

CHAPTER XII

The concept of the Poet in the aesthetics of Sri Aurobindo

If Heidegger says, ' All reflective thinking is poetic, and all poetry in turn is a kind of thinking' (Stambaugh 1971: 136), Sri Aurobindo would go further to say it is intuitive thinking. Poetry emanates from a sublime source that finds expression through a supreme revelatory utterance. The various grades of consciousness (*satyam ritam brhat*) commingle to produce the spirit forming gestalt. The poet's vision perceives the universe in its comprehensive wholeness that sends forth the creative rhythm. The sense of beauty fosters the sense of oneness. The poet achieves the fourth dimension of aesthetic sense.

A fourth dimension of aesthetic sense
Where all is in ourselves, ourselves in all,
To the cosmic wideness re-aligns our souls,
A kindling rapture joins the seer and seen;
The craftsman and the craft grown only one
Achieve perfection by the magic throb
And passion of their close identity. (Aurobindo 1996:112)

The voice of poetry comes from a region above us, a plane of our being, above and beyond our personal intelligence; a supermind which sees things in their innermost. The poet has to realise a region above him, beyond his mere personal intelligence. His voice finds expression under the sway of the supermind which 'sees things in their innermost and largest truth by a spiritual identity and with a lustrous effulgency and rapture and its native language is a revelatory, inspired, intuitive word limpid or subtly vibrant or densely packed with the glory of this ecstasy'.(Aurobindo 1994:279)
The poet finds his strength from the higher hidden planes of consciousness.

A Power that lives upon the heights must act,
Bring into life's closed room the Immortal's air
And fill the finite with the Infinite. (Aurobindo 1996:315-16)

He penetrates through the veneer of mundanity to correspond with the secret knowledge . In one of Vamadeva's hymns in the fourth Mandala (IV. 3.16) the Rishi describes himself as one illumined expressing through his thought and speech words of guidance, " secret words" - *ninya vacamsi* - "seer wisdom that utter their inner meaning to the seer" - *kavyani kavaye nivacana*. (Aurobindo 1991:5) The poet-seer (*kavayah satyasrutah*) sees the truth (*ritam*), the true law of things (*ketuna*).

They sang Infinity's names and deathless powers
In metres that reflect the moving worlds,
Sight's sound -waves breaking from the soul's great deeps.
(Sethna 1989:402)

He goes beyond the word or image he uses or the forms of the things he sees. He stands to reveal the large and powerful interpretive vision of Nature, life and man. He discovers the 'hidden word'.

A world unseen, unknown by outward mind
Appeared in the silent spaces of the soul.
He sat in secret chambers looking out
Into the luminous countries of the unborn
Where all things dreamed by the mind are seen and true
And all that the life longs for is drawn close. (Aurobindo 1996:27)

In the dialectic of the 'delight of being' and the 'delight of becoming' we have the hub of creativity in art and literature. What is irrefutable here is the subliminal nature of aesthetic inspiration - 'the more luminous, flexible, deep and powerful will the Art be that springs from that high motive'. (Aurobindo 1950 :109) The poet is a man who is not

incapacitated by a disability to seize the essence or *rasa*, the delight of being which is supra-aesthetic. *Rasa*, for Sri Aurobindo, is more than the informing spirit of poetry (*vakyam rasatmakam kavyam*); it is the existential substrate of all that *is*.

So poetry attains its value by its ability to carry us beyond the ordinary range of our consciousness. ('Poetry , if it deserves the name at all, comes always from some subtle plane through the creative vital and uses the outer mind and external instruments for transmission only.' Aurobindo 1949: 3) The Aurobindean aesthetic catches the dialectic of the Mind and the Super Mind where the artistic delight transforms into the delight of being.

The artist and the poet do it when they seek the *rasa* of the universal from the aesthetic emotion or from the physical line or from the mental form of beauty or from the inner sense and power alike of that from which the ordinary man turns away and of that to which he is attached by sense of pleasure.(Aurobindo 1949 :206)

