

Hindustani Music and the Philosophy of Art

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Music has for long been an object of serious reflection in India. Quite a few attempts have been made in the past to define its basic concepts, such as *rāga* (melodic matrix)¹ and *tāla* (rhythm), and to determine the real purpose of this art. Even today our talk about music abounds in phenomenological insights and aesthetic predicates, some of them fit to be used even with respect to a single *swara* (or note). Yet if philosophy be regarded as a serious attempt to clarify, distinguish, and interlink the meanings of concepts relating to a particular subject, or as phenomenological *analysis* — or, quite generally, as a resolute attempt to think ever more clearly — it would be difficult to say that a *philosophy* of contemporary Hindustani (or north Indian) music flourishes at present. We have no properly thought out book on the subject, and even the number of essays on music written in the way of philosophical aesthetics is extremely limited. This partly explains why I have not worded the subject of this essay directly as philosophy of Hindustani music.

I am mindful of the constraints to which this article is subject. Those who happen to read it cannot all be expected to be conversant with the philosophy of art as it is being done in relation to music in the West today. So I have to put everything so clearly that the lack of foreknowledge may inhibit understanding but minimally. I must also bear in mind the pragmatic thesis that “ideas must be expressible in living and behaviour or they are merely verbal”²; for otherwise my writing on the traditional Indian conception of the aim of music, which is frankly *metaphysical*, will not seem to make any sense. Above all, to interest the readers of this journal I have to relate my treatment of the subject, wherever I fairly can, to our music *today*. At the same time I see it clearly that our understanding of the music of India stands to gain in clarity from the way people in the West are philosophizing about *their* music, and that they too may be expected to get some stimulus or corrective from a thoughtful look at Hindustani music. In the present essay, however, I can focus only on the following four concepts: music’s ultimate end, *ālāpa*, *rāga*, and *tāla*. They are all of special importance because they relate to Indian music as a whole. Other concepts and problems which may be expected to receive some incidental attention are: music and metaphysics; the pure and the profound in music; music and expression; form as organic, living; and the (alleged) uniqueness of time in music.

I. Music’s Metaphysical Aim

Metaphysics has been understood variously; and the word ‘metaphysical’ too

admits of different meanings, one of these being 'relating to the supernatural or supersensible realities'. It is in this sense that the aim of music is metaphysical according to the ancient Indian view. Music, we are told, is not a matter of mere entertainment, but essentially a way to spiritual emancipation³ — an experience that is said to relate to the innermost depths of our being, and not to the senses that provide our everyday experience. Now this is bound to repel the majority of contemporary philosophers of art. But I find it possible to plead for a patient consideration — though not of course for the positive acceptance — of this view; and my arguments here would roughly run as under :

a. If, as a determinate view of reality as a whole, metaphysics may be said to be inseparable from such a no-nonsense subject as science — I have here in mind the view (of Popper and Einstein) that "to try to purify science of all metaphysics is to hamper or cripple it"⁴ — it would be clearly dogmatic to hold, without due enquiry, that in its other sense of an earnest concern with supersensible realities, metaphysics has *nothing* to do with the art of music which is so freely used in prayer and worship.

b. Further, it is widely believed in India that some of the saints who are now a part of our religious history in fact realized their spiritual destiny through the pursuit of music. Three of these saints are Swami Haridas, Meera Bai, and Tyagaraja who is widely revered in south India as a classical composer of the highest quality. What is more, I know of a Dhruvapada⁵ song the text of which opens with the emphatic declaration that a knowledge of the essence of tone-production comes only as a sequel to the direction of one's whole life towards the goal of spiritual liberation; and then proceeds to speak of the way in which the *prāna* (or vital force) is to be made to pass through the six psychic centres (*chakras*) leading, in the end, to liberation⁶.

But, I hasten to admit, all this does nothing to prove that the relation of the discipline of music to spiritual exaltation is a *necessary* one. As for the saints who seem to have vindicated the possibility of such a relation, how can we be sure that they attained to the end supreme primarily because of their commitment to music rather than in virtue of their own spiritual fineness and fervour? Nor is the uncertainty removed by the composition I have referred to. A religious orientation may perhaps be fairly said to make for some sensitiveness to the deeper values of music, such as introvertive depth, serenity and sublimity; but if the end of spiritual freedom is to be attained through a kind of yogic⁷ discipline — which is what the regulated progression of *prāna* through the hierarchy of the six psychic centres really is — how does *music* remain the major way to our spiritual goal?

c. But, the traditional Indian may rejoin, we have not yet reckoned with some important but little known facts about the content and practice of Hindustani music. For instance, there are quite a few Dhruvapada songs which are called *ārāadhanātmaka* (or of the nature of worship). Here, along with a prayerful text, the manner of singing has to be all along inward-looking, and so rather subdued, without of course any loss of sweetness; and no improvisation is allowed. The whole utterance gives one the impression of a musical sigh welling up from the depths of

being, or of incense borne aloft on the wings of devotion, emitting an aura of purity and quiet contemplation. Such songs are remarkable for their *kind* of beauty; it spellbinds us, but is yet quite austere. The content of feeling here is intense, but the manner is restrained, the different notes appearing as mere accents of charm rather than as projections of technical self-assurance, and all alike sung with such poise and quiet winsomeness that they lend a grip to attention without any strain on our apprehending powers.

But here one may protest that it is primarily the character of the meaningful language that deepens, where it does, one's orientation towards God; that language cannot be regarded as the essence of music; and that, therefore, the question still remains open if music *alone* can take us closer to our religious goal. Before, however, more thought is given to this big question, another incidental issue may be discussed in brief.

II. Of Music as Pure: *Ālāpa*

What is *pure* music or music *alone*? Lovers of Indian music would at once say: it is *ālāpa*⁸ or singing which eschews both language and beats organized as rhythm-cycles⁹, and which can yet be very expressive and generally winsome. Such a view of purity in art, we may note, is very different from Clive Bell's view of the same. For none of the appraisal words that are commonly used in respect of good *ālāpa* — say, 'deep', 'dignified', and 'serene' — is intelligible except in the light of our adult experience of life, which is precisely the reason why *ālāpa* does not generally appeal to the very young. Nor would it be correct to say that *ālāpa* is 'pure' in the sense that what it expresses — sadness or joy perhaps — is utterly different from what or how such emotions feel in real life, for if the singer straightaway sets out to sing a sad *rāga* (or melody-type¹⁰) at a *nimble* pace, the procedure would strike the knowledgeable as improper for the simple reason that sadness *in real life* recalcitrates alacrity. The typically Indian answer to the question how exactly *ālāpa* is 'pure' would be that just as milk is pure when it is not adulterated with water¹¹, so is music 'pure' when it is free from admixture with what is not really essential to this art, that is, language and beat-measured rhythm (or *tāla*). Many would react at this point with disbelief, and the feeling is likely to mount if they are told that such purity is attainable even in singing; but what we call *ālāpa* (of the Dhruvapada manner, I repeat) is a clear vindication of this possibility.

