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HAROLD E. McCARTHY

## *Aesthetics East and West*

Van Meter Ames, in his review of *Essays in East-West Philosophy*, has remarked that the 1949 Philosophers' Conference unhappily neglected any serious consideration of aesthetics East or West.<sup>1</sup> As a member of that Conference, I must agree with Ames that aesthetics was neglected in 1949 and that such neglect was unfortunate, particularly for those who do their best to keep abreast of twentieth-century times.

It is to be hoped, of course, that the next Conference will broaden out not only geographically but also problematically, i.e., with respect to the *range* of problems considered central to the philosopher's quest. If philosophy is concerned, ultimately, with the nature of man and his relationship to the world in which he lives, then man's drive toward aesthetic expression, being as basic and as ineradicable as man's drive toward intellectual understanding, moral evaluation, or social reconstruction, must be an object of serious concern for the philosopher. It may be granted that a total approach to philosophy is, geo-culturally, an East-West approach; but within the framework of this total approach the world must be viewed not merely as something to be known and shared, but also as something to be expressed artistically and enjoyed or responded to aesthetically. What man is, how man views his world, and what man is spiritually capable of achieving—all of these are embodied not only in the *Ethics* of Spinoza, the *Principles* of Euclid, and the *Analects* of Confucius, but also in the sonnets of Shakespeare, the quartets of Bartók, and the paintings of the Southern Sung artists.

Observations of this kind should be so obvious as to be quite unnecessary. And yet, although there are a number of volumes devoted to the history of Western aesthetic theory, most historians of general philosophy concern themselves only with epistemological, metaphysical, and socio-moral issues. Indeed, one of the few philosophical works in English which is basically historical in its orientation and which includes, as a major part, aesthetic considerations, is the volume by Schoen, Schrickel, and Ames entitled *Understanding the World*.<sup>2</sup> But even here we find what actually amounts to three

<sup>1</sup> PHILOSOPHY EAST AND WEST, II, No. 4 (January, 1953), 340-343.

<sup>2</sup> Max Schoen, H. G. Schrickel, Van Meter Ames, *Understanding the World* (New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1947).

independent volumes between a single set of covers rather than a single, integrated work.

Perhaps the only volume in recent years which approaches the general philosophic problems of man with full emphasis upon, and very penetrating understanding of, the roles and functions of art in the human orientation is F.S.C. Northrop's *The Meeting of East and West*.<sup>3</sup> Some critics may feel that Northrop's attitude toward the problems of art is much too rationalistic, but it must be admitted that his approach to the problems of man is comprehensive and, in that respect, rare, since man the emotional-aesthetic creature is not made subservient to man the intellectual creature, and man is understood in the plural—men who participate in diverse and changing cultures, East and West. Considering Northrop's contributions, then, it becomes doubly unfortunate that so little attention was given to aesthetic problems at a Conference at which he was a leading and even a guiding member.

It must be remembered, however, that serious concern on the part of the Western philosopher with the problems of art and aesthetic construction has been, historically speaking, relatively recent. Though we may admire scholarship, nothing is drearier to read than a standard history of aesthetic theory, particularly a history which takes us no further than the end of the nineteenth century. Even when one has gathered the few figs from the thistles, one is inevitably left with the quite correct impression that, while some major philosophers have attempted a systematic analysis of some phase of art, most Western philosophers have neglected aesthetic problems altogether, have relegated them to passing remarks, or have made them incidental corollaries to metaphysical, ethical, or socio-political analyses. Even in the midst of significant artistic traditions, most philosophers in the West have been, as philosophers, peculiarly insensitive to the import of the poetical and artistic work being done about them.

Thus it is that, so far as the West is concerned, the most important writings in the general field of aesthetics, whether in French, Italian, German, or English, have appeared during the last seventy-five years. It is not too much to say that, in the West, more works have been devoted to the philosophy of art during the last seventy-five years than during the previous twenty-five hundred years. Just how this new philosophical interest in art is to be accounted for is something we need not go into here. The fact remains that philosophy of art has become vital in the Western twentieth century, whereas in the past it was considerably less than vital to the formal philosopher.

If one turns now to the histories of Eastern philosophies, one is left with

<sup>3</sup>*The Meeting of East and West* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946).

the feeling that the Eastern philosopher also, like his Western co-worker, has been, historically speaking, too much concerned with the problems of truth, the good life, and the possibilities of salvation to pay much *systematic* attention to the aesthetic drive and its manifestations in poetry, painting, sculpture, music, and architecture.<sup>4</sup> All in all, there is every reason to suppose that in the East (as in the West) philosophy of art, particularly in China and Japan, has existed until recently mainly in the form of passing remarks or elaborated extensions of extra-philosophical analyses.<sup>5</sup> And these passing remarks have by no means been adequately brought together and systematized, let alone translated into English. What the English reader knows of the basic ideas and concepts of traditional Indian aesthetics (and most Indian aesthetic theory is very closely tied up with the technical problems of dramatic presentation), he knows mainly through the writings of Ananda Coomaraswamy; but one can hardly say that these writings have had much influence upon recent developments in aesthetics in the West, though the fault is by no means that of Coomaraswamy. As for traditional Chinese and Japanese aesthetics, the Western aesthetician is probably familiar with such works as Laurence Binyon's *The Flight of the Dragon*,<sup>6</sup> Osvalt Sirén's very important study with translations from original sources, *The Chinese on the Art of Painting*,<sup>7</sup> Kuo's *An Essay on Landscape Painting*,<sup>8</sup> and Shio Sakanishi's *The Spirit of the Brush*.<sup>9</sup> E. R. Hughes's recent work on Lu Chi, *The Art of Letters*, seems to be an important contribution to comparative aesthetics even though the Sinologist may take exception to a great deal that Hughes has to say.<sup>10</sup> Coomaraswamy tells us that the systematic discussion of aesthetic problems has been far more developed in India than in China "where we have to deduce the theory from what has been said and done by painters, rather than from any doctrine propounded by philosophers or rhetoricians."<sup>11</sup> One

<sup>4</sup> This statement most certainly does not mean that Eastern philosophers in the past have paid *no* attention to art. The Indians, as we shall see, had much to say about the nature of art in connection, mainly, with their treatises on the drama. Confucius had much to say about the role of music in education and its relationship to the good society. Mo-tzū, in reaction against the Confucianists, found little justification for music and the fine arts, but his view did not reflect the general attitude of the Chinese people.

