Aesthetics and Hindustani Music in Independent India[1]

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The purpose of this essay is clear. I want to trace the course of aesthetical thinking on Hindustani music since the attainment of our political independence; and to suggest, in the light of what has already been done in this direction, some lines of further enquiry that seem to be uniquely relevant to this art. Of course, this does not imply that there was no such thinking earlier. The art of music has for long been an object of serious reflection in our country. As is well known, attempts were freely made in ancient India to define such basic concepts of our *sangeet* as *swara*, *rāga*, *tāla* and *rasa*. Yet I see it clearly that *serious attempts to think clearly about our music*, without the obfuscation of glib references to religion and metaphysics—and *in relation to our music as it flourishes today*—began only when the country become independent[2]. An important new factor that has led to a growing realization of the need for a clearer *understanding* of our current music is the provision of regular columns for critical write-ups in our important dailies and weeklies[3]. Our universities too have made some contribution in this direction by encouraging research on such subjects as 'Aesthetical Canons of Hindustani Music', and 'Hindustani Music and the Aesthetic Concept of Form'[4].

It would, however, be wrong to believe that enough has been done to promote the study of our music from the aesthetical point of view. The truth rather is that so far we have failed to produce any whole book on the subject, and that even published essays on the aesthetics of Hindustani music have been few and far between[5]. Nor would it be correct to suggest that every serious book on the music of India since 1947 has striven to look at this art in the way of *modern* aesthetics which is essentially analytic in character and, by and large, very mindful of differences not only between the various arts but between concepts which seem to be similar in meaning, such as feeling and emotion, creation and making, and the artistic and the aesthetic. Rajendra Bajpai's scholarly work in Hindi on aesthetics (titled सौन्दर्य [6]) devotes just two pages to *sangeet*. What is worse, it confines itself to such categor-

ical remarks as the following: "Indeed, music takes the soul away from the perishable and towards the imperishable"[7] and does not try to *explain* anything about our music *today*. Similarly, Swami Prajnanananda's equally impressive work, *A Historical Study of Indian Music*[8], though it contains one full chapter (no. 15) on the 'Aesthetic-cum-Psychological Aspect of Indian Music'—and another (no. 16) on the philosophy of Indian music—revels, a bit too freely, in mere generalities. See, for instance, the following remarks:

[a.] The philosophy of music states that music is the highest art because it confers upon man absolute bliss and happiness, which are permanent.[9]

[b.] Music is a system of education which imparts knowledge and experience as to how to elevate and animate the levels of consciousness.[10]

[c.] From the science of music we know that a *ragā* is psycho-material object [which is] constituted out of man's innermost feeling and sensibilities, together with material ingredients of tones and tunes.[11]

Such talk may well be able to impress some readers. But it is bound to disappoint those who seek *to understand* what music is and how it is valuable as art. How many of our top musicians, I ask, can be fairly said to have attained a state of abiding happiness? (Be it noted that what 'a' says of music is not that it *can* confer, but that it necessarily confers, upon man absolute and permanent bliss.) And how many *rasikas* can truthfully claim that they have gained from listening to music a *knowledge of the ways to elevate* (the moral quality of) *their level of consciousness*? The third utterance (c) is just as questionable. Is a *rāga* constituted (directly) out of man's innermost feeling? Is there no difference between singing (or creating) a *rāga* and weeping bitterly over the sudden death of a loved one? M.R. Gautam, a well-known vocalist and writer on music, is not merely eloquent, but quite justified in insisting that a difference *is* there. "The blush of shame, the pallor . . . due to fear, the grinding of . . teeth.. [in] violent anger . . . . are some examples of natural personal expression. But there is an abyss between . . . [such] natural expressions, and . . . [expressing a feeling] aesthetically; between the . . . cries and contortions of some one grieving . . . and the song with which the same individual [expresses] his feeling"[12]. Following Susanne Langer, I may *explain* the difference quite briefly. When a man in fact feels sorry and looks sad, he does not have to organize his 'look', but the expression of sadness in music requires a very careful regulation of the material and manner of singing. Finally, are tunes the material ingredients of *or* compositions in a *rāga* ?