Here, however, quite a few points call for some explanation. What exactly is the *essence* of music, that is, that basic material without which no music (as art) is possible? Now, taking all forms of classical Indian music into account, my answer would be that the material we seek is some specific tones (or *swaras*) and tonal passages, both regulated in respect of their duration and manner of movement. The regulation of time, I must add, may be done objectively — that is, with the help of beats which the *rasika* (or knowledgeable listener) can easily mark, and the intervallic order of which cannot be wantonly disregarded¹²; or subjectively, that is, by the musician himself in accordance with his own assessment of the demands of good singing. It is common knowledge that our everyday talk can be quite expressive without being determined by any set temporal arrangement. So the suggestion that

ālāpa-singing can be expressive without adhering to any pre-fixed rhythm need not surprise us.

All this should become clearer as we turn to dwell a little longer on the nature and significance of *ālāpa*. The aesthetic resources of *ālāpa* (as sung), I repeat, do not include a pre-fixed and concurrent rhythm¹³. Nor do they cover language as ordinarily understood. The materials of *ālāpa* are only the following: tones, tonal passages, and some alphabets of the Hindi language which may well be used in rapid succession, but are never so put together as to make a (meaningful) word. So we would be biased if we believed that only *instrumental* music could be 'pure'. It is true that in the past a Sanskrit text, having a clearly religious meaning, was regarded as the non-aesthetic material of *ālāpa*; but in current practice nobody cares about that text — many even do not remember it correctly; and the focus of the singer's attention is all along on tunefulness and evocation of variform effects within the technical confines of the *rāga* chosen for treatment, so that their evocation is at once, if not all along, a projection of the *rāga*'s own aesthetic potential. For production of effects, certain set ways of singing individual notes and traversing their linkages are employed. Thus, the device commonly known as *gamak* suggests depth and power; and *dyut*, *andolan*, *dagar*, and *anuranātmaka* utterance work up, respectively, the effects of a twinkle, oscillation or swing, an upgoing meander, and a kind of nasal resonance which can be so regulated as to sound very similar to the tinkling temple-bells as they sway and appear to draw near and to recede in alternation¹⁴. But it would be wrong to believe that the effects worked up by *ālāpa* are only euphonic, for they can also relate to the life of feeling and desire, say, by creating the tonal analogue of a longing for what is far off, yet deeply loved¹⁵.

Yet all this is perhaps of subsidiary value here. The true aesthetic warrant of *ālāpa*, I believe, is its unmatched power to produce such effects as those of grandeur, serenity, seamlessness and infinity; and to evoke an intense yet identifiable *rāga*-atmosphere. It is indeed this dual power, and obviously no such meaningful relevance to the major issues of life as may distinguish a good tragedy¹⁶, that makes for profundity in *ālāpa*. But though it is true that the *rāga*-atmosphere, or the overall look of the *rāga*, as built up by *ālāpa* is felt to be seamless, our response here is by no means undiscerning. The *rāga*'s individual character — and its distinctness from other *rāgas* — are never lost sight of by knowledgeable listeners. Should this appear a little self-discrepant and so unacceptable to some, I would rejoin by pointing to an experience that is (in principle) accessible to all, say, that of walking through a flower-laden avenue and of feeling wooed by a breeze that seems everywhere and is also the bearer of a *distinct* fragrance.

Here, in passing, a question may be discussed. Can a particular exposition of *ālāpa*-singing be said to have (or to be) a form? Yes, I would readily say, in case 'form' is taken to mean a skilful and aesthetically significant interlacement of the work's details. Great care has to be lavished in *ālāpa*, not only on the articulation of individual notes, but on the manner, both euphonic and temporal, of interlinking them. What strikes almost every knowledgeable listener as the singer commences *ālāpa* is the contemplative and often reverential way in which the very opening

notes are sung. The singer, here, rarely seems to be singing *for* an audience; he rather appears to be seeking and securing a foothold for further work, not merely marking the *swaras* accurately, but, so to say, *feeling for their melodic insides*; and the introverted look recurs freely in many of the most intense subsequent moments of *ālāpa*. The point to be noted here is that *ālāpa*-singing provides an easily accessible illustration of the truth (which Coleridge emphasized) that art-making is a rhythm of the alternating impulses to create and to contemplate¹⁷. Further, in so far as every presentation of *ālāpa* is done in a *rāga* — that is, not only within the limits of a specific melodic scheme, but also as a heuristic concern with the creative possibilities that the scheme in question offers — on completing a well-done *ālāpa* the singer feels not merely satisfied but a little overawed at the potential immensity of a single *rāga*.

III. *The Profound in Music*

Profundity as experienced by the singer of *ālāpa* and his listeners derives from the following factors: a tranquil and regulated build-up of the melodic fabric which captures attention partly by virtue of the very attitudes it requires us to adopt, that is, not merely sympathetic attention to the present music for its own sake, but patience in waiting for what is to come next, *and* a creative imaginativeness to bridge the many intervals of literal silence that punctuate the course of singing, an act which is helped by our own knowledge of the *rāga*-form; abounding moments of manifestly absorbed, and not merely tuneful, singing; the seemingly exhaustless potential of the *rāga* to admit of newer and newer effects of depth, height and beauty; and the melodic atmosphere which, once it has to establish itself, appears to be all around us, and to steep us with a feeling of happy subservience. Phenomenologically, profundity is here a sheer immensity of satisfied feeling which comes as a sequel to a blend of some purely musical values in what meets the ear, and discriminating but not analytical attention of the listeners.

It is, I believe, improper to start our search for profundity in music from the example of great literature. For whereas literature, at its best, generally builds upon a subject-matter of high seriousness, and may well be said to be *about* matters of general and abiding interest, such as the vicissitudes of life, what we call *profound* in the region of Hindustani music — whether it occurs in the course of *ālāpa* or in Khyal-singing (which uses both language and rhythm) — is never importantly related to references to the course or content of life. The *ālāpa* that I seek to focus on is not *about* anything at all. In spite of its vast canvas, it is just itself: a clear vindication of the power of the merely euphonic as against the verbal, of *laya* (or tempo, aesthetic pace) in opposition to *tāla*, and of the *rāga*-form as distinguished from the individual notes it builds upon. To suggest that *ālāpa* may be said to be 'about' the possibilities of sound would be rather odd, though it may well be said to *reveal* these possibilities. By virtue of the sheer force of the way it is commonly used, the word *about* suggests representation, a subject-matter, and a more or less external relation between that which relates and what it is about or related to. The first two of these suggestions are just irrelevant to *ālāpa*; and tones, and the creative pos-

sibilities they offer, are the very stuff of which it is made.

I suggest that even in respect of literature a distinction may be made between a work's looking profound and a *rational account* of what makes it appear so. At the level of appearance — that is, when it has just cast its spell on us — the work only seems to be infinite in significance, and to engulf us, so to say; it surely touches us deeply, but our being quickened into thoughts and imaginings of basic issues, values, and human foibles is a somewhat subsequent happening. This perhaps explains, in part, why after the seizure of a work's profound significance one is not straightaway willing or able to talk about it explanatorily. It seems to me that if the primary phenomenal level is kept in mind — that is, if profundity be regarded as the felt impact of the seemingly fathomless significance of a work — it would help up in seeing the likeness of profundity in music and literature without losing sight of unlikeness of the ways which make the quality in question appear in the two arts.