<sup>5</sup> With respect to aesthetics in Japan, Masau Yamamoto writes as follows: "The theory of beauty and of art in Japan has a long history, as traditional as art itself. But on the whole it is rather personal reflection on the experiences of the artist, lacking in systematic construction and objective description. It is no more than one hundred years that we have aesthetics as science or philosophy." "Aesthetics in Japan," *The Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism*, XI, No. 2 (December, 1952), 171.

<sup>6</sup> *The Flight of the Dragon* (London: John Murray, 1911).

<sup>7</sup> *The Chinese on the Art of Painting* (Peiping: Henri Vetch, 1936).

<sup>8</sup> Hsi Kuo, *An Essay on Landscape Painting*, Shio Sakanishi, trans. (London: John Murray, 1935).

<sup>9</sup> *The Spirit of the Brush* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1939).

<sup>10</sup> *The Art of Letters, Lu Chi's "Wên Fu"* A.D. 302 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1951).

<sup>11</sup> Ananda Coomaraswamy, *The Transformation of Nature in Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935), p. 5.

suspects that a vast amount of work remains to be done along the lines of piecing together and analyzing the multitude of scattered comments and observations of Chinese painters, critics, poets, and pedagogues in general. At any rate, the aesthetician who wants to reconstruct Chinese aesthetic theories cannot afford to confine his attention to such traditional philosophers as Confucius and Mo-tzū.

As for original work now being done by outstanding Eastern philosophers in aesthetics, one would hesitate to make any generalizations at all. Radhakrishnan, for instance, has written both intensively and extensively in the field of philosophy. His contributions to religious, moral, and metaphysical theory have been recognized as of major importance. But his aesthetic writings have been fragmentary at best and not particularly illuminating; indeed, his analyses seldom amount to more than enthusiastic ejaculations which leave us quite uncertain as to how literally they are supposed to be taken. He does hold that art "as the disclosure of the deeper reality of things is a form of knowledge."<sup>12</sup> We are also assured that, although the "true work of art is charged with thought," great art needs "inspiration and not intellectual power," and hence "is possible only in those rare moments when the artist is transplanted out of himself and does better than his best in obedience to the dictates of a *daimon*. . ."<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, fragmentary statements of this kind do not constitute sustained and systematic analysis. Even such a sympathetic and careful critic as Robert W. Browning is, in the end, quite unable to make out a good case for the systematic character of Radhakrishnan's aesthetic suggestions.<sup>14</sup> Browning may be sure that Radhakrishnan has an aesthetic view; but if Radhakrishnan does not discuss his view in any sustained manner, a critic has very little to go on.

Furthermore, if one hopes to get a more systematic and carefully formulated aesthetic view from another great Indian thinker, Sri Aurobindo, one will again be disappointed. Sri Aurobindo was, of course, a poet as well as a philosopher; but, when philosophizing, it would seem that he was reaching for a transcendental level of existence which, in achieving an all-embracing bliss, would leave little room for the relative blissfulness of art. Thus, the aesthetic enjoyment of art and poetry is to be understood, for Sri Aurobindo, as an imprecise "image or reflection of the pure delight which

<sup>12</sup> S. Radhakrishnan, *An Idealist View of Life* (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1932), p. 192.

<sup>13</sup> S. Radhakrishnan and J. H. Muirhead, eds., *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1936), p. 272.

<sup>14</sup> Robert W. Browning, "Reason and Types of Intuition in Radhakrishnan's Philosophy," in Paul A. Schilpp, ed., *The Philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan* (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1952), pp. 207-214.

is supra-mental and supra-aesthetic" and "represents partially and imperfectly one stage of the progressive delight of the universal Soul in things in its manifestation and it admits us in one part of our nature to that detachment from egoistic sensation and that universal attitude through which the one Soul sees harmony and beauty where we divided beings experience rather chaos and discord."<sup>15</sup> This may be quite true; but, unfortunately, aesthetics never thrives when the aesthetic must give way to the supra-aesthetic. Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo cannot be taken, of course, as spokesmen for the contemporary philosophy of art in India, but it is important to note that the two most distinguished and respected Indian philosophers of recent years have contributed little to the philosophy of art. In the recent West, on the other hand, Dewey, Santayana, and Croce have all been profoundly concerned with art. Only Bertrand Russell among the great thinkers of recent decades has ignored art for the more traditional problems of logic, epistemology, and morality—but even he may have something to say about aesthetics before his ninetieth birthday!

Turning now to the Japanese philosophers, it would appear that, whatever the case in the past, some of the present-day philosophers are almost as interested in the problems of art as contemporary Western philosophers. Unfortunately, however, there are obvious language barriers so far as the Westerner is concerned. Thus, most Western philosophers learn of the work of recent Japanese aestheticians only indirectly; and, even if they are intrigued by what they learn, they actually have very little to go on. As was announced in *PHILOSOPHY EAST AND WEST*, *Riso* devoted its August, 1951, number to the topic of modern aesthetics, with ten articles on a variety of subjects ranging from "Cinema Arts" to "The Problem of Aesthetic Existence."<sup>16</sup> Those who follow *The Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism* will recall the report that in 1950 the Japanese Society for Aesthetics published the first number of *Bigaku (Aesthetics)*, containing such articles as "The View of Art of P. Cézanne," "Romanticism and Music," "On the Art of Kiyochika Kobayashi," and "The Beauty of Negation."<sup>17</sup> But without translations, or at least English summaries, such articles will remain quite inaccessible to the Western reader. Just what remedy can be applied here is difficult to say. When one examines recent Japanese philosophical works which have appeared in English, one

<sup>15</sup> Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine* (New York: The Greystone Press, 1949), pp. 101–102.

<sup>16</sup> *PHILOSOPHY EAST AND WEST*, I, No. 3 (October, 1951), 92.

