a man is to be good or bad. And what will any one be profited if under the influence of honour or money or power, aye, or under the excitement of poetry, he neglect justice and virtue?[1]

It is commonly believed that the province of music and gymnastic in education are separate, the one training the soul and the other the body. This is a false conception, for gymnastic improves the soul as well as the body.[2] Music appeals principally to the reason or philosophic element of one's nature, while gymnastic tempers the spirited element.

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1. Republic X, 607-8; III:323
2. Republic III, 410; III:98

There must be a balance or harmony between these elements to realize a temperate and courageous character. The process is likened to the tuning of the strings of an instrument, each of which needs to be tempered in due proportion to the other.[1] Some gymnastic contributes primarily to military preparation, but the ultimate purpose is virtue, even as in music.[2] Exercise and motion in early years make an early contribution to virtue.[3] Music and gymnastic are blended in the Greek chorus and dance. Two particular forms of dance are accepted--one expressing war and courage, the other peace and order.[4] The rhythm of movement and harmony of music are blended, reinforcing the experience coming through both the body and the senses. It is significant that emotional experience is thus associated with bodily movement.[5]

In the curriculum, music and gymnastic serve as the basic dye which determines the shade of all that touches the cloth of life afterward.[6] Music is the most potent influence in esthetic education. Its major purpose is to instill order and harmony in the soul. Gymnastic shares its proportion of contribution to this same end. Therefore, the content of the curriculum must be so controlled as to pro-

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1. Republic III, 410-2; III:93-100
2. Laws II, 656; V:34
3. Laws VII, 791; V:171
4. Laws VII, 814-6; V:197-9
5. Moore, The Story of Instruction, Vol. I, p. 145
6. Republic IV, 429-30; III:119-20

duce a harmonious growth in virtue giving the body its proper share in the development. In this period, the esthetic tenor of the personality is definitely set, both as to awareness and taste.

At this point the content of education takes a definite change; the emphasis is shifted from the visible to the intelligible.[1] It is introduced by study of the sciences and is fulfilled in dialectic. The sciences may be pursued for practical values—to the warrior or shopkeeper—but they may also draw and convert the mind to "the contemplation of true being." Each one has aspects which appeal to sense experience, but more basic are number and order which are matters of reflection. The real value of those ten years spent with the sciences is the attraction of the soul toward the "full perfection of being,"[2] a view of the beautiful and good, a sense of their "intercommunion and connection with one another."[3]

With this preparation in dealing with ideas rather than sensations, the dialectic process carries on those who are selected to a full realization of being. The process is described:

> . . . . when a person starts on the discovery of the absolute by the light of reason only, and without any assistance of sense, and perseveres until by pure intelligence he arrives at the perception of

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1. Republic VII, 523-4; III:225-6
2. Republic VII, 526; III:229
3. Republic VII, 531; III:234

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> the absolute good, he at last finds himself at the end of the intellectual world, as in the case of sight at the end of the visible.[1]

The soul, by reason and contemplation, is able to follow through without contradiction to the absolute truth, the basis of all science and reality.

To draw away, thus, from the world of sensory experience, and deal only with the realm of the invisible seems ordinarily to leave the realm of the esthetic. However, when the ultimate reality of beauty is intelligible and not visible and can be perceived directly, when beauty in the phenomenal world is the result of its participation in the beauty of the ideal world, then the content of education which makes one at home in the world of ideas brings him to the source of all beauty and the knowledge of the good. Nevertheless, this culmination of the esthetic experience can come only to those who have followed the process up through music, gymnastic, and the sciences.[2] Greene rightly concludes:

> Education is thus nothing less than the process that is instigated by the perception of ordered beauty in the world of sense, that sinks into the soul and breeds character, that then rises from love of sensible things to love of beautiful character in the soul, and that ends in the love of pure beauty. . . . . What is here especially interesting is that not only beauty, or even beauty in sensible form, is given the power of influencing the soul in a rational way, but works of art.[3]

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1. Republic VII, 532; III:235
2. Republic VII, 533; III:236
3. W. C. Greene, Plato's View of Poetry, p. 36

The Esthetic Significance of the Educational Method

It is a narrow view of the esthetic which confines its nurture to the use of art materials. The manner in which they are used and the method of general education can make a very vital contribution to esthetic education.

A method which encourages harmony in development has esthetic value. It is noted first in the relation of the nurture of body and soul. Thus the whole being is united in its experience of the esthetic. The same principle pertains to the nurture of the soul itself. In bringing the elements of the soul into proper relationship, method encourages inner beauty which manifests itself in the artist's creation as well as in character.

Again, method which fosters normal development has esthetic significance.[1] By play and approach through interest, the energies are free for growth and expression. Pleasure and pain, so closely related to the esthetic, are early set in the right direction. Spontaneity is kept alive by safeguarding against forced procedure. An attempt to preserve all the natural gifts of the personality provides opportunity for each individual to develop his best. These considerations are most important if there is to be pre-

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1. This point is not to be confused with growth according to nature. Plato did not expect natural development left to itself to result favorably. Fine potentialities might turn to as great evil as good without careful nurture; Republic VI, 494-6; III:192-3.

served that sensitivity and awareness basic to esthetic experience.

Method which begins with the disinterested approach is basic to esthetic education for it delays judgment until all aspects of experience have been explored. An objective attitude becomes habitual.[1] Like the inductive method, consciousness is first enriched by all qualities present. Then, with a store of sights and sounds, tastes and touches, weights and shapes, reason and judgment may perform their function. Premature activity of judgment conditions against esthetic strength.

Education may accomplish a great deal esthetically through the unconscious influence of environment. The impressions which come unconsciously and persistently are deep. Because they come unexpectedly when the individual is unprepared, they do not receive the censure which would otherwise be exercised. Environment provides a large part of education and is at work long before formal instruction directs the processes of growth. Therefore, the environment needs to be kept in harmony with the kind of esthetic experience desired.

As a method, imitation is the modus vivendi of some art. By imitation one is able to enter most fully into another experience as presented in drama, poetry, or the

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1. John E. Adamson, The Theory of Education in Plato's "Republic," pp. 152-4

dance. This fact pertains to the performer to a high degree; to the extent that there is unconscious imitation, it is true for the observer also. Such participation persists in its influence. The way to assure the desired esthetic growth is to censor what is the subject of imitation.

Finally, in developing taste, educational method is dominantly esthetic. In some educational procedure, the sense of personal valuation is eliminated. In Plato's plan, much of the method is given to helping the youth build a standard of excellence. In fact, education is to be so effective in this particular method, that when reason comes it will recognize that which has developed so unconsciously. To develop taste is one of the major principles of esthetic education. By virtue of the prominence given to this method, Plato's system is in large part a plan for esthetic education.

Summary

The educational system proposed by Plato aims to develop the individual in virtue, and to build justice in the state with the help of the philosopher-king. The educational process is long, beginning with prenatal care and the early games of childhood, through elementary training, music, and gymnastic, the unifying of the sciences, and dialectic at which stage those who have followed are ready for public leadership. In this process certain principles

of method are noteworthy, namely: proportionate development of body and soul, harmony of the soul, following nature, a disinterested approach, the contribution of environment, imitation, and development of taste.

Esthetic significance is apparent in the whole plan. The aims are personal and of vital quality. Music and poetry occupy a large part of the curriculum, thus nurturing order, harmony, and rhythm in the soul, as gymnastic helps to develop the body in the same manner. The advanced study in unifying the sciences and in dialectic leads to the knowledge of the idea. In method esthetic experience is fostered by harmonizing the soul and body, by play and natural growth, the disinterested attitude, the control of the environmental influence, the control of imitation and taste.

General Summary

A study of Plato's life has revealed the sources of the esthetic in his own experience. Richly surrounded by the early treasures of Greek art and trained in the tradition of Greek education, Plato was made sensitive to beauty. Through friendship and family relationship he was made keenly aware of social and political turmoil which threatened the expression of beauty in life. Stirred to vigorous thinking and a passion for virtue by Socrates, he gave the second half of his life to realize his ideal of

virtue and justice through education, first as founder and teacher of the Academy, second as teacher of Dionysius II in Syracuse, and lastly in his dialogues.

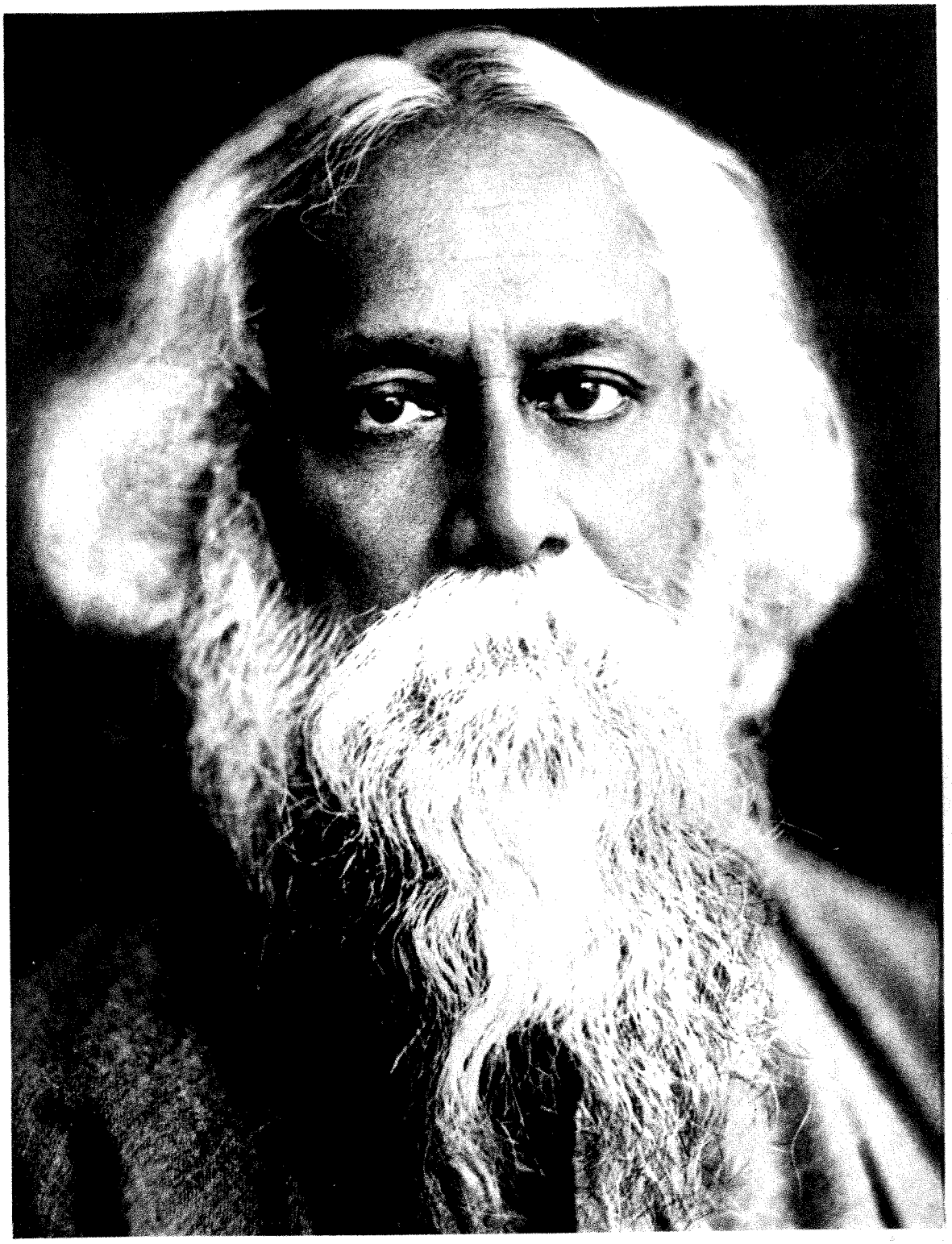
There is woven through Plato's whole philosophy a unique pattern of beauty. Always beauty is related to the good, which is the supreme value. Beauty exists with the good and other absolutes in the realm of ideas. Pleasure may be derived from sensuous objects, but only when absolute beauty participates in a sense object is it beautiful. Beauty, therefore, is objective and intelligible. It may be experienced directly in its essence or indirectly as it may be recalled through sensible objects in which it participates. The soul reaches out toward the vision of beauty, and, when it is perceived, one is moved with ecstasy and reverence, a sort of divine "madness." This experience is also creative; hence there are the creative arts. Many of the arts in his day were on a low level of imitation which Plato does not sanction, but that art which is truly inspired, a sort of phantasy, is the offspring of beauty. Art so created awakens in the one who contemplates it the experience of beauty which moved its creator. The exact relation of beauty to sense qualities in art is undeveloped. In spite of Plato's condemnation of painting and poetry and sense objects, they do participate in the nature of beauty.

As a practical philosopher, Plato embodies these ideas in his educational theory. Virtue in the individual

and justice in the state are to be realized through a process of nurture in which music and poetry are the major materials. With the additional study of gymnastic, there is developed a harmony of soul and body which is beautiful. For those who will continue in education, the unity of the sciences and dialectic which bring them to the realm of the idea, where true beauty is, completes the preparation of the philosopher-king. In addition to the use of art directly and indirectly, the principles of method in education contribute to esthetic growth. Integration of the soul and harmony of body and soul are fundamental to esthetic orientation. Method which takes cognizance of the normal development, finds its basis in a disinterested approach, seeks to control the unconscious influence of environment, uses imitation creatively, and develops taste, such method makes possible esthetic values in education. Thus, in aim, in content, and in method, Plato's ideal of education is of esthetic significance.

CHAPTER IV

R A B I N D R A N A T H T A G O R E



RABINDRANATH TAGORE

"Tagore lives for the glory of culture.
Let Santiniketan stand as a guiding milestone
for the growth of the human spirit,
as a construction of the most needed,
the most noble and the most beautiful."

—Nicholas Roerich

CHAPTER IV

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

When hungry for some new inspiration or direction in thinking, the West is not likely to turn to the East. However, some men of the West have tarried with sufficient leisure and sympathy to become aware of the real values which the East offers. Müller declares:

> If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solution of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant—I should point to India.[1]

Not the least of the fields in which the Indian mind has a contribution to make is the esthetic. Beginning before the Christian era, the theory of the experience of the beautiful received attention over a period of two thousand years, with the result that there are now about eight hundred seventy-two major works principally on the esthetics of poetry.[2] Inspired by his simple, contemplative manner of living, the vividness and rhythm of nature about him, and

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1. Friedrich Max Müller, India: What Can It Teach Us? p. 6
2. Mulk Raj Anand, The Hindu View of Art, pp. 147-8

certain aspects of the Hindu view of life, the Indian has developed an indigenous art. India, therefore, has a contribution to make to a consideration of esthetics.

Then again, the insistent need in India for adequate educational provision does not augur any very suggestive returns from the East in problems pertaining to education. The year 1835 is memorable for India, for the Macaulay policy fixed a trend in education which is not an expression of Indian life when it required that the English language be the medium of higher education. Battling with the problems of a subject nation and high illiteracy, India has offered ample opportunity for the experimental school.[1] The Indian Renaissance, born out of the shock from the influx of Western culture, awakened Bengal especially in literary and artistic matters, so that Tagore is both a product and source of the new life.[2] With a vivid appreciation of the genius of his culture and a passion for the release of that genius, not only for his own people but for all education, Tagore provides a rewarding study. In him is found a conscious desire expressed in action that, where they are at their best, the East and West shall meet.

Though there is a distinct national character to much in his educational theory and experiment, this study of Tagore seeks for that which is of universal significance.

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1. Daniel J. Fleming, Schools with a Message in India
2. Letters to a Friend, C. F. Andrews, ed., pp. 13-20

A survey of his life reveals how Santiniketan, his experimental school, germinated in his own experience. A summary of his philosophical views, with special consideration of those relating to the esthetic gives the foundation for his educational practice. Then, out of the general analysis of his educational theory and experiment, there is drawn Tagore's relationship to esthetic education.

The Life of Tagore

In a tradition where high culture has too often expressed itself in withdrawal from life, it is of special interest that a countryman says of Tagore, "He is the first among our saints who has not refused to live, but has spoken out of Life itself, and that is why we give him our love."[1] To bring about a renaissance there is need for vision, but there is need for more. The culture and gifts which make a seer, the insight into human need which gives him understanding and compassion, the impulsion which keeps him restive until the realization, these all form the life of Tagore.

The Family Background

It would be no proud boast to assert that Rabindranath Tagore was born great. The surging of the intel-

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1. Quoted by W. B. Yeats in his Introduction to the edition of Gitanjali, p. ix

lectual renaissance of Bengal for more than a century found strength in the Tagore family.[1] The halo of honor about the name came from achievement in art and music, from leadership in political and industrial problems, and from the life impact of poet and seer. Upholding this family name, there were Prosonno Koomar Tagore, remembered for public works, such as law, editing, writing, and for founding the British Indian Association; Rajah Sir Sourindra Mohun Tagore, noted as authority in Hindu music and founder of the Bengal Music School and the Bengal Academy of Music; and again, Abanindranath Tagore, a painter of note and former head of the Art School. His brother, Geganendranath, stood high as an artist in black and white.

The immediate family of Rabindranath continued the tradition. The grandfather, Prince Dwarakanath, was a landlord, philanthropist, and reformer. The father, Debendranath, chose to be known, not as rightful Maharaja (great king), but as Maharshi (great sage). As a great mystic, he contributed richly to the Brahmo Samaj.[2] Of Rabindranath's six brothers, the eldest, Dwijendranath, was a philosopher. Jyotirindra, another brother, was an artist. A third brother was the first Indian entering civil service. The three sis-

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1. ThÃkur is the name in the original and means god or lord.
2. A religious movement founded by Ram Mohun Roy in 1830 purposing to break the fetters of orthodox Hinduism, especially in some social restrictions.

ters manifested talent also. Being the youngest in the family, Rabindranath "grew up in the one house where all the surging tides of the Indian Renaissance might flow round his daily life, and fill the air he breathed with the exhilaration of their fresh airs."[1]

The Period of Childhood and Early Training

On May 6, 1861, Rabindranath Tagore was born. The large Tagore household lived a simple life in respect to food, clothing, and luxury. There was no pampering. The children grew up in the servants' quarters and were not free to go through the palatial dwelling.[2] Though the father traveled a good deal and was thus away from the family, his personality was felt as a presence.[3] The mother died when "Babi" was a child; hence his care was largely that of male servants.[4] Their stern restrictions early built into his experience the sense of rebellion against restraint and a great desire for freedom. Punishment meted out to him took the form of being shut in a room or being made to stand

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1. E. J. Thompson, Rabindranath Tagore: His Life and Work, p. 6
2. Tagore, My Reminiscences, pp. 8-9
3. Thompson, loc. cit.; My Reminiscences, pp. 67-70. The Reminiscences were written when Tagore was fifty years old.
4. C. F. Andrews points out that the young wife of his elder brother was like a mother to him and that it is probably from her care for him that Tagore got his insight into woman's character expressed both in his poetry and in his championing the rights of Indian womanhood; see Rabindranath Tagore in Voorslag, Vol. I, No. 9, February, 1927, p. 16.

within a circle inscribed on the floor. Happily, the location was near a window which looked out on the place of morning bathers, and Rabindranath "would spend the whole day peering through the drawn venetian shutters, gazing and gazing on this scene as on a picture book."[1]

Not being permitted to be out of the house, Rabindranath developed a yearning for nature as strong as the desire for freedom. He writes:

> We perforce took our peeps at nature from behind the barriers. Beyond my reach there was this limitless thing called the Outside, of which flashes and sounds and scents used momentarily to come and touch me through its interstices. It seemed to want to play with me through the bars with so many gestures. But it was free and I was bound--there was no way of meeting. So the attraction was all the stronger. The chalk line has been wiped away to-day, but the confining ring is still there. The distant is just as distant, the outside is still beyond me . . . .[2]

This hunger for nature was fed somewhat by the inner garden. Though it was not elaborate, he says:

> Our inner garden was my paradise; it was enough for me. I well remember how in the early autumn dawn I would run there as soon as I was awake. A scent of dewy grass and foliage would rush to meet me, and the morning with its cool fresh sunlight would peep out at me over the top of the Eastern garden wall from below the trembling tassels of the cocoanut palms.[3]

Related to his experience of nature and permeating other early impressions was a sense of mystery. His own words are:

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1. My Reminiscences, p. 10
2. Ibid., p. 13
3. Ibid., pp. 17-8

> Looking back on childhood's days the thing that occurs most often is the mystery which used to fill both life and world. Something undreamt of was lurking everywhere and the uppermost question every day was: when, Oh! when would we come across it? It was as if nature held something in her closed hands and was smilingly asking us: "What d'you think I have?" What was impossible for her to have was the thing we had no idea of.[1]

In all of these things, patterns were set which shaped much of later experience. Thompson rightly observes that within the Tagore household "was a life so varied and busy that it was abundant compensation for the outside fair that he missed, except as spectator."[2]

Rabindranath's school days were not especially helpful. "I suppose it was fortunate for me," he says, "that I never in my life had what is called an education--that is to say, the kind of school and college training which is considered proper for a boy of respectable family."[3]

He tells how he cried to go along to school with his companions, a brother and a cousin, when they started off. In meeting the situation, his tutor applied "a resounding slap" and uttered this prophecy: "You're crying to go to school now, you'll have to cry a lot more to be let off later on."[4] His crying resulted in his entering too early the Oriental Seminary with a permanent deposit of rather unhappy memories. He endured the situation by having

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1. My Reminiscences, pp. 19-20
2. Op. cit., p. 7
3. Lectures and Addresses by Rabindranath Tagore, Anthony X. Soares, ed., p. 6
4. My Reminiscences, p. 6

a school of his own with the bars of the verandah railing as his "wooden pupils" while he, as teacher, applied all the "barbarities" he had observed.[1] Following a more or less brief experience in the Oriental Seminary, he went a year to the Normal School. Here again he spent his time apart from the group working things out for himself with the happy result, in an examination, of being head of the group, much to the disturbance of the teacher.

Because of Rabindranath's unhappiness in the school, his guardians shifted him to the Bengal Academy. Here the only improvement was toward a little freedom, but it was a "dismal" place and developed the spirit of truancy.[2] Of this time, he writes that

> at home we had to go through much more than what was required by the school course. We had to get up before dawn, and, clad in loin-clothes, begin with a bout or two with a blind wrestler. Without a pause we donned our tunics on our dusty bodies, and started on our courses of literature, mathematics, geography and history. On our return from school our drawing and gymnastic masters would be ready for us. In the evening Aghore Babu came for our English lessons. It was only after nine that we were free.[3]

Sunday was a day of special interest, for they had demonstrations in physical science. Though this science study appealed to his sense of mystery, the courses in English made the deepest impression. The children found it difficult to get the sounds and became openly jocular when the

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1. My Reminiscences, pp. 30-1
2. Ibid., pp. 60-1
3. Ibid., p. 38

tutor tried to help them feel the beauty of the language.[1] The pertinacity of the teacher amazed them but he was planting more really than he knew.

Poetry enters frequently into the experience of a Hindu child, but the unusual sensitivity of Rabindranath's nature tingled with its delights. At the age of five, he became consciously aware of rhyme in these words:

> Jal Pawray (water falls)
> Papa Nawray (leaves tremble).[2]

He writes of this experience later:

> Whenever the joy of that day comes back to me, even now, I realize why rhyme is so needful in poetry. Because of it the words come to an end, and yet end not; the utterance is over, but not its ring; and the ear and the mind can go on and on with their game of tossing the rhyme to each other. Thus did the rain patter and the leaves quiver again and again, the live-long day in my consciousness.[3]

"The whole atmosphere of our home was permeated with the spirit of creation," he says.[4] Definite encouragement in writing poetry was given to him at about eight years of age by his nephew, Jyotiprokash. Jyoti was studying Shakespeare and took Rabindranath into his study. This conversation ensued:

> "You have to write poems."
>
> "How can I do it? I do not know how," replied the future author of "Gan," "Gitanjali," and "The Gardener."

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1. My Reminiscences, pp. 40-1
2. Basanta K. Roy, Rabindranath Tagore: The Man and the Poet, p. 41
3. My Reminiscences, p. 4
4. Lectures and Addresses by Rabindranath Tagore, Anthony X. Soares, ed., p. 8

> "I shall teach you. I have been reading Shakespeare's Hamlet, and though I am not a poet, I feel from your turn of mind that, with proper training, you may become a great and original poet."[1]

Under direction, he then wrote some payar verse.[2] This experience tore away the veil of mystery through which he had looked at poetry.[3] With fear gone, he began to write freely. He was helped further by a teacher in the Normal School who taught him versification at odd moments in the school day. Thus began the style of power and beauty later to be recognized with the Nobel prize.