From such undiscriminating writing on music to Chetan Karnani's resolution to seek, *a cogent explanation of contemporary Indian music*, in scrupulous avoidance of the usual mumbo-jumbo about spirituality or religion[13], is therefore a very welcome shift in scholarly concern. What is more, where Karnani stresses the need for "a cogent *psychological* explanation in terms of the *new* aesthetics" he also opens the way, if unwittingly, to some important questions What is the new

aesthetics that he speaks of? And does this aesthetics seek a merely *psychological* explanation of the art? Our answer has to be that the 'new' aesthetics, which may be said to be "full of life and ferment just now", is philosophical[14]; and that, instead of confining itself to questions of psychology, such aesthetics is today being done along the following lines of thought and enquiry:

a. What exactly do we *mean* when we use specific words in relation to a whole art or its individual creations? This *is* the main question before those who seek to do aesthetics in the way of the linguistic-analytic approach to philosophy; and it is easy to visualize the basic question that such an approach would require us to pose and discuss in respect of our music. What exactly do we mean by words like *ragā*, *tāla*, *bandish*, *sthāyi*, *laya*, *tāla*, *sama* and *kanbharnā*?

It is obvious, however, that the question just posed cannot be satisfactorily answered without looking beyond the concepts listed and noticing the specific details or aspects of actual music which they signify. Take, for instance, the word *sthāyi*. Merely to say that it means that which is fixed or unchanging in a song will be hardly any explanation; for, ordinarily, the dual *rāga-tāla* frame of a classical song is also required to remain unchanged so long as the singer himself does not decide to switch over to another composition. Nor would it be enough to say, on the basis of the very first look at a recital, that *sthāyi* is simply the opening line of a song. Fuller attention to the ongoing course of music is bound to make it clear that in so far as the *sthāyi* may be repeated, say, after the first, fourth and eighth *taans*, numerically it may also be said to be the second, fifth or ninth 'line' of the total singing; and that, what is more, in so far as *taans* come to wear the lively look of *patterns*, instead of appearing as mere *arrangements*, partly because a repeat of the *sthāyi* is provided between them as their steadfast background, it would be far less inadequate to speak of the *sthayi* as the aesthetic ground of the entire singing than as the mere opening line. In other words, we cannot seize the true meaning of our musical concepts unless we take into account our experience as knowledgeable listeners (or *rasikas*) as well. This is at once a pointer to the need for another way of doing philosophical aesthetics to which we may now turn.

b. Aesthetics which is done in the way of a phenomenological approach to philosophy insists that it is essential to keep the evidence of our aesthetic experience of music in mind when we discuss any question about this art. And the emphasis is warranted not merely because of the commonsense consideration that our talk about a thing cannot be responsible unless we somehow come to know it by direct acquaintance (as against knowing by mere description[15]), but because what a detail of music appears to direct contemplation can be quite different from what it may seem to mere abstract thinking around the words which refer to it.

Consider, for instance, the following remark which is freely made abut a good

Tablā accompanist: 'वाह! क्या ठेका क़ायम किया है!' As we know, the word क़ायम means: to establish— securely, or more or less unshakeably. But the cycle is being played as an organized *succession* of beats; it involves *literal* passage from one beat to another; and so it is not क़ायम in the same sense in which an institution or artist may be said to be established.Therefore, in the context of rhythm, the word in question has to be taken to mean but a pleasing *semblance* of fixity which is created by the unfaltering steadiness of the pace at which the cycle is made to run.

Take, next, the word *tension*. We use it freely in daily life and also with reference to music. But its meaning is far from being identical in the two contexts; and the difference can be seen only by those who listen to music knowledgeably[16]. Tensions in real life, like that of waiting to see if our last batsman in a cricket one-dayer is able to score the winning run off the last ball of the match, are generally a sort of felt *dis*comfort; and, what is more, our minds are here so occupied with the thought of the *uncertain* outcome that the whole situation does not permit any active distinguishing of its inner details, though we are surely quite aware of its overall requirement. In art contemplation, on the other hand, the experience of tension necessarily involves the perception of some clear differences, accents or segments, and relations in the work. 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.

Even *in* the ambit of a music composition, be it noted, music's own 'look' is more important than the mere manifestness of verbal meaning. Consider an instance. Suppose that the second line of a Bhairava Dhruvapad song runs thus— 'सकल ताप नाम हरत'—and further, that the last two words (नाम हरत) are to be sung in such a way—across the notes: ग म रे स—that the word नाम (but not the word हरत which describes an *avaroha* passage) may appear to be *an upgoing meander*, by means of a slight prolongation of the आ sound of ना. Now, the point to be noted here is that the requisite effect, of a slightly zig-zag (*dagar*-like) ascending passage in open *akāra* will be utterly lost if the disposition of the words in question is changed into हरत नाम because the letter र will, so to say, peck at the ascending vocal passage and disturb the intended effect of an unruffled open-*akāra* meander, *though the changed verbal order will in no way bedim the verbal meaning*. So, from the phenomenological viewpoint — that is, from the viewpoint of music's own appearence as experienced— the change of verbal order will not be desirable.