<sup>17</sup> For very interesting reports concerning *Bigaku (Aesthetics)* and the Japanese Society for Aesthetics, see *The Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism*, IX, No. 2 (December, 1950), 156; IX, No. 4 (June, 1951), 346–347; X, No. 1 (September, 1951), 93; X, No. 4 (June, 1952), 382; and XI, No. 2 (December, 1952), 181.

finds little systematic concern with aesthetic theory as this is understood in the West. One of the notable exceptions to this statement is found in D. T. Suzuki's *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*.<sup>18</sup> This work is not a systematic study of the nature of art from a number of carefully selected points of view; and, when compared to such Western works as D. W. Prall's *Aesthetic Judgment* or Dewey's *Art as Experience*, the work is hardly recognizable as an aesthetic treatise. But it is a keen and penetrating philosophical study of art, though Suzuki, a master of Zen, assures us that Zen masters make better artists than philosophers. It is not surprising that, whereas the transcendental Indian philosopher may transcend art even though he is surrounded by it, the Zen man, who delights in the empirical world just as it is, finds his readiest expression in art and hence becomes productive of it.

As for the contemporary Chinese philosophers, little needs to be said here. China is controlled, both politically and intellectually, by the disciples of Marx; thus, whatever aesthetic writings may appear under these conditions will be Marxist in orientation and dogmatic rather than philosophical in tone. But, as has been suggested above, a great deal of work of a historical character can be done by the Chinese scholar outside of China. Armed with new concepts, new techniques, and new procedures of investigation, the scholar concerned with understanding the general aesthetic theories implicit within the scattered writings of historians, critics, artists, and philosophers may well find very important areas of reflection that have been previously unexplored.

Having made these general remarks and observations, let us now become more concrete. In the last few months, three volumes by contemporary Indian scholars have been brought to the attention of this writer: *Indian Aesthetics* by K. C. Pandey,<sup>19</sup> *The Social Function of Art* by Radhakamal Mukerjee,<sup>20</sup> and *Poets and Mystics* by Nolini Kanta Gupta.<sup>21</sup> It cannot be expected that brief analyses of these three works will give one a complete understanding of what is going on in Indian aesthetics at the present time, let alone in the East as such. But so seldom does one find mention of works of this kind in American journals that a discussion of these particular works may be of value. Since all discussions of this kind inevitably express a point

<sup>18</sup> Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism and its Influence on Japanese Culture* (Kyoto: The Eastern Buddhist Society, 1938).

<sup>19</sup> *Comparative Aesthetics*, Vol. I, *Indian Aesthetics* (Banaras: Vidya Vilas Press, 1950).

<sup>20</sup> *The Social Function of Art* (Bombay: Hind Kitabs, Ltd., 1948).

<sup>21</sup> *Poets and Mystics* (Madras: Sri Aurobindo Library, 1951).

of view and move within certain limitations, self-imposed or not, it seems wise to acknowledge the point of view and to make clear the limitations.

As for limitations, no attempt will be made to present well-rounded and complete reviews of the works about to be considered. The aim of the paper is that of suggesting, both directly and indirectly, some of the problems and possibilities of comparative aesthetics. As for the underlying point of view, the following frame of reference is hereby acknowledged:

1. The general point of view is clearly that of one who has been particularly influenced by the writings of such American aestheticians as John Dewey, D. W. Prall, D. W. Gotshalk, Curt J. Ducasse, Bernard C. Heyl, Van Meter Ames, John Hospers, and Ralph Church. One may speak of these writers as naturalists, if one wishes.

2. The basis of aesthetics, it is felt, is art practice as understood in terms of the total socio-historical context of such practice. Whatever may be the case with ethics, aesthetics must remain empirical if it is to be relevant to art. Metaphysical interpretations of art seem unfortunate to this writer, partly because they tend to lose contact with the facts of art practice.

3. Systems of aesthetics (modern or pre-modern) are important to the contemporary aesthetician only insofar as they help to clarify the problems of the *present* and contribute to relevant solutions. But problems change as art practice itself changes, and solutions are never final.

4. Other frames of reference are certainly possible. The acceptance of one frame of reference does not rule out the relevance or fruitfulness of other frames of reference.

## II

K. C. Pandey's work entitled *Indian Aesthetics* is actually the first of three volumes, all of which are to appear under the general title *Comparative Aesthetics*. Volume II is to be concerned with "aesthetic currents in the West" and Volume III with a "detailed comparison of the views of Indian and European Aestheticians."<sup>22</sup> Such a three-volume work could well be a notable contribution to comparative aesthetics, being, as it is, without comparable precedent.

As the title indicates, Volume I is strictly Indian and largely historical in orientation. On the basis of original Sanskrit texts, Pandey is primarily concerned with the presentation of the general aesthetic views of Abhinavagupta (ca. 950–1020) against the background of a five-hundred-year development

<sup>22</sup> Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 74.



of Indian aesthetics which started with the writings of Bharata (*ca.* A.D. 500) and continued in the contributions of such commentators upon Bharata as Bharṭa Lollata (*ca.* 850), Śrī Sankuka (*ca.* 850), and Bharṭa Nāyaka (*ca.* 900). The Western reader who is unfamiliar with Pandey's earlier work, *Abhinavagupta: An Historical and Philosophical Study*, may never have heard of Abhinavagupta. In fact, until recently, Indian scholars themselves knew little about him, possibly because his philosophical background is that of the Śaiva philosophy of Kashmir rather than Vedānta. Those who follow *The Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism* may remember a reference to him in a short article by P. J. Chaudhury which appeared in 1948.<sup>23</sup> Pandey leaves us in no doubt about his own evaluation of this tenth-century metaphysician and aesthetician. Thus we are told: (1) that the problems originally raised by Bharata were eventually solved by Abhinavagupta, and in such a way that his solutions have been "accepted by all the subsequent writers of repute";<sup>24</sup> (2) that "Abhinava's aesthetic theory, . . . because of its soundness, has well stood the test of the long time of more than one thousand years";<sup>25</sup> and (3) that, having given the "final shape to the philosophy of beauty," the theory "stands to gain and not to lose in importance, if it be compared with that of any ancient or modern aesthetician in the West."<sup>26</sup>

Statements of this kind, though perhaps intended for home consumption only, are almost necessarily bound to strike unpleasantly upon Western ears, particularly now that we are in the middle of the twentieth century. A Jacques Maritain may be convinced that St. Thomas, if properly understood, gave the final shape to the philosophy of beauty and may even feel that the shape thus given has stood the test of seven hundred years, if not a thousand. A Louis Harap may be quite convinced that Marx and Engels together laid down the foundations of any future theory of art, foundations which will stand the test of time up to and through the communist millennium.<sup>27</sup> But the fact remains that the bulk of Western philosophers are neither Thomists nor Marxists in art; and thus the typical Western scholar cannot point, nor does he wish to try to point, to any aesthetician whose solution to any aesthetic problem has been, or will be, accepted by all the subsequent writers of repute. Indeed, if aesthetics is so unique and so self-enclosed that it can remain

<sup>23</sup> *The Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism*, VII, No. 2 (December, 1948), 139-140.