It was a fortunate day for Rabindranath, then a lad of eleven years, when his father returned home. The Maharshi sensed the talent of his young son and summoned him to his rooms to ask, "How would I like to go to the Himalayas?" The thought of freedom and release from school stirred the answer, "O that I could have rent the skies with a shout, that might have given some idea of the How!"[4] After proper outfitting, preparation, and farewell, the travelers set out, making a short stop at Bolpur. They journeyed on to Amritsar, then to the mountains. The freedom Rabindranath experienced was new. The responsibility placed upon him by his father was wholesome; failure was met with understanding, not rebuke.[5] Rabindranath was

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1. Roy, op. cit., p. 43
2. Verse having fourteen syllables.
3. My Reminiscences, pp. 35-6
4. Ibid., p. 76
5. Ibid., pp. 81-3

taught Sanskrit, English, and astronomy by his father at intervals on the journey. This discipline with certain other things was rather distasteful, yet he was given liberty in the mountains. In reflecting upon his father's manner of dealing with him, he writes:

> To the end of his life, I have observed, he never stood in the way of our independence. Many a time have I said or done things repugnant alike to his taste and his judgment; with a word he could have stopped me; but he preferred to wait till the prompting to refrain came from within. A passive acceptance by us of the correct and the proper did not satisfy him; he wanted us to love truth with our whole hearts; he knew that mere acquiescence without love is empty. He also knew that truth, if strayed from, can be found again, but a forced or blind acceptance of it from the outside effectually bars the way in.[1]

After a few months with his father, Rabindranath was sent back to Calcutta with a servant. Upon his return, he was promoted from the servants' quarters to the inner apartments. For a time he was the center of interest, being asked to relate his journeys.[2] But the necessity for returning to school raised some difficult problems, for Rabindranath would not submit and "resorted to all manner of subterfuges." In despair, his eldest sister said, "We had all hoped Babi would grow up to be a man, but he has disappointed us the worst."[3] However, the influence of one teacher at St. Xavier's has not been forgotten; his memory

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1. My Reminiscences, p. 94
2. Ibid., p. 105
3. Ibid., p. 108

has been as "a passport into the silent seclusion of the temple of God."[1] Considering these representative scenes of his childhood, it becomes evident that Rabindranath's "real education came, not from the desultory and experimental alternation of tutor and school, with a background of time spent with servants, but from the whole circumstances and environment of his life."[2]

The Freedom of Youth

A distinctive period of Tagore's life covers six years of his youth, from about sixteen to twenty-two, and is characterized by him as a period "of utter disorderliness."[3] The restraining idealistic patterns of the family were set aside; he became a realist. His "immature mind"[4] was influenced by English literature, Shakespeare, Byron, Milton, in which he felt "strength of passion" and "uncontrolled excitement." He enjoyed life, its fashions, its delicacies, its romances. In reflecting upon this period, he writes: ". . . . at this age of unmeaning activity, when my undeveloped powers, unaware of and unequal to their object, were jostling each other for an outlet, each sought to assert superiority through exaggeration."[5]

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1. My Reminiscences, p. 110
2. Thompson, Rabindranath Tagore: His Life and Work, p. 7
3. My Reminiscences, p. 178
4. Ibid., p. 160
5. Ibid., p. 179

The poetry of these years quite naturally mirrors the inner experience of Tagore. "Despair of Hope" and "Lamentation of Joy" are suggestive titles.[1] In "The Gardener" he has collected his songs of romantic love. The freedom of these years was a joy to him, even in such a thing as writing on slate where he could erase easily.[2] Contact with atheistic groups[3] and "religious epicureans"[4] hurt his sensitive spiritual nature; yet the "intellectual impudence of budding youth" led him to revolt in religious matters. In characterizing this period, Roy reminds us that Tagore was, like other men,

> created with a dual nature,--part sensuous and part spiritual. His youthful mind was oscillating between the twin currents. Even though the sensuous was the uppermost for a time, the other never deserted him altogether. There was always that ineffable feeling of inherited spirituality.[5]

At the very beginning of this period, Rabindranath was sent to London to study law. The zest of a new adventure pleased him, but it did not last. Though he writes with enthusiasm about certain experiences,[6] yet he was "too young to enter into the spirit of England at that time"[7] and returned to Bengal after a year. Later, he lived in

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1. In these years he wrote also, The Broken Heart, lyrical drama; Evening Songs, Morning Songs.
2. My Reminiscences, pp. 200-1
3. Ibid., pp. 184-5
4. Ibid., p. 185
5. Rabindranath Tagore: The Man and the Poet, p. 68
6. My Reminiscences, pp. 157-77
7. Lectures and Addresses by Rabindranath Tagore, p. 141

the home of his brother, Jyotirindra, on the river Ganges. Here he was richly nourished in his spirit with the beauty of the surroundings. How deeply these days impressed him is indicated in this bit of reminiscence:

> The Ganges again! Again those ineffable days and nights, languid with joy, sad with longing, attuned to the plaintive babbling of the river along the cool shade of its wooded banks. This Bengal sky-full of light, this south breeze, this flow of the river, this right royal laziness, this broad leisure stretching from horizon to horizon and from green earth to blue sky, all these were to me as food and drink to the hungry and thirsty. Here it felt indeed like home, and in these I recognised the ministrations of a Mother.[1]

While living with this brother, Rabindranath experienced an illumination which changed the tone of his life. The first definite phase of this awakening came at twilight in Calcutta, where his brother had moved, when the sense of <u>self</u> was obliterated. The world was no longer trivial, but "full of beauty and joy."[2] A further and more penetrating insight which was sustained with subsequent renewals, he describes in these words:

> The end of Sudder Street, and the trees on the Free School grounds opposite, were visible from our Sudder Street house. One morning I happened to be standing on the verandah looking that way. The sun was just rising through the leafy tops of those trees. As I continued to gaze, all of a sudden a covering seemed to fall away from my eyes, and I found the world bathed in a wonderful radiance, with waves of beauty and joy swelling on every side. This radiance pierced in a moment through the folds of sadness and despondency which had accumulated over

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1. <u>My Reminiscences</u>, p. 208
2. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 215

my heart, and flooded it with this universal light.[1] This new inner vision was not only expressed in poetry[2] but affected his relationships.[3] Roy compares the experience in importance to the illumination of his father[4] and that of Saint Francis of Assisi.[5] "It was a change," says Roy, "a crisis, yes, a convalescence. Tagore came out of it a better man, a deeper thinker, and a universal poet."[6]

The Maturing Years

During the next two decades of his life, years which Thompson[7] calls "dreamily wide awake years, with their leisurely busyness," Tagore matured in understanding, expression, and social participation. At the age of twenty-two, he was happily married. A number of the following years were spent in trying various forms of writing: drama, songs, sonnets, and prose in the form of essay and novel. After a second visit to England, and travel on the continent, he made his home at Shileida on the Padma, a branch of the Ganges. His eldest brother, Dwijendranath, had not

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1. My Reminiscences, p. 216
2. On that day he wrote The Awakening of the Waterfall, which poem, he says, "gushed forth and coursed on like a veritable cascade." Loc. cit.
3. Ibid., p. 217
4. His father had a vision in his early youth while on the bank of the Ganges which prepared him to become the great Indian theistic mystic.
5. Roy, op. cit., p. 72
6. Ibid., p. 77
7. Rabindranath Tagore: His Life and Work, p. 22

been successful in the management of the family's country estate, so Rabindranath was invited by the Maharshi to take charge.

The time spent at Shileida made two indelible impressions on Tagore. His whole-souled response to nature was given stimulus by his life in the house-boat on the Padma. In describing the beauty surrounding him he writes:

> The kul kul noise of the ripples, the gentle tremor of the boat, the light-bathed sky, the vast expanse of soft blue water, the fresh foliage of trees along the banks of the river—an ensemble of colour, music, dance and beauty lend radiance to the superb melody of nature. All these awaken a keen interest and a deep delight in my mind."[1]

Much of his love for Bengal which inspired his later rhapsodies of its beauty[2] grew at this time as well as his philosophy of nature.

A second joy which came to Tagore during these days was the opportunity of close contact with the people. Though an aristocrat by birth, he never manifested any sense of condescension or mockery toward the toiler. Instead he entered into their experience with unusual sympathy and un-

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1. Quoted by Roy, Rabindranath Tagore: The Man and the Poet, p. 106
2. "Golden Bengal" may be compared to "America, the Beautiful"; "I love you, my golden Bengal, for your sky and your air always play on the harp of my heart.
   In the spring, your mango groves breathe forth the maddening perfume of the blossoms, and in the autumn your harvest fields smile in the bliss of fruition. Mother darling! O, how inexpressibly sweet is your love which has clothed the banks of rivers, and the shades of trees in such a superb attire." In Roy, op. cit., pp. 108-9

derstanding. He watched with untiring kindliness the helpless and simple lives of the *ryots*.[1] His sense of social responsibility became very keen. His relation to the estate brought about reorganization and an elevation of the social and moral sense.

In his thorough study of Tagore's literary career, Thompson characterizes the period at Shileida as "the most prolific period of his amazingly prolific career."[2] The genius burning within was released in drama, song, sonnet, essay, and novel. Tagore was a generous contributor to the *Sādhanā*, one of Bengal's best periodicals, following the line of new things in science and of social criticism. "Much of what is most independent," observes Thompson, "and not a little of what the authorities have found most troublesome, in recent Indian political thought, owes its spring to Rabindranath's teaching. He is the parent of many movements which today he disowns."[3]

The closing years of this period reveal a transition which opens into the major activity of the latter half of Tagore's life. The fermenting of his social consciousness now broke forth as participation in problems of popular government. He no longer remained the pure artist, for the reformer in him sought a voice. Thus he turned to

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1. Roy, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-4
2. *Op. cit.*, p. 20
3. Ibid., p. 21

pamphlets and lectures. In this vein he wrote Gitanjali, his best known religious poem, "the expression of the mature philosopher-poet."

The Full Tide of Life

With the turn of the century, which brought Tagore near his fortieth year, a chapter of Tagore's life began which yet remains unfinished. As has been observed, during these early years Tagore garnered richly of the good things of life. Having thus tapped many resources which, like the mountain spring, feed into the main current of experience, Tagore found life at its full tide.

For some time the years were almost feverish with the currents which swept into his life. In 1901 he was made editor of the revived Bengal Review.[1] The important period of his novels began also. His Ashram or retreat near Bolpur was founded that year and is now very widely known for the experimental school, Santiniketan.[2] In 1902, the death of his wife, whom he loved deeply, brought the suffering of separation. He sought retreat in the Himalayas where his daughter succumbed with tuberculosis. About 1905, his youngest son died.

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1. Thompson, Rabindranath Tagore: His Life and Work, p. 37
2. The spelling used here is the Indian form. It is sometimes found as "Shantiniketan" since the "s" has a slight "sh" sound.

At the time of the Partition in 1905, Tagore threw himself into the struggle of nationalism.[1] Indicating the strength given to this cause, Thompson writes:

> In all India, there was no voice more powerful than his, no pen more effective. This was the time of his mightiest prose, whose periods march and burn. There is not much political writing in English which can match his best pages of this time.[2]

In 1907, with the clean sweep of one day's action, Tagore freed himself of all political responsibility and connections and retired for work in his school, his poetry, and meditation.[3]

As suddenly as he had left public life, he reappeared in 1910 in Calcutta with the purpose of reorganizing the Brahmo Samaj of his father. But the attempt proved fruitless, and he returned to Santiniketan.[4] When he withdrew from his retreat again a year later, it was to establish a world-wide reputation. On a trip to England he presented some translations of his works which were received with enthusiasm.[5] During 1912 and 1913, he was in the United States with his son for a change in environment and some study of agricultural methods.

Returning to India with this wide recognition, Tagore became known to his own people in a new way. Three

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1. Thompson, op. cit., p. 40
2. Loc. cit.
3. Ibid., p. 41
4. Ibid., p. 42
5. Yeats, Introduction to Gitanjali; also Thompson, op. cit., p. 43

peculiar honors followed: the Nobel prize for literature in 1913,[1] the doctorate given by Calcutta University, and the knighthood in 1914. He renounced the last honor at the time of the Punjab repression in 1919, having expressed disapproval in strong criticism.[2] The consequent popularity of such honor disturbed Tagore, for he sought peace. Though there was no small divergence of opinion[3] regarding his place of honor in literature, particularly among his own people, yet he held his place in world circles. The strain of some unwise ventures[4] brought him near to a breakdown. In 1917 he made a lecture trip to Japan and the United States with such success that he left his plans and returned home. The next year his daughter died, and the bewilderment of the war was heavy on his spirit.

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1. A telling account of the first suggestion of the Nobel prize to Tagore is given by Roy, Rabindranath Tagore: The Man and the Poet, pp. 189-93. The inscription of the medal reads: "For reason of the inner depth and the high aim revealed in his poetic writings; also for the brilliant way in which he translates the beauty and freshness of his Oriental thought into the accepted forms of Western belles-lettres." (Annie R. Marble, The Nobel Prize Winners in Literature, p. 159.)
2. A sentence from a letter to Lord Chelmsford reveals his feeling: "The accounts of insults and sufferings, undergone by our brothers in the Punjab, have trickled through the gagged silence, reaching every corner of India, and the universal agony of indignation roused in the hearts of our people has been ignored by our rulers —possibly congratulating themselves for imparting what they imagine a salutary lesson." (Thompson, op. cit., p. 55.) His request for withdrawal was not honored.
3. Thompson, op. cit., pp. 45-62
4. Ibid., p. 53

In 1920 he started an extended tour,[1] going to England first, where his former glory had waned somewhat. He visited France and America, then went to Denmark, Sweden, and Germany in 1921. Everywhere the magnetism of his personality won homage. He returned again to his writing and his school. To these he has given unceasing energy and alertness up to the present year.

The Major Contributions of Tagore

In conclusion, there should be a brief consideration of the four main currents of Tagore's life. Following the trend in social reform set going by Raja Ram Mohun Roy, "the father of modern India,"[2] and continued by Debendranath Tagore, Rabindranath Tagore threw his energies into the improvement of the condition of women in India. This staunch feminist did not appreciate the sympathy heaped upon Indian women by those of the West,[3] for he saw in the increased mechanization of Western life a gradual annihilation of the real beauty of woman.[4] On the other hand, he did not condone the evils of Indian life but sought to make possible for the women of his land the full realization of their especial powers through education. He saw in woman a

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1. His impressions and thoughts on the trip are well expressed in Letters to a Friend, C. F. Andrews, editor.
2. Roy, op. cit., p. 115
3. Ibid., p. 125
4. Ibid., pp. 120-5; Tagore, Personality, pp. 174-5; Tagore, Creative Unity, pp. 158-9

heightened sensitiveness and penetration and those passive qualities which give balance to life.[1] Woman has a unique contribution to make to civilization.[2]

Tagore is probably better known as a reformer through his activity in relation to Indian nationalism. He was early influenced in this direction by Rajnarayan Bose and Jyotirindranath Tagore.[3] Realizing that a nation depended upon its arts for survival, he used his poetry to preserve the spirit of his beloved India. Roy states, perhaps none too extravagantly, that

> if by a natural disaster all of Tagore's thoughtful essays, profound philosophical dissertations, learned historical interpretations, soul-stirring short stories, powerfully allegorical dramas, carefully wrought novels, and exquisite books of ballads and lyrics are destroyed forever from the face of this earth; still as long as men live in India he will be remembered as one of India's greatest poets, for they could never forget the message of his national songs. His songs have made such an indelible mark on the life of the nation that they will continue to shower their beneficent influence as long as the name of India will endure.[4]

Being transmitted by oral tradition, these songs have become rooted deeply in the consciousness of the people. They are sung at all times of day, at work and play, by beggar and ruler, and at every sort of occasion.[5] Tagore strikes the chords of the soul in his songs. In addition he defended

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1. Personality, pp. 173-5
2. Ibid., p. 183
3. Op. cit., p. 131
4. Ibid., pp. 132-3
5. Ibid., pp. 134-5

with fervor the rights of his own people to develop and not continue in subjection.[1]

Tagore was severely criticized when he suddenly dropped out of his active fight for Indian nationalism. But he has risen to a higher conception of his problem,[2] for

> to him nationalism, in his own land and everywhere, is now the enemy, which obstructs all progress and freedom of thought and life. . . . . He condemns its sterility and negative teaching. His mission in life, he says, is to strive for reconciliation of East and West in mutual helpfulness.[3]

This new vision is indicated in these significant words spoken at a banquet in London:

> I have learned that, though our tongues are different and our habits dissimilar, at the bottom our hearts are one. . . . . East is East and West is West—God forbid that it should be otherwise—but the twain must meet in amity, peace and mutual understanding; their meeting will be all the more fruitful because of their differences; it must lead both to holy wedlock before the common altar of Humanity.[4]

It is not surprising that a man with a social passion such as this is seen in his advocacy of feminism and nationalism should found a school. In fact, Thompson indicates that his educational venture came after disillusionment and disappointment in political activity.[5] Having

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1. Roy, Rabindranath Tagore: The Man and the Poet, pp. 145-6
2. Tagore, Nationalism, p. 127
3. Thompson, Rabindranath Tagore: His Life and Work, p. 92; see Nationalism, pp. 111-54
4. Roy, op. cit., p. 152. This conviction reverberates with positiveness in his essays on nationalism. See also "East and West" and "The Nation" in Creative Unity.
5. Op. cit., p. 95

had such an unhappy experience in his own school days, having felt the binding cords of Indian repression, and having grown in the bliss of creative freedom, in his mature years Tagore founded a school for Bengal children. He takes them at an early age and, making the school their home, they grow up with the full benefit of its benedictions of freedom and love.[1] He has been able to work out his ideal of impression and expression for the realization of life in the combination of the "spiritual tendencies of India with the spirit of social service so characteristic of Western Society."[2] Personality, nature, and music are trusted to be the greatest teachers at Santiniketan. Even with this strong emphasis on culture and individual development, the world and its problems are not forgotten.

Tagore is probably most generally known through his literature. As noted previously, he expressed himself in a wide variety of types of literature and in each case with his characteristic grace and charm. However, the criticism made of him, when he was given the Nobel prize, that he dabbled in too many forms, is probably true, yet who has surpassed him?[3] Though there has been some bitterness over his use of Bengali, he has made his native tongue a cloak of rare harmony. His accomplishment in preserving that na-

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1. Roy, op. cit., p. 155
2. Ibid., p. 163
3. Ibid., p. 197

tive beauty so splendidly in his translations is worthy of note. In thought and expression, Tagore is a part of his heritage, yet he is "an original poet of the highest rank,"[1] a "creator and that of the highest mode."[2] He "combines in his writing the rich inheritance of his predecessors and the wealth of vast literature produced by the masters who were his contemporaries."[3]

Summary

Rabindranath Tagore came into a family environment of high culture. Out of his home life under the care of servants grew a yearning for freedom and a sense of mystery. His early school experiences increased his unhappiness and repression, but the journey with his father to the Himalayas gave him a new experience of freedom and discipline. Inner unrest and enlightenment characterize the years immediately following. As he matured, Tagore wrote freely, mingled with people, and participated in social reconstruction projects. He was honored with the Nobel prize, the doctorate from Calcutta University, and the knighthood. His major contributions have been in raising the status of Indian womanhood, in championing Indian nationalism, in his prolific writing of song, poetry, drama, story, and essay, and finally in

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1. Roy, op. cit., p. 206
2. Ibid., p. 212
3. Ibid., p. 216

founding and sustaining of his school at Santiniketan.

The Philosophy of Tagore

The philosophy of Tagore is found in a persistent pattern throughout his writings. It is as much a part of the art of his pen as is his charm of style and diction. Still, Tagore is not primarily a philosopher; he is first of all a poet. Therefore, he is not subject to the demand for a complete and clearly-ordered system of thought. Lest his readers make such a claim from him, Tagore explains in the preface to Sādhanā, one of the most ordered and philosophical of his prose works, "that the subject matter of the papers published in this book has not been philosophically treated, nor has it been approached from the scholar's point of view."[1] He issues the same warning in his Hibbert Lectures on The Religion of Man, saying, "I hope that my readers have understood, as they read these pages, that I am neither a scholar nor a philosopher."[2] However, whether in the sheer beauty of his poetry, the lofty line of his plays, the engaging melody of his songs, or the strong sentences of his essays, his pages are instinct with a philosophy which is Tagore.

The major themes of Tagore's philosophy are closely interwoven. For analysis, his views regarding the

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1. Op. cit., p. vii
2. Op. cit., p. 88

universe, man, the absolute, and reality, are isolated. Then they are synthesized in an exposition of his conception of the esthetic. Preliminary to this procedure, there are noted some of the influences on Tagore's philosophy.

Influences on Tagore's Philosophy

To determine the influences which shape an individual's thinking is to deal with unruly intangibles. However, in the experience of Tagore, there are some things about which there is relative certainty on the basis of his own statements. With a father such as Maharshi Debendranath as the head of a home, certain things follow.[1] Tagore tells of the family custom of using the Upanishads[2] in daily worship.[3] He also indicates his rebellious attitude toward the family religious practices.[4] Yet, more subtle than these is Tagore's avowed reverence for his father, the recognized strength of his influence,[5] and the close relation with his father at certain periods. His participation in the Brahmo Samaj probably encouraged a sense of freedom and individuality.

Tagore's writings reveal plainly their basis in

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1. Thompson, Rabindranath Tagore: His Life and Work, p. 88
2. A collection of Sanskrit treatises or dialogues written by Indian sages from about 1000 B.C. Their principal theme is the union of the human soul with the Divine.
3. Sādhanā, p. vii; cf. The Religion of Man, pp. 89-90
4. My Reminiscences, p. 185
5. Sādhanā, p. vii

Hindu philosophy.[1] He recalls his early contact with Vaishnava poetry.[2] He confesses that he followed the Vedic teaching unconsciously.[3] Sādhanā, the book of meditations, contains extensive quotations from the Upanishads. Tagore indicates the influence of these writings on the structure of his views. Specifically, he says:

> To me the verses of the Upanishads and the teachings of Buddha have ever been things of the spirit, and therefore endowed with boundless vital growth; and I have used them, both in my own life and in my preaching, as being instinct with individual meaning for me, as for others, and awaiting for their confirmation, my own special testimony, which must have its value because of its individuality.[4]

He speaks with approval of the songs of the Bauls[5] and the songs of Kabir.

The influence of Christianity upon his thinking is an intricate problem in itself. The major coloring has come incidentally through general contacts and some through the Brahmo Samaj, rather than directly through study.[6]

These influences withal, one must recognize that all have passed through the alembic of his own individuality.

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1. A simple presentation of the Hindu view of life is given by J. C. Chatterji in India's Outlook on Life.
2. The Religion of Man, pp. 103-4; Lectures and Addresses by Rabindranath Tagore, A. K. Soares, ed., pp. 7-8. Vaishnavism is a Hindu sect centered especially around the worship of Vishnu. Some of the poetry tends to be erotic, but the form and "music" made the strongest impression on Tagore.
3. The Religion of Man, pp. 90-1
4. Sādhanā, p. viii; see Thompson, op. cit., pp. 98-103, for discussion of the sources of Tagore's views.
5. Creative Unity, pp. 78-6; The Religion of Man, p. 16, also pp. 207-20
6. For the varying viewpoints see Thompson, op. cit., pp. 100-5; S. Radhakrishnan, The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore, pp. 119; 2-6; 55, 56

He strongly advocates the uniting of the West with the genius of the East. It is natural that his own thinking should be a picture of that union of cultures.[1]

Views Relating to the Universe

The universe is the expression of the absolute, whereby its joy is manifested or realized in form, which is law.[2] "God finds himself by creating."[3] "The creation of the universe," explains Radhakrishnan, "is only the realization of the Absolute, the revelation of its freedom. . . . . It is the creative joy that gives birth to the universe, which is not only separate from God but also united to Him. God is the basis of the whole universe."[4]

Tagore transcends those views of the universe which present two elements at war with each other.[5] He sees a harmony in it all. As Radhakrishnan says, "Self and not-self into which the universe has been dichotomised are no rivals, but are the different expressions of the same Absolute, different modes of its existence."[6] It, therefore, becomes the interest of man not to conquer or to subdue or

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1. Note the sense of authority in his own individual experience; Sādhanā, p. viii
2. Ibid., p. 104
3. Tagore, Stray Birds XLVI, in The Collected Poems and Plays of Rabindranath Tagore
4. Op. cit., p. 28
5. Ibid., pp. 11-5
6. Ibid., p. 18

to escape the world of nature,[1] but to find harmony with it by sympathetic insight.[2] Such a relation is possible because the infinite is in both man and nature. Tagore writes:

> The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.
>
> It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.
>
> I feel my limbs are made glorious by the touch of this world of life. And my pride is from the life-throb of ages dancing in my blood this moment.[3]

The basis of unity in the universe is of the essence of personality. "From the beginning of his history," says Tagore, "man has been feeling the touch of personality in all creation . . . ."[4] And further, "man must feel that if this universe is not the manifestation of a Supreme Person, then it is a stupendous deception and a perpetual insult to him."[5]

At once three of Tagore's salient ideas are introduced: unity which pervades all, joy which accompanies all creative activity, and personality as the source of meaning in the universe.