c. In thus arguing, however, we have unwittingly moved to another distinct way of doing philosophical aesthetics, the way which looks on art-activity as *the mak-*

ing of a singular world, and which emphasizes the need to reckon with the viewpoint of the artist at work. Nelson Goodman lists the major devices of world-making (by *or* in art) as follows: composition and decomposition, weighing, order, deletion and supplementation, and deformation[17]. But these are by no means *uniquely* relevant to Hindustani music; and, by way of indicating a new direction for our aesthetical thinking on this art, I think it necessary to focus on some important devices of world-making in Hindustani music: say, regulation of vocal volume and aesthetic pace or duration, and intonation. Those who have heard the singing of maestros like Ustad Abdul Karim Khan and Pandits Omkarnath Thakur and Kumar Gandharva know it well that, in music, a suggestion of the rise and fall of feeling can be easily evoked by means of a slight, but perceptible—and duly controlled—regulation of vocal volume. Further, if in *ālāpa* the passage of voice from the first note of the *rāga* to its third one is *leisurely in pace* and quite undisturbed by the discreteness of the second note—and if, what is more, the passage is also made to involve the volume-regulation 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 entreaty, though it would be difficult to decide whether the image of supplication evoked relates to a sorrowful entreaty *or* to a grateful prayer. The value of proper intonation for music is clearer; and the emphasis on *kāku*, regarded as modulation of voice for the sake of expressing human feeling[18], is quite proper. But I do not believe that expression of feeling is the *only* aim or result of proper intonation in music, for what is brought about by this vocal device may only be a richer euphonic effect.

By way of explaining *this* point let me here refer to a Dhruvapad in Gurjari Todi in which the *antarā*—'मन जीतो तो सब संसार'—arises from the *swara mā* and ends by placing the word संसार at the *taar shadja*. Here, if the word in question is sung only at the note just named and is pronounced as 'saṉsāra', the singing may well be sweet, but it will not work up that suggestion of fullness (or भराव) which may be easily produced if the word is pronounced as 'sa*m*sāra' *and* is made to traverse the entire range of notes from *mā* to *sā*. For a more impressive vocal effect, therefore, the second way of articulating the word would be more appropriate. I may add that the nasal sound (or *anuraṇāsika dhwani*) that distinguishes words like संसार and गंगे is brought out more satisfactorily if the word is so uttered as to *traverse a passage* across some notes. It need hardly be added that this passage will either be an ascent or a descent. *Aroha* and *avaroha* are imporant not merely because they indicate the form of a *rāga*, but because they can vitally modify the very *sound* of words as sung.

Now, aesthetics of the kinds we have distinguished as 'b' and 'c'—that is, as analysis of the appearance and making of music—has been done pretty well, if not with a clear awareness of the ways of contemporary Western aesthetics by some writers on music in independent India. I may cite the following as illustration:

[1.] [Bade Ghulam Ali Khan's] bass notes had matchless modulation and amplitude, while the notes of the upper octaves were free from shrillness.[19]

[2.] [To turn to a] noteworthy excellence of Ghulam Ali's *taans* . . . in the *adānā* rendering . . . [he] would first execute a very fluent *taan* of pearly beads in his usual impeccable manner, and would then liquidize, so to say, the very last note—quite without notice, it would seem — into a mere flowing breath of sweetness impressively supple but without inner marks, flashing to the *taar* with remarkable effect. To me this detail of manner is an excellent employment *in music* of the psychological principle of figure and ground. The stretch of a sheer flow which follows the beaded pattern serves as the ground against which the array of round shapely *swaras* which precedes the flow appears to be all the more articulate, so that the whole *taan* gives one the impression of stars and a silvery haze that make the milky way.[20]

[3.] In [Ghulam Ali's] *tarānās*, due to his rare voice qualities . . . edges of the words were never lost or rounded off in his singing. They were carefully chiselled into their individual shapes—unblunted and yet without strain . . . In *his* music, the values of the individual notes remained intact irrespective of the length . . . [and] tempo of the *taans* and [the] proportion of *gamaks*. He was never slippery in *taans* . . . [or] merely sonorous in *gamaks*. The melodic line was always clear, the component-notes received their full values and the termination-points never remained abrupt dots . . . [The] Ustad excelled in *sattā taans*. The distinctive feature of his *taans*, however, was the use of speedy movement in case of short spiralling patterns spanning the entire range of vocalization. While a *satta taan impressed* . . . [by virtue of] *its power and miraculous and instantaneous shortening of the tonal space, the spiralling variety . . . in Ustad's singing* [was remarkable, first for] *creating greater awareness of the tonal space and* [secondly, for] *accentuating the intricacy of the design involved* . . . [the manifest attainment of both ends being facilitated by the fact that the design] *was repeated* . . . [at] *progressively higher pitch-levels*.[21]

This is, I believe, an excellent example of doing philosophical aesthetics of music in the two ways I have distinguished as 'b' and 'c'. We all freely talk of the fluency, design, range, and variety of *taans*. But only a trained singer who is also a watchful *rasika* can focus, as Ranade here does so effectively, on the appearance of a shortening and enlargement of tonal space created by the very character of *taans*; and on how the different scales can serve *to vivify* the design of a *taan*, instead of merely contributing to its range.