<sup>24</sup> Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>27</sup> For a presentation of the aesthetics of Marxism, Louis Harap's *The Social Roots of the Arts* (New York: International Publishers, 1949) seems to be quite well written in spite of the inevitably dogmatic and propagandistic character of the approach.

unaltered in the midst of progressive accomplishments in related areas, then it is so isolated that it is of no significance to any man who is trying to live in the present. But if aesthetics, as a field of investigation, is not so isolated, then aesthetic theory is bound to change, relative to new developments and new understandings in such diverse fields as semantics, epistemology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, art-history, and psychoanalysis—not to mention art-practice itself. In the last analysis, it is the artist who gives the aesthetician his basic data.

But since any evaluation of Abhinavagupta rests upon an analysis of his contributions, let us turn to some of these. It may be granted at the outset that the selection of a few of his contributions for special consideration does not do justice to the whole of Abhinavagupta's aesthetics.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, a sample is surely better than nothing.

1. With respect to the old and thoroughly familiar problem as to whether the aim of art is to entertain or to instruct, it is clear that Abhinavagupta follows the lead of Bharata and subordinates art to moral edification, the pleasing character of art being regarded as instrumental to leading the spectator to follow the path of duty. He thus seems to accept without serious modification Bharata's view that:

the end of dramatic art is instruction, not directly, but indirectly, through presentation of what is pleasing to eyes and ears. It does not directly command, but it makes the audience experience the goodness of virtuous path. . . . It administers the medicine of instruction, but it either coats it with sugar or mixes it up with the milk of pleasant sight and sound so that bitterness of medicine is not experienced.<sup>29</sup>

This is not to say, of course, that significant art is, in any direct and crude sense, pleasant preaching. As a beholder, according to Abhinavagupta, one identifies oneself with the hero of the drama and views everything from the hero's point of view, reacting as does the hero.

At the level of identification with an ideal hero, there is the experience of moral satisfaction. Drama, therefore, improves the spectator morally, not through sermons, but by making him experience moral satisfaction and realise its superior value.<sup>30</sup>

One cannot argue, of course, that contemporary aestheticians have somehow outgrown and thereby passed beyond the problem as to whether art should aim at (or be judged in terms of) instruction, entertainment, both, or neither. American pragmatists in particular have never forgotten that art can be some-

<sup>28</sup> It might be well to point out that I am deliberately not discussing the theory of *rasa* in connection with Abhinavagupta. So much has already been written about *rasa* that it seems wise to take a somewhat different approach.

<sup>29</sup> Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126.

thing more than an object of individual satisfaction by being—or becoming—an instrument of personal and social adjustment. Even such an “entertaining” writer as W. Somerset Maugham agrees with the pragmatists in this respect:

The value of art, like the value of the Mystic Way, lies in its effects. If it can only give pleasure, however spiritual that pleasure may be, it is of no great consequence or at least no more consequence than a dozen oysters and a pint of Montrachet. If it is a solace, that is well enough; the world is full of inevitable evils and it is good that man should have some hermitage to which from time to time he may withdraw himself; but not to escape them, rather to gather fresh strength to face them. For art, if it is to be reckoned as one of the great values of life, must teach men humility, tolerance, wisdom and magnanimity. The value of art is not beauty, but right action.<sup>31</sup>

We can say, then, that, in the problem of entertainment versus instruction in the arts, Abhinavagupta has recognized a problem that is still vital, however time-worn the problem may be in the West. But one cannot say that he has solved the problem (whatever that would mean), nor can one even say that in his theory of “identification” he has given us anything more than plausible speculation which, however harmonious with the tendencies of mysticism, leaves much to be desired from the point of view of empirical psychology.

2. With respect to the nature and the status of the art object (a problem of interest at the present time), Abhinavagupta is not, perhaps, without some sophistication. He makes it quite clear that a work of art is not, in itself, an imitation of something else, nor is it, either from the point of view of the artist or from the point of view of the sensitive spectator, the same sort of thing as a *natural* object. From the point of view of the artist it is something created, something which, in being created, becomes expressive of aims and intentions on the part of the artist. And from the point of view of the spectator it is something seized upon only within the context of an aesthetic experience and hence is something which, for the spectator, exists only in relation to the aesthetic attitude. It is both objective and subjective, and hence is neither a mere physical object nor a mere figment of the “mind.”

What is meant by this, is that the essential nature of the aesthetic object is such as does not allow it to be classed with any one of the accepted types of the objects of the world of daily life. It is an object of the aesthetic world and as such has only aesthetic reality and that too for those only who breathe and have their being in that world . . . a reality which is no less a reality than the common world reality, simply because it is aesthetic reality.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *The Summing Up* (Garden City: Doubleday Doran and Company, 1938), pp. 302–303.

<sup>32</sup> Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

Such statements may be highly suggestive and quite significant; but, insofar as they can be accepted by the contemporary Western aesthetician, they are most certainly not new. Those contemporary writers who have been in the process of coming to the conclusion that statements about the art-object must always be understood as relative to some chosen perspective, may be pleased to find similar suggestions coming from a tenth-century aesthetician. But it must always be realized that "anticipation" does not constitute verification and truth is not established by citing precedents.