What is hinted at is the psychological transformation that sets in the aftermath of an artistic mode of apprehension, leading the artist to the higher grades of consciousness. This is the true metamorphosis in Sri Aurobindo's thesis where the broadening of the consciousness unsheathes the true (not merely being in self-delight) self in an expression that is essentially spiritual. Sri Aurobindo's aesthetic culture is inextricably integrated to a spiritual experience where art 'reveals the power for inner truths, for self-enlargement, for liberation'. (Aurobindo 1949:163) The poet has the 'unsealed vision'(130), the 'vision mind'(1949:63) or 'seeing mind'(302). 'The intellect is not the poet, the artist, the creator within us; creation comes by a supra-rational influx of light and power.'(1949:128) In a remarkable process of absorption and transfiguration, the artist adds something to what is already existing. To use Sri Aurobindo's distinction between the powers of manifesting and discovering, one might say that the mental imagination has to discover the unknown, while the truth-consciousness alone is capable of manifesting the known. He seizes the soul of the wonder of things and not

the mechanical miracle, searching out the perfected synthesis of rhythm and sublime. The creative impulse rides on the inspiration which is the force that lends substance to rhythm, form and words. 'The most genuine and perfect poetry is written when the original source is able to throw its inspiration pure and unaltered into the vital and there it takes its true native form and power of speech exactly reproducing the inspiration, while the outer consciousness is entirely passive and transmits without alternation what it receives.' (Aurobindo 1949:3) The true poet is the channel or receptacle for the inrush of the elation or creative impulse that transmits what it receives. The discriminative intelligence and determining vision 'comes as part of that influx of power and light from above which by its divine enthusiasm lifts the faculties into their intense supra-rational working. (1972 :Vol.15 131) He is thus open to the golden light.

Thy golden Light came down into my brain
And the grey rooms of mind sun-touched became
A bright reply to wisdom's occult plane,
A calm illumination and a flame.

Thy golden light came down into my throat
And all my speech is now a tune divine,
A paean-son of Thee my single note;
My words are drunk with the Immortal's wine.

(“The Golden Light”, 1994:146)

This golden light is the divine inspiration; it is the impetus to poetic creation and utterance which comes to the poet from a superconscient source above the ordinary mentality; this makes what is written seem not to be the fabrication of the brain-mind, but something more sovereign that is breathed or poured in from above. The poet, essentially, creates out of himself - with the inner seeing and sense. His outward seeing stimulates his inner vision where the personality of the seer disappears under the intensity of the eternity of vision and the Spirit stands in its sovereign identity to reveal its own secrets. So the poetic vision of life is a soul view, and the mind of the poet,

seized by the creative spirit, looks beyond the inane temporality of things to discern 'forces behind life'.

A conscious power has drawn the plan of life,
There is meaning in each curve and line. (Aurobindo 1996:460)

The soul of the poet has come to see "Thy world-epiphany" as the "veil" is torn.

A master-work of colour and design,
A mighty sweetness borne on grandeur's wings;
A burdened wonder of significant line
Reveals itself in even commonest things.
(*"Divine Sight"* 1994:165)

Sri Aurobindean aesthetic stresses a greater, wider, and deeper aesthesis. By aesthesis, Sri Aurobindo 'meant a reaction of the consciousness, mental and vital and even bodily, which receives a certain element in things, something that can be called their taste, Rasa, which passing through the mind or sense or both awakes a vital enjoyment of the taste, Bhoga, and this can again awaken us, awaken even the soul in us to something yet deeper and more fundamental than mere pleasure and enjoyment, to some form of the spirit's delight of existence, Ananda'. (1949:122) The poet avails himself of image, symbol, whatever is just, beautiful, meaningful, and suggestive. He gives to a local habitation a new merit and 'his fictions are not charming airy nothings, but as with every true artist significant figures and creations which serve to bring very real realities close to the spirit, and their immortality is the immortality of truth'. (Aurobindo1994:212) With intuitive life vision or inspired reason he can shed light on the self of things and reach the vision of identity - our whole self and the self of the world. So in the universal light of the sun of poetic truth, the poet *creates*. The Vedas point out the eternal Truth around which the illumined powers of thought and life find their sacrosanct place. Under the benign benison of the immutable beauty of Mother of Creation and the Eternal Spirit, such powers find their 'measureless house'. The poet grows an access to such a source.

A voice of unborn things whispers to the ear,
To their eyes visited by some high sunlight
Aspiration shows the image of a crown:
To work out a seed that she has thrown within,
To achieve her power in them her creatures live.

(Aurobindo 1996 183-4)

With the power of his waking self he is in the formidable position to discover the highest power of the inspired word, the *Mantra*.