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1. Sādhanā, p. 5; cf. attitudes of Europe and Japan; Nationalism, pp. 90-1
2. Nationalism, p. 88
3. Gitanjali LXIX, in The Collected Poems and Plays of Rabindranath Tagore
4. Tagore, Personality, p. 69
5. Ibid., pp. 71-2

Views Relating to Man

Man, being a part of the universe in which God realizes his own joy through creation, was obviously made to be human, "a thing of spirit and a creature made in his own divine image."[1] Man finds in his nature an inescapable dualism. Tagore says:

> At one pole of my being I am one with stocks and stones. There I have to acknowledge the rule of universal law. . . . . But at the other pole of my being I am separate from all. There I have broken through the cordon of equality and stand alone as an individual. I am absolutely unique, I am I, I am incomparable.[2]

He summarizes the four-fold relationship of this dualism in this fashion:

> The consciousness of relationship dawned in us with our physical existence, where there was separation and meeting between our individual life and the universal world of things; it took a deeper hue in our mental life, where there was a separation and continual reunion between our individual mind and the universal world of reason; it widened where there was a separation and combination between the individual will and the universal world of human personalities; it came to its ultimate meaning where there was the separation and harmony between the individual One in us and the universal One in infinity.[3]

In the midst of the tension of this dualism, man "must know with absolute certainty that essentially we are spirit."[4] Any tendency to herd human beings, to mechanize

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1. Nationalism, p. 17
2. Sādhanā, p. 69
3. Personality, p. 84; also ibid., pp. 79-83; Sādhanā, pp. 82-3
4. Sādhanā, p. 30; also p. 111

life, or professionalise its expression smothers the exalting genius of man.[1] Personality is made, not by accumulation and acquisition, but by expression.[2] There is creative energy in man which seeks expression; therefore he needs freedom.[3] Like the chick which breaks its shell prison for the fulfillment of its existence,[4] so man realises himself in "the world where he has his freedom of creation; where he is in coöperation with the infinite, where his creation and God's creation are to become one in harmony."[5]

As a "finite-infinite being"[6] man is under the necessity of rising above the finite to know self-realisation. The freedom which permits full creative activity begins in the surrender of self.[7] Such an experience is "self-transcendence, not annihilation,"[8] as the "lamp must give up its oil to the light and thus set free the purpose it has in its hoarding."[9] Tagore writes:

> Perpetual giving up is the truth of life. The perfection of this is our life's perfection. We are to make this life our poem in all its expressions; it must be fully suggestive of our soul which is infinite, not merely of our possessions which have no meaning in themselves. The consciousness of the infinite in us proves itself by our joy in giving ourselves out of our abundance. And then our work is the process of our renunciation, it is one with our life.[10]

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1. Nationalism, pp. 46, 132
2. Sādhanā, p. 40
3. Personality, pp. 88-9
4. Ibid., p. 92
5. Ibid., pp. 92-3
6. Radhakrishnan, The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore, p.7
7. Sādhanā, pp. 41, 19
8. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 61
9. Sādhanā, p. 77
10. Personality, p. 63

The surrender of the self is made more explicit in definite relationships. According to Tagore:

> The man who aims at his own aggrandisement underrates everything else. Compared to this ego the rest of the world is unreal. Thus in order to be fully conscious of the reality of all, one has to be free himself from the bonds of personal desires. This discipline we have to go through to prepare ourselves for our social duties—for sharing the burdens of our fellow-beings.[1]

There are indicated three aspects of this proposition. First, this surrender deals with the desire for self-gratification.[2] Second, man, the individual, transcends his own limitation and gives his energies to the unity of things, the One.[3] Finally, self-sacrifice is realization through others[4]; man, therefore, enters into a selfless service with joyful abandon.[5] This high philosophy of self-renunciation is made real in the life of Tagore himself, for he does not withdraw to be an ascetic,[6] but lives with people and shares the burdens of all.[7] Nor does he disparage the glories of sense experience, but finds it a minister of love.[8]

It naturally follows, then, that man reaches perfection when he is able to overcome the finite in himself and give himself entirely to the infinite within him. Re-

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1. Sādhanā, p. 19
2. Ibid., p. 73
3. Ibid., p. 87; The Religion of Man, p. 20
4. Nationalism, p. 97
5. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., pp. 32-3
6. The Gardener XLIII, LXXV
7. Gitanjali LXXVII
8. Ibid. LXXIII

lating Tagore's view to the thought of the Rishis of the Upanishads, Radhakrishnan says:

> So long as man is finite and does not give up his selfish nature, his destiny is not fulfilled, and the final consummation of becoming one with God is not attained, he is in the moral life struggling hard to attain the end which he does not get. . . . But when the individual completely surrenders himself to the universal life, and the self becomes one with the supreme, then he gains the bliss of heaven and shares the life eternal.[1]

The ultimate aim in life, then, is to realize "a certain comradeship" with the being who is in all. Describing the realization of this purpose, Tagore says:

> When the heat and motion of blind impulses and passions distract it (i.e. the soul) on all sides, we can neither give nor receive anything truly. But when we find our centre in our soul by the power of self-restraint, by the force that harmonises all warring elements and unifies those that are apart, then all our isolated impressions reduce themselves to wisdom, and all our momentary impulses of heart find their completion in love; then all the petty details of our life reveal an infinite purpose, and all our thoughts and deeds unite themselves inseparable in an internal harmony.[2]

Thus the two-fold nature of man establishes a double kinship, that with nature and that with the Creator. His personality is most fully realised when that which is finite ministers to that which is infinite in his nature. The result is a personal unity and harmony with the deepest reality of all life. Out of the freedom and joy which result, man is creative.

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1. Op. cit., pp. 64-5
2. Sadhana, p. 35

Views Relating to the Absolute

The heart of Tagore's philosophy is found in his conception of the Absolute in philosophy, or God in religion. Tagore finds meaning and value to life not in the material alone or in the spiritual alone, but in a pervasive unity, the nature of which is determined by the Absolute. Here is the center of all centripetal and centrifugal forces and energies.[1]

Out of the wealth of his thinking and reading, Tagore takes great freedom in the use of names when referring to the Supreme One. As may well be expected, he uses the Hindu name "Brahma," but so principally in his meditations in Sādhanā where he quotes freely from the Upanishads. Other terms are significant as descriptive names pertinent to relationships being emphasized. He speaks of the "Eternal Person manifested in all persons."[2] God is the "infinite Being and the finite Becoming at the same moment."[3] He is the One, the Supreme One, who gives unity to the many.[4] Radhakrishnan explains other terms:

> Art, philosophy, and religion are the specialised modes in which the Absolute presents itself to mankind. God is a trinity because man is. The human individual is a unity of intellect, emotion, and will, and the Supreme Ideal, to satisfy sentiment, will, and reason, appears as Supreme Beauty, Supreme

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1. Personality, pp. 70, 99
2. The Religion of Man, pp. 110, 163
3. Personality, p. 73
4. Creative Unity, pp. 4-8; Personality, pp. 86-8

> Good, Supreme Truth . . . . This ideal shows itself to man's capacity for joy as Supreme Beauty, to his capacity for knowledge as Supreme Truth, to his capacity to act as Supreme Good.[1]

Such a variety of names calls for a clearer statement of the express nature of this Absolute. Without question, God is a personal being, never "a God of cosmic force."[2] "And the Other?" Tagore asks. "I believe it is also a self-conscious personality, which has its eternal harmony with mine."[3] He explains:

> There is an impersonal idea, which we call law, discoverable by an impersonal logic in its pursuit of the fathomless depth of the hydrogen atom and the distant virgin worlds clothed in eddying fire. But as the physiology of our beloved is not our beloved, so this impersonal law is not our God, the Pitritamah pitrinam, the Father who is ultimate in all fathers and mothers, of him we cannot say:
>
> Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya——
> (Realize him by obeisance, by the desire to know, by service——)
>
> For this can only be relevant to the God who is God and man at the same time; and if this faith be blamed for being anthropomorphic, then Man is to be blamed for being Man, and the lover for loving his dear one as a person instead of as a principle of psychology.[4]

Therefore Sastri says, in the light of his understanding of Hindu thought, that to Tagore "God is both a Person and an immanent Power. Just as the human soul is a person and is distinct from the body and yet fills it with his power and illumination, the Oversoul is a person and is distinct from the universe and yet immanent in it."[5]

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1. The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore, pp. 51-2
2. The Religion of Man, pp. 16-7
3. Ibid., p. 140
4. Ibid., p. 112
5. K. S. Sastri, Rabindranath Tagore: Poet, Patriot, Philosopher, p. 221

The God of Tagore is immanent as well as transcendent.[1] The most ready reaction to his poetry is that God is very near. For the soul that is aware, there is a very real sense of intimacy with God. The unwary reader may even find basis for pantheism, especially in his treatment of nature and his ideal of unity. We are reminded, however, that "God is everything, but everything is not God."[2] Anticipating being called pantheistic, Tagore writes:

> Let me assert my faith by saying that this world, consisting of what we call animate and inanimate things, has found its culmination in man, its best expression. Man, as a creation, represents the Creator, and this is why of all creatures it has been possible for him to comprehend this world in his knowledge and in his feeling and in his imagination, to realise in his individual spirit a union with a Spirit that is everywhere.[3]

God is not self-sufficient, even as the universe is not sufficient in itself.[4] God realizes Himself in creation which gives Him joy.[5] "He is active; he is giving himself," says Tagore.[6] Putting it in other words, "the spirit of One in God must have the many for the realization of the unity. And God is giving himself in love to all."[7]

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1. Sastri, op. cit., p. 222; Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 46
2. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 33
3. The Religion of Man, p. 101
4. Personality, pp. 55-7
5. Ibid., p. 69
6. Ibid., p. 62
7. Ibid., p. 68

As already suggested, God is manifested in his universe. It is the fact of the presence of God in all things that makes possible the sense of unity in all.[1] Tagore concludes:

> And from this I have known certainly that the earth and the sky are woven with the fibres of man's mind, which is the universal mind at the same time. . . . The Great Master plays; the breath is his own, but the instrument is our mind through which he brings out his songs of creation, and therefore I know that I am not a mere stranger resting in the wayside inn of this earth on my voyage of existence, but I live in a world whose life is bound up with mine.[2]

However, nature is not the highest revelation of God, but man himself. "The revealment of the infinite in the finite," says Tagore, "which is the motive of all creation, is not seen in its perfection in the starry heavens, in the beauty of the flowers. It is in the soul of man. For there will seeks its manifestation in will, and freedom turns to win its final prize in the freedom of surrender.[3] The soul of man becomes "the meeting ground of the finite and the infinite."[4] Perfection in life, therefore, lies in the direction of revealing God through renunciation of self.[5] "It is for us," he declares, "to realize the Person who is in the heart of the All by the emancipated consciousness of our own personality."[6] This ideal is not reached by a

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1. Sādhanā, pp. 9, 17; Personality, pp. 71-2
2. Personality, p. 74
3. Sādhanā, p. 41
4. Ibid., p. 38
5. The Religion of Man, p. 22

process of accumulation or acquiring of God through worship or obeisance,[1] for the infinite is not to be possessed, but to be experienced.[2] Tagore explains that

> it is not the function of our soul to gain God, to utilise him for any special material purpose. All that we can ever aspire to is to become more and more one with God. In the region of nature, which is the region of diversity, we grow by acquisition; in the spiritual world, which is the region of unity, we grow by losing ourselves, by uniting. Gaining a thing, as we said, is by its nature partial, it is limited only to a particular want; but being is complete, it belongs to our wholeness, it springs not from any necessity but from our affinity with the infinite, which is the principle of perfection that we have in our soul.[3]

Union with God cannot be a forced relationship, for God comes as the lover, the guest.[4] "We must be ever ready to receive God," suggests Radhakrishnan, "for it may well happen that when He comes we are not ready, and when we are ready He does not come."[5] The realisation of life is made possible by two unalterable means, namely: love and action. Love, being the essence of God[6] motivates man.[7] Piety of attitude does not lead to perfection, but sympathetic action or service.[8]

The Absolute establishes the pervading unity in all. Being personal in nature, the Absolute gives value in

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1. Sādhanā, p. 149
2. Ibid., p. 152
3. Ibid., pp. 154-5
4. Ibid., p. 41; Gitanjali XLIV, XLVII
5. The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore, pp. 71-2
6. The Religion of Man, p. 98
7. Sādhanā, pp. 106-7
8. Ibid., pp. 120, 122, 125

terms of personality. When man becomes properly related to the Absolute, love and action are expressed for realization.

Views Relating to Reality

Consonant with his emphasis upon unity, Tagore believes that "reality is not based in the substance of things but in the principal[1] of relationship."[2] He distinguishes further: "Truth is the infinite pursued by metaphysics; fact is the infinite pursued by science, while reality is the definition of the infinite which relates truth to the person. Reality is human."[3] Truth is essentially in relationships. The "truth of this world," according to Tagore,

> is not in the masses of substance, not in the number of things, but in their relatedness, which neither can be counted, nor measured, nor abstracted. It is not in the materials which are many, but in the expression which is one. All our knowledge of things is knowing them in their relation to the Universe, in that relation which is truth.[4]

Truth is differentiated from fact in that truth consists "in harmony of facts."[5] Reality, as suggested above,[6] is not abstract in nature, but human, for it is "the expression of personality."[7]

How is reality known? Since it is characterized

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1. Spelling of original; read "principle."
2. The Religion of Man, p.132
3. Loc. cit.
4. Creative Unity, pp. 5-6
5. Ibid., p. 32
6. See p. 174
7. Personality, p. 69

by unity, any approach which divides or analyzes will not lead to a knowledge of reality; hence science is not the method. Scientific investigation is further inadequate for it excludes all personal elements, therefore, does not disclose reality.[1] It is, then, the "immediate perception of sympathy" which gives knowledge of reality.[2] "Reality, in all its manifestations," says Tagore, "reveals itself in the emotional and imaginative background of our mind. We know it, not because we can think of it, but because we directly feel it. And therefore, even if rejected by the logical mind, it is not banished from our consciousness."[3]

Being of the essence of personality, reality is not therefore many. Reality is "one infinite centre to which all the personalities and therefore all the world of reality are related."[4] Knowledge of this reality gives a sense of unity and is realized by direct experience. Thus Tagore's philosophy is a simple mysticism.[5]

Views Relating to the Esthetic

The creative genius that speaks, as does Tagore, in poetry and song, is no stranger to the esthetic. When

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1. Personality, pp. 4, 50-1
2. Ibid., p. 77
3. The Religion of Man, p. 123
4. Personality, p. 99
5. Sybil Baumer, An Introduction to Rabindranath Tagore's Mysticism, p. 12

such a person expresses himself as to the nature of beauty and art, his words are more than passingly significant. However, at once it is evident that he does not speak with the exactness of the scientist. It is Tagore's habit to present the nature of a thing, not by definition and analysis, but by description and synthesis. How does Tagore describe beauty and what is its relation to art?

Descriptions of Beauty

Being essentially the expression of personality, beauty is not static, but vital. In making this distinction, Tagore says that "beauty is not a mere fact; it cannot be accounted for, it cannot be surveyed and mapped. It is an expression . . . . It is infinite in its suggestions, it is extravagant in its words. It is personal, therefore, beyond science."[1] Let it be noted, however, that while beauty is related to personality, it is not therefore personal in the utilitarian sense. Beauty is disinterested and free. Joy is the emotional motive and is at the heart of the realization of beauty. Tagore writes:

> All the language of joy is beauty. It is necessary to note, however, that joy is not pleasure, and beauty not mere prettiness. Joy is the outcome of detachment from self and lives in freedom of spirit. Beauty is that profound expression of reality which satisfies our hearts without any other allurements but its own ultimate value. When in some pure moments of ecstasy we realise this in the world around us, we see the world, not as merely existing, but as deco-

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1. Personality, p. 34

> rated in its forms, sounds, colours and lines; we feel in our hearts that there is One who through all things proclaims: 'I have joy in my creation.'[1]

Beauty is not dependent on something outside itself for value. Material need does not foster beauty, but, on the contrary, crushes it.[2] Being independent of the realm of material necessity, beauty, then, is the creative expression of personality giving joy.

Again, beauty is free in a sense in which truth is not. The law of truth forces itself on one, but one may ignore or be insensitive to beauty. One knows the fact that the morning comes, but may not sense its beauty. Thus, in the "realm of truth we are bound, in the realm of beauty we are free."[3]

Further, beauty is substantial and is of the essence of reality. In discussing "The Poet's Religion," Tagore says:

> Beauty is no phantasy, it has the everlasting meaning of reality. The facts that cause despondence and gloom are mere mist, and when through the mist beauty breaks out in momentary gleams, we realise that Peace is true and not conflict, Love is true and not hatred; and Truth is the One, not the disjointed multitude.[4]

Too often, experience would seem to convince man that the outward show of events and facts is the real thing. But these are the properties of the drama, so to speak, in the

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1. Creative Unity, p. 36
2. Nationalism, p. 150
3. Thought Relics, p. 38
4. Creative Unity, p. 15

unity of which is found beauty and reality.[1] So, when thinking of esthetics of art, beauty does not have an ordinary meaning, but "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty."[2] Beauty, then, is pictured as vital, free, and partakes of the ultimate personal reality.

The Experience of Beauty

From these descriptions it is apparent that Tagore writes principally in terms of the experience of beauty. The primary consideration is awareness. Tagore traces his own intense awareness to an early awakening. His description is significant:

> One day while I stood watching at early dawn the sun sending out its rays from behind the trees, I suddenly felt as if some ancient mist had in a moment lifted from my sight, and the morning light on the face of world revealed an inner radiance of joy. The invisible screen of the commonplace was removed from all things and all men, and their ultimate significance was intensified in my mind; and this is the definition of beauty. That which was memorable in this experience was its human message, the sudden expansion of my consciousness in the super-personal world of man.[3]

The universal aspect of the experience he embodied at once in a poem, "The Awakening of the Waterfall," which tells of the waterfall's bursting into freedom from its ice home at the touch of the sun and finding its reality in "continual union with the sea."[4]

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1. Creative Unity, pp. 13-4
2. The Meaning of Art, Dacca University Bulletin, No. XII, 1926, pp. 4-5
3. The Religion of Man, p. 92
4. Loc. cit.

Two things are to be noted in this experience: clearer perception and expansion of self-consciousness. Experience of the objective world too often goes no further than mere looking and knowing or recognition without seeing.[1] It is commonly recognized that the chair is a place to sit, that the bird sings, that there is a shadow, but seldom is there noticed the form of the chair, the rhythm of the song, or the color of the shadow. Though man is making the universe increasingly his servant, yet for Tagore, "the great fact lies in the delight of the meeting of our eyes with the world of lines, colours, and movements. There is an incessant call from this universe of light, of sound, of touch, to our eyes, ears, to our limbs, and the response to it is a fulfilment which not only belongs to us, but to the great world."[2] This fulfillment through awareness to the universe means intensely, for it means joy and harmony of being. Presenting this same interpretation by contrast,

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1. Tagore tells of his own surprise and awakening when a Chinese artist, by calling his attention to a donkey on the streets of Peking, helped him distinguish between knowing and seeing. He writes: "It was obscured to me by an envelopment of commonplace associations; I was lazily certain that I knew it and therefore I hardly saw it. But my friend, who possessed the artist mind of China, did not treat it with a cheap knowledge but could see it afresh and recognize it as real. When I say real, I mean that it did not remain at the outskirt of his consciousness tied to a narrow definition, but it easily blended in his imagination, produced a vision, a special harmony of lines, colours and life and movement and became intimately his own." The Religion of Man, pp. 134-6
2. Thought Relics, p. 89

Tagore writes:

> Even the giant forces of the world, centripetal and centrifugal, are kept out of our recognition. They are the day-labourers not admitted into the audience-hall of creation. But light and sound come to us in their gay dresses as troubadours singing serenades before the windows of the senses. What is constantly before us, claiming our attention, is not the kitchen, but the feast; not the anatomy of the world, but its countenance. There is the dancing ring of seasons; the elusive play of lights and shadows, of wind and water; the many-coloured wings of erratic life flitting between birth and death. The importance of these does not lie in their existence as mere facts, but in their language of harmony, the mother-tongue of our own soul, through which they are communicated to us.[1]

Again, it is emphasized that this awareness expands self-consciousness. By virtue of this aspect of the experience, there is reality, the essence of which is union with the Other, the infinite. The meaning is not in the objective fact, but in the sense of unity with the Absolute. "We have our primal sympathy for all things that exist," says Tagore, "for when realized they stimulate the consciousness of our own existence. The fact that we exist has its truth in the fact that everything else does exist. The I am in me realizes its own extension, its own infinity whenever it truly realises something else."[2] He presents the idea in dramatic form:

> The world and the personal man are face to face, like friends who question one another and exchange their inner secrets. The world asks the inner man, — "Friend, have you seen me? Do you love me? — not as

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1. Creative Unity, pp. 6-7
2. The Meaning of Art, loc. cit.

> one who provides you with foods and fruits, not as one whose laws you have found out, but as one who is personal, individual?"
>
> The artist's answer is, "Yes, I have seen you, I have loved and known you, — not that I have any need of you, not that I have taken you and used your laws for my own purposes of power. I know the forces that act and drive and lead to power, but it is not that. I see you, where you are what I am."[1]

Although there is this identification, beauty is disinterested.

A dominant element of awareness is rhythm. Tagore's earliest conscious experience of awareness was of this nature. He tells of reading his first primer:

> The morning hour appeared to me like a once-illumined page, grown dusty and faded, discoloured into irrelevant marks, smudges and gaps, wearisome in its moth-eaten meaninglessness. Suddenly I came to a rhymed sentence of combined words, which may be translated thus — "It rains, the leaves tremble." At once I came to a world wherein I recovered my full meaning. My mind touched the creative realm of expression, and at that moment I was no longer a mere student with his mind muffled by spelling lessons, enclosed by classroom. The rhythmic picture of the tremulous leaves beaten by the rain opened before my mind the world which does not merely carry information, but a harmony with my being. The unmeaning fragments lost their individual isolation and my mind revelled in the unity of a vision.[2]

The rhythm of the words[3] and the pictorial suggestion united in giving a visual experience of rhythm which remained in his consciousness "the live-long day."[4] "What is this rhythm?" Tagore asks, and answers:

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1. Personality, p. 22
2. The Religion of Man, pp. 93-4
3. Note the Bengali words: jal pawray; papa nawray; see p. 147.
4. My Reminiscences, pp. 3-4

> It is the movement generated and regulated by harmonious restriction. This is the creative force in the hand of the artist. . . . . The rose appears to me to be still, but because of its nature of composition, it has a lyric of movement within that stillness, which is the same as the dynamic quality of a picture that has a perfect harmony. It produces a music in our consciousness by giving it a swing of motion synchronous with its own. If the picture were to consist of a disharmonious aggregate of colours and lines, it would be deadly still.1

This and other specific elements of the experience of beauty are more definitely related to particular arts, hence will be considered in that relation. Tagore writes almost exclusively about art, but in the realization that art expresses itself by beauty.