3. With respect to the analysis of the aesthetic experience itself (another problem with which the contemporary aesthetician has been very seriously concerned), Abhinavagupta suggests that the aesthetic attitude does differ from the practical attitude of ordinary life "inasmuch as it is marked by total absence of expectation of being called upon to act in reality."<sup>33</sup> The intrinsic dimensions of the aesthetic experience (involving sense experience, imagination, emotion, and katharsis) and the conditions of having a full aesthetic experience (taste, susceptibility, intellectual background, experience, freedom from non-aesthetic demands, etc.) are discussed with some empirical keenness; but the general conclusion is not particularly helpful to one whose approach to the aesthetic experience is more scientific than metaphysical. We are told that according to Abhinavagupta:

aesthetic experience is a transcendental experience. It does not belong to the sphere of *Māyā*. It does not admit of explanation in terms of qualities of individual subject. It is beyond *Sattva* and its predominance. It is free from all qualities. It is the experience of itself by the Universal. It is the rest of one aspect of the Absolute on the other. It is consciousness, free from all external reference and resting on its inseparable aspect, the "Self," and as such it is "Ānanda."<sup>34</sup>

Of course, it is important to point out that art is not illusion and that the aesthetic experience, when full, can be something of real value and significance. This is something that few Westerners would care to deny. But the only alternative to regarding the aesthetic experience as something trivial is not that of subsuming it under metaphysics or religion, and thus turning it into a stepping stone to the life divine. One alternative is less ambitious and more important. It is that of doing one's best to understand the full importance, actual and potential, of the aesthetic aspects of experience in the life of man and of recognizing just how art, *as art*, can be of importance to the individual, to society, to the good society.

All in all, then, and speaking from the point of view of the contemporary Western aesthetician, one must come to the conclusion that what one can accept

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 104–105.

from Abhinavagupta is not new and what is new seems mainly of historical rather than of vital interest to the present. It may be argued that, relative to the historical accomplishments of the West, Abhinavagupta was well ahead of his time. His time, however, was the tenth century and we are now living, or trying to live, in the twentieth century. It may be that the Indian aesthetician must recover his past before he can begin to operate in the present. But the Western aesthetician cannot be expected to sympathize with the glorification of a tenth-century aesthetician when so much has happened since then which must be taken into account. One cannot really blame the Western aesthetician for feeling that *if* Abhinavagupta is the last word in Indian aesthetics, then Indian aesthetics is of little contemporary importance. Fortunately, there are scholars in India who, without completely ignoring the past, recognize that even the theory of art must keep abreast of the times, and that the views of the tenth century are not so much eternal as simply out-of-date.

### III

When we turn from Pandey's *Indian Aesthetics* to Radhakamal Mukerjee's *The Social Function of Art*, we seem to find ourselves in a totally different world. Some critics may feel that we have left philosophy for sociology, psychology, and history, and that, whatever value the book may have, it has little or nothing to do with formal aesthetic theory. Other critics may feel that the book is so thoroughly Western in its basic orientation, or so completely under the spell of Western ideas, that it could easily have been written by an American or a European. Thus, it could be argued that the book is Indian only in the sense that its author is Indian but not in the deeper sense that it expresses in some distinctive fashion the traditional Indian philosophical outlook. Both of these points need consideration.

It is obvious that one who works in the field of aesthetics must have some general idea of where the working boundaries of the field are. Aestheticians may not agree among themselves as to where the boundaries ought to be, but only in terms of the recognition of some boundaries can any aesthetician distinguish between what is relevant and what is irrelevant so far as he himself is concerned. For many aestheticians in the West, aesthetic problems have been primarily metaphysical, epistemological, and normative, the aesthetician being concerned with the intrinsic or generic nature of art (and its relationship to philosophy, religion, science, etc.), the structure of the aesthetic experience, the establishment of standards of aesthetic evaluation, and the determination of the proper role of art in human society. Some aestheticians who have been con-

cerned with these problems have also been concerned with the whole problem of the nature of creative processes in art. But even among these aestheticians, aesthetic creation has generally been approached gingerly with much reliance upon illustrative anecdote, analogical reasoning, and extra-naturalistic explanation. Plato was probably not the first philosopher to talk in terms of divine inspiration, and Radhakrishnan will not be the last philosopher to postulate a *daimon*. Contemporary psychologists may have their hearts in the right place, but even they admit the difficulties involved in the study of creation in the arts. As W. Edgar Vinacke has recently written:

the kind of thinking which precedes a work of art . . . seems to be so different from everyday thought, which does not lead to such results, that the ordinary person cannot really understand it and hence assumes that the thought processes responsible must be incomprehensible. It must be confessed at the outset that the psychologist himself has not, as yet, penetrated the mystery very deeply, either. The problems are extremely difficult to approach in an objective and significant manner.<sup>35</sup>

In recent years, however, and thanks partly to the impact of Marx, Freud, and Boas (not to mention the work done by experimental psychologists), some aestheticians have begun to recognize and to take seriously the problem of creation.<sup>36</sup> Curt J. Ducasse defines aesthetics, or the philosophy of art, as specifically concerned with the analysis and understanding of the three activities of creation, contemplation, and critical evaluation and, thus, concerned with art from the points of view of the artist, the consumer, and the critic.<sup>37</sup> Although this three-fold distinction is very suggestive, Ducasse's analysis of creation remains incomplete. D. W. Gotshalk seems to depart from tradition by devoting an entire, carefully worked-out chapter of his excellent book, *Art and the Social Order*, to the problem of creation in the arts.<sup>38</sup> His general conclusion is that artistic creation necessarily involves physical, psychological, and social factors and that without reference to these, any account of creation would be thoroughly unrealistic. Gotshalk's analysis is probably quite sound as far as it goes. At least, he presents us with a conceptual framework in terms of which further analysis can be carried on, which is more than one can say for those who, when coming across unexplored areas in their aesthetic

<sup>35</sup> W. Edgar Vinacke, *The Psychology of Thinking* (New York, Toronto, London: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1952), p. 238.

<sup>36</sup> As a matter of fact, as far back as 1906 Max Dessoir was pointing out that the role of the artist had been neglected by aestheticians. He wanted more attention, even of a scientific sort, given to the psychology and procedure of the artists. For an excellent, if brief, account of philosophical and psychological contributions to the theory of aesthetic creation, see Schoen, Schrickel, and Ames, *op. cit.*, pp. 591-616.

<sup>37</sup> Curt J. Ducasse, *Art, the Critics, and You* (New York: Oskar Piest, 1944), pp. 22-25.

<sup>38</sup> D. W. Gotshalk, *Art and the Social Order* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1947), pp. 54-83.

maps, write in *genius*, *inspiration*, and *daimon*. Phyllis Bartlett, although not a formal philosopher, has given us in her *Poems in Process* a work on creative processes in poetry which will remain a classic statement of its kind for many years to come.<sup>39</sup> And finally, Arnold Hauser's *The Social History of Art* is a monumental study of the social contexts of Western art which ought to have overwhelming influence upon future work in aesthetics and art history.<sup>40</sup> In spite of such excellent and relatively recent works, it is still true that Western aesthetics has been mostly written from the point of view of the spectator.