The poet may be balked by his medium, his transcribing brain and inadequate control over language and rhythm. The true poet needs to grow a mastery in all these three areas in a twofold Sadhana where one points to the spontaneous illumination of the inspiration ('a slender river of brightness leaping from a vast and eternal knowledge ... which exceeds reason more perfectly than reason exceeds the knowledge of the senses' Sri Aurobindo 1972: 27) and the other requiring labour in the proficiency of art for 'reception' and 'transmission' - a poetic radiation, as it were. 'For the poetic mind sees at once in a flood of coloured light, in a moved experience, in an ecstasy of the coming of the word, in splendours of form, in a spontaneous leaping out of inspired idea upon idea, sparks of the hoof-beats of the white flame horse Dadhikravan galloping up the mountain of the gods or breath and hue of wing striking into wing of the irised broods of Thought flying over earth or up towards heaven.' (Aurobindo 1994:206) He has the stab of flame within:

A light falls on our vexed unsatisfied lives,
A thought comes down from the ideal worlds
And moves us to new model even here
Some image of their greatness and appeal
And wonder beyond the ken of mortal hope.

(Aurobindo 1996:261-2)

The poet is the seer-creator, hierophant and magician of a diviner and more universal beauty. He hears 'a voice of unborn things' (183). His creation voices a supreme harmony of Truth, Beauty, Delight, Life and the Spirit. Philosophy may meander into abstractions

and religion 'turn to an intolerent otherworldliness and asceticism', but the poet creates his art as the mediator between the immaterial and the concrete, the spirit and life, liberating man into pure delight and bringing beauty into his life. The recreation of the five supreme harmonies provide the ample sweetness and power; the accents of power and light come from 'the highest skies of vision and ranges through the widest width of our being'. (Aurobindo 1994:199) Here dwells Homer, Shakespeare, Dante, Valmiki, Vamadeva or Viswamitra who can seize on some truth of being, breath of life, power of spirit and manifest it for the delight and joy. There is the imaginative intelligence, the ecstatic and exalted sense and more than anything else the intense light of the revealing force. The true poet will have the 'sovereign poetic enthusiasm' raising his art to the greater power of revelation, the Overmind, the source of creative inspiration. He puts his fingers on undiscovered secrets, transfiguring old rhythms and creating new harmonies; he is scarcely guided by rules and prescribed forms - the Truth-finder, born as a flame from earth and yet the heavenly messenger of the Immortals. The poet may subscribe to a system of philosophy but would betray the essential law of creation in his effort to argue out his system intellectually: he would stomp, though artistically, the unfirm ground where authentic poetic spirit and pure inspiration are in short supply. He is the man who serves the 'rites of a different consecration' with 'richly irised seeing eye' and 'rapturous voice', providing in an insightful transmutation the 'something more' - it is the truth that is poetic, authentic, inspired and compelling. Here Tagore is Sri Aurobindo's Poet with the transforming power of poetic vision. The Poet ascends to the supreme level and can ascend beyond the regions of Mind where the higher and wider values stand to substitute the values of constricted existential perimeter.

Beauty, in its four grades - physical, moral, intellectual, spiritual - forms a difficult evolution as the poet's mind requires to travel beyond the initial stages to the supra sensuous, the supra rational and the supra intellectual with a sense of 'revelation'. He transcends his role as a maker of beautiful words and phrases, a favoured child of the fancy and imagination and a careful fashioner of idea and utterance but becomes the chosen voice of the eternal spirit of beauty and delight and the supremely creative and self-expressive rapture, approximating the Ananda. The poet has the persistent thrill of a

transfiguring touch and to whom 'beauty' – a flame in which God abides – discloses itself. Thus empowered, the poet digs out the 'wells of light' from darkness's core.

On the undiscovered depths imposed a form,
Lent a vibrant cry to the unuttered vasts,
And through great shoreless, voiceless, starless breadths
Bore earthward fragments of revealing thought
Hewn from the silence of the ineffable. (Aurobindo1996:41)

The poet needs to lessen the tyranny of the reasoning and the critical intellect by cultivating the power and sincerity of life; the sustaining power that makes his creation vital is 'breath of life'. The poet's creation cannot be merely 'all thought' (be it cultured philosophising or moralising in dexterous verse) for a divorce from 'life' would mean an imperfection of the poetic grasp that precludes the inner being from the effects of sweetness and illumination. It is the beauty and the power of the thought and its life and emotion that need to be made one thing with life. So the poet needs to reembody in the beauty of the word, the infinite life of the spirit for his business is most intimately with the life of the soul, making poetry the rhythmic voice of an inner curve of being and not merely the surface voice. The justification of this argument lies in the superiority of Shakespeare's work.