Art and the Expression of Beauty

The basic consideration in Tagore's philosophy of art is that the creative urge is born of surplus energies. Energies related to necessity express themselves in construction. Surplus energy creates, and there is art. The animal lives in a realm of necessity and usefulness, but not all man's energies are consumed in self-preservation. In explanation, Tagore writes:

> When a feeling is aroused in our hearts which is far in excess of the amount that can be completely absorbed by the object which has produced it, it comes back to us and makes us conscious of ourselves by its return waves. . . . . This is the reason why, of all creatures, only man knows himself, because his impulse of knowledge comes back to him in its excess. He feels his personality more intensely than other creatures, because his power of feeling is more

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1. The Meaning of Art, Dacca University Bulletin, No. XII, pp. 3-4

> than can be exhausted by his objects. This efflux of the consciousness of his personality requires an outlet of expression.[1]

Thus, "art reveals man's wealth of life, that seeks its freedom in forms of perfection which are an end in themselves."[2] In concrete illustration of the contrast, Radhakrishnan notes that man "speaks with his voice when he has a purpose to gain; but when he has none such, he dances. Man writes with his hand, and works with it when he has an axe to grind, but when he has none such, he paints with it. . . . . In art we do not seek for the fulfilment of our physical or intellectual needs."[3]

However, not just any surplus energies of man give rise to creative expression in art. As Tagore says, "The principal creative forces, which transmute things into our living structure, are emotional forces."[4] Cognitive energies or knowing powers eventuate in constructive expression, but not creative. In objects he makes, man conceals himself; in the creative, he reveals himself.[5]

Creative expression is thus dependent upon the awareness of the self for its materials. The outer world "becomes completely our own when it comes within the range of our emotions."[6] The very nature of this world itself

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1. Personality, pp. 11-2
2. The Meaning of Art, op. cit., p. 1; see also p. 2
3. The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore, p. 125
4. Personality, p. 13
5. Cf. ibid., p. 12
6. Ibid., p. 14

assists in appropriation of it. "It brings to us ideas, vitalised by feelings, ready to be made into the life-stuff of our nature."[1] Hence, the "things which arouse our emotions arouse our own self-feeling. It is like our touch upon the harp-string: if it is too feeble, then we are merely aware of the touch, but if it is strong, then our touch comes back to us in tunes and our consciousness is intensified."[2]

Art, being thus the creation of emotional energies, is personalised. It is not imitation of objective reality, nor is it copying or photography.[3] Art is creation in which the artist interprets experience. He is selective according to his own personal ideas.[4] "By leaving out whatever is non-essential for his own purpose of expression, and intensifying what is significant, he brings out the truth of his creation much more vividly than he would if he copied the actuality which is strictly impartial to whatever exists."[5] Creative expression, then is expression of personality.[6] It is not the personality of the individual man alone that is embodied, for in his awareness, man finds in the outer world the Personality which is akin to him. In his lecture on "The Artist," Tagore says that

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1. Personality, p. 15
2. Loc. cit.
3. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., pp. 134-5
4. The Meaning of Art, op. cit., pp. 6-7
5. Ibid., p. 7
6. The Religion of Man, p. 138

> the mysterious fact about it is that though the individuals are separately seeking their expression, their success is never individualistic in character. Men must find and feel and represent in all their creative works Man the Eternal, the creator. Their civilization is a continual discovery of the transcendental humanity. In whatever it fails it shows the failure of the artist, which is the failure in expression; and that civilization perishes in which the individual thwarts the revelation of the universal.[1]

Out of the background of Indian art, Tagore finds a further characteristic of art to be simplicity. It does not seek to represent truth by imitation, but by symbol. It suggests and carries a sense of mystery.[2] Simplicity is adequate for interpretation of "spiritual ecstasy" and "meditative calm." However, Tagore does not anathematize other art because it is not like Indian patterns. Quite the contrary, he denounces binding standards and encourages the exploration of the new though it is always to be tested by the basic purpose of art.[3]

In writing of art, it is natural that Tagore refers most frequently to those forms in which he is master. Poetry is one of the most expressive of the arts, as Tagore creates it. He does not give much recognition to the value of the intellectual content of the words. Their value in art is rather in the rhythm. In analyzing his own ecstasy in writing poetry, he says:

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1. The Religion of Man, p. 133
2. Sastri, Rabindranath Tagore: Poet, Patriot, Philosopher, pp. 77-8, 104
3. The Meaning of Art, op. cit., pp. 11-2

> Words are barren, dismal and uninspiring by themselves, but when they are bound together by some bond of rhythm they attain their significance as a reality which can be described as creative. We need not ask the question what they mean. They have something which appeals to our recognition. They have a reality; they have a value--a reality which is ultimate, and they have the quality of permanence. In their rhythmic interrelation the words come to a completeness and wholeness so that we cannot help recognizing them and acknowledging them as part of our own selves.[1]

He feels justified in his distinction since the charm is lost when words are put in prose form.[2]

Music is the "most abstract of all the arts."[3] Like mathematics, it works through the harmony of unity. Rhythm in music is not burdened with facts and thought. It is, therefore, more direct and intense.[4] "In music the feeling extracted in sound becomes itself an independent object. It assumes a tune-form which is definite but a meaning which is indefinable and yet gripping our mind with the sense of absolute truth."[5]

Painting and the dance have a place along with the above arts. Through their particular medium, they give expression to reality as the others. The plastic arts are included, though Tagore has little to say of them specifically.

Against the background of this understanding of

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1. Dr. Rabindranath Tagore on His Drawings, in Indian Art and Letters, Vol. IV, No. 1, pp. 70-1
2. Loc. cit.
3. The Meaning of Art, Dacca University Bulletin, No. XII, p. 7
4. Ibid., pp. 7-8
5. Ibid., p. 8

the nature of the experience of beauty, both receptive and creative, there is meaning to Tagore's answer to the question, "What is Art?" His reply is: "It is the response of man's creative soul to the call of the Real."[1] In an earlier lecture on this problem, Tagore defers a definition but gives the reason for art's existence as an "impulse of expression, which is the impulse of our being itself."[2] Like the jasmine, the fact of art is sufficient explanation for its being.[3]

When man responds in creative form, there is art. The motivation, however, is of pure joy, apart from "immediate self-interest."[4] While making this claim, Tagore recognized that art does sometimes penetrate into the realm of the useful. He says:

> It has to be conceded, that man cannot help revealing his personality, also, in the world of use. But there self-expression is not his primary object. In everyday life, when we are mostly moved by our habits, we are economical in our expression; for then our soul-consciousness is at its low level,—it has just volume enough to glide on in accustomed grooves. But when our heart is fully awakened in love, or in other great emotions, our personality is in its flood-tide. Then it feels the longing to express itself for the very sake of expression. Then comes Art, and we forget the claims of necessity, the thrift of usefulness,—the spires of our temples try to kiss the stars and the notes of our music to fathom the depth of the ineffable.[5]

So close do the lines of utility and self-expression come at

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1. The Religion of Man, p. 132
2. Personality, p. 7
3. Dr. Rabindranath Tagore on His Drawings, op. cit., p.72
4. Creative Unity, p. 39
5. Personality, pp. 16-7

times that there is the ornamental and decorative. In the interests of citizenship, architecture is affected; ceremonials are made elaborate.

Still, the major ministry of art is not to the practical. It is to the universal which comes to man when he fully realizes himself. The energies thus awakened break forth in creative life to express the universal. "This building of man's true world, — the living world of truth and beauty, — is the function of Art."[1] Art, or creation, rises to this height from the longing to create in harmony with the Supreme Person who is revealed. It is the vocation of the artist "to take a creative part in the festival of life, the festival that is to give expression to the infinite in man."[2] Tagore's conclusion is that art "is great because I have the power to make it worthy of its relationship with me; it is great because by its help I can offer my own hospitality to the God of all the world."[3] Here is the artist's <u>credo</u>:

> It is for the artist to proclaim his faith in the everlasting YES, — to say: I believe that there is an ideal hovering over and permeating the earth, an ideal of that Paradise which is not the mere outcome of fancy, but the ultimate reality in which all things dwell and move. I believe that this vision of Paradise is to be seen in the sunlight and the green of the earth, in the beauty of the human face and the wealth of human love, in objects that are seemingly insignificant and unprepossessing. Everywhere in this earth the spirit of Paradise is awake

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1. <u>Personality</u>, p. 31
2. The Meaning of Art, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 15
3. <u>Loc. cit.</u>

> and sending forth its voice. It reaches our inner ear without our knowing it. It tunes our harp of life which sends our aspiration in music beyond the finite, not only in prayers and hopes, but also in temples which are flames of fire in stone, in pictures which are dreams made everlasting, in the dance which is ecstatic meditation in the still centre of movement.[1]

Summary

The various elements of Tagore's philosophy are bound together by certain pervasive conceptions, namely: personality, unity, creativity, and joy. The universe, as the creation of the Supreme Person, reveals that Personality as the basis for meaning and unity in all. Man, partaking of the same dual nature of the finite and infinite, becomes aware of the meaning of the universe to his personality. Out of the buoyant experience of harmony, man creates. The absolute which gives meaning and in the realization of which all has meaning is "a self-conscious personality." God transcends his creation, but he is also immanent and manifested in his creation. Man most fully realizes himself when he experiences union with the Supreme Personality. Reality, then, is in essence relatedness, experienced not in the distinctly intellectual, but in the emotional and imaginative realm. All these ideas come to a focus in the esthetic. Beauty is experienced through intense awareness of

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1. The Meaning of Art, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 14-5

the universe. Sensing the rhythm and harmony in all, the self is expanded in its consciousness and surplus emotional energies set free seek expression. Art is thus creative, simple, and personal. Whatever its form, its highest meaning is in its union with the Supreme Person at the heart of all creation.

The Educational Views of Tagore

Tagore the poet was not content with pure idealism and poetic dreams. Though his sensitive soul shrank from the hum-drum duties and harsh situations of public life, he realized that truth must be put into action else it may die alone. Out of sheer devotion to the ideals which gripped his soul with inescapable impulsion for their realization, Tagore began to write his poetry in human life through the medium of his school.

Major Educational Influences

Tagore's passion for the preservation of all that is fine in Indian culture finds expression in his educational views and policies. In old India the center of education was the forest home (tapovana). Pupils gathered around a great teacher or guru in the freedom and intimacy of a home atmosphere. Here the teacher and pupils shared together the whole gamut of life's responsibilities and privileges, intellectual, economic, and spiritual. In this sense,

> the school was there where was the life itself. There the students were brought up, not in the academic atmosphere of scholarship and learning, or in the maimed life of monastic seclusion, but in the atmosphere of living aspiration. They took the cattle to pasture, collected firewood, gathered fruit, cultivated kindness to all creatures, and grew in their spirit with their own teachers' spiritual growth.[1]

From this background[2] there came to Tagore the "ideal of education through sharing a life of high aspiration with one's master."[3]

In the light of this ideal it is natural that Tagore should oppose the general adoption of Western educational systems and their attached culture. He finds that "European education has become for India mere school lessons and no culture; a box of matches, good for the small uses of illumination, but not the light of the morning, in which the use and beauty, and all the subtle mysteries of life are blended in one."[4] Being sensitive to the unique contribution of Indian culture, Tagore objects to "the artificial arrangement by which foreign education tends to occupy all the space of our national mind, and thus kills, or hampers, the great opportunity for the creation of a new thought-power by a new combination of truths."[5] This, he says, makes him

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1. Personality, p. 128
2. Kshitimohan Sen, A Picture of Indigenous Education, in The New Education Fellowship Bulletin, No. 1, 1937, pp.1-8
3. Personality, p. 129
4. Creative Unity, p. 192
5. Ibid., pp. 193-4

> urge that all the elements in our own culture have to be strengthened, not to resist the Western culture, but truly to accept and assimilate it; to use it for our sustenance, not as our burden; to get mastery over this culture, and not to live on its outskirts as the hewers of texts and drawers of book-learning.[1]

The educational system has been organized for utilitarian purposes. The beauty of the indigenous culture has been thrust aside, and Tagore says that

> we are made to tread the mill of passing examinations, not for learning anything, but for notifying that we are qualified for employment under organizations conducted in English. Our educated community is not a cultured community, but a community of qualified candidates.[2]

One of the major educational problems is the burden of learning English.[3] Tagore rejoices that he had only vernacular schools until his twelfth year, then he played truant. A major purpose of education is to teach one to express himself through the language medium, and none is more effective than the mother tongue. Therefore, schools should be conducted in the vernacular, the study of English to be introduced where needed and used only in advanced study.

The unpleasant experiences of Tagore's own school days left a vivid impression. When accounting for the origin of his own school, he says it was not due to "any

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1. Creative Unity, p. 194
2. Ibid., p. 180
3. Making Education Our Own, in The New Education Fellowship Bulletin, No. 1, pp. 15-23

new theory of education, but the memory of my school-days."[1] The schools he attended were not unusually severe, nor was he a difficult pupil, but his love of freedom and his alertness rebelled against stereotyped procedure. His deep love for children would not permit him to pass not heeding their need for natural growth in education.[2]

The most direct approach to discover Tagore's contribution to esthetic education is an investigation of his experimental school. In order to get the full meaning of the relationships, a brief survey of the whole system is presented. Then, more particular analysis of the distinctly esthetic aspects is made.

Santiniketan—The Bolpur School

Not every idealist and reformer is able to see dreams grow into reality so fully as has Tagore in his experimental school at Bolpur—Santiniketan. Founded in 1901, its growth has been vital rather than structural. For these nearly four decades, the founder has been a living inspiration to the many pupils, as poet, teacher, and friend.

The History of Santiniketan

On the open moorland of Bengal, about a hundred miles from Calcutta and near the village of Bolpur, Maharshi

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1. Personality, p. 112
2. Ibid., p. 115

Devendranath Tagore secured a plot of ground. He enriched its soil, enhanced its beauty, built a house and temple, then dedicated the beautiful Ashram (Forest Home) to the public under a trust deed, where anyone may come "to meditate on God free from all antagonism of creed and sect,"[1] the only restrictions being "speaking ill of any religious sect, obscene amusements and flesh foods."[2] This place thus set apart was called by the Maharshi Santiniketan, The Abode of Peace. Today, under the Chhatim trees where the Maharshi first sat in meditation, a marble seat waits with the text from his prayer in Bengali,

He is the repose of my life,
The joy of my heart,
The peace of my spirit.[3]

—tini amar praner aram; maner ananda; atmar santi—

For nearly thirty years there was little use of the Ashram. Moved by the burden of need for a new educational opportunity for the boys of Bengal, Rabindranath Tagore received the permission of his father to use Santiniketan as the place for founding a school (Vidyalaya). In December, 1901, the boarding school was started with two teachers under his supervision and five boys. For a decade there was slow growth during which time Tagore gave his strength to the Swadeshi movement. In 1911, a festival at

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 8, p. 2
2. Loc. cit.
3. Ibid., p. 1

Santiniketan celebrating Tagore's fiftieth year brought the school to the attention of the outer world. During his trip to England and Europe in 1913, the conviction that education should combine the values of various cultures grew on Tagore and was expressed at Santiniketan in the coming of two new teachers, C. F. Andrews and W. W. Pearson.

Another direction of expansion at this same time came in the purchase of property at Surul. This location was given over to rural reconstruction and is now known as Sriniketan. Through this center education was to be made complete by contact with the problems of the economic life of the people.

The educational scheme of Santiniketan has undergone the changes of normal growth. As the boys finished the elementary work, there was need for advanced study. Beginning in 1917, further courses were gradually added so as to make three distinct departments: the Patha-bhavana or school, Siksha-bhavana or college, and Vidya-bhavana or research work. In 1919 the Kala-bhavana or School of Art and Music was started. It was that same year that a meeting of students and friends of Santiniketan shared the dream of Tagore to create an institution to be a center for all Eastern cultures. The name Visva-bharati was given and the motto chosen was, "Where the whole world forms its one single nest": Yatra visvam bhavaty ekanidam.[1] With an

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 8, p. 14

invitation for the participation of all cultures of the East and West in this institution, Visva-bharati was formally founded in 1922. Eminent leaders from various countries have been invited in as professors[1] in an attempt to realise its ideal of "India's obligation to offer to others the hospitality of her best culture and India's right to accept from others their best."[2]

The Aims of Education

Those who write about Santiniketan generally give a direct picture of the life of the school and not a logical treatise. The repetition of this approach is evidence of the injustice felt in an analytical treatment, even as a tree is not really known by a technical study of its dismembered parts. With an understanding of the distinct limitation of this approach, there is sufficient safeguard in making this study of the aims, curriculum, and method of Santiniketan.

The ideal of education which Tagore sought to make possible in Santiniketan is expressed frequently in different relationships. Out of the depth of his own experience and his conviction of India's unique contributions, Tagore was moved by the determination to give his strength

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1. Santiniketan and the Educational Institutions, Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 12, p. 24
2. Tagore, Sangit-Bhavana, p. 2

VISVA-BHARATI

॥ यत्र विश्वं भवत्येकनीडम् ॥

" yatra visvam bhavaty eka-nidam "
(Where the whole world finds its shelter)

Visva-bharati represents India where she has her wealth of mind which is for all. Visva-bharati acknowledges India's obligation to offer to others the hospitality of her best culture and India's right to accept from others their best.

Rabindranath Tagore

> to bring to the surface, for our daily use and purification the stream of ideals that originated in the summit of our past, flowing underground in the depth of India's soil,—the ideals of simplicity of life, clarity of spiritual vision, purity of heart, harmony with the universe, and consciousness of the infinite personality in all creation.[1]

This description may seem specialized and applicable alone to Indian education, but further analysis reveals a penetration of value which has universal significance.

Tagore has little sympathy with education which is concerned primarily with training the mind, acquiring facts, or even knowledge. "The great aim of Education," he says, "is not merely to collect facts, but to know man and to make oneself known to man. It is the duty of every human being to master, at least to some extent, not only the language of intellect, but also that personality which is the language of Art."[2] It is a severe indictment against current educational practice that its emphasis only partially fulfills this ideal, and in this separation defeats itself. In analyzing the problem, Tagore says:

> We may become powerful by knowledge, but we attain fulness by sympathy. The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence. But we find that this education of sympathy is not only systematically ignored in schools, but it is severely repressed. From our very childhood habits are formed and knowledge is imparted in such a manner that our life is weaned away from nature and our mind and the world are set in opposition from the beginning of our days. Thus the greatest of educations for which we

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1. W. W. Pearson, Shantiniketan: The Bolpur School of Rabindranath Tagore, p. 20
2. Creative Unity, pp. 196-7

> came prepared is neglected, and we are made to lose our world to find a bagful of information instead. We rob the child of his earth to teach him geography, of language to teach him grammar. His hunger is for the Epic, but he is supplied with chronicles of facts and dates. He is born in the human world, but is banished into the world of living gramophones, to expiate for the original sin of being born in ignorance.[1]

There is, then, a unity in life which must be recognized in education. It must keep the student in touch with the "life-current of the people"[2] and the "innermost truth" of the world thus expressed.[3] In a syllabus to students, the aim expressed is that they "should in the fullest sense be true to their humanity; and in their thoughts, feelings and behaviour express this truth."[4] This end is approached by three distinct means: aid in "perfecting their sense-training,"[5] the use of "their faculties of observation in the Ashram and in the villages round about" with records kept,[6] and well-defined and various responsibilities on the part of each student.[7] The student is thus brought "to be in perfect tune in the symphony of response between life and world, to find the balance of their harmony which is wisdom."[8] Tagore recognizes that this high ideal of education has not been fully realized, but it has been

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1. Personality, p. 116
2. Creative Unity, p. 193
3. Personality, p. 126
4. Visva-Bharati Bulletin No. 17, p. 1
5. Loc. cit.
6. Ibid., p. ii
7. Ibid., p. iii
8. The Religion of Man, p. 176

introduced effectively in Santiniketan.[1]

The Curriculum of Education

A conception of education which embraces the whole of life and its harmony in all relationships requires a more free understanding of curriculum. An analysis of the curriculum according to major emphases breaks the sense of unity and dulls awareness of the vitality of the whole experience. To Tagore, the curriculum is not the arrangement of courses of study alone, but the whole plan of activity. The various classes and activities do not function

> as isolated departments interfering with one another but as aspects of the one great ideal of life and education gradually discovered and fostered under the direct guidance of the Poet,—life lived in community and human fellowship, in constant awareness of the great living presence of Nature as the common parent of all living and non-living things, and education that lays as much emphasis on the training of the senses and emotions as on the development of the intellect and whose values are not based on an imitation of foreign fashions but are rooted in the native soil of the people's cultural traditions and their authentic expression.[2]

However, for this immediate study we must see the whole in terms of its parts.

Courses of Study

From the simple beginning in 1901 with a group of five boys, Santiniketan has grown to embrace the Visva-bharati ideal in a coeducational institution providing the

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1. The Religion of Man, p. 177
2. Sangit-Bhavana, p. 3

whole range of education. The courses of study are organized dominantly to stimulate and bring to maturity the finest degree of Indian culture. Because of pressure from standard educational systems which control professional interests of educated youth, provisions are made in the curriculum to meet these demands. Hence, Santiniketan presents a rich opportunity for study.

Patha-bhavana—The School. The elementary unit of study is the Patha-bhavana. With six years as the minimum age, provision is made for separate classes of both boys and girls. Girls may enter at any age, but boys over twelve years are not permitted to enroll.

The courses of study in the Patha-bhavana are carefully organized in eight groups. By this organization of study, it is the purpose "to present knowledge in a concrete and connected shape" and at the same time "to provide for the fullest possible scope to the creative urges of the young mind."[1]

The syllabus[2] of Visva-bharati gives in detail the subjects, standards, and books for each group in the Patha-bhavana. In each group, there is graded study in Bengali, English, and Arithmetic or Mathematics. History, Geography, and Sanskrit are added in the more advanced courses; Hygiene, Mechanics, and Everyday Science are given in the two highest

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 4, p. 9
2. Ibid., No. 17

groups. In all these groups of study, where the student's vernacular is other than Bengali, provision is made for study in Hindi and Urdu with possibility for special arrangement in Tamil, Assamese, and Gujerati.[1]

Moreover, there is particular interest in courses which persist with variation through all the groups of study pertaining to sense training, art, music, and crafts. Though these courses would be considered generally as electives, such is not the case at Santiniketan. The curriculum is so constructed that

> Every student is given the opportunity of self-expression in art-activities by receiving training in drawing and music.
>
> Great stress is also laid on the importance of manual training. Every student is required to spend a substantial part of the school hours in learning the use of simple house-hold tools, and in getting acquainted with the elementary processes of Gardening and House and Road repair. Organised training in Carpentry and Weaving is also provided, and pupils showing special aptitudes are given the opportunity of learning a handi-craft which finds its motive in the expression of some artistic need (book-binding, wood-carving, lacquer work, etc.).[2]

Siksha-bhavana—The College. The Siksha-bhavana provides for two courses of study which run parallel—the Visva-bharati course and the Calcutta University course. There are three types of Visva-bharati courses, yet all "lay special stress on the unity of the different aspects of cul-

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 4, p. 10
2. Ibid., No. 12, p. 13

ture and art. They aim at developing a harmonious mind in the individual."[1] An attempt is made to carry on the work begun in the Patha-bhavana with opportunity for specialization.

Likewise, there are three plans in the Calcutta University course, giving ample opportunity for meeting individual aptitude. The girls make up informal classes in activities of special home-making interest.[2] Other departments of Visva-bharati offer a variety of electives. The classes are kept small and are conducted in English.

The types of courses may be further indicated by noting the purpose of the Siksha-bhavana. It aims to be both practical and academic in that it "prepares students for more advanced literary and academic studies, and also provides a liberal education for those who will begin to earn their livelihood in the practice of arts and crafts, industry, agriculture or commerce.[3] The college level study involves lectures and more work in the library, and in the seminary. The emphasis in the courses is upon cultural considerations and institutions and movements relating to social problems and international relations. Courses in Sriniketan provide a practical aspect to the study. By these various means, the students are helped "in thought,

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 4, p. 16
2. Ibid., p. 19
3. Ibid., No. 12, p. 14

emotion and action," to "attain truth and achieve the fullest development in all the various manifestations of the human spirit."[1]

Vidya-bhavana—The School of Research. Vidya-bhavana began as a department of higher studies in 1918, and, with students from a number of foreign countries, has established an international reputation.[2] It offers to advanced scholars the opportunity for research in Indian literature, thought, and culture. Language study, as well as critical and philosophical training, are given to facilitate the student's work. Those doing original work, preparing theses, or following cultural lines are all encouraged. Eleven languages are taught, and facilities are available for research in Oriental literatures, philosophy, Buddhism, and Indian mysticism.[3] Because the work is so definitely individual, there are no regular courses.

Closely associated with this department is the Cheena-bhavana, the school of Sino-Indian studies. This research has been made possible recently.

Kala-bhavana—The School of Art. The Kala-bhavana makes a special contribution to Santiniketan, not as an isolated school, but by its fusion with other courses. This

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 12, p. 15
2. Ibid., p. 22
3. Ibid., No. 4, p. 25

department came into existence in 1922,[1] under the leadership of Abanindranath Tagore. He has had the able help of Nandalal Bose, as well as other experts from India and abroad. Rabindranath Tagore set aside funds to provide adequately for the housing in Library, Museum, Gallery, and work rooms as well as investment for running expenses.