It is, then, with special interest that we turn to Mukerjee's book, since it is devoted almost exclusively to the general problem of aesthetic creation, and in terms of a very broad perspective. If his work is not regarded as adequately "philosophical," it should be remembered that he *is* concerned in his way with a problem with which some philosophers, past and present, have also been concerned. He is critical, to be sure, of traditional ways of handling the problem; but if philosophy is to remain alive, it cannot be tied down to the traditional ways of doing things. Mukerjee is critical, to begin with, of any mystical approach to the problem of creation, though he recognizes how frequent this sort of approach is. As he writes:

Art work is too often regarded as a matter of divine revelation or spontaneous inspiration of a man of genius defying rational explanation, which, on the contrary, may be detrimental to its true appreciation. All this has stood in the way of serious efforts to examine the sources and processes of artistic activity.<sup>41</sup>

Moreover, he is just as critical of any straight, individual-psychological approach to the problem of creation, since he recognizes that art "is at once a social product and an established means of social control"; and so, he concludes that both "the present psychological and psycho-analytic approaches to art have . . . hardly done justice to the social factors that enter into the unconscious mechanism of artistic creation or into phantasy-making and the formulation of archetypes . . . in all epochs and cultures."<sup>42</sup> If art is "the expression and communication of man's deepest instincts and emotions reconciled and integrated with his social experience and cultural heritage,"<sup>43</sup> then the only reasonable and adequate approach to the problem of creation in the arts must be a psycho-sociological approach guided by a cultural-historical orientation to man and his diverse activities. And finally, Mukerjee insists

<sup>39</sup> *Poems in Process* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951).

<sup>40</sup> *The Social History of Art* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951).

<sup>41</sup> Mukerjee, *op. cit.*, introduction, p. i.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, preface, p. i.

that, if anyone is going to take this approach to the problem of creation seriously, he must go beyond philosophical speculation and plausible conjecturing. Any serious study of art must be "aided by the cognate studies of psychology, sociology and history for the unfolding of the dynamic interaction between art and the social and intellectual conditions and movements of the age or culture."<sup>44</sup>

Indeed, one has the feeling that Mukerjee is of the opinion that much of the work that has been done so far, East and West, on the theory of art is preparatory at best and, to borrow Comte's terms, theological or metaphysical in its general orientation rather than positive or scientific. Thus, when he speaks of Bosanquet, Alexander, Bergson, Croce, Santayana, and Dewey as men who have taken up the "philosophical approach to art,"<sup>45</sup> it is clear that he thinks of the mature theory of art as a social science, a sociology of art, however neglected such a social science has been so far. And in this sense, a

comprehensive treatment of the sociology of art must do justice to the factors of fulfilment and frustration of the personality and to the regional and economic circumstances and social ideologies, sentiments and values—the totality of cultural behaviour that determine the styles and subject-matter of art. The sociology of art must enter into more intimate relations with the psychology of the unconscious and *gestalt* than with the orthodox atomistic psychology. At each stage of analysis, the thoroughly unified social character of the experience would need emphasis. The interaction between the creative art and the society or the "spirit" of the age is reciprocal.<sup>46</sup>

Here, then, are Mukerjee's initial convictions as expressed in the early pages of his work. The bulk of the book is devoted to the task of developing these convictions by way of bringing to bear upon the central problem of creation the various and varying contributions of those psychologists, psychoanalysts, anthropologists, sociologists, and art historians who are particularly vital to twentieth-century thought: Freud, Jung, Marx, Boas, Malinowski, Benedict, Havelock Ellis, Herbert Read, etc. And since he also holds to the thesis that art is essentially pluralistic in method and goal, and exists, necessarily, in multiple traditions, he faces the issue squarely and exhibits as much keen familiarity with the work of Picasso, Epstein, Henry Moore and Max Ernst as he does with the frescoes of Ajanta, the bas reliefs at Borobodur and Angkor Vat, and the Sung painters.

One wishes that one could now add that Mukerjee has been completely successful in carrying out these enlightened and ambitious plans. But a "sociology of art" is not produced at a single blow; and Mukerjee, unfortunately, has tried to move in too many directions at the same time. One might almost say that he

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. iii.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, introduction, p. vi.



has tried to produce what he initially recognized as out of the question, i.e., "a volume of encyclopaedic scope covering the entire account of civilisation in its artistic aspects."<sup>47</sup> The general result, however stimulating, is characterized by looseness, lack of integration, occasional irrelevance, frequent confusion, and lack of superior critical discrimination. Thus the achieved goal (whatever the intended goal) is not so much that of a systematic theory that introduces simplicity into overwhelming complexity, but rather the careful and sustained recognition of the complexities inherently involved in art-creation and hence the pressing need for careful study in terms of pluralistic perspectives and for study which exploits, rather than ignores, the important work being done by the social scientists in particular. This is a major achievement in itself. And it is good to have a scholar who belongs to India, the alleged homeland of metaphysics and mysticism, who seems to find the bulk of Western aestheticians too philosophical for his particular taste. One fears, however, that Mukerjee is just another voice crying in the wilderness and that Western aesthetics will probably remain robustly "philosophical" for a long time to come—unless, that is, it loses itself in the semantic analysis of the key terms used by aestheticians.

But even if we grant that Mukerjee's work is moving in a very important direction, the question can still be asked as to whether it is *distinctively Indian*. This question is an important one, particularly to those who feel that the Eastern traditions, *qua* traditions, have much to offer us in every branch of philosophy. Now, if one means by *Indian* in this context the fact of being in conformity with the ideas of classical Indian aestheticians, then one must say that Mukerjee's book, although it most certainly does not ignore the Indian philosophical tradition, is not distinctively Indian. But such a judgment does not constitute adverse criticism, for if the condition of being Indian is that of conforming to the past and ignoring the best that has been done in recent psychology, sociology, anthropology, etc., then to be Indian is to be archaic, out-of-date, and thoroughly provincial. It would be far better, unless philosophers are willing to regard themselves as historians or doctors of memory, to forget once and for all the distinction between East and West and simply to demand that all philosophers, regardless of where they live, be familiar with the relevant past of their work and keep abreast of the moving present. This much is demanded of any ordinary scientist, and it is not too much to demand of a philosopher. Such a demand would not bring about a contrived synthesis of philosophies East and West, but it would help to establish the very conditions of that sort of

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<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. i.

co-operation which could yield, in a perfectly uncoerced and even unintended manner, philosophical fusion. It is enough, then, that Mukerjee has attempted to make concrete the idea of a sociology of art. That he is an Indian may be of importance to national pride; but it is of no importance to the quest for a broader and richer understanding of art as a basic mode of human activity and as a fundamental human value.