The outward form of Shakespeare's work is a surge of emotion and passion and thought and act and event arising out of character at ferment in the yeast of feeling and passion, but it is its living interpretation of the truth and powers of the life-soul of man that are the core of greatness of his work and the rest without it would be a vain brute turmoil. (Aurobindo1994:217)

However, the poet being a child of his age has to surrender a part of his being to the deliberate detached reason that turns him an observant. The over accent on the intellectuality of his observing self makes a sort of scission in his being which however stands to be redressed in a balance maintained between thought and life, ' the life

passing into self-observing thought and the thought returning on the life to shape it in its own vital image' (218). The poet (thought-mind) ought not to wean out youthful power of the vital being, the lucidity and candour of a spontaneous life that prevent him from being tethered to the tantalising pole of morbid perversities. Life-sense and observing reason, engaged in a complementary contribution, sustain the fullness of existence. The poet, however, needs to tread the illumined realm of an intuitive and spiritual thinking being endowed in a 'high original power'.

In that paradise of perfect heart and sense

No lower note could break the endless charm. (Aurobindo1996:235)

This helps him to find his self and the self of things, inculcated as he is, with the knowledge of the integral power of our complete existence. Sri Aurobindo would brush aside the tradition headed by Hobbes and recently given currency by Ryle, as inadequate by pointing to the complexity of the creative process. The notion of simple problem solving, particularly of the behaviourably observable type fails to account for creativity. Creative activity does not consist merely of the reshuffling of discrete elements of atomic contents and experienced forms into other combinations. The product of the creative mind is not a mere combination, but a *creation* in a sense that no behaviourist or mechanist can admit and remain true to his theories. Aesthetic consciousness or creative imagination, for Sri Aurobindo, must image 'difficult and hidden truths'. Arguing by his paradigmatic concept of mantra he would say that a metaphor or a symbol employed in the Vedic style is expected to convey a reality, as a revelative symbol of the unrevealed and hint luminously to the mind what for logical or practical thought would have ever remained inaccessible. The romantic view of imagination is that it is 'a plaything and caterer for our amusement, our entertainer, the nautch-girl of the mind' (Aurobindo1949:7). The artist must be a seer, 'a revealer of hidden truths, imagination no dancing courtesan but a priestess in God's house commissioned not to spin fictions but image difficult and hidden truth.' (ibid)

In Aurobindo's four-fold gradation of the planes of experience - higher mind, illumined mind ("The outflow of the illumined mind comes in a flood brilliant with revealing words

or a light of crowding images, sometimes surcharged with its burden of revelations, sometimes with a luminous sweep." 1949: 116), intuition ("The intuition is usually a lightning flash showing up a single spot or plot of ground or scene with an entire and miraculous completeness of vision to the surprised ecstasy of the inner eye; its rhythm has a decisive inevitable sound which leaves nothing essential unheard, but very commonly is embodied in a single stroke." 116-7), and overmind ("The Overmind is essentially a spiritual power. Mind in it surpasses its ordinary self and rises and takes its stand on a spiritual foundation. It embraces beauty and sublimates it; it has an essential aesthesis which is not limited by rules and canons; it sees a universal and an eternal beauty while it takes up and transforms all that is limited and particular." Sethna 1972: 50) we cannot overlook the propelling force of imagination in the aesthetics of creation. Imagination, the mind's vehicle of summoning possibilities, has the supplementary power to figure the 'may be's and 'might be's of the Infinite to transform itself into 'truth imagination'(Aurobindo1949:392), as the mind ascends towards truth-consciousness. 'Every well-made and significant poem, picture, statue or building is an act of creative knowledge, a living discovery of the consciousness, a figure of Truth' (Aurobindo1949:108). Creative intelligence mediates between the experiential reality of the surface and the heightened strata of consciousness to open the door of the Spirit. Imagination, Sri Aurobindo points out, 'ultimately becomes inspiration when it ascends higher. The purer it becomes the nearer it gets to Truth. For instance, in the case of poets, generally it is inspired imagination that works'(Purani1970:199). In *The Life Divine*, Sri Aurobindo points out the transformation that the Overmind brings on the mind to create great poetry - the creative binary opposition between the delight of being and the delight of becoming which bears a hint of Kantian reason that is unshackled from the rules of discursive mental operations.