[4.a] [Ustad Amir Khan] made us realize that *if one wants to contemplate over notes*, the *sārangi* is not an aid but an obstacle.[22]

[4.b] [If it be agreed that, as I.A. Richards believes,] the valuable states of mind in aesthetic experience are those wherein we attain a perfect organisation of our impulses or a state of nervous equipoise . . . an Amir Khan recital . . . [may be said to be] far more effective than that of Ghulam Ali[23]. . . [Amir Khan] believed that the function of classical music is not only to please and surprise, but to *soothe and elevate the mind*.[24]

I think it necessary here to bring out how these two extracts relate to what I have spoken of as the second and third ways of doing philosophical aesthetics:

The word 'one' in 'a', I suggest, refers as much to the singer himself as to the *rasika*. Keeping this in mind I would say that the sentence in question hints at the important truth, which Coleridge emphasized, that the creation of art is not a single breathless act of making alone, but an alternation of the impulses to create and to contemplate what has already been created—as a part of the work awaiting completion[25].

For the *listener, I may add*, the suggetion that the singer is not merely placing his *swaras* accurately in the scale, but is putting *himself* into the act of singing, is a vital part of how the music *appears* to him; and it is important from the viewpoint of phenomenological aesthetics, because where a musician seems to be singing with his throat alone, however manifest be its grammatical correctness, the *rasika* will not be enabled to establish *tādātmya* with it, and the singing will afford but a surface satisfaction. The overall impact, if not the mere meaning, of *what we utter* is inseparable from *how we appear to be* in the act of utterance, half-hearted and merely formal or intensely involved. This is why whereas an elaborate lecture on prayer by a philosopher of religion may leave us quite unaffected, even a few simple words from a man like Gandhi on the same subject may touch us very deeply—by virtue of their very *earnestness*; and this again is why a *live* recital by Ameer Khan or Kumar Gandharva could appear much more convincing and spellbinding than their *recorded* music. Their appearing to be lost in the contemplation of music serves as directly, *if not as disucursively*, to deepen the power of their music as *abhinaya* vivifies the meaning of a thematic intraform (or number) in dance.

Turning to 'b', I am irresistibly reminded of the Indian view that *rasa*-experience is essentially *svātma-parāmarsha svātma-vishrānti.* But what is perhaps more noteworthy in this context is the care with which Karnani eschews talking of metaphysics or spirituality. He speaks of elevation *of the mind , not of the soul*; and *this* elevation is easily intelligible in terms of what aestheticians commonly speak of as disinterested delight, that is, an agreeable feeling which results from a transportation of the mind to the region of contemplation, and beyond our everyday concern with utility and reality.

[5.] Pandit Vazebuwa opted for clarity and force in the enunciation of words in the song-text. The [distinctive] way he accomplished this . . . almost amounted to *carving out contours of words in sound* . . . [He] treated the words as sound-patterns that invited emphasis and employment for their own sake . . . [; in other words, their use in *his* music was] *sound-oriented, not meaning-oriented.* Perhaps this was the reason why he frequently ignored uttering words fully . . . [Further,] the pauses adjacent to *sam*-points in all his renderings, and those located after the introduction of new and intricate musical phrasings, . . . allowed his music to sink in . . . [and produced a] chiaroscuro effect [of forceful sound and silence . . . What also conduced to this effect was his frequent employment of *Jhaptaal* compositions] . . . In a *jhaptaal* composition, an artist appears to come to the *sama* in a pouncing manner . . . This special quality, born of . . . structural features, was . . . reinforced in Pt. Vazebuwa's singing . . . [by the fact that] the *mukhdaas* of his *jhaptaal*-compositions . . . invariably began from the eight-and-a-half beat point, and the achieved effect was inimitable. [26]

By and large, this is again an admirable specimen of doing aesthetics from the viewpoints we have listed as 'b' and 'c'. Nowhere else, in our aesthetical writing on music in independent India, have I come across the two important points that Ranade here makes: chiaroscuro effect of sound and silence, and *treatment of words as sound-patterns rather than as semantic units.* But, though it may well be true of Vazebuwa's singing, what is here said about Jhaptāla and compositions

in this cycle generally is, in my view, questionable. The reason why I say so will become clear in the light of what I now set out to say on the matter, partly by way of summarizing my own thinking on the concepts of *mukhrā* (or, as I prefer to call it, *āmad*), and *sama*.