Be that as it may, artists and critics in India do not generally talk of the *meaning* of music; they only speak of the presence or absence of some aesthetic qualities such as shapeliness, sweetness, creative variety and abandon, and a moving or spellbinding quality. From the Indian point of view, the characterization of the value or charm of music as its *meaning* is rather glib. Where a musical continuation is said to make sense the meaning may simply be that the succeeding notes quite accord with the preceding ones, or that the passage in question clearly meets the technical demands of the *rāga*; and just as neither a perfectly proportioned figure nor a finely drawn triangle are said to be *meaningful*, so too a passage that is not discordant may only be said to be agreeable or acceptable rather than meaningful. But does this mean that what we call pure music has nothing to do with real life? The answer cannot be given forthwith. We have to make some distinctions. *Ālāpa*, our paradigm of pure music, is surely not *quite* unrelated to real life. It is, in every case, the work of a particular singer; and the sense of musical excellence he has come to develop, and his personal experience of the life of feeling cannot but determine, directly or otherwise, the music he produces. But however manifest be the effects of, say, repose and unboundedness in his music generally, when he sets out to do *ālāpa*, or during the course of it, he is surely not guided by the image of a tranquil lake or that of the heaven's vast spread. Nor does the trained listener directly experience the variform effects of *ālāpa* as likenesses of things and happenings in real life, though when he is asked to *describe* the effects in question he may well have to refer to some contents of the actual world by way of illustration. The insistence that aesthetic *form* (as distinguished from what it builds upon) and worldly significance seem to be ultimately inseparable cannot be taken unreservedly¹⁸.

But, to turn to a point which is more relevant to our enquiry, how exactly can *ālāpa* facilitate access to the goal of spiritual upliftment? I may venture to answer this question as follows:

It is a basic assumption of the theory of Hindustani music that every *rāga* is specially suited to a particular hour of the day. But I see no point in this belief unless the normal features or happenings of the hour — or the thoughts or feelings it may tend to generate — can be transfigured into, or in some other way help, the sub-

stance of music itself. Now, imagine a devotee hallowing the morn with *swaras* of *rāga* Bhairava which is meant for this particular part of the day. Steadying himself with an utterance of the tonic he sets out to develop the singing suchwise that he may be able to saturate himself with images and attitudes that suit the hour — the rising sun, yearning in prayer and the concomitant chastening of self, pouring *arghya* (sacred water) on the idol, and non-attachment towards the things of the world. A brief but immaculate touch at the tonic, followed at once by *komal re* (D flat) prolonged firmly and sweetly, attunes the mind with the sunrise outside, by suggesting emergence. The same note (D flat) touched while descending from *ga* (E) provides, in a manner, a clear euphonic transcript of the downward slant of pouring *arghya* on the idol. As attunement grows through the aid of *swaras* (or notes), detachment deepens and the singer cooperates by possessing the *sa* (tonic) merely ideally and lingering at the *re* (D flat) — now faintly, though of course sweetly — the note suggesting transcendence. The *re* thus becomes an aid to devotion and to elevation of the self.

Such self-satisfying and uplifting singing is, however, by no means necessary. Most of our vocalists would sing the *rāga* and the notes I have referred to quite without the ethico-religious orientation I have visualized. At the same time, the possibility of turning the material and manner of music into an aid to personal uplift must not be ignored; for otherwise the talk of realizing God through music would cease to make any sense.

IV. What is Rāga?

It may be added that even without the ideal inner attitude I have referred to, a *rāga* as sung can be quite easily identifiable to the knowledgeable, though its aesthetic character or expressiveness will surely suffer a change. But this requires me to bring out the distinction between the grammatical identity and aesthetic personality of a *rāga*. The concept of *rāga* has been interpreted variously, and I take it as an important task of the philosophy of Hindustani music to pick up and integrate the elements of truth in these different views; and, further, to so enlarge our understanding of the concept that not merely the components of a *rāga* but *the very dynamics of the way it is created and experienced may be duly covered*. With this larger end in view I propose to define a *rāga* as follows:

A *rāga* is a specific melodic form which serves to permit and determine, as a matrix, the creation and contemplation of music on the basis of the quality, emphasis and relatedness of tones and rhythmic abidance or passage, with an eye to evoking (in listeners) either the appropriate *rasa*¹⁹ and/or (at least) a sweet apprehension of the *rāga*'s own whole-form, the listeners' actual responses to and experience of the melody varying necessarily, in respect of detail, in accordance with their individual capacities for technical grasp and aesthetic sensitiveness²⁰.

Let me now explain this definition by commenting on its key ideas.

To begin with, a *rāga* is a specific melodic form. This means, first, that it is a form, or an integration of its constituent *swaras*. It is an integration — not a mere

putting together — of notes because, though none of them can be allowed to suffer in respect of grammatical accuracy and sweetness, they are all to be so built upon that they may not seem to usurp the requisite aesthetic dominance of the relation of the focal (*vadi*) and consonant (*samvadi*) notes. It is indeed important to remember that a *rāga* does not represent its constituent notes in their wholeness; it does not attach equal importance to all of them. Some of these notes are indeed to receive less emphasis than others. No note can of course be allowed to appear indistinct or off-key; but, on the other hand, prominence cannot be equally given to every note of the *rāga*. In other words, the *rāga*-form is a unity of *varying* emphases; it is not to be regarded as a rosary of *even* beads; and where, as in ordinary Khyāl-singing, a fluent pattern (*tana*) seems to treat every note evenly, the question may indeed be put if it is able to preserve the proper character of the *rāga*.

Secondly, the suggestion that a *rāga* is *melodic* form means that its different notes follow a before-after order. This order in the region of music is necessarily a series of the higher and the lower; therefore, progression and descension (or *āroha* and *avaroha*) are integral movements in the being of a *rāga*.

Thirdly, by saying that a *rāga* is a *specific* melodic form we only mean that every *rāga* has a distinct and identifiable perceptual character. It strikes the ear differently from another *rāga*. But insofar as two different *rāgas* may employ exactly the same notes, if in dissimilar ways, the perception of the precise character of a *rāga* may call for a finely trained ear on the part of the *rasika*. In other words, a *rāga* as heard is not merely received, but is often at once an exercise in discrimination on the part of the listener.

Further, I have chosen to speak of a *rāga* as a matrix of melody, and not as a melodic *type*. (This is important because, in quite a few presentations of Hindustani music to Western audiences, the word *rāga* has been translated as *melody-type*.) A *type* is the concept of a class. It certainly covers or is applicable to all things of the same kind; but it obviously does not make or enter into the substance of these things. A *rāga*, on the other hand, is the substance or material of the melodic whole which it is developed into by the singer in a particular recital. It has been freely regarded, I know, as a melodic *type* because many compositions can be created in the same *rāga*. But my point is that these compositions are also made out of, and bring out the nature of, the *rāga* chosen for treatment. Therefore, a *rāga* may be said to be a matrix in the sense of being a ground-mass which is at once the necessary and pervasive condition, the material, and the regulative and individuating principle, of musical creation. Further, though it is true that whatever is seen to appear in the treatment of a *rāga* must not transgress its grammatical character, and that one cannot here draw upon anything which lies beyond the technical bounds of the *rāga*, yet, within these ultimate limits, there is such infinite room for the creation of ever newer beauty and effects that no one, not even all the musicians of India taken together, can exhaust the aesthetic possibilities of even a single *rāga*. From this point of view, a *rāga* is limitless in spite of its being possessed of a specific individuality.