#### IV

While Mukerjee's approach to the philosophy of art is that of the sociologist, Nolini Kanta Gupta's approach is fundamentally that of the literary critic. In his *Poets and Mystics* he presents fourteen short essays, most of them having to do with literature, and a number of them devoted to individual poets: Goethe, T. S. Eliot, Blake, Tagore, and Sri Aurobindo. Although the essays were written over several years and are formally independent of one another, a number of interrelated themes run through the entire volume, giving it a unity it would not otherwise have. One of the most important of these themes has to do with the problem of the relationships among poetry, philosophy, and religion. This theme is of particular interest to the contemporary Western literary critic who, taking seriously the writings of Franz Kafka, T. S. Eliot, Graham Greene, Aldous Huxley, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, and others, is finding it more necessary than ever to come to terms with the problem of the philosophical or religious poem, play, and novel. To this problem Gupta brings not only intelligence and sensitivity but also a broad understanding of the literary, philosophical, and religious traditions of both India and the West. From such a critic one might expect a new, or at least an unfamiliar, point of view.

It is clear, as Gupta suggests, that if one starts with a dichotomous distinction between poetry and philosophy, such that poetry is all passion and philosophy all sober analysis and ratiocination, philosophical poetry becomes most difficult. Or, as Gupta writes, the combination of poetry and rationalized knowledge "is risky, but not impossible."<sup>48</sup> From the point of view of creation, one might well find that the man whose talents lead in the direction of analysis and demonstration may not, at the same time, be a man whose nature expresses itself best in the language of art. And from the point of view of the consumer, an abundance of intellectualization in a work of art, and particularly in poetry, may lead to a divided consciousness, neither part of which is altogether satisfied. Historically, Gupta points out, many poets can be found who

<sup>48</sup> Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

have risked all and have "foundered upon this rock" of philosophy; but "a philosopher chanting out his philosophy in sheer poetry has been one of the rarest spectacles."<sup>49</sup> As he writes:

I can think of only one instance just now where a philosopher has almost succeeded being a great poet—I am referring to Lucretius and his *De Natura Rerum* [sic]. Neither Shakespeare nor Homer had anything like philosophy in their poetic creation. And in spite of some inclination to philosophy and philosophical ideas Virgil and Milton were not philosophers either. Dante sought perhaps consciously and deliberately to philosophise in his *Paradiso*. Did he? The less Dante then is he. For it is his *Inferno*, where he is a passionate visionary, and not his *Paradiso* (where he has put in more thought-power) that marks the *nec plus ultra* of his poetic achievement.<sup>50</sup>

Gupta needs no reminder that Lucretius is probably more read as a philosopher than a poet, for he recognizes that this is, indeed, the case with the *Gītā* and the *Upaniṣads*, which, as great philosophical poems, are "idolised more as philosophy than as poetry."<sup>51</sup> With respect to philosophical poetry Gupta is certainly right. One need only add that, if one means by *religion* preaching and moral exhortation, then the combination of poetry and religion is as difficult as the combination of poetry and philosophy; and, although we have an abundance of what can be called "devotional verse," none of it really succeeds in justifying itself as poetry.

Technically speaking, the specific problem here, as Gupta clearly sees, is one of integration, for if a poem (or any work of art) does not function aesthetically as a single whole, then, whatever values it may or may not possess, it is not a work of art at all, although it may be a combination of many different things. And if poetry and philosophy move, as has been suggested, in opposite directions (poetry demanding a concrete tense concentration which ratiocination and argument would only dissipate<sup>52</sup>), then it is only natural that integration would be difficult. The allegory and the parable are, it is true, techniques whereby a certain amount of superficial combination may be achieved, but such combination does not constitute aesthetic fusion. And perhaps more often than not the complete fusion of philosophy, religion, and poetry cannot even be hoped for. Thus, so Gupta feels, in T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*, which apparently strives in the direction of such fusion, "the strands remain distinct, each with its own temper and rhythm, not fused and moulded into a single streamlined form of beauty . . . it is the philosophical, exegetical, discursive Eliot who dominates. . . ." <sup>53</sup> But where Eliot fails, Sri Aurobindo supposedly succeeds:

In him we find the three terms of human consciousness arriving at an absolute fusion. . . .

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 129-130.

The three terms are the spiritual, the intellectual or philosophical and the physical or sensational. . . . His poetry is philosophic, abstract, no doubt, but every philosophy has its practice, every abstract thing its concrete application,—even as the soul has its body; and the fusion, not mere union, of the two is very characteristic in him.<sup>54</sup>

Gupta may or may not be right with respect to his judgments of T. S. Eliot and Sri Aurobindo. This writer, at any rate, finds the praise of Aurobindo's poetry somewhat excessive. But here, for the moment, is one important theme: the difficulty of integrating philosophy (as ratiocination) and religion (as preaching or exhortation) in a single poetical structure.