It is just not true that the *sama* of either Jhaptāla itself or of a *bandish* in this cycle necessarily, or even generally, appears to come in a *pouncing* manner. (The fact that it may appear to emerge *as a distinct moment* is quite another matter.) I have heard, and can myself present, compositions in Jhaptāla where the *sama* appears, expectedly, as but the natural terminus or destiny of a flowing *sthāyi*, quite gently, though of course perceptibly. Nor is the beginning of an approach to the *sama* from the 8 1/2th beat of the cycle in question aesthetically commendable. But let me explain why I say so. In the region of our classical music a *bandish* has dual setting. It embodies a *rāga* and a specific *tāla*. Now, just as a good *sthāyi* is required to project the typical catch-phrase (and also the *vādi-samvādi*) of the *ragā* chosen, so it should also appear to concur effortlessly with the specific *tāla* in which it is set. The latter end can be attained in two ways:

First, there may be a roughly one-one correspondence between the segments of the *sthāyi* and those of the *thekā*; and the *sama* may be arrived at, and easily anticipated and identified by a *rasika*, as the natural terminus of the confluent flow of two distinct passages, primarily on the basis of his foreknowledge of the cycle. Such an arrangement of melody and rhythm is pleasing essentially because of the ease with which it is grasped. It is a well-known principle of Gestalt psychology that similar units can be easily grouped and perceived as a whole. But, I contend, exactly the same kind of facility is also provided by the accord of the *lahrā* with the basic steps of *tatkār* in Kahak dance. A *sthāyī* which follows *just as accordantly* the run of the cycle may well be pleasing in the easy way I have just explained ; but it will not at all show how, within the limits of an overall conformity with the idiom and range of the *thekā*, the opening melodic line can still have its own independent character too. And that would be a clear defect. After all, melody is not rhythm, and good singing is never a slavishly unremitting adherence to the details of *tāla*. It has its own aesthetic demands, and these have to be met. For instance, where the singer is executing a *taan* the drummer must play the basic *thekā* clearly. He is just not allowed to play any *pattern* here.

In the same way, and now I turn to the *second* way in which a *sthāyi* can duly heed the demands of *tāla*, though *sthāyis* which run straight from *sama* to *sama* without any such inner configuration of *swaras* as may seem to diverge for a while from the set flow of the *thekā*—are quite in order, and (I repeat) may even be pleasing, aesthetically superior *sthāyis* are those which are characterized by some configuration of the kind I have just distinguished. Commonly, such a configuration is what may be called *āmad*; and an *āmad* necessarily highlights the aesthetic character of the *sama*, thereby meeting a key requirement of *tāla*. We may define an *āmad* as the shapely and seemingly self-evolving access of the

sthāyi, from a specific point in its own fabric, to the *sama* as its point of self-completion. The *sama*, as we know, is not merely the first beat of the cycle, but the point to which we return repeatedly, completing a round; so it must be said to be *the focal beat* of the cycle. But the *aesthetically* central is a fount of value; it determines the beauty of that which encompasses it. Now, if the *sama* is to appear in its true character as an *aesthetic* centre, the larger the *portion* of the *sthāyi* that appears to upgather its beauty, so to say, to be delivered to or at the *sama*, the more convincing will be the suggestion that the key beat is, in a way, the destiny or a vital determinant of the whole passage that a *sthāyi* really is. So an approach to the *sama* that takes only one and a half *mātrās* of the cycle cannot be said to be generally laudable. What is deeply satisfying, and no mere tickle of momentary joy, for the discerning listener, *by virtue of keeping him attuned with the music*, is not any indication of *the singer's own skill* in making for the *sama* from the space *between* two *mātrās* and reaching it briskly, but a shapely and discernible ascent *of the sthāyi itself* to the *sama*.