It would be interesting to see, at some length, how the *rāga*-matrix functions.

An analogy would help here. Just as the bed and banks of a river facilitate, determine and contain the seamless flow of its waters, similarly, by virtue of its compass and character, a *rāga* provides both freedom and direction to the contemplation and creation of music. Again like the river-bed which leaves the waters free to ripple or to eddy, or to simply flow noiselessly, a *rāga* too, apart from the norm of accordance with its grammatical structure and the classical idiom generally, offers infinite freedom for musical expression and embellishment. But, of course, the analogy is by no means absolute. The bed of the river is clearly not a constituent of its billows and ripples; but a *rāga*, on the other hand, by virtue of the notes it builds upon, is the very material of its musical filling. But, one may protest, all this is a bit too general. What are the specific elements which a *rāga* utilizes? The answer is: quality, emphases and relatedness of tones, and rhythmic abidance or passage.

But to say so is to mean a great deal, and the implications must be distinguished. The quality of a note may be taken to cover the following: its being high or low by virtue of its placement in the bass, middle or upper register; its thinness or richness, tangentiality or penetration, which respectively mean how brief or how long is the abidance of voice at a particular note; and, above all, its expressiveness — gaiety, a sad and yearning intenseness, or a simple soulful quality. Variations of aesthetic pace can also lend a look of repose or impulsiveness to a tone; but their effect is also freely that of abandon, easy confluence, decorativeness and winsome grouping. The words 'relatedness of tones' may be taken to cover the various formal graces some of which have been already listed.

It is important to see how the many forms of our present-day classical music contribute variously to the evocation of the full aesthetic character of a *rāga*. *Alāpa* of the older kind, we have seen, brings out the spaciousness, repose and dignity that are implicit in a *rāga*; and, what is more, even its power to elevate us and to encompass us in the way of a rarefied atmosphere. A good composition (or *bandish*), be it a Khyāl or Dhrupada²¹ one, projects the *rāga* as a single and easily identifiable wholeness. The *tānas* of the Khyāl-singer manifest how a *rāga* is as open to a close and varied filling of vivacious and decorative patterns as to the reposeful stretches of *ālāpa*. So, to speak comprehensively, a *rāga* is neither a mere arrangement of ascent and descent (*āroha* and *avaroha*) nor a skeletal fixture to which the music has only to conform, but a rich and integrated wholeness of implicit depth, accommodativeness, repose and vitality, and variform beauty and expressiveness.

That is why our master musicians freely speak of a *rāga's* *personality*. Indeed, just as a man's personality is an actualization of his determinate potentialities, so is the form of a *rāga* a realization of its aesthetic potential within the limits, and on the basis, of its grammatical structure. In thus interpreting *rāga*-form I am not only encouraged by Aristotle's view that an immanent form "explains a thing's development, [that] it is the intelligible structure that a thing is when fully developed, and [that] the growth of the thing is [to be] regarded as a striving to make actual its form"²², but also by the evidence of our actual musical practice and discourse. The propriety of looking on the *rāga* as a kind of living form — rather than as a rigid, inert structure — should now be obvious.

To conclude, if we look at it from the aesthetic point of view, a *rāga* is what or how its grammatical character comes to appear as a result of the musician's actualization of the creative possibilities that it offers. The *rasika* and the critic have to follow this process of actualization and to gather its successive moments through a constructive use of their sympathetic imagination.

V. Music and Expression

In my discussion of *Alāpa* and *rāga* I have spoken of effects and expressiveness pretty freely. But, as we know, 'expression' in the context of art cannot be taken in the same sense in which we speak of expressing our thoughts and feelings overtly in terms of language. Where we find sadness in music no pressing *out* is involved. However manifest it be, the sadness in question remains where it is, that is, in the music itself. This is why we prefer to say: "The music is sad" or "The music *looks* sad, or *appears* or *seems* to be sad". The italicized words perhaps cover many more striking features of music than 'express' which, in the region of this art, is generally used essentially in relation to the life of feeling. One cannot replace the sentence. "The composition *looks* [or is] very balanced" with "The composition *expresses* [or embodies!] balance". However, because of the admitted importance of the expression theory of art, and also because we quite often speak of the expressiveness *of music*, I have to give due attention to the question as to how (pure) music is related to expression. It is of course obvious that the relation is not necessary. A substantial amount of Hindustani music is admired simply because it is properly structured, sweet, and sparkling. But where music *is* expressive, how does it come to wear the look of what it seems to express? And what exactly is 'expressed' or presented to contemplation? To turn to the second question first, what seems to be expressed by (or rather, in) music is not merely the whole range of feelings which are commonly known as emotions, such as joy and grief, but a good deal of what Susanne Langer speaks of as feeling and its forms, say, the following: excitement and repose; the easy passage of a reverie; sudden activation, perhaps of an impulse or thought; a moment of intentional waywardness; "precipitate advances [and] victorious emergences"²³; "the drive and directness of desires; and above all the rhythmic continuity of our selfhood"²⁴. All this may be accepted. But the vital question relates to the 'how' of such expressiveness or semblance. How is all this brought about?

My answer is: in various ways. But before I explain why I say so, I must make a distinction. The question we have posed may be broken up into two. What does *the singer* have to do to invest the music with its variform look or expressiveness? And what are we, *the listeners*, to do; or how are we to equip ourselves to register the expressiveness in question? Now the answer to the second question is clear. One has to become a *rasika* or a knowledgeable listener by acquiring a knowledge of the grammar of music and by cultivating percipience through repeated and devoted attention at concerts. A layman may well be able to distinguish soft from vigorous music, and a slow from a fluent passage. But the individual moments of pathos and pain — or of cheer and abandon — which a turn or passage of voice traversing but

two or three notes may provide, and sensitiveness to which can deepen or refine our response to the overall emotive look of the melody, are accessible only to discriminating listeners because, quite unlike the lay lover of music, they are not only possessed of a foreknowledge of the *rasa* (or overall emotive look) of the *rāga* being sung, but are also all along alive to the factors which make for expressiveness, say, the regulation of tempo, the comparative duration of individual notes, and *their disposition in passages of ascent or descent*. To take a simple instance, the gentle oscillation of a note in the lower half of the middle register may express a mere *entreaty* — and a similar treatment of another note in the upper half a kind of *aspiration* — to the *rasika* if he knows that the rules of the *rāga* being sung require a *descent* to follow in the first case, and the sequel of an *ascent* in the second.