The course of study of the Kala-bhavana is not restricted to formal art, but includes all art as related to culture. The full course covers a five-year period. In the first four years attention is given to free-hand drawing, nature study, decorative drawing, copying designing, modelling, and studying traditional paintings. The last year makes an additional requirement of two new subjects from among these: fresco painting, wood engraving, Japanese coloured wood block, architectural drawing, lithography, modelling, and needle work. All girls are required to take needle work. Through association with Sriniketan, some village arts are taught.

The courses are conducted according to the studio plan which brings the teacher and student into a relationship of freedom. Many opportunities are made for direct contact with nature as an indispensable part of the course. Thus, through the years, Santiniketan has become one of the important centers of art education in India.

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1. An earlier bulletin states that Kala-bhavana started with two or three pupils in 1919; see Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 12, p. 16.

Sangit-bhavana—The School of Music and Dancing. With Tagore a prolific composer of Bengali song, it is to be expected that Santiniketan should be known for its school of music. Sangit-bhavana provides for study in the three fields of Indian musical expression, vocal, instrumental, and in dancing. In addition to the course work, the music festivals and seasonal dances become a vital part of the work.

For the Gita or vocal music, there is a three-year course in both Bengali and classical Hindustani music. Tagore's songs are used in the first study, beginning with the more simple ones. The course in Hindustani music uses a number of Ragas and Tals. Attention is given to sight singing, identification, correct intonation, and theory.

In the Vadya study, that is, instrumental, the Israj and the Sitar are used. The course arranged for three years proceeds much on the plan as in vocal study.

The study of dancing, Nritya, includes in a four-year course the representative Indian dance of South India, of North India, and the Manipuri dance, as well as folk dances. The emphasis is to use the dance as a means of expression, hence the courses are creative. Thus the dance has been relieved of its professionalism and become a part of education in the training of pupils.[1] This study contributes richly to the festival occasions.

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1. Sangit-bhavana, p. 9

Sriniketan--Institute of Rural Reconstruction and Handicrafts. Strictly, Sriniketan would not be considered a course of study. However, as really as does any other department, it offers opportunity for educational activity which is distinctive. The students enter into the life problems of this Indian community and make it a process of creative study.

Summary. The rich courses of study to be found at Santiniketan are not additions to a school department, but are vital developments of the ideal embodied. Study is considered from the standpoint of the whole, and not of one course in relation to another. All are open for participation by the student, in fact special consideration is given so that the student "does not neglect any of the major human faculties, nor over-develops one at the expense of any other."[1]

Meditation

One of the strongest impressions to be carried from Santiniketan is that of the time of meditation.[2] At the sound of a bell in the early morning and early evening, the students take their piece of carpet and go out into the open air where they sit for meditation. Without coercion or direction for worship, they keep this time, each one accord-

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1. Sangit-bhavana, p. 14
2. Pearson, Shantiniketan: The Bolpur School of Rabindranath Tagore, p. 32

ing to his own thought until all chant in Sanskrit the closing prayer:

> Thou art our Father. Make us conscious of this truth that thou art our Father. Let our salutation to thee be true. Save us from all hurts. Drive away all the sins from our hearts, and send to us all that is good. Thou art the source of all happiness, and thou art the source of our welfare. Thou thyself art blessedness.
>
> Om-Shanti, Shanti, Shanti-Om.[1]

From this quarter hour of quietness, they return to the next activities. The importance of this period in the curriculum is evident when Tagore says:

> I insist on this period of meditation, not, however, expecting the boys to be hypocrites and to make believe they are meditating. But I do insist that they remain quiet, that they exert the power of self-control, even though instead of contemplating on God, they may be watching the squirrels running up the trees.[2]

Each one is free to direct his own contemplation.

This appointed meditation is not an isolated experience for abnormal boys, but is "a mere incident in an atmosphere of contemplation."[3] Thus a habit of contemplation is built day by day and is reënforced once or twice a week by a service in the temple which is short and simple, consisting of prayers and an address by Tagore[4] or one of the teachers.[5] Thus the growing child keeps an awareness of the spiritual world, and there is not the necessity of awak-

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1. Fleming, Schools with a Message in India, p. 176. Shanti means peace.
2. Personality, pp. 145-6
3. Fleming, op. cit., p. 175
4. Pearson, op. cit., pp. 73ff.
5. Ibid., pp. 33, 72

ening it through formal instruction later.[1] However, religion is not confined to this time alone, for religion enters into living to build the desired harmony of life.[2]

Extra-course Activities

To make possible "an education which would not be divorced from life,"[3] there must be provision for much more than formal study. Such provision is rich at Santiniketan. The part of the curriculum commonly called "extra-curricular activities" is pursued with earnestness equal to that given to regular course work. The schools of art and music afford ample opportunity for stimulation in artistic lines. The location of Santiniketan is nature's invitation for excursions and meditation. The freedom of the plan provides an opening for student organizations. So life is touched in many of its aspects.

Physical Culture. With all the emphasis on the artistic and the religious, the physical is not neglected. Santiniketan participated in the inter-school sports in the district, and has made outstanding records.[4] In the evening, both Indian and foreign games are played. There is provision for swimming, and organization for scouting.[5] This scope of activity makes possible all-round physical

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1. Personality, p. 127
2. Ibid., p. 135
3. Visva-Bharati Bulletin No. 4, p. 1
4. Pearson; op. cit., p. 57
5. Visva-Bharati Bulletin No. 4, p. 11

culture according to the needs of individual development.

Creative Activities. Spontaneous creativity is the rule rather than the exception in the stimulating atmosphere of Santiniketan. Following the evening games is an entertainment hour given over to stories, reading, recitation, and debates by the students. Informal groups learn Tagore's songs; festivals, fairs, and exhibitions are filled with their creative endeavor. The students find special ability and joy in presenting Tagore's plays as well as some of their own.[1] Still another avenue of creativity is in the three school magazines which are prepared monthly and illustrated by three sections of the school.[2] their anniversary calls forth elaborate preparation and keen interest. Tagore himself often acts as a helpful critic at such events.

Citizenship. Sensitiveness to human need and the cultivation of the spirit of self-help suggest another type of activity which is a vital part of the student life. The students learn self-reliance by caring for as many of their own personal needs as possible. Upon occasion, groups take turns in managing larger tasks demanded by their school life. With the older students, the type of service widens

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1. Pearson, Shantiniketan: The Bolpur School of Rabindranath Tagore, pp. 61-3
2. Personality, p. 144; Pearson, op. cit., pp. 47-8

to the social group and community. The nursing in the Hospital is done by the boys[1]; a large variety of experiences is given through coöperation in the life of neighboring villages. Insofar as students may, they enter into "every phase of adult life in embryo form."[2]

Summary

The closely unified curriculum at Santiniketan provides for the whole gamut of life's experience and of formal education. In its various schools it offers study from the elementary grade through the most advanced graduate research. In all there is freedom for interrelation of courses, for students are encouraged in a broad development. In addition to the formal courses, their education is enriched by daily meditation, physical activities, opportunities for creative expression, and development in citizenship.

The Methods of Education

As carefully as the gardener protects the tender plants and watches the first fruit, so has Tagore been vigilant to safeguard the growth of his educational idea from destructive influences. Education that is life must be kept vital, free from the formalism of the workshop or absolutism of the machine.[3] During the nearly forty years of the

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1. Pearson, op. cit., p. 64
2. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 9, p. 33; see pp. 30-38
3. The New Education Fellowship Bulletin, No. 1, p. 14

growth of this ideal, there has emerged a mature approach to the building of life processes. His education, therefore, follows three major stages of development. He characterises the first stage as one in which "the body is growing, the mind receptive, the spiritual faculty dormant."[1] The demands in method made by this stage are provision for physical needs, mental stimulation and expression, and spiritual training and development. "The second stage," says Tagore, "is marked by an all-round activity which is self-educative." The final stage he describes as "the quietude of realisation where the retreat of solitude becomes as important as the field of work."[2] What, then, are the distinctive features of method which order the life and study of Santiniketan?

Atmosphere

One of the basic principles of Tagore's method is education through the sub-conscious mind.[3] He, therefore, places primary emphasis upon the surrounding atmosphere, which "is a great deal more important than rules and methods, building appliances, class teachings and text books."[4] From it is derived inspiration and stimulation. Hence, Ta-

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 4, p. 2
2. Ibid., p. 3
3. Pearson, op. cit., p. 62; Personality, p. 139
4. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 9, p. 18

gore says, "I tried to create an atmosphere in my institution, giving it the principal place in our programme of teaching. For atmosphere there must be for developing the sensitiveness of soul, for affording mind its true freedom of sympathy."[1]

The atmosphere of Santiniketan is not a mere nebulous theory which exists as an obsession in the mind of its leaders. It is a reality; visitors testify of its uniqueness and its permeation of every activity. This atmosphere is a reality because it has been sought and developed consciously. It is a method operating through various channels.[2]

One very striking element of the atmosphere is the simplicity which controls. The buildings are plain, answering the requirement of need primarily, so that it is asked why they are not planned to serve an artistic value. Though the exteriors are simple, at suitable places the interiors have been decorated with murals by the students of the Kala-bhavana. Lest he be misunderstood, Tagore explains:

> There are men who think that by the simplicity of living, introduced in my school, I preach the idealization of poverty which prevailed in the mediaeval age. . . . . Poverty brings us into complete touch with life and the world, for living richly is living mostly by proxy, and thus living in a world of lesser reality. This may be good for

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 9, p. 18
2. Personality, p. 133

> one's pleasure and pride, but not for one's education. Wealth is a golden cage in which the children of the rich are bred into artificial deadening of their powers. Therefore in my school, much to the disgust of the people of expensive habits, I had to provide for this great teacher,—this bareness of furniture and materials,—not because it is poverty, but because it leads to personal experience of the world.[1]

Santiniketan means simplicity "in life, in clothes, in equipment."[2] Thus child life is not smothered and thwarted in its growth nor nurtured in the false notion that accumulation is a major virtue in education.

Other elements which create this atmosphere will be considered in some detail following, but note is here made of a few.[3] The location of Santiniketan, with its open stretches to the horizon away from the jostle and tension of the city, is as an ever-present halo of peace. The presence of Tagore—directly in his participation in occasional teaching, in plays and informal relations, and indirectly in his songs, poems, and ideals—gives to the atmosphere the power of personality.[4] The schools of music, art, and crafts lend the creative touch. Contact with scholars, visiting professors, and distinguished guests enriches the life of the school. The library and reading room with their special collections, as well as the close connection with the work in rural reconstruction at Surul, add

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1. Personality, pp. 121-2
2. Fleming, Schools with a Message in India, p. 173
3. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 4, pp. 3-4
4. Personality, p. 143

their own uniqueness. Thus the mere fact of being at Santiniketan is educative in a very real and deep sense, because of the atmosphere.

Freedom

The whole philosophy of Tagore calls for freedom in educational method, for it is nature's method. Freedom, not liberty, is indispensable for growth in realizing the goal of education. Tagore writes in unwavering conviction;

> I for my part believe in the principle of life, in the soul of man, more than in methods. I believe that the object of education is the freedom of mind which can only be achieved through the path of freedom--though freedom has its risk and responsibility as life itself has. I know it for certain, though most people seem to have forgotten it, that children are living beings--more living than grown-up people, who have built their shells of habit around them. Therefore it is absolutely necessary for their mental health and development that they should not have mere schools for their lessons, but a world whose guiding spirit is personal love.[1]

Expectation of growth presupposes freedom to express the imagination[2] and "to develop their own characters in the way which is natural to them."[3]

The application of this principle to routine problems of a large group in boarding school is a real achievement. Tagore was as aware of the dangers as he was of the values. He states:

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1. Personality, p. 147
2. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 9, p. 35
3. Pearson, Shantiniketan: The Bolpur School of Rabindranath Tagore, p. 45

> If a child is to have freedom for growth it must have freedom to regulate its own life, freedom from interference and supervision; but such sheer anarchy may lead to a licence of growth which may endanger the whole structure. Of all problems, then, this one of finding the minimum of discipline that is necessary for the preservation of the maximum of liberty is the most difficult. To encourage the children to set their own bounds and to reason out their own discipline needs a real faith in their capacity and a real courage, —the courage to stand by and watch mistakes being made without constantly interfering to set everything right.[1]

The children coöperate in carrying out the necessary work for their physical well-being and comfort, thus learning the responsibility of freedom and the place of discipline. "Children have sufficient common sense," says Tagore, "to recognize the need for such discipline and can make their own rules prescribing penalties for breaches of it."[2] Work and study themselves pursued in the right spirit dictate an inner discipline which is conducive to growth and is of the essence of freedom.

In the school definite behavior problems are cared for through courts set up by the students themselves. They express no complaint of decision for discipline.[3] They have their own committees and hold meetings to discuss problems of the school. Undergirding this procedure is the conviction that trust begets trust,[4] "a principle that has been actually and consistently followed in the matter of creat-

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 9, pp. 35-6
2. Ibid., p. 36
3. Pearson, op. cit., pp. 45-6; Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 4, p. 7
4. Pearson, op. cit., p. 56

ing and maintaining order ever since the year of its foundation."[1]

Freedom is basic in class relationships as well. Supervision during examinations is not expected. The student may choose to write his answers while sitting in a tree.[2] Sometimes class proceeds while the group walks to the river or a neighboring village.[3] Or again, study procedure may be interrupted in the manner Pearson relates:

> I remember in the middle of one class I was suddenly interrupted in my teaching by one of the boys calling my attention to the song of a bird in the branches overhead. We stopped the teaching and listened till the bird had finished. It was spring time and the boy who had called my attention to the song said to me, 'I don't know why, but somehow I can't explain what I feel when I hear that bird singing.' I could not enlighten him, but I am quite sure that my class learnt more from that bird than it has ever done from my teaching, and something that they would never forget in life. For myself my ears were opened and for several days I was conscious of the songs of the birds as I had never been before.[4]

Freedom permits the child to know the world in which he lives before the conventions of adult life restrict his behavior and consequently his direction of growth.[5]

Freedom, thus, is indispensable, for "education implies growth and therefore life, and school-time should be a phase of life where the child begins to achieve freedom

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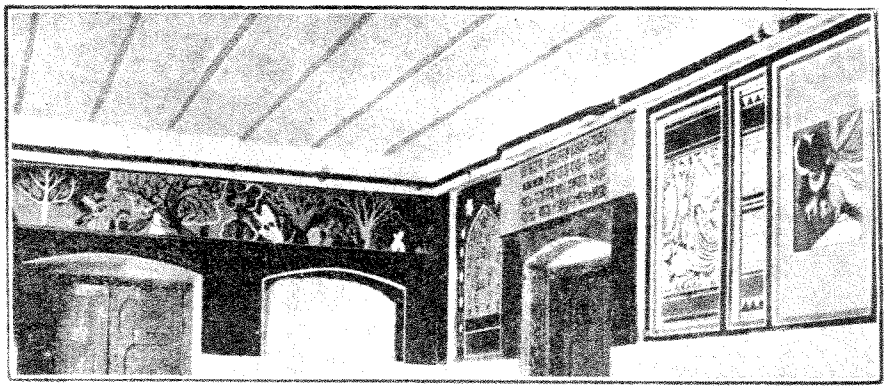
1. Questionnaire of International Centre of Progressive Schools—Holland, p. 2
2. Pearson, op. cit., p. 56
3. Ibid., p. 59
4. Ibid., p. 58
5. Cf. Personality, pp. 117-21

A
College
Class

Styles
of
Fresco-painting



A
Music
Class

through experience. By taking for granted that a child can be taught freedom we deny it life."[1]

Creativity

A system of vital education with the ideal of freedom in its method should eventuate in freedom in the individual personality. In order to assure this result, Tagore gives a large place to creative activity. Being fully persuaded of this necessity, he brooks no patronage from the methods of Western education. This latter serves largely to furnish the mind, not to develop it. Under such procedure, the desire and ability to create are gradually deadened and the individual becomes so much more educated material.[2] According to Tagore:

> That this mind could be of any use in the process, or in the end, of our education was overlooked by our modern educational dispensation. We are provided with buildings and books and other magnificent burdens calculated to suppress our mind. The latter was treated like a library shelf solidly made of wood, to be loaded with leather-bound volumes of second-hand information. In consequence, it has lost its own colour and character, and has borrowed polish from the carpenter's shop. All this has cost us money, and also our finer ideas, while our intellectual vacancy has been crammed with what is described in official reports as Education. In fact, we have bought our spectacles at the expense of our eyesight.[3]

From the struggle in his own schooling and observation of the condition of Indian education, Tagore could

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 9, p. 38
2. Personality, p. 117
3. Creative Unity, p. 176

not escape the burden laid upon him to save for the individual and his country the creative spark of personality. He writes:

> It is only through the fullest development of all his capacities that man is likely to achieve his real freedom. He must be so equipped as no longer to be anxious about his own self-preservation; only through his capacity to understand and to sympathise with his neighbor can he function as a decent member of human society and as a responsible citizen. In the course of the slow growth of the spirit of detachment he will also eventually succeed in finding a natural outlet for his inborn capacity for creative expression in that world of abstraction which is also the world of spiritual truth. To have discovered the best means of self-expression as an individual, as a citizen and as a creative agent, and to experience daily the delights and the difficulties of perpetual growth, --this is true freedom.[1]

Again, it is a difficult thing to put such a method into operation with all the possibilities for miscarriage due to uncertainties of human nature. But since it was necessary to realize the ideal of harmony of life and of the world, the venture is made. The method begins with giving "constant occasions to explore one's capacity through surprises of achievement."[2] This involves the removal of all ready-made equipment and provision of service which the children may supply for themselves.[3] They are thus challenged to a "creative life."

With this approach there develops at most unexpected turns a demand for knowledge in certain fields related

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 9, p. 37
2. Ibid., p. 12
3. Cf. ibid., p. 13; Personality, p. 125

to this creative activity and for still other forms of activity. The method yields intrinsic stimulation to the minds of the children to new fields of conquest. For example, upon posting letters one day, the boys saw the postmaster writing in English on the envelopes. They returned with a demand of their teacher for English lessons, nor did they repent of it later.[1] As a result of this wholeness of their life, the children do not expect a vacation. Physical weakness, character maladjustment, and class barriers are resolved healthily in the creative participation in the daily current of life.[2] Necessity makes them "intellectually alert" and helps them to feel that "education is a permanent part of the adventure of life."[3]

The curriculum reveals the outworking of this method. Note here is made of the variety of special, yet frequent, opportunities, such as festivals, dramas, school magazine, musical evenings and social gatherings, which are an outlet for the normal creative stimulus.[4] The whole method of life with the children is to let them build with a real world and its problems and not with toys and play. The aim with the children is that

> through experience in dealing with this overflowing abundance of child life, its charm and its simplicity, to provide the utmost liberty within surroundings

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 9, pp. 14-5
2. See ibid., pp. 15-6
3. Ibid., p. 17
4. Fleming, Schools with a Message in India, p. 169

> that are filled with creative possibilities, with opportunities for the joy of play that is work, — the work of exploration; and of work that is play, — the reaping of a succession of novel experiences; to give the child that freedom of growth which the young tree demands for its tender shoot, that field for self-expansion in which all young life finds both training and happiness.[1]

They begin with housecraft, then handicraft. Every student has the opportunity to express himself in some form of art activity.[2] The discovery of a special interest or aptitude directs in the choice of specialization in college level work. Thus freedom is given its full course in individual development through the creative method.

Direct Learning

It would doubtless create no little annoyance should a pupil choose to leave his desk in a classroom, climb a tree, and sit in its branches while studying. Yet, such a method is encouraged at Santiniketan. In commenting on his experience in the class of one of his teachers, Tagore says:

> What is surprising is to notice the same headmaster's approbation of the boys' studying botany. He believes in an impersonal knowledge of the tree because that is science, but not in a personal experience of it. This growth of experience leads to forming instinct, which is the result of nature's own method of instruction. . . . . I myself was brought up in a cultured home in a town, and as far as my personal behaviour goes I have been obliged to act all through my life as if I were born in a world where there are no trees. Therefore I consider it as a part of education for my

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 9, pp. 24-5
2. Ibid., No. 12, p. 13

> boys to let them fully realize that they are in a scheme of existence where trees are a substantial fact, not merely as generating chlorophyll and taking carbon from the air, but as living trees.[1]

Whenever possible, direct learning is used. Whereas the child's formal education commonly begins by contact with books, paper, and other materials within brick walls, at Santiniketan the emphasis of early training is upon "natural processes--directly through persons and things."[2] At the ages of six to twelve, the child grows readily from impressions received by taste, smell, sight, hearing, and touch.[3] With the rich opportunities at hand in the situation of the school, the purpose is to develop fully from the beginning all the senses.[4] The children learn to observe carefully the various forms of life about them. Many problems of an economic and social nature are studied in relation to actual situations which must be solved,[5] rather than through the book alone. With the vernacular as the language of instruction, English is learned in the lower classes, but by the direct method in the use of stories.

The method of direct learning is in harmony with the wholeness of life and does not dissociate its various experiences. It is the natural means of the child's growth. Tagore says that

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1. Personality, pp. 118-9
2. Ibid., p. 143
3. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 9, p. 25
4. Ibid., No. 12, p. 12
5. Ibid., No. 9, pp. 25-33

> it is certain that children did not bargain for this muffled and screened world of decency when they were ready to be born upon this earth. If they had any idea that they were about to open their eyes to the sunlight, only to find themselves in the hands of the education department till they should lose their freshness of mind and keenness of sense, they would think twice before venturing upon their career of humanity.[1]

Formal processes come later in life when the child has gathered his materials for knowing life. Again, Tagore remarks:

> Children with the freshness of their senses come directly to the intimacy of this world. This is the first great gift they have. They must accept it naked and simple and must never again lose their power of immediate communication with it. For our perfection we have to be vitally savage and mentally civilised; we should have the gift to be natural with nature and human with human society.[2]

Personality of Teacher

The teacher becomes an important consideration in the method of vital education. Since real education comes through life, the teacher is the key to the situation, as was the guru of the Forest School. Teachers are not "mere purveyors of book-lore in whom the paper god of the bookshop has been made vocal"[3]; they are living embodiments of the truth they teach. They teach by the method of direct inspiration. The impact of this idea is witnessed to by Fleming, for he says: "Certainly the most formative influence in the school is this rich personality. Through example and

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1. Personality, p. 123
2. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 9, p. 8
3. Creative Unity, p. 186

and through personal association the spirit is caught and ideals are moulded."[1]

The personality of the teacher creates an atmosphere and attitude which are educative. The presence of Tagore in Santiniketan is a demonstration of the power of this method. As he mingles with the boys as their Gurudu —revered master—they are challenged to grow by his sympathy, encouragement, and affection. While Tagore does not teach regularly,[2] he has many opportunities for direct relation with the boys, sometimes taking a class in singing or literature and joining them in producing plays. Thus the boys feel free to come to him with their efforts in creative expression. Bose says that his "great personality silently permeates the whole atmosphere of the school and inspires every member of the Institution with the divinity and nobility of his character."[3]

Tagore's own estimate of the value of personality in the teacher is indicated in his appreciation of one who early worked with him. Of Satish Chandra Roy he says:

> He was not like other teachers, a mere vehicle of text-books. He made his teaching personal, he himself was the source of it, and therefore it was made of life stuff, easily assimilable by the living human nature. The real reason of his success was his intense interest in life, in ideas, in everything around him, in the boys who came in contact with him. He had his inspiration not through the medium of books,

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1. Fleming, Schools with a Message in India, p. 174
2. Ernest Rhys, Rabindranath Tagore, p. 145
3. Ibid., p. 184

> but through the direct communication of his sensitive mind with the world. . . . . The literature that he studied had not the least smell of the library about it. He had the power to see ideas before him, as he could see his friends, with all the distinctness of form and subtlety of life.[1]

Concerning this teacher, Tagore concludes that the boys were "able to receive their lessons from a living teacher and not from text-books."[2]

The personality of the teacher is made paramount because of Tagore's basic ideal of education as living truth and not information. If this ideal is to be realized in the pupil it must be embodied in the teacher. Truth must be as a burning flame which catches one life from another. Tagore puts it graphically when he says;

> The teacher who has come to the end of his subject, who has no living traffic with his knowledge, but merely repeats his lessons to his students, can only load their minds; he cannot quicken them. Truth not only must inform but inspire. If the inspiration dies out, and the information only accumulates, then truth loses its infinity. The greater part of our learning in the schools has been wasted because, for most of our teachers, their subjects are like dead specimens of once living things, with which they have a learned acquaintance, but no communication of life and love.[3]

The teacher and the student are together in pursuit of truth. Therefore, they have many associations in most natural ways, for their school is as "an open house, in which students and teachers are at one."[4] The classes are kept

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1. Personality, pp. 141-2
2. Ibid., p. 142
3. Creative Unity, p. 137
4. Loc. cit.

small to provide intimate relationship. The method of vital education, then, is not the pursuit of subjects, but of "truth in its living association with her lovers and seekers and discoverers."[1]

Nature

This survey of the educational method at Santiniketan is not complete without a recognition of the place nature is given as a teacher.[2] Life is spent in the open air as much as possible, in the shade of the trees or on the open verandas. It is quite the orthodox thing to take an excursion for a class, or plan a trip in the night time. The boys rejoice in the coming of the seasons, for they go out in the refreshing rain. There is no formal nature study by syllabus or text; but the students love nature and have sympathy for all living creatures[3] through knowing them "in relation to life and the daily experiences of life."[4] The out-of-doors offers "an unlimited field for experience and for experimenting with life." "Nature herself is the best schoolmaster."[5] Through this intimate contact with nature, the students develop a sensitiveness to the infinite and thus build up a sense of the unity of life.