A fuller, but by no means exhaustive, discussion of *āmad* appears in my paper entitled 'The Fabric of Aamad—A Study'of Form and Flow in Hindustani Music' presented to the Sangeet Natak Akademi Seminar on Science and Music (8 October 1969); and I have not so far been able to produce a more searching essay by way of securing that clear understanding of our musical concepts which is demanded by *philosophical* aesthetics of the linguistic-analytic and phenomenological kinds. But the other key concepts of our music and rhythm have also received a clear, if not unquestionable, treatment in my other writings, specially in the little book, *The Winged Form*[27], and the essay 'Aesthetics of Hindustani Music' which appears as Chapter V in my other work, *Aesthetical Essays*[28]. However, my most elaborate attempt to discuss a key concept of Hindustani music is my latest essay on *rāga*[29]; and it is precisely this which I now want to project, partly because of the long-standing complaint that "in so many books written in English on Indian music, no satisfactory definition of *rāga* is available"[30]; and partly by way of indicating *how our traditional (pre-independence) aesthetical views can be made to stimulate further thinking.*

Our traditional musicology abounds in definitions of *rāga*; and it is necessary for further reflection on this concept to list the several points made in these definitions.

a. A *rāga* is something which entertains people (*ranjako janachittaanaam*[31]).

b. Further, it is a distinct complex of some specific *swaras*; or, it is *dhwanivishesh* embellished with *swaravarna*[32].

c. Finally, the elements which go to make the wholeness of a *rāga* are: *graha, amṣa, tār, mandra, nyāsa, upanyāsa, alpatva* and *bahutva*[33].

Now, these individual features and factors are surely all there in a *rāga;* but none of them, taken by itself, can be said to represent the wholeness of what a

rāga is, that is *how it grows and realizes its potential in musical performance and how it is able to affect us in the way it does.* Therefore, with the traditional characterizations of *rāga* as our starting-point, we have to so try to secure a more comprehensive and self-consistent understanding of this key concept of our *shāstriya sangeet* that none of the accepted truths about it may be left out, and provision may also be made for the dynamics of actual performance and enjoyment of music. With this end in view, and also bearing it in mind that our music has been traditionally regarded as *nādasādhanā*–or as such a disciplined and discriminating fellowship with the world of sound that we may come closer to the ultimate goal of life—I make bold to reflect as follows:

The emphasis that a *rāga* should (at least) entertain people is only proper; for its constituents are *swaras*, and a *swara* is, by definition, a sound which is charming or sweet in itself. Yet we cannot say that entertainment is the *only* purpose of a *rāga.* If, as our traditions insist, music's final purpose is to liberate us spiritually; and if, as is unchallengeable, all our classical music projects some *rāga*, a *rāga* should somehow be able to work up such effects as are not merely euphonic or up-and-down passages of musical sound, but elevating and purificatory in their 'look'. Indeed, what we called *ālāpa* in Dhruvapada terminology abounds in tonal analogues of introvertive depth, seamlessness, infinity, austere discipline, detachment, and reverential approach to a locus of implicit value.

But, barring perhaps the suggestion of a reverential treatment of individual *swaras*, hardly any of the effects just listed is evocable at the very outset of a recital. Nor are they accessible to the listener so long as he does not become a *rasika* or a trained contemplator of the art. In saying so I hint at two important truths. First, the form of a *rāga*, if it is to serve the higher ends of music, cannot be its prefixed grammatical character as notated or its skeletal look in the early stages of the recital, but has rather to be brought out by the musician's own creative imagination. Second, the words *ranjako janachittānām* cannot be taken to mean 'entertains the mind of *every* individual listener'. It is common knowledge that the subtler excellences of music and the full-blown, distinctive form of a *rāga* are accessible only to a true *rasika.* I therefore suggest that the word *'jana'* in this context be taken to signify 'people collectively' [34]. The meaning of the words in question would then be that the delight which a *rāga* gives is not a private, but (in principle) a shareable experience. This is indeed the point in Bharata's view that, *unlike* (say) touch and *similarly* to the eye, the ear is an aesthetic sense. It would here be a proper supplement if I add that, as against works of literary art, music is an art of the people, because, by virtue of its primary quality of sweetness of sound[35], it can appeal even to the lowly and the unlettered.

Yet, be it noted, the direct and momentary appeal of a sweet *swara* is not the same thing as our enthralment by the artistically developed personality of a *rāga.* The words *ranjako chittānām* require us to believe that a *rāga pervades or suffuses* the minds of the listeners. Indeed, it is the evidence of proper listening to

music that the charm of a *rāga* is not just a peck of delight, as is sometimes the very first sip of a rare blend of wine or tea, but is seen to abide, if only for an hour or so. Now, this becomes possible not only because the *swaras* are (in principle) sweet in themselves, but becuase they make *an integrated complex of distinct inner accents.* How, otherwise, could they *grip* our discriminating attention, instead of just drawing it for a mere moment?