But what does *the singer* have to do to make his singing expressive? A lot, I would say. The assistance of language is unavailable to pure music; and so the musician, here, has to make the most of the formal devices at his disposal. And no one of them, such as regulation of aesthetic pace, will suffice for every kind of expressiveness or effect. The concept of musical movement does not trouble me. It is surely not as problematic as it has sometimes been made to appear. What is it, one may ask, that could here be said to move, and what exactly is the path traversed? My ready answer is : it is the human voice which moves, and the way it covers is the up-and-down stretch of the *rāga* in the scale. Some have wondered if music can ever provide a perception similar to that of “a wave moving across the sea”²⁵ But the kind of passage we call *dagar* in the language of *ālāpa* is a clear, if gentle, meander; and the early stages of *ālāpa* on the Vichitra Veena²⁶ abound in suggestions of a mighty billow arising from and receding into the depths of the melody; and enabling us to glimpse at the same time the points of its upsurge and subsidence. It is, therefore, too much to contend that in music “there is not even the appearance or illusion of something that moves between the positions”²⁷. But the point I wish to press rather is that the familiar device of expressing, say, grief in music in the same way in which the emotion manifests itself in life — that is, in terms of hushed tones and *leisurely pace* — cannot account for all that music may be seen to express. Where music is deep and tranquil, the expressiveness cannot be explained on the analogy of *bodily movement*; and where a particular passage is required to seem soothing, some notes may have to be lightly caressed, so to say, instead of being projected. Further, the waxing and waning of feeling may have to be suggested through a slight, but perceptible regulation of vocal volume — a device which does not have any analogue in the way we move about in daily life. Clearly, in investing music with expressiveness much more is involved than skill in handling aesthetic pace alone.

Yet, I may add, such skill itself can work in more ways than are commonly recognized. Thus if, during the course of *ālāpa*, the passage of the voice from the first note of the *rāga* to its third one is *leisurely* and unbroken — that is, unruffled by the discreteness of the second note — and if, what is more, the passage also involves the gentle regulation of vocal volume I have just spoken of, a kind of concave curve can be so accomplished that it may appear as almost a picture of the inner kneeling implicit in an earnest entreaty²⁸.

The *directness* of the way in which we see feeling in music, where it is there, is a matter of experience; and it would be a clear travesty of fact to suggest that when a piece of music appears sad to us the sadness is somehow first evoked in us and only then read into the music. However, the question if we ourselves become sad where the music seems sad to us is not so easy to settle. Much would depend on how manifest and pervasive the sadness (in the music) is. But a few remarks may be safely made. Where the music we are listening to is 'classical'— by which we generally mean the quality of being doubly framed, that is, in a particular *rāga* and in a specific rhythm-cycle — there is an unrelaxing (yet effortless) cognitive awareness of the technical requirements of the dual setting; and this does not allow our sensitiveness to the pathos in music to turn our total experience into one of *overall* sadness. (I do not deny that authentic musical awareness is always a case of 'knowing-this'²⁹; but where we listen knowledgeably to classical Indian music, the 'this', whether it be a tuft of notes or just a *single swara*, is generally, if implicitly, viewed in relation to the technical requirements of *rāga* and *tāla*.) On the other hand, it is precisely because (as true *rasikas*) we do not fail to notice anything in music that some specially sad moments in it may make us experience a few real touches of pathetic feeling.

I think it necessary here to develop how much is involved in a genuine or direct understanding of music. It may not be wrong, but it is hardly very enlightening, to suggest that the understanding in question is "essentially a description of the course of the music and of the experience of its connectedness"³⁰; and we have to guard ourselves here against some possible misunderstandings. We have to avoid over-emphasis on the course or passage of music; for the steadfast and tuneless singing of even a single note can satisfy us deeply with its lingering look of warmth or tranquility. (It may be noted, in passing, that if the tarrying in question is overdone, the determinate character of the *rāga* being sung may be seriously upset, bringing it dangerously close to another *rāga* from which it is expected to be kept distinct. This, incidentally, is a pointer to two truths: first, that a *rāga* is an organic unity, insofar as its overall look depends upon the character of its parts; and, second, that duration enters as a determinant into the very constitution of a *rāga*.) Further, the coupling of 'course' with 'connectedness' is not to be taken to suggest that features like literal discontinuity or occasional pauses, and variform turns and emphases do not contribute anything to the expressiveness of music. Finally, especially where we listen to an excellent live exposition of Hindustani classical vocal music, the look and impact of the course of music cannot be abstracted from the singer's manifest absorption in the singing. However questionable be the *theory* that music is a kind of direct self-expression, the *fact* unquestionably is that the most moving moments in our classical singing are those which seem to give utterance to the singer's inmost being.

VI. Time in Music: Rhythm

Another important concept of Hindustani music, besides *rāga* and *ālāpa*, is *tāla* (or rhythm). Rhythm, however, is not the only form in which time (or duration as

aesthetically controlled) permeates and determines our music; another is *laya* (tempo or aesthetic pace) which in the case of *ālāpa* is determined (as we saw), in the main, subjectively or by the singer himself, not with the help of beats but essentially in accordance with his personal assessment of the aesthetic requirements of music. Rhythm, on the other hand, is duration as measured *with the help of beats*, and (in north Indian music) *organized into cycles*. *Laya* or tempo (as regulated pace, leisurely or quick) is of course importantly present in rhythm too, but it figures here with the help of beats — and *bols*³¹. But I must explain all this clearly and relate it, wherever possible, to aesthetic theory. Before, however, I set out to do so I must put down one thing clearly. What I propose to deal with, in the main, is not rhythm in *music*, but rhythm *as such*. Today, of course, it is *as accompaniment* that rhythm is generally appreciated in India; and we are not slow to notice the rhythmic organization of a *music composition* either. But our traditional *sangeet*³² has always looked on rhythm as an independent art too; and I am going to *argue* why such a view makes sense. What is more, solo expositions of rhythm are even today presented, occasionally, as important items in our prestigious music conferences. Above all, I see it clearly that the character and role of rhythm in (our) music cannot be properly understood unless it is first studied in relative abstraction from music, be it vocal or instrumental. But, of course, my treatment of the matter cannot wholly keep off references to music.

a. Now, a solo exposition of Hindustani rhythm — say, on the *Tabla*³³ — comprises the playing of a cycle and some patterns. Any cycle that is chosen for treatment is a whole of a specific number of beats occurring at even speed. The first beat (or the *sama*) is at once the focal beat, because from it we set out as we play (or follow) the rhythm, and to it we return completing a round. The ability of the drummer — and also of the singer while presenting a rhythmically organized composition — to come back to the first beat with split-second accuracy, and in terms of well-designed and ever more various passages, is regarded as a mark of artistic skill, and so serves as a criterion for judging the excellence of the recital. Our everyday experience of time, I may add, has nothing to offer as a parallel to this image of a self-completing and pleasing circular passage of ordered accents. In real life the moment of beginning an activity is never seen to reappear. After a catastrophic failure one may well gather courage to begin a particular venture anew; but this is literally a new beginning, and not a happily incurred and orderly return to the original initiative step.

b. The material of Indian rhythm is distinctive. It comprises not merely beats but *bols* (mnemonic syllables)³⁴. These syllables are mere letters or bunches of letters like *tā*, *dhā*, *tin*, *dhin*, *tingin*. They do not *mean* anything, but only seek to be formal analogues of those actual sounds which are produced by striking the drums in determinate ways. Further, though they are not (expected to be) unmusical, they chime with but one or two notes of the scale. Their function, I repeat, is simply to help us identify and remember the actual sounds drummed, and their beauty arises only from the manner of their grouping, regulated pacing, and clear execution.