A Light there is that leads, a Power that aids;
 Unmarked, unfelt it sees in him and acts:
 Ignorant, he forms the All-Conscient in his depths,
 Human, looks up to superhuman peaks: (Aurobindo 1996:339)

Herein we encounter the *mantra* - the mystery of the inevitable word, the supreme rhythm, the absolute significance and the absolute utterance. With the Overmind, at work beauty and truth are held in a luminous unification, with disparate entities reconciled. The poet (*rishi*) with a 'force' working within him combines the opposites and 'it is his vision of its (truth's) beauty, its power, his thrilled reception of it, his joy in it that he tries to convey by an utmost perfection in word and rhythm.' (Aurobindo 1949: 129) It is on the basis of the over-mental experience that the full import of the delight of being can be realised. Poetry and Truth are wedded together, shaping up with the bliss of Brahman, as the full manifestation of the *Logos*. One can agree with Sethna on Sri Aurobindo's ability to bring out living symbols from the mystical planes - a concrete contact with the Divine presence. 'Even when realities that are not openly divine are viewed, the style is of a directed knowledge, direct feeling, direct rhythm from an inner or upper poise: the mundane scene and the supra-mundane principalities and powers are given their image and value and secret life-throb as realised from a consciousness aware directly of the supreme Spirit. That consciousness covers all phenomena with significances and suggestions which the mere mind cannot adequately gauge.' (1974:89) Aurobindo's aesthetics takes *citta vistara* as an essential function. The poet's mind is not satiated with the liberated intellect for it progresses beyond 'the scrutiny of things that explain to the experience of the things that reveal the truths of the spirit.' (Aurobindo 1994:238) The integral equation of *Brahmasvada* and *Rasasvada* could lend a finality to the experience. His voice lays down the order of novelty where new things are told and old things are stated in a new way in a scale of ascension infused with a vision of inmost things and invested with untapped potentialities of the soul's experience. His voice would reveal the rhythmic Word, the vibrations that touch the fount of joy from the inner being culminating in the fullness and unity with all cosmic experience. Sri Aurobindo's seer-poet needs to create poetry taking the 'highest' as its keynote - an intuitive supra-intellectual consciousness that understands the potent communion with the Eternal in subtler harmonies and in the vibrations of a larger and quieter spirit. With the intention to transfigure the past without being imaginatively preoccupied with it, he seeks to demarcate the eternal in the flux of transience with greater revelatory spiritual significances. It is a delve into a deeper aesthesis that poetically 'materialises' the 'untransformed', lining the border of a welter of things, without any

predilection towards the ugly and the terrible that exist with their individuality under the lucent wings of poetic creation. The true poet obviates the tyranny of prosaicness with the reinscription of the 'beautiful' and 'noble' that is engendered by the vision-power. It is from him that the profound enlightening idea is born. Also a creative interpretation of the world and nature are ascribed to him as his utterance is compelled under the force and puissance of the intuitive will, vision, the inmost consciousness of Nature and things, the inner rhythm, the greatest stress of sight and a vibrant and responsive sense. He stands to open 'new vistas to the general intelligence and the life-sense of the race.' (Aurobindo 1994:244)

The defects in English poetry, as pointed out in Sri Aurobindo, reemphasise the features that consolidate the Poet's Art - especially thought-power, thought-vision and the fruitful alignment with life. Creativity is not a bland imitation of nature in a world that exists in the vision and imagination of the creator. The poet, for him, reveals the creative truth and Aurobindo 'comes close to traditional tantric ideas on art which say that art-activity was like the flight of the bird from one tree to another which left no trace of its trail in the air' (Nandi 1975:159). Thus the subjectivity and objectivity in art harmonise into a spiritual transcendence that 'lies in the apprehension of a something stable behind the instability of word and deed, something that is a reflection of the fundamental passion of humanity or something beyond itself, something that is a dim foreshadowing of the divine urge which is prompting all creation to unfold itself and to rise out of its limitations towards its God-like possibilities.' (159-60) Sri Aurobindo, as a poet, was a 'traveller between summit and abyss'. As S.K. Ghose observes, 'To read him is once more to believe in human possibilities. What Claudel said about Rimbaud, *C'est a Rimbaud que je dois humainement mon retour a la foi*' applies with equal, if not greater, force to Sri Aurobindo's massive insights, his 'revelation', everburning fire." (Joshi 1973: 52))

True to his theory, he has the poetic integralism that explores the inconscient. He writes in an enhanced awareness that breaks through the veneer of things.