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1. Creative Unity, p. 188
2. Fleming, op. cit., pp. 171-3
3. Ibid., p. 172
4. Visva-bharati Bulletin No. 9, p. 30
5. Ibid., p. 28

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Summary

In addition to the curriculum, the distinctive aims of education for Tagore are realized through method. Because of the power of unconscious growth, the atmosphere is made as stimulating as possible by simplicity and creative elements. The sense of freedom undergirds all procedures and relationships. There is constant encouragement for creative endeavor and opportunity for learning directly. The personality of the teacher and contact with nature are made channels for growth. Thus life is encouraged to grow normally and fully.

Esthetic Education

Out of the rich background of the experience and writings of Tagore, there stands a clear conception of the esthetic in education. The deficiencies of the dominating Indian education and culture are a persistent cry for a new freedom which shall not frustrate and smother life, but let it grow full according to its nature. In his ideal to preserve that which is fine in Indian culture and to redeem the potentialities of personality, Tagore has blazed a trail in esthetic education.

The Esthetic Significance of the Aims of Education

In the consideration of Tagore's aims in education, two major emphases are found. In the first place, Tagore

observes that education has two fundamental interests: the intellectual, scientific, or factual and the integrative, personal, or creative. He finds adequate provision is generally made for the former, but to the depreciation and often death of the latter. When education is given to mastering facts it is a "dead load of wisdom."[1] It forgets

> that the perfection of colour and form and expression belongs to the perfection of vitality,—that the joy of life is only the other side of the strength of life. The timber merchant may think that the flowers and foliage are mere frivolous decorations of a tree; but if these are suppressed, he will know to his cost that the timber too will fail.[2]

The experience in which the self is aware of the world about him is not an automatic response of recognition on the cognitive level alone; it reaches into the affective responses where personality is unified and distinctive, where taste and values are determined. By demanding that education provide for this aspect of experience, Tagore opens the way for the esthetic.

In the second place, having established the esthetic in education, he assigns it a two-fold aim: that man may know himself, and then make himself known to man. A man knows himself in the degree that he has awareness to Man in the universe about him; the realization of the individual personality is determined by the measure of his personal

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1. Creative Unity, p. 193
2. Loc. cit.

realisation of the universe, especially nature.[1] Therefore, education aims to develop the faculty of perception through sense training and the habit of observation through contact with nature, life and its crafts, festivals and rituals, varying cultures, and religion.[2]

But such awareness releases energies in the personality which must be expressed; hence, education must prepare man to "make himself known to man." Tagore observes that

> a large part of man can never find its expression in the mere language of words. It must therefore seek for its other languages,—lines and colours, sounds and movements. Through our mastery of these we not only make our whole nature articulate, but also understand man in all his attempts to reveal his innermost being in every age and clime.[3]

Education aims to preserve the expressiveness of the whole self and provide for its outlet in creativity.

Therefore, though he gives the proper place to customary intellectual pursuits, Tagore aims to realize esthetic values. He emphasizes the importance of the affective responses, especially as they are related to one's awareness of the universe and to the expression of that awareness with the surplus energies of life.

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1. The Meaning of Art, Dacca University Bulletin, No. XII, pp. 4-5
2. Visva-bharati Bulletin, No. 17, p. 2
3. Creative Unity, p. 196

The Esthetic Significance of the Curriculum of Education

Through its Kala-bhavana, Santiniketan has become "best known as a unique centre of the revival of Indian Art, including painting, music and dance."[1] However, esthetic education is not consigned to a single department, but permeates the whole school life. The esthetic is an integral part of the curriculum and is equal in importance to any other interest. Beginning with the earliest and carrying through college, the work is graded according to the development, capacity, and interest of the student. It embraces not only the formal arts, but the practical arts as well. It infuses the whole life of the student.

In noting the esthetic elements of the curriculum more specifically, is there esthetic significance to the meditation? By intention, the practice of meditation is for a religious purpose, though no regulations are imposed. Aside from the content of the periods of meditation, the practice of the contemplative attitude is important. Beauty is found where there is leisure. Necessity, force, and pressure of life are not productive of art. Therefore, the contemplative attitude, with its detachment and leisure, are basic to the esthetic experience.

The courses of study have a definite esthetic content. Immediately attention turns to the Kala-bhavana and

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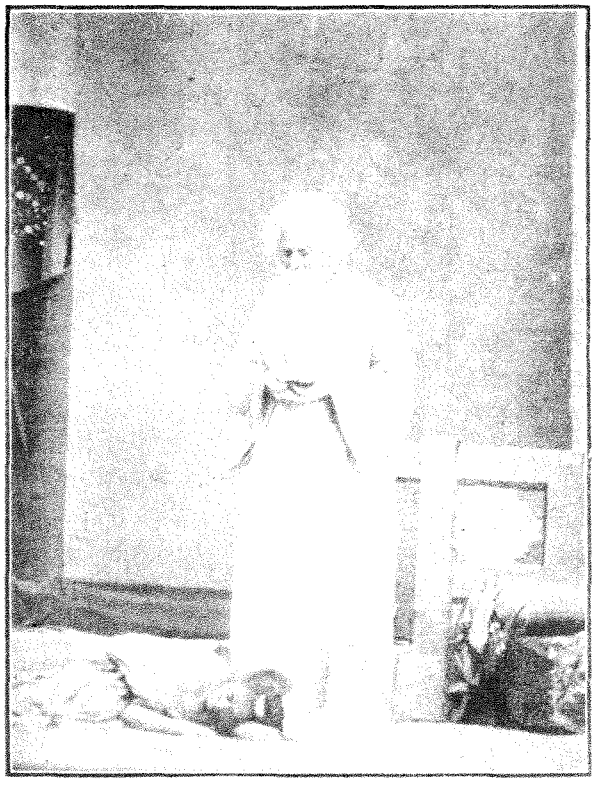
1. Sangit-bhavana, p. 2

In celebration of the Rainy Season, girls go in rhythmic procession, carrying auspicious symbols, to perform the Tree Plantation Ceremony.



Tagore with a student in his play
Worship of the Dancing Girl

Sangit-bhavana with their study of art, music, and the dance. Under capable leadership there has been developed a fine blending of the values of the indigenous art, European culture, and that of the Far East.[1] These departments provide training for those of special artistic interest and aptitude. But they do more in that they set an esthetic tone to the life of the school and provide an opportunity for the less talented to understand art as it is created in life. In addition to specialization for the gifted, there is definite esthetic content in each course. On the elementary level, of equal importance with the regular studies are sense training, art, music, and crafts. Much care is taken to give the early creative urges of the child a wholesome avenue of expression. On the college level the esthetic content comes directly in two ways: in courses in the practical arts for those with vocational interest, and those in the fine arts of cultural and professional value. It is the idea that all courses shall include something of this content.

It is a misunderstanding of Tagore to look upon these courses primarily as formal art training. Such value surely is realized, but Tagore would have them a part of each individual's study in order to bring about a harmony of mind and unity of life.[2] Then the curriculum has ministered to a real experience of beauty.

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1. Anand, The Hindu View of Art, p. 221
2. Visva-bharati Bulletin, No. 4, p. 16

For Tagore, curriculum is used in the broad sense to include the full scope of life. He, therefore, uses as educative a variety of informal activities. Of special interest esthetically are various types of creative expression. It may be a drama, a festival, an exhibition, or the informal evening entertainment hour. The school papers provide a still different sort of creative expression. There is keen interest invested in these various pursuits as they provide for the overflow of energies and give a sense of group solidarity in the discovery and expression of beauty. Thus is esthetic experience rounded out through the curriculum.

The Esthetic Significance of the Methods of Education

While a large place for the esthetic is made in the curriculum, an equally important consideration in Tagore's is method. He recognizes certain basic principles of natural development which have determined the formulation of his educational scheme.[1] Of special esthetic significance in the first stage is the activity of the mind in receiving impressions. But the mind does not thrive on mediated impressions; it learns true freedom by arriving at judgments and thoughts through direct experience. In this early stage, the "spiritual faculty" also is developed, the esthetic value being found in "love for the beauties of nature and admiration

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin, No. 4, pp. 2-3

for great men and great deeds done in history." The second stage of growth, being a period of "all-round activity which is self-educative," contributes to the esthetic as the intelligence enters the realm of "pure thought and beauty and expands in wider communion with the ideas and ideals of all times and places."[1] The further perfecting of body and mind for creative activity of the next stage is realized in means of self-expression such as "language, picture, song and service, and by bolder adventures into the realm of the infinite during the hours of meditation, through artistic activity, and the mode of living as a whole."[2] In the third stage, the body having matured, the mind seeks the concrete expression of its store of experience in creative endeavor. In general, then, method follows natural development beginning with the awareness of the mind and responsiveness of the spirit, then following the expanding breadth and depth of activity and intelligence and perfecting of skills for expression, and consummating in the period of creative activity.

Tagore's educational method contributes to the esthetic in growth by unconscious influence. In the simple surroundings sensitivity is not overstimulated and deadened. The museum and art decorations in the library provide frequent contact with the arts. Then the whole atmosphere is

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin, No. 4, p. 3
2. Loc. cit.

surcharged with a spirit of creativity and the expression of personality. In such an atmosphere the esthetic response is nurtured.

More directly, esthetic development thrives where there is true freedom in method. The child is keenly alert to the immediate impressions of the universe; but under traditional methods this alertness is too soon shackled by formalism. "Complete freedom then the child must have," says Tagore, "to adventure in the realm of song, of music, of poetry if it wishes, of drama and dance, to reveal in the expression of ideas through colour, line or form, or to wander on the limitless horizon of solitary thought and meditation, in touch with the still small voice within."[1] Limitations restrain growth, but the release of freedom encourages investigation and expression.

This sense of freedom is preserved for the student in a number of ways. Discipline from superiors is dispensed with wherever possible, leaving students to cope with problems through their own resources. Self-reliance and trust are thus encouraged. The small, informal class promotes spontaneous expression and sharing the impressions of which the student is aware. Life in the open air, the times for games and informal programs contribute to a liberation of the self.

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1. Visva-bharati Bulletin, No. 9, pp. 38-9

every sort of creative endeavor. Thus there is encouraged an attitude of life which is creative as seen both in the formal expression of the arts and in the many relations of their experience. Such method in education has esthetic value not only for the skills learned, but also for the creative tone of personality which takes art from the museum and brings it into life.

The value of direct learning is evident. Experience mediated through text-books and lectures is not very vital; that which comes by direct contact with a thing or a situation itself is vivid and arouses personal response more completely. Direct contact in learning preserves sensitivity. Especially is this method seen in the sense training.[1] Concepts of distance, length, breadth, depth and height, of area, volume, weight, hearing, form, and others are built up by experience of them in concrete expression. By this direct training, meaning is established through immediate experience. Here, too, the method is not isolated to certain art qualities, but is operative wherever the senses are active. In this procedure education does not become essentially an intellectual matter, but, appealing to all aspects of experience, it touches the whole nature.

What esthetic significance has Tagore's emphasis upon the personality of the teacher? The personality of the

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1. Details are given in Bengali in Visva-bharati Bulletin, No. 17, pp. 17-24.

teacher should keep learning vital and not permit it to become a burden of information. The student catches directly the emotional response of the teacher to the materials taught and thus is inspired more definitely. A philosophy which finds the meaning of the universe in terms of personality and which views art and beauty in terms of the personal response depends strongly for the esthetic in education upon personality.

Finally, nature is emphasized in the consideration of educational method. In the processes of sense training, nature is used wherever possible. Rhythm, which is so vital to the experience of beauty, may be felt directly in nature.[1] Nature is always at hand and so various in its manifestations. When the student has learned to respond to it, he may be ever growing in sensitivity. His experience of beauty is not confined to the museum or gallery; he finds beauty all about him. It is recalled that the esthetic approach to nature is not the scientific. "By plucking her petals you do not gather the beauty of the flower."[2] The sights and sounds of nature reveal a presence. Its beauty enters experience when there is the attitude of sympathy. Direct contact is imperative; book study does not yield esthetic enjoyment. The emotions must come into play if the self is

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1. Gitanjali LXX
2. Stray Birds CLIV

to appropriate esthetic value from nature.[1]

Summary

In Tagore's carefully wrought system of education, esthetic values are realized in many ways. The aims of education are related to the esthetic in the emphasis on the development of the affective aspect of experience, the response of the individual to the universe and the need for a medium in which to express that meaning. In special departments and in the whole circuit of the educational structure, the curriculum affords a rich and comprehensive experience of beauty and art. The contemplative attitude for the individual is encouraged in the time of meditation and the creative in the many informal programs. Likewise the methods employed foster the esthetic. The natural development of the individual is considered in the emphasis upon mental and spiritual growth of the early years, the widening understanding and expression of beauty in its various forms in the next period of growth, and finally the fullness of creative expression. Impressions which come into the area of the subconscious are made to contribute to the desired ends. Freedom and creativity are correlated with direct learning. The stimulation of nature and the inspiration of the teacher's personality complete the important aspects of esthetic value in education.

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1. Personality, pp. 14-5

General Summary

A brief survey of the life of Tagore has laid bare the main springs of his interest in the esthetic in education. He was born into a rich heritage of family and culture. His early experiences at home and at school were so confining and so disappointing that he felt compelled to provide a school where there was freedom. As Tagore matured and his talent was discovered, he was encouraged in art by his family and received great inspiration and helpful training from the trip with his father to the Himalayas. There came also an awakening to social problems to which he later gave time and writing. All the while he had been writing freely—poetry, drama, song, story, and essay. He became internationally known through his travel and lecturing, and the granting of three honors, the Nobel prize, the knighthood, and the doctorate degree from Calcutta University. However, much earlier he had founded an experimental school at his father's Ashram, and in it has embodied his ideals for creative living and blending of cultures. Thus Tagore mediates directly the beauty he has discovered in life.

In the study of some of his major philosophical views, there was established a background for the appreciation of his esthetics. For Tagore the universe is the result of creative activity expressing joy in which unity is a pervasive characteristic and meaning is centered in personality. Man feels his kinship with nature and seeks to

realize himself through self-sacrifice of the finite within and release of the infinite through harmony with the Supreme Person in all. Thus man is creative. This self-realization comes in the degree to which he achieves union with the reality which is personal, by means of sympathetic insight.

With this background, it is found that beauty is the expression of that reality in the universe which gives joy. The experience of beauty comes through awareness of the universe and its rhythm, through union with the One as expressed in lines, colors, sounds, and forms. Out of this experience surplus emotional energies are set free in the personality which seek expression in creative activity. Thus there is art in various forms, but always as an answer of the self to that which is most real in the universe.

In the educational plan at Santiniketan, Tagore has expressed his ideals. The individual learns not only to be aware of beauty about him, but also to express the experience adequately in the language of art. In the formal courses there are opportunities for any branch of study. In addition, each student begins with a progressive training in esthetic awareness and expression with opportunity for specialization according to interest. The periods of meditation, various activities, and citizenship projects help develop the personal, creative, and social experiences of beauty. In educational method Tagore uses processes of normal development and the values of unconscious impression.

Freedom is preserved as basic to esthetic growth and is supported by direct learning and creative expression. Inspiration is derived directly from nature and from the personality of the teacher. By these means Tagore seeks to realize his ideal of the fulness of individual growth in union with the Supreme One in the universe, which is beauty, and the individual creative expression, which is art.

CHAPTER V

A COMPARISON AND EVALUATION OF THE ESTHETIC FACTORS IN PLATO AND TAGORE

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A Comparison of the Esthetic Factors in Plato and Tagore

What can there be in common between a Greek philosopher of the fourth century before Christ and an Indian poet of the twentieth century? Are they as far apart in their life and spirit as they are in their times? What do India and Greece share alike? These and many other questions clamor for answer when the names of Plato and Tagore are placed together. Each one has opened up an engaging story of life, thought, and educational ideal. By placing in juxtaposition the major esthetic factors of their lives, their philosophies, and their educational views, by comparison and contrast there emerge their major contributions to esthetic education.

The Lives of Plato and Tagore

Though Plato is timeless and Tagore is international, Plato is not thought of apart from Greece nor is Tagore apart from India. What impact did the respective

Zeitgeist make esthetically on the educational views of Plato and Tagore? Both Plato and Tagore came into periods following a new awakening, the Golden Age of Greece and the Indian Renaissance. Greece had become conscious of its esthetic power and had enriched its life with architecture, sculpture, drama, and dance. The confusion of war and political upheaval following this period tended to sap its finer energies and obscure its vision. While the beauty of her heritage was constantly before fourth century Greece, there was solicitude lest the ideal be compromised and lost in the rapid currents which beat upon its life. Likewise in India, and more especially in Bengal, new life releasing the fine Indian culture was at work. It was felt in art and literature as well as in the trend toward freedom from that which shackled its spirit. Greece had expressed its sense of beauty, so Plato formulated its theory. India had long had its theory, so Tagore sought to bring the esthetic close to life. Of major interest also are the prevailing traditions which associated the religious and the esthetic. The Greek architecture, sculpture, and dance were used to express religious experience,[1] while the Hindu philosophy has a strong esthetic element.[2] Of greater significance, however, is the quality of the Greek and Indian

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1. H. H. Powers, The Message of Greek Art, p. 84; La Rue Van Hook, Greek Life and Thought, pp. 69, 179.
2. Mulk Raj Anand, The Hindu View of Art, pp. 37, 169.

sense of beauty. Greek beauty, as the expression of repose and of restrained emotion,[1] is characterized by "simplicity and strength."[2] Undergirding all is the Greek feeling "for symmetry and harmony, for the golden mean, for good taste and for the becoming, in short, for sophrosyne, a quality which is at the very basis of Greek ethical standards of behavior."[3] Similarly for the Indian, beauty in essence is spiritual, with the strength of simplicity and controlled emotion,[4] the finest expression of harmony in life. Hence Plato and Tagore have much in common esthetically in the spirit of their times.

When Plato and Tagore are held together in thought, a number of interesting parallels and differences in their lives immediately emerge. They have a long span of life in common, Plato having lived to his eightieth year and Tagore now rounding out his seventy-ninth year. Both established a school when about forty years of age. In their schools they enjoyed release from the strain of active public leadership, but left them temporarily to participate in projects of social betterment. The inspiration of a great man, Socrates to Plato and his father to Tagore, were strong determining factors in each life. Both enjoyed the values

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1. Powers, op. cit., pp. 3, 242.
2. Van Hook, op. cit., p. 293.
3. Loc. cit.
4. Anand, op. cit., p. 148.

of travel. Contrasts as well as further comparisons can be multiplied, but of special interest are the major life situations which are of esthetic import.

Of initial significance is the aristocratic family heritage of both Plato and Tagore. Each doubtless inherited a sensitive and gifted nature. Their latent capacities were developed by a cultured home atmosphere. There was sufficient leisure to engage in esthetic pursuits and that freedom to develop interests which lie beyond necessity. In this relation, there is seen a major contrast in their lives. From all that is known, Plato's contacts and interests remained with the aristocratic level of society, though he did not disparage the position of the worker. On the other hand, breaking caste distinction, Tagore came in close touch with the life of the common people and has championed their cause and sought to improve their opportunities. Plato remained essentially an aristocrat; Tagore has shunned honor and rank and has been a direct benefactor of the needy. In his lifetime Plato was restricted in sharing his esthetic inspiration; Tagore has released the beauty of his soul to bring joy to the beggar as well as the king.

Ordinarily education is an important factor in esthetic development. Too little is known regarding Plato's early training to be dogmatic in this matter; it is well to recall, however, that he doubtless did have the traditional Greek schooling which was strongly esthetic in its emphasis.

What influence Socrates may have had upon Plato's esthetic growth is a matter for conjecture, probably being most important in general philosophical views and in the refining of Plato's own powers of expression. In contrast, Tagore's education is significant for what it did not give him, creating a yearning after the esthetic. The formative influences came from special interest on the part of his family, of one teacher who encouraged him, from times of unusual awakening which came suddenly, and from close contact with nature. Thus Plato's education was more formal and philosophic, while Tagore's was more free and artistic.

There is a strong similarity in the major contributions of the lives of Plato and Tagore. Both are best known through their writings, but in these writings lie contrasts of esthetic significance. Beauty and freedom are in the style of the dialogues but not without restraint. In Tagore there is a wide variety of forms which approaches a prodigality of expression. Again, Plato is essentially the thinker, the philosopher, while Tagore is truly the romantic lover, the poet. Plato stirs one to contemplate beauty, Tagore to be aware of its joy. In addition to writing, both men participated in social enterprises. Plato was early discouraged in political interests, but made an attempt, against his personal wishes, to redeem the situation at Syracuse. Tagore has been moved a number of times by a strong social passion, and consequently has helped to raise the status of women, and to

support, in various ways, efforts to realize a fuller life for his people. Even so, neither one is essentially a social reformer. Following a feeling of futility from experience in public life, both founded a school. Here again, each man expressed the characteristic quality of his personality. The Academy afforded expression of Plato's love for youth and his intellectual search for truth and knowledge of the idea. Santiniketan reveals Tagore's love for the child and his whole development, giving full opportunity for esthetic growth and, in the more advanced work, for the interpenetration of various cultures at their best. In these three comparisons there is brought to focus the basic contrast between the esthetic experiences of Plato and Tagore, the former being restrained and more philosophical, the latter being free and more personal.

A number of further contrasts give rise to interesting questions. What would be known of Plato's esthetic experience had he written his reminiscences, as did Tagore? How might Tagore have been different had he been under the tutelage of a Socrates? What would have been Plato's description of his esthetic awakening had he written of it as did Tagore? Suppose Plato had known the love of a home with wife and children, and Tagore only the love of mature students. Suppose Plato had felt the impact of the varying cultures of Tagore's world and Tagore the special cultures of Plato's world? Answers are not needed to realize how different are the lives of Plato and Tagore and yet how alike they are.

The Esthetics of Plato and Tagore

The esthetic factors in the philosophies of Plato and Tagore are prominent. In the general exposition of the views of each, these factors were noted in relation to major considerations of philosophy. Here specifically the esthetic views of Plato and Tagore are brought together. In surveying the field of esthetics, the major problems were found to be the nature and value of beauty and art and the experience of the subject in appreciation and creative expression derived from their perception.[1] The present analysis of Plato and Tagore deals with these points.

The Nature of Beauty

The basic problem in esthetics is: What is beauty? The answer of Plato is very clear: Beauty in its essence is the idea or form existing in a supersensuous realm. It is objective in nature, independent and free. Objects are beautiful to the senses because of their participation in the idea of beauty. In what respect and by what means the idea beauty takes part in the beautiful object, Plato is not clear, but he is none the less assured that such is the case.

A second important consideration for Plato in the nature of beauty is its relation to truth and goodness. What is the beautiful in contradistinction to the true and the good?

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1. Above, p. 19.

Like the beautiful, the true and the good have objective reality in the idea. The beautiful is distinguished by the qualities of harmony, symmetry, and rhythm. But by these elements, Plato also knows something of the good. Therefore, he says that the good is the beautiful, though they are not identified, for he considers the good as the supreme idea. Beauty, then, according to Plato, is objective in nature and exists in its essence apart from sense phenomena. It is closely akin to the good.