I feel impelled here to make some points of value to aesthetic theory:

First, it makes sense to contend that because of its material, rhythm is not only distinctive but important among the arts. Herbert Read argues that music holds a position of pre-eminence among the arts because it alone enables the artist to appeal to the audience directly, without the intervention of a medium of communication in common use for other purposes³⁵. From this point of view, music may be put a little higher than literature, the material of which — that is, language — is also used for the *non*-aesthetic purpose of conversation in daily life. But, I ask, does not such a way of adjudging the comparative value of the arts warrant an even higher place to rhythm? Musical notes, as we know, are in fact *practically* used, say, by some hawkers in their typical calls, or by some big bells to chime the hour pleasantly — purposes which are both clearly utilitarian; but the syllables (or *bols*) of rhythm are *never* employed for any *non*-aesthetic purpose.

Second, they do not refer to anything external. A standard rhythmic recital is quite non-representational. Of course, if he so decides — perhaps with a view to pleasing an audience of lay listeners — the drummer *can* produce some patterns of syllables that resemble everyday sounds and familiar happenings, such as the movement and noise of a train as it steams out and gathers speed; but whenever this is attempted, those who look at rhythm as an art only feel amused. The rhythm of India is indeed very true to the ideal of 'pure' art. Its charm lies solely in the clarity of its syllables and in the beauty and variety of their disposition. It is true that our lovers and maestros of rhythm often admire a good player for the *crystal* clarity and *silken* softness of his 'syllables', but the meaning here only is that they (the syllables) are finely and effortlessly produced, not that they seek to replicate the shine or tenderness of any particular object. The use of language adverting to things is a purely adventitious act, and is by no means integral to our *experience* of rhythm.

I suggest that a careful look at our rhythm and *ālāpa* can open the way to a wholly new kind of aesthetics — the aesthetic of mnemonic syllables; and that perhaps no other art approximates so closely to the ideal of pure art as the two arts I have named. From the viewpoint of purity, however, rhythm seems to edge out *ālāpa*-singing. I am not sure if the appearance of depth in *ālāpa* is quite free from ideal overtones; but it is unquestionable that the slight effect of depth that may be evoked in Tabla-playing by a proper use of the left drum is a matter of sheer sound. One may protest that quite unlike rhythm, *ālāpa* does *not* depend on a free use of beats; and that, therefore, *ālāpa* should be taken to be 'purer' than rhythm. But to this I would rejoin that, in spite of being essentially melodic in character, *ālāpa* clearly uses *laya* all along; and that, insofar as *laya* (as regulated pace) really *belongs to the region of rhythm*, the argument in support of *ālāpa*'s greater measure of purity loses its force.

Thirdly, and this may be taken as some extra warrant for (a part of) what I have just said, rhythm *as such* has nothing to do with expressiveness, though, if rightly incorporated as an element, it can surely *add* to the expressiveness of music. In respect of a solo Tabla recital *no one ever says that it is expressive of something*. The commonest words of critical acclaim here are fluent, effortless, methodical, sparkling, brilliant. The art of Tabla rhythm is certainly a standing challenge to theories

that look on representation or expression as essential to art. Nor does *embodiment* cover all the major numbers of a standard rhythmic recital. The word suggests inertness. Rhythm, on the other hand, is an occurrent art. We see it being made. The room for creative variations which is ever present in rhythm is hardly provided for when we speak of rhythm as embodiment. Above all, with regard to drumming which is extremely fluent, and may seem to have the seamless rapidity of a torrent, it would be as improper to use the word 'embodiment' as to say that a waterfall embodies a flow.

Here, however, some questions may be fairly put:

If rhythm neither represents nor expresses any life-content, how is it at all significant? My answer is that it charms us by its very 'look', by which I mean the clarity and winsome organization of syllables, and the variform governance of their pace. Our rhythm is perhaps the closest approximation of art to Kant's ideal of free beauty.

But is solo rhythm an *independent* art at all?³⁶ I say it certainly is; but everything here would depend on what we regard as being essential for the autonomy of art. Susanne Langer's view is of help here. She holds that an art that claims to be independent has to have its own distinctive "normal materials" and "principles of constructing its final creations"; and "to make its own primary creations"³⁷; and that, what is more, there have to be some criteria of evaluation that are *uniquely* relevant to it. All these conditions are met by the art of rhythm.

That the material of rhythm is distinctive has been already brought out. But I may add that the syllables that this art builds upon are different also from the ones that make up the material of vocal *ālāpa*. Both are meaningless, it is true; but their audible character differs markedly. Syllables like *dir-dir* and *titkit* are used freely in a rhythmic recital, but never in *ālāpa*-singing. Further, whereas the syllables of *ālāpa* are used to develop the canvas of a *rāga*, those of rhythm seek to articulate and establish the form of a *cycle*, and to weave patterns in and across its ambit.

Some of rhythm's constructional devices too are quite distinctive. The Gestalt laws of perception, such as those of figure-ground and common destiny, are of course freely used here; but in rhythm they obviously make for audible patterns of beats (and *bols*) sequentially, not for an orderly, and more or less simultaneous, perception of objects in the field of vision. I may mention, in particular, one constructional device which is at once basic to, and distinctive of, our rhythm. This is the act of so filling a stretch of some beats, or the duration *between* two separate beats, with orderly bunches of *bols* that rhythm gets invested with *the spatial suggestions of teeming, being crowded, or overflowing with them*. A syllable so inserted may even come to appear as a wedge holding the neighbouring ones apart. The richer and more orderly the filling of *bols* within a narrow time-length, the greater is the entitlement of the drummer to acclaim. From the viewpoint of this artifice, rhythm may well be regarded as an *aesthetic* demonstration of the divisibility of time. 'Aesthetic' here is the key word; for not only the content (or syllables) of rhythm, but the *forms* of its filling—or the varying disposition of *bols*—separate the general features of time—that is, passage, abidance, succession.

and simultaneity—as *they appear in rhythm* from actual or lived time. Further, there are many little elements of *seeming* that characterize rhythm. One of these which seems to clearly, and winsomely, evade determination by actual time occurs when the playing makes the *sama* appear as the climax of a shapely rhythmic upsurge. Here, as we follow the flowing form approaching its terminus, we only *think* of the *sama*; and *as thus apprehended*, it cannot, and it does not, seem extended. The unfoldment that we watch is that of *the pattern*; and when it ends immaculately at the *sama* we just nod in approval at the created simultaneity, instead of judging how long the *sama*-syllable lasts. This syllable does occupy a measureable length of time, but it *seems* instantaneous. Calculative following as a quiet counting of beats — to which our awareness of lived time may be similar, say, in some anxious moments — is here utterly suspended. Assuredly we do not reckon time when a tension is relieved, or a target *just* attained³⁸.

But in speaking thus, do I not unwittingly annul the alleged otherness of rhythmic time from time as experienced in daily life? No, I do not; merely to *explain*, with the help of an analogy from life, how the calculative following of a series may be transcended in our experience of time as rhythm is not to suggest that *the experience itself* involves a reference to life. What rhythm abstracts from life for its own creative work — that is, real time features like the before-after order or the ‘at oneness’ of two events (or succession, simultaneity) is one thing; and *how* creatively they are utilized, *with the help of what type of filling or specific content, and to what effect* — all this is quite another. Only the last of these, or the effects evoked, can be likened, but surely not reduced, to some life-experience; and the overall otherness of time as rhythm from time in real life remains undisputed.