A *rāga*, however, is not merely integrated on the inside, but distinguishable from the other *rāgas* that fall outside its grammatical bounds. It is *dhwanivishesha*, a specific 'euphorganism'[36], that is, an organic unity, not a mere combination of *swaras* with a distinct individuality. But what I here distinguish as the inner (integration) and the outer (distinctness) makes an indivisible singleness. If a *rāga* is distinct from others, as it surely is, it is precisely because of what individual *swaras* it picks for inclusion and treatment, and how it disposes and organizes them in and across the scales. A note's being a prominent point of return and a moment of repose (*amśa or vādi);* its placement in *mandra, madhya* or *tār*; its terminal character, either as destiny *(nyāsa)* or as the beginning of a musical passage (*graha*); its being infrequent and brief or recurrent and prolonged (*alpatva* or *bahutva*)[37]—any one of these details can bring about a perceptible change in the phenomenal character of a *swara*. And it is this investment of *swaras* with a distinct quality, be it intrinsic or expressly relational[38], that makes a *raga dhwanivishesha*.

This thought, that a *rāga* is an euphonic specific, is of help to me in seeking for the precise meaning of *swaravarna*. What exactly could be meant by saying that a *rāga* (as sung or played) is a distinct sound? To reply that it is different from everyday (non-aesthetic) sounds, like the noise of a running bus or the grating sound of a massive iron gate, would be pointless; for nobody is likely to confuse such sounds with the sound of a *rāga*. The sensible answer would rather be that every *rāga* as heard (by the knowledgeable) is possessed of a character which is quite different from that of the other *rāgas*. But, I ask again, what really is that which makes a *rāga* dissimilar to others? Surely *not* the possession of segments of musical structure and performance like *sthāyi, ārohi, avarohi* and *sanchāri* which are (in principle) *common* to the exposition of each and every *rāga*, but the aesthetic character or quality of the notes that the *rāga* in question comprises. Here, however, it is important to see how much this quality may be taken to cover. Quite generally, it may be said to mean the distinctive look of a *swara*. But in detail this look itself means a great deal. The *swara's* position in the scale, or its appearing to be higher or lower than the other notes; its aspect of depth and repose in the *mandra* or of plaintiveness in the *tār*; its appearing to be tender or energetic, tangential or steadfast—in short, everything that makes a note appear different from the other notes is covered by the word *quality*. And, I ask, if the constituent notes of a *rāga* are not qualitatively different from the *swaras* that go to make other *rāgas*, how can the wholeness of a *rāga* seem to be different from

another *raga*? Finally, the word, विभूषित:, meaning 'embellished', goes better with the euphonic and emotive qualities of *swaras* than with *sthayi, ārohi, avarohi* and *sanchāri* etc. In contemporary musical parlance, do we not commonly regard *sthāyi, āroha/avaroha* etc. as essential segments of musical structure and performance rather than as *embellishments* of a *rāga*? Embellishment arises from formal devices like *gamak, lahak, āndol, dagar, soot, meend, murki, khatkā*; and, I must add, the use of any one of these devices affects the quality or phenomenal look of a *swara* or *swara-samooha.* So, disagreeing with the traditional view, I prefer to interpret *swaravarna* (varna of *swara*) as the quality[39] *of swara*, not as '*swara*' and '*varna*' in the sense of the various passages like *ārohi-avarohi* and *sanchāri.* My interpretation, however, and the way I arrive at it, will not get the notice which I hope it deserves unless it is borne in mind that I have tried all along to think in such a way that the basic conception of *swara* and the following important emphases of the different traditional definitions of *rāga* may appear not merely meaningful, but consistent with, rather than as disjoined from, one another: (a) *ranjako janachittānām,* (b) *dhwanivisheshastu,* (c) *swaravarna vibhooshitah,* (d) *grahanshau tār mandrau*, etc.

Indeed, in my thinking all these ideas interweave easily. A *rāga* is capable of suffusing the minds of many listeners (at the same time). This is so because it is an integrated complex of some specific *swaras*. A *swara* is, by definition, a sound which is sweet in itself (*swameva rājate*). What is more, because of the constituent segments and artistic devices used in a *rāga*—such as the different scales and regulated duration and disposition of notes—the (*swaras* in a *rāga*) come to be invested with many qualities. Thus individuated within an overall unity, the *swaras* add to the charm of (or embellish) the *rāga* and also bestow on it a specific character.

Now, bearing in mind both the traditional emphases of musical theory and the dynamics of musical performance and experience as it obtains today, I may put forth the following definition of *rāga*:

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, emphases and relatedness of tones and rhythmic abidance or passage, possibly with an eye to providing to *rasikas* either an experience of the appropriate *rasa* in some cases, and/or (at least) a sweet apprehension of its (or *rāga*'s) own whole-form, their actual overall responses to the melody varying necessarily (in respect of detail) in accordance with their individual capacities for technical grasp and aesthetic sensitiveness.