While Plato gives much consideration to beauty, Tagore is interested primarily in art. However, Tagore does refer to beauty, but not with the philosophic approach of Plato. Plato's major emphasis is upon beauty itself, while Tagore concentrates upon the experience of beauty. As a result, there seems to be little in common between their views on the nature of beauty. In the first place, as for Plato beauty is not to be identified with the objective aspect of sense phenomena. Beauty is not in the color, the line, the sound as sense qualities, but in a reality which exists apart from them, and yet participates in them.[1] Beauty is

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1. There is no specific indication in Tagore of any conception of the idea as found in Plato. However, there is something near to it in the Indian conception of art. Coomaraswamy points out the Indian norm as prāmāna which "means in philosophy the norm of properly directed thought, in ethics the norm of properly directed action, in art the norm of properly conceived design. . . . ." He further indicates the relation of this conception to Plato saying that "the idea of prāmāna implies the existence of types or archtypes, which might at

the expression of reality. Its existence does not depend upon the subject which experiences it, but the reality which expresses it. So far as the sense world is concerned, then, beauty is objective and free. Beauty is not perceived in the world without awareness of ultimate reality which is not physical but spiritual. In this Plato and Tagore agree.

The fundamental difference between the esthetics of Plato and Tagore is found in the nature of the reality whose expression is beauty. The reality which is beauty is abstract, according to Plato; to Tagore it is personal. Reality is not truth alone, but truth related to the person, the Supreme Person. Beauty then becomes the immediate relation of truth and personality expressed in objective form. Is this reality which Tagore considers to be the source of beauty distinctively that of beauty, or is it operative in other realms as well? That expression of reality which is beauty has its own ultimate value; it is independent as to source, but may be more definitely distinguished in the experience elicited. Beauty, goodness, and truth are different in their expression, but ultimately they arise from relationship with the absolute or Supreme Person. At this point Tagore

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first thought be compared with these of Plato and the derived European tradition. But whereas Platonic types are types of being, external to the conditioned universe and thought of as absolutes reflected in phenomena, Indian types are those of sentient activity or functional utility conceivable only in a contingent world." Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, The Transformation of Nature in Art, p. 17.

goes beyond Plato in the unity of all, except as Plato reaches toward such a view in making the idea of good the supreme reality.

In this interpretation of the nature of beauty, it is apparent that neither Plato nor Tagore is a realist in the modern sense, but rather an idealist. Reality is not in the sensible world, but in an objective absolute which exists apart from sense qualities yet expresses itself through them. For Plato this objective reality is abstract idea, while for Tagore it is personalized truth. Other characteristics of the nature of beauty emerge in a consideration of the experience of beauty.

The Knowledge and Experience of Beauty

Having established the nature of beauty, the next problem is: How is beauty known and what is the nature of esthetic experience? When beauty is conceived as reality beyond objective sense qualities, it naturally follows that mere sense impressions do not give knowledge of beauty. So Plato is very explicit in insisting that beauty is intelligible, not sensible. But sense objects, in so far as they participate in beauty are stepping stones by which one may rise to the ultimate vision of absolute beauty. This vision of beauty in essence is arrived at by intuition. While beauty may thus be known directly, it would seem that not many arrive at this exalted experience. It is a common experience to take pleasure in colors, sounds, lines, and forms, but this is only half way to knowledge, merely opinion. The soul which had a

vision of beauty in a previous existence recalls that beauty in the presence of beautiful sense objects. Thus Plato analyzes the knowledge of beauty.

Insofar as Tagore's conception of beauty agrees with Plato's, he agrees fundamentally in the process of knowing beauty. One must be aware of the colors, lines, sounds, and forms in objects perceived, but esthetic awareness is also intuitive whereby one knows absolute beauty expressed in sense objects. This knowledge is non-rational and of emotional quality. At this point Tagore presses on beyond Plato because of the personal nature of real beauty. The knowledge of beauty is not so restricted as it seems to be with Plato. Because of the kinship of the individual with personality in beauty, it seems closer, while with Plato it seems far away. With these minor differences, both agree in the knowledge of beauty by intuition.[1]

If beauty is thus known, what is one's experience in the presence of beauty? Plato characterizes it in a three-

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1. In his study, "The Hindu View of Art," Mulk R. Anand defines rasa as at the center of the knowledge and experience of beauty. He describes it as "an ideal state, a transcendental mode of consciousness, in which the essences of things are intuitively apprehended, by plunging back, as it were, into the mysterium tremendum of life, in the manner of the poet who sees the meaning of things by the sudden flash of a vision or of the philosopher who realises the wholeness of experience in a moment." (p. 163) As he discusses it further, he indicates that it is "virtually the same thing" as Plato's idea expressed in the Symposium or the Phaedrus. See the footnote, pp. 164-5. Tagore refers to rasa in Personality, pp. 14-5.

fold manner. In the first place, the attitude of the subject experiencing toward the sensible object is disinterested and contemplative. Then, with the full realization of the experience of beauty, there is an ecstasy which has a divine quality. There is also something of the quality of love in the experience, and the soul senses a kinship with beauty which Plato likens to a creative union. For Tagore, the experience of beauty is much the same. It begins in the contemplative attitude which is disinterested, yet sympathetic to the reality in all. Awareness of the beauty in the universe brings joy. This buoyance is related to a new sense of union with the reality seen in beauty. Thus, Plato and Tagore are in accord as to the intuitive knowledge of beauty and characterize the experience of beauty, coming through a contemplative attitude, by disinterestedness, ecstasy and joy, and kinship or union. A question of immediate interest follows: To what extent is this knowledge and experience realized? Is it only the few who have this full awareness or is it a matter of degree of attainment? Is the esthetic experience an individual, unitary experience, or is it rather to be thought of in terms of esthetic quality in relation to experience in general? While this problem may be more readily answered in relation to art, it must be noted briefly here as of great significance to esthetic education. This analysis tends to make the knowledge and experience of beauty selective, especially for Plato. An answer is not given directly by

either, but it is taken for granted indirectly by the very process of education which each advances. For Plato, education is permeated with beauty which harmonizes a beautiful soul with a beautiful body. Art is the means to this end. It must be recalled, however, that his most advanced education is consummated in knowledge of the idea or vision of reality. In contrast, Tagore indicates that beauty is everywhere at hand, is forever calling to be recognized, and waits only for awareness and sympathy of the individual as an invitation to give itself. Both Plato and Tagore, then, recognize an esthetic quality to experience. However, especially for Plato, there is a heightened experience of beauty, different essentially not in quality, but in intensity. It comes with the full vision of beauty in its essence rather than in its presence in sense objects. Tagore does not speak of an experience of beauty in its essence. To him the reality of beauty is always known in relation to sense objects.[1] He therefore emphasizes the esthetic quality of experience.

The Value and Function of Beauty

The value and function of beauty open up one of the

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1. The strong sense in Tagore of the union of the sensible and intelligible tends to minimize the aspect of direct experience of reality. However, Coomaraswamy points out in relation to Indian art: "Pure aesthetic experience is theirs in whom the knowledge of ideal beauty is innate; it is known intuitively, in intellectual ecstasy without accompaniment of ideation at the highest level of conscious being." Op. cit., p. 46.

most mooted questions in the field of esthetics. The discussion generally centers upon art rather than beauty, but is determined very largely by the philosophy of beauty held. The aspect of the problem which is especially related to beauty is considered here.

The value of beauty is indicated by the place it holds in one's whole philosophy. Where does beauty stand in relation to the good, the true, the holy, the useful, and other values? In studying Plato it is found that the values which occupy the center of his thinking are the good, and the true, and the beautiful. These are not autonomous, for their value is derived from the good as the supreme reality. Likewise, for Tagore the value of beauty is derived, for it is determined by the expression of personality which is ultimate reality.

It is to be expected, then, that the function of beauty is in harmony with its nature. When character and virtue are linked with beauty, there is commonly felt to be a confusion of the ethical with the esthetic. This is not so if beauty is what Plato conceives it to be. The same relation pertains with Tagore. Thus, basically the function of beauty is intrinsic to its nature, as the plan is to the bulb, or the fruit is to its tree.

The Nature and Value of Art

The relation of beauty and art are seen in the nature and value of art. Art is not the mere copying or

imitation of the physical world of sense appearance. Much art, so-called, is merely imitation, but it should be the expression of beauty. The value of art is determined, not by the cleverness of technique, but by the reality which it expresses. Since the reality expressed in art is beauty, that which has been discovered regarding beauty applies also to art. Plato finds that art influences character and the life of the state. For Tagore, art contributes to the realization of the ideal life, both for the individual and for the social group. Fundamentally, Plato and Tagore concur in these matters, the point of contrast being added by the specific nature of beauty.

The Creation and Appreciation of Art

A final consideration is the creative process of art. Plato and Tagore have in common views regarding the creation and appreciation of art. According to Plato the artist who creates art of any value finds his inspiration in the personal experience of beauty. His inspiration is a sort of divine madness or ecstasy of a non-rational nature. Tagore holds similarly that the inspiration for creation comes from a sense of abounding emotional energies. This experience craves expression. Creation of art results; thereby the artist preserves something of his own experience and does not merely hold a mirror up to nature. The appreciation of art involves a sharing of the inspiration out of which it is created. So with Tagore, by creating art the individual may communicate the experience of kinship with the reality

of the world about him.

In a few more specific points, Plato and Tagore are agreed. In referring to the arts, those which stand out most definitely are music, poetry, the dance, and to a lesser degree painting. Sculpture and architecture are not ignored neither are they so frequently mentioned. The dominant qualities of art are simplicity, rhythm, and such technical items as line, color, sound, and form. In the literary arts, however, Plato shows more concern over the intellectual content of the words while Tagore is primarily interested in the factors of rhythm and sound, which Plato also recognizes in his emphasis upon style. Thus Plato and Tagore have particular interest in the same esthetic factors in the creation and appreciation of art.

The Educational Views of Plato and Tagore

A comparison of the esthetic factors in the educational views of Plato and Tagore reveals interesting contrasts. It is well to remember that Plato was a theorist building on current systems of education while Tagore is an experimenter making the practical approach. Both are teachers, but Tagore is also an artist of rare gifts.

The Aims of Education

The study of Plato's aims of education has revealed his two-fold emphasis upon the individual and the state and its esthetic significance. In Tagore there is the same whole-

some balance, with perhaps a greater aim to make possible the fullest realization of the self. Education does not aim at acquiring things or information, but at becoming a person fully. Thus the aims of education are related to life. When Plato seeks virtue, he seeks to realize an active excellence in the individual. When Tagore sets his aim to know Man, he aims to realise the full awakening and growth of personality. Tagore adds further the aim of self-expression, which is found in Plato but not in the same creative sense. Plato concentrates upon the whole of which the esthetic is an indispensable part; Tagore sees the parts more definitely in relation to the whole.

The Curriculum of Education

Esthetic factors in education are generally measured in terms of the art study available. It would appear, according to this emphasis, that the ideal of Plato is the summum bonum. When he mentions early training, he suggests play with materials that will build awareness. The formative years are given to Greek music and gymnastic. The content of this procedure is largely the rhythm and harmony of music, especially as it is related to poetry. While Plato is much concerned about the intellectual content of the poetry, he emphasizes its style as having a far-reaching influence. Gymnastic provides similar discipline and nurture, so that soul and body may be brought into harmony. Plato provides also for the experience of order and harmony

in the higher realm of pure thought in the later study of science and dialectic. The selectivity which Plato exercises in the content of the curriculum in order that all influences may be constructive is not confined to formal education, but obtains in the whole state. There is thus a tendency to break down the formal division between education and the rest of life.

In general, the values to be found in Plato's curriculum are also in Tagore's, but in a more articulated fashion. Beginning with the child at school age, sensitivity is to be realized by means of the ordered plan for sense training which is required. The more highly organized curriculum of Tagore prohibits the extended attention of Plato upon music, but the children are encouraged in a variety of arts. Tagore does not emphasize the intellectual content of art as Plato does, but the value of form and style which are expressive. Physical growth is provided for in games, natural exercise, and athletic sports, all of which have less conscious relation to the esthetic than Plato expresses in his ideal. In addition to the pressure of organized requirements for higher education, Tagore provides for esthetic growth in particular directions by advanced study, thus fulfilling his idea of beauty as Plato does his own peculiar conception.

Definite contrasts between the curriculum of Plato and Tagore are also apparent. The esthetic elements in Tagore must find their place in a more highly organized educational structure than in Plato. While Plato makes the esthetic element dominant, Tagore must relate it to the other demands of

study and preparation. What Plato accomplishes directly in the curriculum, Tagore must realize through other unifying factors. Difficult as it is, Tagore does not forfeit the sense of the wholeness of experience which is more simple for Plato. A second contrast is Tagore's direct provision for learning the crafts and preparing for all levels of the social structure. While Plato aims to prepare the citizen, his plan tends more toward the education of the select group of guardians. In his emphasis, Tagore fulfills a broader social objective and influences the whole culture more directly. He therefore may control from within that which Plato is compelled to regulate by censorship. A final major contrast is felt in Tagore's more modern approach to art education. The student may study for professional art activity in the specialized departments of music, painting, and dancing. There are many opportunities for the expression of these interests as well as the drama in the varied school activities at Santiniketan. This same opportunity came in the Athenian life at festivals, plays, and contests. Still, the emphasis in the curriculum of Tagore is much more distinct and specialized. So, by and large, the esthetic factors of Tagore are mediated through a more modern curriculum and with a broader appeal to all interests in life.

The Methods of Education

As was true in the comparison of the curriculum, here also Tagore has developed educational method more fully while Plato centers in fundamental principles. Some matters

which are explicit in Tagore are implicit in Plato. As basic to esthetic growth, both Plato and Tagore emphasize method which follows normal development. When the senses are keen and physical growth is most rapid, both sensitivity and physical activity are dominant in method. Tagore uses the broadening interests and perfecting of skills of the next period, while Plato centers mostly in the intellectual alertness and growth of the third period. In the relation between normal development and method, Tagore manifests the deeper insight and more complete adaptation.

More specifically, certain basic psychological principles are to be found in the methods advocated. Both Plato and Tagore take into account the formative power of unconscious influences. Hence, they insist upon the importance of the right environment and the removal, as far as possible, of negative factors. The impressions coming from informal contacts are to be harmonized with the purposes of formal education. Thus Plato advocates censorship and Tagore establishes his Ashram school. Other important psychological principles recognized are the use of the play spirit, following the student's spontaneous interest, and the development of individual capacities. Plato notes particularly the tendency to become like that which one imitates and to imitate that which one sees. Because the principle is so strong in esthetic experience, he is very discriminating in the choice of art which may enter his state. Then again, Tagore is explicit in encouraging the direct method of

learning wherever possible. The same emphasis is implicit in Plato and is akin to his stress on the disinterested approach.

Another major comparison between Plato and Tagore in educational method is the unifying of the esthetic with life. For Plato art contributes to the development of character by harmonizing the elements of the soul and coordinating the expression of the body with the soul. The many esthetic interests in Greek life -the chorus, drama, festival, and games -cause their training to enrich their experience. Tagore accomplishes the same end by other methods. For him the esthetic seasons all experience through responsiveness and creativity to find and express beauty in all relationships. The methods involve awareness to nature, self-expression in crafts and arts, festivals, drama, and creative participation in the whole school life.

Through all these aspects of method to which Plato and Tagore give stress, there is a fundamental contrast. The process and end of educational method for Plato has the quality of discipline, and that in the wholesome sense. Taste is developed as a standard of choice. The spirit of method is order and control. This emphasis is in harmony with the dominant tone of Greek art. In contrast, Tagore is interested principally in freedom and self-expression. His method is not thereby lawless, encouraging liberty. But discipline is encouraged by Tagore by self-reliance and trust. External censorship is not often exercised. In the

wholesome atmosphere of his school, the children are encouraged to express themselves, to experiment, to create. As they become aware of inner value in relation to the group, they build their own censorship. This contrast is brought out directly in the attitudes of Plato and Tagore toward standardization or censorship in art, Plato advocating the rigid control of an external standard and Tagore the inner control of the soul sensitive to reality.[1] Hence Plato emphasizes discipline in method, and Tagore cherishes freedom.

Summary

The collation of the esthetic factors found in Plato and Tagore has revealed points of difference as well as points of similarity. They came into similar cultural backgrounds and family heritage, yet Plato remained essentially aristocratic in his life while Tagore has manifested an active sympathy to all regardless of caste. Tagore's education was not the wholesome experience which Plato's was to him. While both founded schools, participated in ventures of social reconstruction, and wrote prolifically, throughout there is revealed the characteristic contrast of classic restraint in Plato with the romantic freedom in Tagore. The comparison of the esthetic factors of the philosophies of Plato and Tagore has revealed that beauty has

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1. Cf. Republic III,401; III:87; Laws II,656-60; V:34-8 with Tagore, The Meaning of Art, Dacca University Bulletin, pp. 11-12

objective reality apart from the physical world. With Plato beauty is abstract in quality, with Tagore it is personal. Beauty may be known in its objective essence by intuition. There is fundamental agreement also in the experience of beauty in its attitude of disinterestedness, ecstasy or joy, and kinship which is creative. For both, beauty ranks very high in value and performs its function in the realization of its own reality. The considerations regarding art follow closely the contributions of beauty, since art is the expression of beauty. The creation of art is born out of the inspiration of beauty and communicates to the observer the experience of the artist. As the esthetic enters the field of education, Tagore and Plato are in harmony concerning the ultimate aim of virtue or self-realization in the individual personality. Both through differentiation and integration, esthetic factors are evident in the curriculum. In method there are similar procedures with the basic difference of the sense of restraint in Plato in contrast to Tagore's emphasis upon freedom.

An Evaluation of the Esthetic Factors in Plato and Tagore

Among the leaders in the field of art education, there is a strong movement toward a complete reorganization of art in education. In magazine and conference, plans are projected and experiments are reported. A representative statement of the situation is made by Victor D'Amico:

> We must first realize that the arts are not meeting the needs and demands that education sets. Our vision is short-sighted, our methods antiquated, and our objectives limited. . . . .
>
> We are indeed employing a 1910 educational machine in the arts to meet the demands of a modern world. . . . We must reorganize our philosophy, our teaching methods, and our tools. The old machine, the curriculum, is out of date; a new one must replace it.[1]

He pleads that art may have a real and vital place in education as is its right instead of the relation of an adjunct. In answer to many problems involved in the desired reorganization, he sets forth the following criteria for the arts in education:

1. To develop the power to see significantly, not imitatively, that the student may get a richer experience in living.
2. To develop a sense of the self through stimulating the imagination in the use of ideas, media, and materials of the arts.
3. To develop a conscious appreciationof the art values by participation in them through exploratory and discovery methods and not through dogmatic principles and formulae.
4. To provide a pleasurable experience through the joy acquired in creative activity.
5. To provide emotional and physical stability through working in graphic and plastic media.
6. To develop a self-discipline in the use of tools and media.
7. To develop the power of self-criticism and analysis through the knowledge of art values and materials.
8. To develop a deep sense of appreciation and tolerance for one's own work and the works of others by a wide knowledge of the cultural background.
9. To integrate the experience by the power to use all of one's intelligence all of the time.[2]

When these criteria are placed against the background of the educational views of Plato and Tagore, their harmony with

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1. The Arts in Education Now, Design, Vol. 38, No. 2, June, 1936, p.8
2. Ibid., p. 10

these standards is recognized. An analysis of the above statement indicates the demands for a new approach in philosophy, in methods, and in curriculum. Of what value are the esthetic factors in Plato and Tagore in relation to these felt needs in art education?

The Philosophy of Esthetics in Education

An adequate program of esthetic education must be built upon a sound philosophy of esthetics. It is futile to expect any wholesome changes or salutary results unless the the reorganization begins with a satisfactory view of the experience of beauty and art which is to be nurtured.

Much consideration has been given to the views of Plato and Tagore regarding the nature of beauty and art because of their relation to esthetic education. In a realistic view which considers beauty as identical with the physical presence of the art object, obviously esthetic education would be concerned with only the technical considerations of line, color, mass, form, and rhythm. Or again, from the viewpoint of beauty as subjective, the responsibility rests upon the experience of the person, hence the emphasis in esthetic education is upon individual experience. The former philosophy results in an approach largely intellectual and a method principally formal, working toward understanding and skill in techniques. The second philosophy of beauty develops an educational emphasis which is emotional and requires a highly individualistic method. These viewpoints are often confused in practice. There is yet a third philosophy of beauty as

objective, as seen in Plato and Tagore. On the basis of such a philosophy, esthetic education recognizes the objective qualities of art which express beauty and also takes into account the experience which one has in the presence of beauty. By holding to beauty as an objective reality, the elements of the other views are united and enriched. The value of the objective view is indicated in the following comparison:

> Greek literature and art are largely objective in the best sense; modern literature and art are subjective. Greek classic reserve, chaste and unemotional may seem cold to modern taste formed and fed by emotionalism . . . . . It is the essential normality, the simplicity, and the truthfulness of Greek works of art that may cause them to lack appeal to jaded modern feeling. Our craze for novelty inthe arts is an invitation to the portryal of the excessively ornate or the elaborate, even the representation of the ugly and the grotesque. The simply beautiful has ceased to attract. This surely is but a passing phase that will be followed by a return to truth and beauty. And it is to the Greeks that we shall return, insofar as we are indebted to them for the standards and the canons by which these eternal virtues are to be tested and measured.[1]

There is a mystical element in the experience of beauty according to Plato and Tagore. By direct apprehension of reality, one feels a sense of union with beauty. Laurence Buermeyer finds mysticism essential to art,[2] and observes that "when this withers art falls into dilettantism, academicism, preciosity, and trivinlity."[3] The artist must be aware also of an inspiration outside of the formal aspect of his art work to produce great art.[4] Plato and Tagore provide for both of

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1. La Rue Van Hook, Greek Life and Thought, p. 293
2. John Dewey, et. al., Art and Education, p. 43 ff.
3. Laurence Buermeyer, The Aesthetic Experience, p. 143
4. Ibid., p. 156

these experiences of the mystical in their esthetics.

What significance has this matter in esthetic education? Without this philosophic basis in esthetic education, art becomes as any formal study. Perfection of technique is its end. With the esthetic basis which Plato and Tagore provide, art comes closely akin to religion and enhances the spiritual values of life. Education does not become a marketplace where equipment for life is secured, but more nearly like the temple where the self opens like the flower to its full realization in strength and beauty. In Tagore's esthetics, the ideal and the real are held in union, making possible a living unity in experience.[1] The philosophy of beauty for both Plato and Tagore likewise unifies education about the vital center of experience which issues in creative realization.

Essential to Plato and Tagore is the kinship of beauty and experience of art with the good, with the spiritual values of life, with religion. Their philosophies lead to the unity of all of life, to interpenetration rather than differentiation and isolation. The scientific approach to esthetics seeks to isolate beauty by a clear-cut cleavage from other experience and thus it tends to consign the good and like values to a realm absolutely outside of the esthetic. Such differentiation may be accomplished with precision in the sphere of thought, but not in that of experience. Plato

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore, pp. 140-2

and Tagore were not hermits given to philosophic formulations, but concerts with life at its fulness. Beauty and art, being what they are, function unremittingly in the moral realm.[1]

The Aims of Esthetic Education

An immediate outgrowth of a philosophy of education are the aims to be realized through the process. In an initial study of esthetics, the aims of esthetic education were found to be three — esthetic awareness, taste, and creative expression.[2] What is the relation of Plato and Tagore to these aims?

Esthetic Awareness

The basic aim in esthetic education is to enlarge one's capacity for the esthetic response to life. Plato's aims of education make no direct recognition of this need. It may be read into his stated aim, but his silence at this point indicates another aspect of the problem. Plato's concern was not to develop esthetic awareness, but what to do with the keen sensitiveness common with the Greek of his day. The response to art and all the surroundings is so ready and full that some means of censorship is advisable. The Greek had not yet learned the reaction of the unmoved

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1. Raphael Demos, The Philosophy of Plato, pp. 218, 253; Emile Faguet, Pour qu'on lise Platon, p. 246 ff.
2. Above p. 26

spectator of modern times. He was close to the experience of ritual in which all participated in expressing an emotional experience. Consequently, his esthetic awareness was keen and his response immediate.[1] A further observation is significant at this point. A full esthetic content of current education afforded an opportunity for the natural development of awareness. Plato did not have to revise a formalized system of education which snuffed out the alertness of early childhood. However, there is, through his curriculum and culminating in the advanced study, the aim to cultivate that awareness to the real beauty. Hence, though recognized in method, esthetic awareness is not set as a conscious aim in education.