It would be appropriate if I also indicated here how tension in the region of rhythm is utterly different from the real-life tension of, say, waiting to see if our last batsman in a one-day cricket match is able to score a winning run off the last ball of the match. Tensions of the latter kind are all, as a rule, a sort of felt *discomfort*; and, what is more, our mind is so occupied here with the thought of the uncertain outcome that the whole situation does not admit of any active distinguishing of its inner details, though we are surely quite aware of its overall requirement. In art, on the other hand, the experience of tension necessarily involves the perception of some clear differences, accents or segments, and relations in what is given as object to contemplation. In the region of rhythm, for example, an easy way to build up a little tension is to designedly raise the *pace* of the syllabic filling in the different segments of a pattern as it makes for the focal beat, on attaining to which the pressure is released *as anticipated*; but here a pleasing perception of the general design of the pattern, and of its *articulate* segments, is most necessary. In either case, however, it is a situation, real or artistically created, that is felt to be tense; and the feeling and its source cannot be divided. What is more, the passage or the seeming suspension of time as the tension grows or holds out is, so to say, no mere conduit or alternative to the feeling, but itself feels taut and burdensome or promotional. Time is never a mere form, but always the form of *some experience*, and how its passage or duration feels is inevitably coloured by the character of the experience it individuates. Even

our moments of vacancy acquire some character from ennui or impatience.

But, we may wonder, are not the same apprehending powers involved in our experience of rhythmic time as in that of lived time?³⁹ Yes, that is so; attention, remembrance, anticipation, and *following* the lead of the 'object'—all are importantly at work in our experience of rhythm. But just as a thing is an indivisible that-what oneness, so is *experience* an indissoluble unity of *what* is experienced and *how* it is experienced; and its overall character cannot but change along with changes in its content. Sympathy is involved in both grieving and rejoicing with others, but does it in any way attenuate the difference of the two acts as experiences? Nobody confuses salt with sugar though both are alike known by tasting. Therefore primarily because of its singular content of beats and the syllables that attach to them—and also embellish the intervals that separate the beats—rhythmic time must be said to differ from real time. If in spite of its distinctive features of form and content that I have just listed, time as it appears in rhythm is not granted any otherness from real time, how otherwise, I would ask, would the difference be explained *were it really there*?

As for the primary creation of rhythm, it is, I may say, *the automotive and articulate symmetry of pure pace*. By 'symmetry' I mean beauty of form. Everything in the region of rhythm is indeed required to seem well organized and shapely. This is true of both the basic rhythm-cycle and the patterns that are woven in and across it. The epithet *articulate* is perhaps truer of our rhythm than of any other art. Langer emphasizes it in the context of music. A composition, she says, "is not merely produced by mixture like a new colour made by mixing paints but is articulated, i.e., its internal structure is given to our perception... [The parts, here,] maintain some degree of separate existence"⁴⁰.

Here I find the closing idea questionable. In Hindustani music *meends* or glides, if properly used, are found to make for rather than to weaken the form; but it is impossible to say that the notes in a *meend* retain "some degree of separate existence". Such existence is here neither present nor desired. In fact, what distinguishes a *meend* as a formal device is the quite opposite fact that the notes it comprises seem to *flow into one another*.

But in respect of *rhythm* articulation is always a key requirement. Here, even in the case of such patterns as a *rela* or *rau*, which are meant to be played at a very quick pace, we insist on clarity of syllables, without of course accenting them at the expense of requisite fluency. And generally, the syllables are required to be 'cut out' or neatly executed. The syllable *dir-dir* may seem to be an exception to this rule; but even here, we may note, the effect aimed at is one of *tremulous* fluency, and the palpitation must not be quite eclipsed in the flow.

Its automotive character is another main feature of our rhythm. The meaning is not that rhythm *somehow* seems to be self-propelling, but that the length or brevity of the very first syllable (or beat) as played (or recited)—that is, its own temporal character—directly determines whether the entire subsequent playing is to be leisurely or brisk. In recitation of *bols* it is in fact quite easy to see the point that if one utters the first beat slowly—say, in the manner of a drawl—the entire sub-

sequent recitation has to be just as unhurried; and if the same beat (or its *bol*) is then spoken sharply and briefly, the following beat-*bols* too are quickened correspondingly. I wonder if we can find in any other art a more *obvious* instance of determination of the whole-form by the character of a part.

Finally, there *are* some criteria of evaluation that relate uniquely to the art of (Tabla-) rhythm. One of these is the drummer's capacity for a 'blended' employment of the two drums that are taken as one percussion instrument and called *Tabla*. The left drum is meant to work up effects of a certain breathing continuity (called *sāns* or *ās*), and of depth and dignity; and the right one contributes crispness, discreteness, sweetness, fluency and clarity. The requirement is that (at least) in playing the basic rhythm-cycle the use of the two drums should be duly coordinated, so that the total playing may neither seem to be a mere succession of disconnected sounds, due to overmuch dominance of the right drum, nor a mere booming loudness because of excessive pressure on, and use of, the left. Another requirement which relates to rhythm *alone* is the *drummer's* ability to return to the *sama*, on completing a pattern, in a well-designed way and *with split-second accuracy*. Chipping the (*sama*-) instant is an important source of charm here. Does real life offer any parallel to this designedly created semblance of quintessential simultaneousness?

VII. Conclusion

Now, in the end, I may put my conclusions clearly:

a. The metaphysical Indian conception of the ultimate purposes of music is of little relevance to our present-day practice and understanding of this art. But if it is borne in mind, it can surely make us a little keener than we presently are for effects of high seriousness in music, and may also be of some help to those who want to deepen their own religiousness through this art.

b. It is a fallacy to believe that only instrumental music can be 'pure'. What is called *ālāpa*, as a form of *vocal* music, in India is clearly 'purer', for it bewitches us, where it does, quite without the two common sources of musical charm — language and rhythm. Representation is quite foreign to *ālāpa* done seriously; but some expressive moments seem to be essential to good *ālāpa*. However, when the *ālāpa* singer seeks to express some feeling, if only because he has to invest the *rāga* being sung with its requisite overall emotive look, what guides him *directly* is not any image of expressiveness in real life, but simply the professional employment of those formal devices, both melodic and temporal, in which he has been trained, and which are, in his own judgment, essential to good singing.

c. Profundity in (Hindustani) music is not a merely objective quality. It is rather the intenseness and depth of — and our own felt suffusion with — the impact of some purely musical values.

d. A *rāga* is not a mere melody-type, but a determinate matrix which is at once the material and regulative norm of a recital of classical music; and also a chartered region for the exercise of freedom to produce ever newer effects of beauty out of a specific number and disposition of notes.

e. As for Indian rhythm practised as an independent art, 'representation' here is a sheer irrelevance; and so is 'expression'.

f. *Alāpa*-singing and our *rhythm* — with its kaleidoscopic ally of speakable and figured syllables — offer a very fascinating ground for the rise of a quite new aesthetics: the aesthetics, we may say, of mnemonic syllables.