O word concealed in the upper fire,

Thou who hast lingered through centuries,
Descend from thy rapt white desire,
Plunging through gold eternities....
Break the seals of Matter's sleep,
Break the trance of unseen height...
O Muse of the Silence, the wideness make
In the unplumbed stillness that hears thy voice...
(“Musa Spiritus” Aurobindo 1994:589)

He is the poet of 'transformation' - as all his true poets are - who extends the experiential self to embrace the reality of the world and obeys the higher law that has the body's cells holding the immortal flame. He, like the vedic rishi, climbs beyond himself to the region where the Ineffable has a secret voice and the Imperishable burns through 'Matter's Screen'. His awareness knows the harmonious and the luminous totality of man's Being - the genuine *voyant* possessed with as Ghose says: *Samyaktvishiti* or *Totalitatdenken* (Joshi 1973:60)

So 'all problems of existence are essentially problems of harmony' (Aurobindo 1949:4). However, this harmony cannot be monochromatic in the sense that intellectual knowledge and the will of action are not the ultimate instruments of our consciousness and energy. The cognate of supra-rationality is vital for it creates the spaces of creation. Tagore believed that our realisation should not end with the reasoning mind, for it must acknowledge the creative imagination in the same breath. 'The rational or intellectual man is not the last and the highest ideal of manhood. The spirit that manifests itself in man and dominates secretly the phases of his development, is greater and profounder than his intellect.' (Aurobindo 1949:124) For Aurobindo, the rational is surpassed and left behind by the genius, for the rational only constructs, but does not create. In this light one can understand Kant's celebrated view that creations of the mind which do not owe their origin in any way to the spiritual faculty in man (freedom and autonomy) are only a product of mechanical operations, of association of ideas, or even of mere lucky accidents. 'Rule and precept are incapable of serving as the requisite subjective standard for ...the aesthetic and unconditioned finality in fine art'. (Meredith 1911:212) Kant

finds the explanation of genius in 'the supersensible substrate of all the subjects (unattainable by any concept of understanding), and consequently in that which forms the point of reference for the harmonious accord of all our faculties of cognition....'(ibid) Despite obvious differences between Kant's and Sri Aurobindo's respective philosophical positions, the points of accord also are striking. It may be noted in this context that Sri Aurobindo is not an advocate of reductionism. Though art or the aesthetic impulse, properly speaking, springs from the infra-rational parts of our being, it does seek the help of the rational. Reason lays down the laws of aesthetics, purifies our appreciation and improves our taste. Within restricted bounds, reason corrects and sets aright our aesthetic instinct and impulse, by making it self-conscious and rationally discriminative. The rational as such may not also be the artistic but it is the creator of our aesthetic conscience – a judge and guide.

So the super-existentialist Sri Aurobindo, manifests a supra-normal familiarity with the intensities of our subliminal and supraliminal being. Spirituality for him is a much wider thing than formal religion. Art reaches its highest self expression when it is pressed into the service of spirituality. And spirituality denotes a three-fold line of human aspiration - divine knowledge, strength, love and joy. Art needs to reach beyond what the best European Art satisfies - 'the physical requirements of the aesthetic sense, the laws of formal beauty, the emotional demand of humanity, the portrayal of life and outward reality' (Aurobindo 1936: 46) - to manifest the inner spiritual truth, the 'deeper not obvious reality of things, the joy of God in the world and its beauty and desirableness and the manifestation of divine face and energy in phenomenal creation'.(ibid) So Sri Aurobindo's integralism delimits the content of art that clearly emphasises the supreme intellectual value of art and his *weltanschauung* smoothens all the rough zones of our stratified existence. His theory of art is impregnated with the poignant belief that 'what nature is, what God is, what man is, can be triumphantly revealed in stone or on canvas' (48). So it is for the poet to realise the three tier use of art - aesthetic, intellectual or educative, and the spiritual which is the highest.

In the dead wall closing us from wider self,

Into a secrecy of apparent sleep,
The mystic tract beyond our waking thoughts,
A door parted, built in by Matter's force,
Releasing things unseized by earthly sense:
A world unseen, unknown by outward mind
Appeared in the silent spaces of the soul. (Aurobindo 1996:27 italics mine)