The situation is very different with Tagore. The current Indian educational practice is "dogmatic in character, restrictive in operation, unnecessarily elaborate in its methods and wasteful in its results."[2] Such procedure in education has tended to quell that spontaneity which is necessary if sensitiveness is to be developed. Therefore, Tagore consciously aims to preserve in the child his response to life in its various aspects. He seeks especially to develop that sympathetic awareness to the universe and art in its various forms by which one experiences the reality in all.

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1. The discussion by Jane E. Harrison in Ancient Art and Ritual is very suggestive on this point, especially pp. 127-33.
2. John Jesudason Cornelius, Rabindranath Tagore: India's Schoolmaster, p. 121

At this point of awareness, both Plato and Tagore provide strongly for the esthetic in education. Leaders of The Barnes Foundation deplore the "demonstrable inability to see."[1] So important is this matter that Parkhurst defines esthetic education very largely in terms of sensitivity as

> the relearning of awareness, the recovery of the excited, flooded consciousness of the child with its naive curiosity, and wonder, and irrepressible gladness. And included in this as of very particular importance is the revivifying of feelings quite physiologically based, and the renequirement of a conscious participation in all the body's abundant life.[2]

Esthetic education in this sense is not selective in the development of the gifted individual only, but brings all to an experience of beauty.[3] Nor is esthetic awareness merely a response to physical qualities, but there must be sensitiveness of the whole self to spiritual reality as well. Education, then, aims to develop the capacity of vivid awareness to the beauty that is generally passed by unperceived.

Taste

The development of taste for beauty is definitely conditioned by the quality of one's awareness.[4] Ordinarily, taste in esthetics is conceived to be a very specialized standard of judgment of beautiful objects. So in education, art study has attempted to set up this standard of criticism.

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1. John Dewey, et. al., Art and Education, pp. 36-7, 192-3
2. Helen M. Parkhurst, Beauty: An Interpretation of Art and the Imaginative Life, p. 265
3. Ibid., pp. 266-7
4. Cf. Harold M. Lee, Perception and Aesthetic Value, pp. 133-46

To develop taste in this academic sense is only a very fragmentary part of the whole and may well be condemned.[1] Neither Plato nor Tagore mistakes the true nature of taste, for they conceive of it in terms of the whole tenor of character. Accordingly, Plato aims to develop taste through the nurture of the harmony of soul by which inner virtue one loves what ought to be loved and hates what ought to be hated.[2] So vital is this matter to Plato that he begins in the nursery to direct the experiences of pleasure and displeasure which determine taste. In the same spirit, Tagore thinks of esthetic education as setting the tone of the whole personality in relation to the deepest reality of life. The development of taste comes naturally, then, as a part of the whole experience. This end is realized through the experience of beauty in art and nature. Both Plato and Tagore, therefore, penetrate to the core of the problem of values as they aim to develop taste in education.

Creative Expression

The aim of cultivating the ability to express esthetic experience creatively is generally felt to be the whole purpose of esthetic education. If one can learn to draw, paint, model, just *do* something, he has an art education —such is the feeling. This attitude has been intensi-

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1. D'Amico, The Arts in Education Now, *Design*, Vol. 38, No. 2, p. 9
2. Plato notes the conflict in taste for one whose nature and habits are not in harmony. *Laws* II, 655-6; V: 33-4

fied in the reaction against the traditional appreciation and in the promotion of expression in progressive education. So now, to express in tangible form something felt inwardly is cherished as a goal in esthetic education. Esthetic creativity, however, is not just any expression, but that which arises from the experience of beauty. An emphasis upon creativity is not explicit in Plato. Yet, Monroe questions "whether education as a process of developing creative power - power of expression, of initiative, and of appreciation - has ever been given a more fruitful form."[1] Greek life was creative in another sense. By means of the chorus, drama, festivals, and contests, the citizens were frequently participating in creative expression. For them art was so much a part of life that it did not need to become an academic exercise. Besides, the very procedure of education in music and gymnastic was basically creative in its process. Tagore considers of major importance the development of skill in expressing one's experience of beauty. As words are a language for expression, so are the various arts, and education should provide one with the opportunity to express himself through any art which may appeal to him. The same creative expressiveness finds outlet in relation to the whole range of individual and social experience and is encouraged by Tagore. Though only a few students may become master artists, the

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1. Paul Monroe, A Text-Book in the History of Education, p.91

freedom of expression is necessary for all. Thus, a major purpose of education is to enable one to express his esthetic experiences creatively.

In the aims of education, both Plato and Tagore are in harmony with the standards for esthetic education. Plato is explicit primarily in regard to the development of taste since provision is made for the other emphases in Greek life. All three are emphasized by Tagore since his educational problems are those which exist generally today. However, in the emphasis of Plato upon virtuous character as a basis for taste and that of both upon the esthetic awareness in relation to the metaphysical nature of reality, Plato and Tagore have driven deep the foundations for esthetic education. Reference to their own stated aims of education reveals further the broad and unified approach centering in the individual as a complete self and his relation to the social group. Thus esthetic education is made an integral part of the whole ed ucational process.

The Curriculum of Esthetic Education

In the desired reorganization of art education, the natural outgrowth of a new philosophy and new aims is adjustment in the curriculum as a whole, not of art education alone. In her analysis of esthetic education, Lascaris organizes the curriculum in terms of general situations and particular situations. In general the media of esthetic

education are the school, the home, the community, the parents and teachers, and certain vital rhythms and psycho-physical energies which she calls "la beauté de l'enfant."[1] The more specific situations for esthetic education are sense education and certain forms of expression — the cultivation of gesture, the manual arts, music, modeling and design, and literary training.[2] The curricula of Plato and Tagore, considered in light of these standards, provide an opportunity for full esthetic development. In their stress upon the unconscious influences are found the informal aspects of education. Plato is most emphatic that aspects of environment which distort the sense of beauty should be removed. This general principle comprehends many of the things which Tagore considers particularly. In his own institution, Tagore is able to control these matters directly — the simple, quiet life of the school which is also the home and community, helpers and teachers who live beautifully as well as teach beauty, and a régime which promotes the well-being and fulness of all the personal energies, physical, mental, and spiritual. By thus providing for the control of unconscious growth, Plato and Tagore recognize the forces which strongly determine esthetic development.

Likewise, the formal aspects of the curriculum are of high esthetic value. The cultivation of the senses is of primary importance. In Plato's curriculum, sense awareness is

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1. Polymnia A. Lascaris, L'éducation esthétique de l'enfant, Book III, Chap. II, pp. 382-405
2. Ibid., Book III, Chap. III, pp. 406-63.

a concomitant learning out of the full art content. Tagore makes direct provision for this aspect of esthetic growth. By that fact his process is more complete and, through the direct method, keeps the experience as natural as possible. Closely akin to sense awareness is alertness of kinesthetic responses and the grace of bodily movement. Plato rightly uses gymnastic in its various aspects for esthetic growth.[1] Tagore accomplishes the same end, but with physical activity of a more natural sort and with less of the military aspect. It is with real insight that they use this aspect of the curriculum, not only to maintain physical fitness, but also to nurture the harmony of personality, recognizing the interdependence of the body and soul. In the provision for manual arts, Plato is obviously deficient, due to his absorption in aristocratic interests and the social structure of his day. While his plan is adequate for his purpose, its lack in meeting modern educational problems is made up in Tagore's curriculum where the arts and crafts become a natural part of the whole social and educational experience. By this means the esthetic is given a channel of expression which integrates it vitally with the common aspects of life and gives an outlet for creative activity which is unrestricted. Plato apparently gives a larger part of his curriculum to music than does Tagore. However, music includes learning the lyre, harmonization, poetry, the chorus, and other related arts. The

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1. Cf. Charles De Garmo, Aesthetic Education, pp. 61-4

natural judgment is that such an emphasis upon music is impracticable and unwarranted. But the educational values of music are yet to be learned,[1] so Plato will do a service by inciting investigation in this direction. Tagore's curriculum with music as only one of the number of art studies is nearer the modern situation and represents the best possible adjustment in an educational system which must answer so many demands. There is no indication that Plato makes any place for modeling or drawing, and it is uncertain whether creative writing was encouraged. Both of these avenues of esthetic expression have due emphasis in Tagore's curriculum.

From this brief analysis, certain values are evident. Tagore has a more highly differentiated curriculum, but not at the cost of integration which is made possible by the strong esthetic content. Ample provision is made for esthetic growth both by impression and expression, especially by means of its normal relations to life activities, thus making possible the sense of unity in life. Furthermore, it is evident, more markedly in Tagore than in Plato, that the curriculum centers in the student rather than in a body of knowledge or skills to be acquired. The particular esthetic development manifested at various age levels is recognized in

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1. Cf. William H. Sheldon, Psychology and the Promethean Will, pp. 133-7. A practical test of the value of music is reported by a headmistress in An Experiment in Educating the Mind through the Body, Hibbert Journal, Vol. XXXI, No. 2, January, 1933, pp. 217-25.

the curriculum. In addition to what is accomplished directly, much value is realized through channels of unconscious esthetic growth. In conclusion, while the curriculum presented by Plato affords nearly all the desired esthetic values, Tagore integrates all these values with the modern type of curriculum.

The Methods of Esthetic Education

Esthetic education is generally conceived of in terms of materials. But as surely as teaching with art objects does not assure an esthetic experience, so surely do certain methods mean esthetic growth or dwarfing regardless of the subject matter. There are, therefore, certain methods which are essential to esthetic education. What recognition do Plato and Tagore make of these methods?

The value of educational method in fostering esthetic growth is seen in Plato and Tagore first in their recognition of normal development. The periods of natural physical growth find their counterpart in method in play and purposeful physical activity which harmonizes with other aspects of personality development. The principles of normal psychological growth are observed in the methods of training in perception, the basis of the Montessori method having been recognized by Plato. Direct learning is introduced wherever possible, and the practice of interpretation and judgment is postponed until experience is adequate for a sound basis. This attitude of mind is essential to mature esthetic

experience. Tagore stresses the necessity for freedom as the sine qua non for esthetic education. Plato seeks freedom also, but the freedom which is the result of discipline.[1] It is noteworthy that abundant opportunity is given for the creative expression of experience which has esthetic significance. The methods of Tagore provide a more varied opportunity for creativity in relation to special art work, but more significantly in conjunction with all of experience.

In making another approach to method, Plato and Tagore find opportunity for esthetic growth in the nat ural resources of experience. The esthetic comes out of life and is not superimposed upon it. Tagore places great importance upon the environment in learning. Simplicity of surroundings and contact with nature are methods of esthetic growth which Tagore uses extensively. Plato does not express himself regarding nature, but is most particular about the surroundings and thus depends upon censorship. Again, Tagore stresses the personality of the teacher as a vital factor in esthetic growth. Plato does not make special mention of this factor, but holding the fairest of sights to be a beautiful soul in a beautiful body, he is not unaware of the value of personality in leading to an apprehension of beauty. Of striking significance is the way educational method penetrates the normal interests and functions of life, thus making the esthetic operative in life as a whole. In fine, Plato and Tagore make

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1. Raphael Demos, The Philosophy of Plato, p. 231

possible esthetic growth in education through methods which recognize principles of normal growth and which capitalize on those factors of normal experience which have special value. As in some elements of the curriculum, here again Plato is silent where Tagore is very explicit. For both, the method of education does not isolate esthetic experience, but even while keeping it a distinct experience preserves its growth in vital relation to the whole of life.

General Summary

The comparison of the esthetic factors in Plato and Tagore has revealed many interesting points of similarity and contrast. Both Plato and Tagore came into periods still vibrant with a renascence and a culture saturated with beauty and art as an integral part of life. Out of their homes, education, and friends came opportunities and direction which definitely moulded their esthetic natures and gave them an individual turn of expression, Plato to philosophy and Tagore to creative art. Their interest in political affairs brought disillusionment, but Tagore has kept in close touch with social problems. Both founded schools to promote the major passion of their lives, each school being an expression of the distinctive aspect of their personalities — for Plato the love of philosophy and youth, for Tagore the love of the child and the beauty of life. Again, Plato and Tagore wrote extensively, the one in a single form — the dialogue —

touching philosophy with art, the other in many forms — poetry, song, drama, story, essay —touching art with philosophy.

In their esthetics, the fundamental comparison is the objective reality of beauty which also contains the contrast between the impersonal and personal nature of that reality. Beauty in its essence is known intuitively. Contemplation, disinterestedness, ecstasy, and kinship characterize the esthetic experience. Because of their relation to reality, both beauty and art are of great value and function in the realization of the self. Art is the expression of the experience of beauty and treasures up for another that experience of the artist.

In esthetic education, Plato and Tagore seek to realize the fullest development of the individual as a person and as a citizen. Their curricula in education lay strong emphasis upon the arts, Tagore in a more modern and articulate manner than Plato. This same contrast is found in the methods of education. While both follow the normal development, Tagore has been able to work out more detail in his own school. Of esthetic importance is their joint emphasis upon unconscious learning from the environment, the play spirit, the development of individual capacities, the direct method, and the unity of art with life. A basic contrast in

method is Plato's approach of discipline and Tagore's of freedom.

In order to realize in modern educational practice what has been conceived of aesthetic education, special consideration must be given to the underlying philosophy, the aims, the curriculum, and the methods. By way of evaluation, Plato and Tagore provide an adequate philosophical basis in esthetics in that beauty as objective reality of a metaphysical nature unifies life and contributes to its full realization. With regard to aims, Plato and Tagore provide for the development of awareness to sense objects and to beauty in all of life. A sensitive nature develops some standard of taste, hence Plato and Tagore aim to make it the natural expression of inner harmony. Finally, the urge to creativity is directed both by stimulation and various channels for expression. The curricula have points of contrast, but each in its own way provides for the esthetic as an integral part of the whole educational experience by magnifying the aspects of beauty in general situations and in specific learning activities. Both Plato and Tagore recognize the effect of general method on esthetic growth. Therefore, educational procedure follows laws of normal growth, both physiological and psychological, and develops the freedom of discipline in contrast to formalism.

CHAPTER VI

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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Review of the Problem

Problems of personality development, of social adjustment, of educational value, and of religious interest magnify the significance of art and beauty in life. In the specific field of the arts in education, there is a strong movement toward reorganization in relation to the whole purpose of education. In the history of esthetic education, Plato presents an educational system permeated with the arts and Tagore has founded a school a part of whose purpose is to foster esthetic growth. Hence, the problem of this investigation has been to discover, through a comparative study, the contribution of Plato and Tagore to esthetic education. It was necessary first to define the field of esthetic education. In studying Plato and Tagore, the research was focused in their esthetics and the esthetic aspects of their views on education. Following the analysis and exposition of their respective views, a comparison was made upon which was based

an evaluation of the views of Plato and Tagore in relation to esthetic education.

Summary of Findings

In order to determine the specific aspect of education concerned in this research, a preliminary study was made of the field of esthetics and of esthetic education. From a brief survey of its historical development, its problems and methods of study, esthetics was described as a systematic study of the nature of beauty and art and the experience of the subject in appreciation and creative expression derived from their perception. Historically, the arts have gradually gained a recognized place in education, but art education does not comprehend the whole scope of esthetic education. The field of esthetic education was thus defined: in terms of aims -- to enlarge the capacity for the esthetic response to life, to develop a taste for beauty, and to cultivate the ability to express esthetic experience creatively; in terms of content -- the whole realm of unconscious influence coming from home, community, school, the situations of formal study in technique and appreciation, in the fine and the practical arts, in observation and creativity; and finally in terms of methods -- direction of early impressions, disinterested attitude, a direct approach, cultivation of the esthetic emotion, and use of environmental influence.

With this understanding of esthetics and its relation to education, the investigation turned to a study of

Plato. The esthetic factors of his life were found to be worthy of note. The culture of his time was esthetic to a high degree as was likewise the current education. Through family association with the leadership of Athens and friendship with Socrates, his gifted nature was challenged with an ideal of virtue for the state. His mature years expressed this ideal in the founding of the Academy, in the practical experience at Syracuse, and the writing of the dialogues.

In analyzing Plato's philosophy, it was found that beauty is a major consideration, for beauty is closely akin to virtue. In its essence beauty exists apart in a supersensuous form or idea by participation in which sensible objects are beautiful. Beauty may be known in its essence by intuition or perceived in art which is beautiful. A direct experience of beauty fills the soul with ecstacy and reverence which inspire creative art. This same experience is mediated by the artist to the one who contemplates his art. By the lack of awareness to and development of some problems of esthetics, it was observed that Plato comes at the dawn of the philosophy of beauty and art, and does not make it his major concern in his dialogues.

Plato's primary concern with beauty was found to be in relation to education with the aim of developing virtue in the individual and thus justice in the state. He uses, in his educational theory, the basic patterns of current Greek education with its major emphasis upon music and gymnastic in the curriculum. With the proper selectivity and discipline, music and gymnastic develop a harmony of the soul and body

which is of the essence of virtue. Advanced education trains select students in the harmony of the sciences so that they may apprehend the eternal ideas. Thus art and beauty are a large consideration in the content of education. In educational method Plato recognizes basic principles which contribute directly to esthetic growth. He emphasizes strongly the control of unconscious influences that they may be in harmony with beauty, follows normal development, develops the disinterested approach, builds a standard of taste, and recognizes the imitative tendency. Therefore, it was observed that the esthetic holds a dominant place in Plato's educational views.

The research then turned to a study of Rabindranath Tagore. Having been born at the time of the Indian Renaissance and into a family of great leaders in social, artistic, and religious affairs, Rabindranath early was turned toward esthetic interests. The inspiration which he failed to get from his schooling came from his family and from an awakening of deep awareness to the world about him. He began to express himself freely in poetry and song. About the same time he grew in understanding of the great social problems of his beloved India and gave his energies to direct service as well as writing. Through travel and lecturing his interests in other cultures deepened, and he became internationally known. He returned to India to expand the work of his experimental school, Santiniketan, which he had founded earlier with the purpose of providing an education which makes possible the full realization of life. Thus Tagore has combined in his

life the social reformer, the creative artist, and the educator.

The poet's views on esthetics are closely related to his major philosophy. The supreme reality, being both immanent and transcendent, is personal in nature. The universe is the result of the creative activity of that personality. Beauty, therefore, is an expression of that reality in sensuous form. The esthetic experience comes through sensitiveness to the supersensuous reality as it is expressed in nature and art. Man thus experiences kinship with reality and joy which release in his personality creative energies out of which he expresses himself in art. The esthetic experience, then, is a means for man's full realization of himself.

Tagore's educational ideals as embodied in Santiniketan are a direct outgrowth of this philosophy. The esthetic factors which are so generally neglected are given their place in education. Every opportunity is used, by direct or indirect method, to develop a full awareness of beauty and provide avenues for its creative expression. The curriculum works out a close integration of art study with all courses. In addition to basic studies required of all, there are the special divisions for specialization in the crafts as well as the fine arts. At informal times also the group activities encourage creative expression. Tagore fosters esthetic growth, likewise, by method. Freedom and self-discipline are the basis of the whole school life. Learning is by direct contact wherever possible, hence nature

and the personality of the teacher have an important place. Through all, beauty develops the sense of unity in self-realization. Thus it became evident that Tagore makes a major contribution to the esthetic in education.

Following this individual study of Plato and Tagore, the major findings were compared and evaluated. It was found that both alike came into a period of renascence, were born into families of aristocracy, founded schools in order to realize their ideals, participated in projects of social reform, and wrote extensively. Marked contrasts were noted in that Tagore broke away from his caste while Plato remained essentially an aristocrat, Tagore's school comprehends the whole scope of education while Plato's is essentially the training of the philosopher, Tagore's participation in social betterment was more extensive than was Plato's, and finally Tagore's writing is essentially that of the artist while Plato's is that of a philosopher. Major points of agreement were found in their views of esthetics. Beauty is objective and metaphysical in nature -- to Plato as abstract form, to Tagore as personalized truth. For Plato beauty is akin to the good, for Tagore it is close to religion. In its essence, beauty is known intuitively and perceived in its expression in art; Tagore emphasizes its expression in nature. The experience of beauty gives ecstasy or joy and a sense of union with reality. Art is the creative expression of man's experience of beauty. Beauty and art, by their very nature, contribute richly to the realization of the self. To this end the esthetic has a major place in education. In Plato the

curriculum concentrates on music and gymnastic, while Tagore includes a broader scope of the arts. Both use forms of esthetic expression such as festivals, drama, chorus, and the dance. Plato isolates the period of concentrated esthetic education while Tagore integrates it with the whole scope of study. In matters of method both use essentially the same procedures, though Tagore gives them a more modern expression and magnifies the sense of freedom in contrast to Plato's dominant purpose of discipline. Further, Tagore, more than Plato, gives place to the practical expression of the esthetic in relation to the whole of life.

At this point an evaluation was made of the views of Plato and Tagore in relation to esthetic education. By referring to a representative statement of the modern standard for art in education, it was found that Plato and Tagore are basically in harmony with the trends toward esthetic education. They provide in their esthetics a philosophic basis which realizes the fullest in education for the realization of self. Their aims in education include implicitly, if not always explicitly, the purpose of esthetic awareness, taste, and creative expression. In their curricula, provision is made for the major consideration in esthetic education, both formal and informal. Tagore has worked out the integration of the esthetic in a more highly articulated curriculum. Finally, in method they have set forth those principles and procedures essential to esthetic growth. Wherever possible esthetic expression is related to normal life processes, more definitely on the part of Tagore than Plato.

Conclusions

In the light of this rich study in esthetic education developed by Plato and Tagore, a number of considerations are outstanding. These are expressed in the form of conclusions and problems for further study.

1. Esthetic education provides a vital, integrating factor for experience. Where the growth of personality is normal, the esthetic permeates all experience. Therefore, it should have a place of corresponding importance in education.

2. The idealistic philosophy of esthetics provides an adequate basis for esthetic education. The reality of beauty is differentiated from the esthetic experience as experience and from the sense object as sense object. Because of its relation to the ultimate reality, beauty unifies experience and contributes to the highest realization of the self.

3. The arts in education are not concerned primarily with sense data, but with values which they express. Artistic qualities in sense objects are not ignored, but are interpreted in terms of the reality which gives them meaning.

4. The aims of esthetic education are as inclusive as life itself. They touch the fundamental aspects of personality and control its growth. Therefore, they find their center in personality and not in materials or procedures.

5. Esthetic education provides an integrative factor in education in relation to a highly differentiated curriculum. It is not to be relegated to a few select courses.

6. Esthetic education should become a vital part of the education of every child. It is not to be reserved for the talented child and professional course. It should begin with his earliest experience and be kept active in some form of progressive expression throughout his study.

7. The esthetic is embodied in all aspects of the school life. The atmosphere of the school is a strong unconscious influence and should be characterized by order, freedom, and creativity. The physical surroundings, as well, should be in harmony with the esthetic by simplicity and beauty. Negative influences should be eliminated as far as possible since keen awareness to beauty means also sensitiveness to that which is not beautiful.

8. Nature provides a rich opportunity for esthetic growth. Education should make possible direct contact with nature, both for study and for values from informal contacts.

9. The personality of the teacher is a vital factor for its stimulation to personality. Esthetic education must be in terms of the whole self and not the intellect alone. Education tends to be held up to this level when it is mediated through personality rather than through impersonal means.

10. Physical activity has a strong influence upon the esthetic response in life. It should be so organized as to contribute to the harmony of the whole self and not to exaggerated physical mastery.

11. Methods of education in other than distinctly art studies affect esthetic growth. By reason of this fact the whole of educational procedure must be built upon the

basic principles of normal growth which undergird esthetic education.

12. Discipline should be an outgrowth of freedom but not displace it. It is determined in relation to a conscious ideal or purpose which pervades relationships in educational procedure.

13. Abundant opportunity should be given for creative expression. Esthetic creativity is the natural outgrowth of wholesome experience of beauty and can be realized with meaning only on this basis.

The implications of this investigation in relation to modern educational practice indicate certain problems for further research. Since esthetic education is highly individualistic in its method, how can its values be realized to the maximum in situations which demand mass education. Granted the contribution which contact with nature makes to esthetic development, how is it possible to preserve or supplement these values in large urban educational systems? In recognition of the potent influence of environment outside of the child's school contacts, to what extent and by what means is it desirable to control and censor the factors of esthetic import? What methods in teacher training can be incorporated in the already heavy requirements in order to prepare teachers who will preserve the esthetic values in all educational procedure? When some of these problems have been solved, it shall be possible to realize more generally the values of esthetic education which have been set forth in this study of Plato and Tagore.

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