g. Finally, time in Hindustani rhythm (and music) is, on the whole, markedly different from the time of our everyday experience. What fills the former is *made to* happen, and always in accordance with some order; and the filling is all along aesthetic, just rhythmic turns and melodic passages. The latter (or real time), on the other hand, is the ground of solid circumstance and vital happenings that mean success or adjustment in practice, or failure, partly because they are beyond our power and often unforeseeable. Surely the time that we regulate and beautify purposely cannot be the same as the time that we can only feebly seize and which is so dotted with chance and deviousness. □

NOTES

1. A fuller account of the meaning of *rāga* appears later in the essay.
2. L. E. Hahn: *The Philosophy of Charles Hartshorne* (Vol. XX in The Library of Living Philosophers), La Salle, Illinois, Open Court, 1991, p. 531.
3. The Sanskrit text here is "*muktidāyakam naturanjakam*": music does not merely entertain but conduces to the attainment of liberation.
4. *The Philosophy of Charles Hartshorne*, p. 510.
5. Dhruvapada is the oldest living form of Hindustani classical vocal music.
6. I owe my knowledge of this composition to my mentor in music, Ustad A. Rahimuddin Khan Dagur. For (a part) of the text of this composition, entitled *Yogasiddhi ka Dhruvapada*, see the essay 'Aesthetics of Hindustani Music' in my book *Aesthetical Essays*, Chanakya Publications, Delhi, 1981, p. 123.
7. *Yogic* is adjective from *yoga*, the latter being the Indian word for a number of systems of physical and psycho-ethical discipline by which the end of spiritual emancipation may be achieved.
8. *Alāpa* to be sure, but of the Dhruvapada singer. Exponents of the Khyal style of singing also often resort to *ālāpa*, that is, singing without words; but they never lose sight of the beats of the *rhythm-cycle* which accompanies the singing.
9. How Hindustani rhythm is cyclic is explained later in the essay.
10. My translation of *rāga* as melody-type is but tentative. It is the usual translation; but it is, in my view, questionable. Why I say so should become clear when I turn to discuss this concept in section IV of this article.
11. Such adulteration has for long been a common practice in India.
12. *Wantonly* is here significant; for in the practice of Hindustani rhythm, a set chosen pace may well be disregarded for a while *designedly*, that is, intentionally and according to a design.

13. *Concurrent* rhythm—that is, a rhythm-cycle as played by the drummer as support and accompaniment to, or along with, the singing — is an essential feature of Dhruvapada and Khyal songs which all avail of both meaningful text and rhythm, though in varying ways and measure.
14. Here, however, we may note that — except where he may seek to interest lay listeners by *explaining* the effect to them — the singer himself does not seek to represent any object or happening in real life. Presently, I am explaining the effect in question with the help of an analogy. The singer's own aim is all along on investing the singing with ever newer beauty and charm.
15. An easy way to produce this effect is to touch the upper tonic with the brevity of an instant, but of course sweetly; and then to project for a while the adjoining D flat without a jerk, yet quickly, in the way of a thin ray of light.
16. I have here in mind Peter Kivy's approach to the question of profundity in music. The reference is to his well-known recent work: *Music Alone — Philosophical Reflections on the Purely Musical Experience*, Cornell University Press, 1990.
17. Coleridge's own way of putting the matter is, however, a little different. He says that the mind of a composer at work suffers alternate pulses of active and passive motion. Owen Barfield: *What Coleridge Thought*, O.U.P., London, 1972, p. 78.
18. Cf. Nick Mcadoo's essay 'Can Art Ever be Just About Itself?' In *JAAC*, Spring 1992, p. 137.
19. *Rasa* may be loosely translated as aesthetic emotion. It is an exalted emotional state which is, on the one hand, grounded in some basic affective tendency of our nature; and is, on the other hand, *not* tied down to our merely individual concern with, and reactions to, real-life situations. For a fairly detailed account of the theory of *rasa* see Appendix II of my book *Swinging Syllables: Aesthetics of Kathak Dance*, Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi, 1991, pp. 178–195.
20. This definition first appeared in my essay 'The Concept of *Raga*— An Essay in Understanding' in the May 1991 issue of *Sruti*, Madras. I am grateful to the Editor-in-Chief, N. Pattabhi Raman, for permission to use it here. The whole essay, I may add, was reprinted in *Sangeet Natak* Nos. 101–102, July–December 1991, pp. 32–46.
21. A Dhruvapada song conforms more visibly and undividedly to a rhythm-cycle than a Khyal composition in adagio. What is more, a Dhruvapada song has four set movements, whereas a Khyal composition has only two.
22. Antony Flew: *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, Pan Books, 1979, p. 123.
23. Albert Gehring quoted by S.K. Langer in *Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling*, Vol. I. John Hopkins University Press, 2nd printing, 1975, p. 83.
24. S.K. Langer: *Problems of Art*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957, p. 133.
25. Malcolm Budd's essay 'Motion and Emotion in Music: How Music Sounds' in *BJA*, Summer 1983, p. 211.
26. The Veenā is commonly regarded as the queen of Indian musical instruments. The instrument referred to here is a particular kind of Veenā.
27. 'Motion and Emotion in Music', p. 214.
28. The look of supplication may well be clear here, but whether it will be the supplication of a sorrowful entreaty or of a grateful prayer is undecidable. I see, here, the point in Susanne Langer's emphasis on the *forms* of feeling rather than on emotions and emotional situations.

29. L.A. Reid's essay 'Art: Knowledge-That and Knowing-This' in *BJA*, Autumn 1980.
30. Stephen Davies: 'Is Music a Language of the Emotions?' in *BJA*, Summer 1983, p. 223.
31. A *bol*, which I choose to translate as 'mnemonic syllable', is a (meaningless) letter or bunch of letters which enables us to name, identify, and *remember* (and so *recite*) the sounds produced by the drummer.
32. The word *sangeet* covers both vocal and instrumental music and dance.
33. Tabla is the more popular percussion instruments in the region of Hindustani music. See the closing paragraph of Section VI of the essay for more information about this instrument.
34. The adjective 'mnemonic' is warranted by the fact that a *bol* and its knitting with other *bols* enable us (also) to *remember* the form and emphases of a rhythmic flow or pattern. Quite a few *bunches* of such syllables, however, are not truly syllables because they are not speakable with a *single effort* of the voice. But their constituents, or the individual letters that they comprise, are all syllables. So the speakable content of our rhythm may be said to be *syllabic* generally.
35. Herbert Read's essay 'A Definition of Art' in *Aesthetics and the Arts* edited by L.A. Jacobus, McGraw Hill, 1968, p. 4.
36. For a fuller discussion of this question, see my essay 'Aesthetic Theory and Hindustani Rhythm', *BJA*, Summer 1976. The essay was reprinted in my book *The Winged Form*, pp. 1-18.
37. *Problems of Art*, p. 79.
38. Here it is hardly necessary to point out that when a runner breasts the tape and is judged the winner what is measured is not the precise moment of winning but the time taken in covering the entire course.
39. This, incidentally, is the crux of Philip Alperson's opposition to the thesis that musical time is quite different from real time. See his essay 'Musical time and Music as an Art of Time' in *JAAC*, Summer 1980, p. 411.
40. S.K. Langer: *Feeling and Form*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963, 3rd Impression, p. 31. Italics added.