The general conclusion seems to be that, although it is not "impossible for the poet to swallow the philosopher and the prophet," at least the ordinary poet "needs the injunction not to be busy with too many things, but to be centered upon the one thing needful, viz., to create poetically and not to discourse philosophically or preach prophetically."<sup>55</sup>

In addition to this theme, there is a sort of paralleling counter-theme which seems more implicit than explicit, more suggested and implied than specifically discussed; and this second theme is certainly worthy of fuller development. If philosophy is not identified with analytical ratiocination and if religion is not identified with theological pronouncement or moral exhortation, but if, rather, both philosophy and religion are to be understood in terms of the goal of integral vision which each pursues and expresses, then a sense can be made out in which all great poetry is, willy-nilly, both philosophical and religious. Such conceptions of philosophy and religion may be foreign to the Western mind, but they are not altogether foreign to the Eastern mind, which may be one reason the Indian is not so prone as the Westerner to distinguish sharply between philosophy and religion. Granted these conceptions of philosophy and religion, then it would appear that the aesthetic problem is not that of attempting to integrate philosophy and religion with poetry but that of recognizing that the philosopher, the poet, and the religionist are all striving, in the last analysis, to express a vision of reality, and that, paradoxically enough, a poet can become profoundly philosophical and religious only when he eschews both philosophy and religion and concentrates on being a poet. Thus it is that Lucretius may be said to be profoundly philosophical, not because he gave a reasoned basis for a philosophical outlook in the trappings of verse, but because, in his poem as a whole, he exhibited "a clarity of vision and an intensity of perception, which, however scientific apparently, gave his creation a note, an accent, an atmosphere high, tense, aloof, ascetic, at times bordering on the suprasensual."<sup>56</sup> In short, he pre-

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

sented us with a vivid and concentrated sense of the "mystery of existence that passeth understanding."<sup>57</sup> But, one might argue, if literature may be spoken of as philosophical and religious insofar as it embodies intensity of perception, the mystery of existence, and a clarity of vision, then not only *De Rerum Natura*, but also *King Lear*, and not only *Job*, but also Kafka's *The Trial*, and, on a somewhat lower level, Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* would qualify as significant philosophico-religious literary constructions, in spite of the fact that in neither *King Lear* nor *The Trial* (not to mention *The Old Man and the Sea*) does one find that sort of sustained ratiocination that is usually spoken of as constituting philosophy. But this is precisely the point. And this is also the reason it is absurd to ask concerning the moral, religious, or metaphysical *message* of any successful work of art. A work of art may express the same spiritual vision expressed by a philosopher and formulated by him as a rational system of thought; but it is the vision, the fundamental experiences, that the two have in common, not the mode of expression. Along these lines, indirectly suggested (if not developed) by Gupta, one may achieve a better understanding of the philosophical and religious possibilities of poetry and fiction. But one will have to start by reformulating one's conceptions of philosophy and religion so as to bring them into better accord with what Indians have been talking about for many centuries.

Gupta's essays are rich in suggestiveness, and we have pointed out and elaborated only one of the underlying themes. Nevertheless, a number of his more minor observations may strike the Western ear rather unpleasantly. These observations should not be over-emphasized, but one, at least, deserves mention here as it may appear to some readers to be quite symptomatic of the "Indian" point of view.

Gupta's inordinate praise of the Sanskrit language as a vehicle for poetry seems peculiarly provincial and unenlightened:

The Sanskrit language was moulded and fashioned in the hands of the Rishis, that is to say, those who lived and moved and had their being in the spiritual consciousness. The Hebrew or even the Zend does not seem to have reached that peak, that absolute-ness of the spiritual tone which seems inherent in the Indian tongue. . . . The later languages, however, Greek and Latin or their modern descendants, have gone still farther from the source, they are much nearer to the earth and are suffused with the smell and effluvia of this vale of tears.<sup>58</sup>

The Western aesthete who is concerned with the analysis of language as the medium of poetry and who has recognized that each language has its

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

own aesthetic potentialities and limitations, that all languages that are living are in the process of constant change, and that poetry, if it is to be constructed at all, must be constructed in a specific living language, will probably not take favorably to this particular application of the dubitable principle that heaven lies about us in our infancy. National pride has its place, of course; but it should be carefully excluded from the art critic's study, however fruitfully it may be exploited from the politician's rostrum. East-West co-operation in aesthetics must not be hampered by any *a priori* decision with respect to the intrinsic merit of any particular language, Sanskrit, Hebrew, Latin, English, or Chinese.

## V

Aesthetics, as a special science or as a special branch of philosophy, is young in both East and West. But for this very reason, every attempt should be made now for the maximum amount of transcultural co-operation. If the general structure of aesthetic studies can be established co-operatively, East and West, there will be no later problem of trying to bring together and to synthesize conclusions which, for one reason or another, are completely divergent, but which nevertheless have taken on the appearance of necessities of thought rather than historically conditioned working-hypotheses. Such co-operation is desirable, but the difficulties must not be ignored:

1. Stereotypes exist which are difficult to remove. The notion that Eastern aesthetics is "all the same" and uniformly mystical and metaphysical often discourages the Western aesthetician from even attempting an objective examination. The discussion of the three books above should indicate how different contemporary approaches to aesthetics can be, even in one and the same country, in this case India.

2. The problem of language is extremely difficult to resolve. Many Indians write in English. But most Japanese scholars, naturally enough, write in Japanese. There is every reason to believe that young Japanese scholars are doing very excellent work in general aesthetics, but until their work is adequately translated into some Western language, East-West influence here is bound to be one-sided.

3. Even if the problem of language is solved, the problem of communication remains. *The Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism* deserves the highest praise for its recent issue devoted to Oriental art and aesthetics. It is hoped that this represents a new policy and that more issues of this kind will be forthcoming. In the meantime, the editor could encourage reviews of works

being published by Eastern aestheticians and art critics. The books discussed above have not, as far as I know, been reviewed in *The Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism*, and they are of value. At the same time, PHILOSOPHY EAST AND WEST should make every effort to encourage aesthetic contributions, particularly from India and Japan.

4. Historical work is important, but the tendency to identify Eastern aesthetics with the aesthetics of Eastern antiquity must be overcome. Such a philosopher as Abhinavagupta is historically important and cannot be ignored. There is, however, no point in setting him up as the enunciator of Indian aesthetics, past and present. Western aestheticians have mainly recovered from their love affair with Aristotle and tend to remember that, although one may seek inspiration in the past, one must seek verification in the present.

5. The Western aesthetician has much to learn about Eastern aesthetics. The Eastern aesthetician is often better off, but it is still true that some Eastern aestheticians must come to the realization that much has happened in the West since Hegel and Schopenhauer (not to mention Plotinus), and also that Croce, however important, is not the only important philosopher of art in the West.

These various problems and difficulties must be resolved if East-West cooperation in aesthetics is going to amount to more than a series of fits and starts. Here is a challenge to those who are really interested in the philosophy of art. It is to be hoped that the next Philosophers' Conference in Honolulu will show that the challenge has been met.