The full meaning of this definition may now be brought out by explaining its key concepts:

To begin with, a *rāga* is a specific melodic form. This means, first, that a *rāga* is a *form* in the (aesthetic) sense of being an integration of the notes it comprises[40]. It is an integration, and no mere aggregation of notes because, though none

of them can be allowed to suffer in respect of tonal rightness, they are all to be so used that the requisite manifestness of the catch-phrase (पकड़), and preferably also of the *vādi-samvādi* relation, may be duly maintained. In other words, some notes are to receive lesser emphasis (*alpatva*) than others; or, the *rāga*-form is a unity of *in*equal emphases.

Second, the suggestion that a *rāga* is a *melodic* form means that the notes it comprises follow a before-after or higher-lower order. *Āroha* and *avaroha* are therefore integral to a *rāga*. They are, in fact, the main source of the dynamic or living quality of our *rāga*-music.

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, with but slight differences of manner or emphasis, the perception of the precise character of a *rāga* may call for a finely trained ear and discriminating attention 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 discernment on the part of the listener.

Further, it is important to see why I have chosen to speak of a *rāga* as a *matrix* of melody, and not as a melodic *type*. A type is the concept of a class. It is of course 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 very material of the melodic whole which is regarded as a musical exposition of it. It has been freely translated as a melodic *type*, I know, because many compositions can be created in any one *rāga*. But my point is that these compositions are also made out of the selfsame *rāga*. 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, *within* this ultimate limit there is such infinite room for the creation of ever newer effects of beauty that all our musicians, along with their entire repertoire of compositions, cannot be said to exhaust the aesthetic possibilities of even a single *rāga*. From this point of view, a *rāga* is infinite and exhaustless in spite of its being possessed of a specific 'look' or aesthetic character.

All this, however, is a bit too general. What are the specific materials or elements which a *rāga* builds upon? The answer is: 'the quality, emphases and relatedness of tones and rhythmic abidance or passage'. As for the *quality* of tones, enough has been said already. The word 'emphases' may be taken to cover concepts like *vādi*, *samvādi*, *nyāsa* and *graha*. Rhythmic abidance and passage relate to *laya* and *tāla*. Variations of aesthetic pace are often seen to lend a look of repose or impulsiveness to tones; but their effect is also freely that of abandon, easy confluence, or climactic attainment. Finally, the words 'relatedness of tones'

(upanyāsa)[41], may be taken to signify the various formal graces—such as *soot, meend, gamak* and *lahak*—for which our music is known, and which mostly embrace more notes than one.

What is presented in an actual recital, however, is never a *rāga* as such but as developed in a particular kind of musical treatment. Indeed to see what a *rāga* really is we have to consider how the various forms of our present-day classical music contribute differently to the evocation of the full aesthetic form of a *rāga*. *Ālāpa* of the older kind brings out the spaciousness, repose and dignity that are implicit in a *rāga*; and, what is more, even its power to elevate and encompass us in the way of rarefied atmosphere. A good *bandish*[42], be it a Khyāl or Dhruvapada one, projects the *rāga* as a single and identifiable wholeness. The *tāns* 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*. In other words, as an operative determinant of our music, a *rāga* is neither a mere arrangement of *āroha* and *avaroha*, and of *vādi* and *samvādi*, nor a rigid and wholly predetermined scheme to which the music has only to conform, but a rich and integrated melodic whole of implicit depth, inner roominess, repose and vitality, and variform 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.

It is easy to show why the form of a *rāga* cannot be identified with the grammatical scheme of *āroha-avaroha* and *vādi-samvadi*, etc. At least in principle, if not in contemporary practice, every *rāga* is supposed to evoke *a rasa*; but the mere indication of *āroha-avaroha* and *vādi-samvādi* is never seen to generate *rasā*. *Lakshana geets* admittedly reveal the grammatical identity of a *rāga*, but never its aesthetic form or personality. Further, the view that a *rāga* entertains people at large and suffuses their minds with its colour naturally implies that, whatever be the *rāga* chosen, its treatment or unfoldment takes quite some time. How, otherwise, could it be expected to *keep* the listeners interested? What is more, if a *rāga* is a *dhwanivisesha*, as it is said to be, it must *appear* as a distinct something. This 'appearing' becomes easier if the *rāga* is given, though it does not necessarily demand, the form of a composition employing both words and rhythm. But if this is done, we clearly go beyond a mere indication of *āroha-avaroha, vādi-samvādi*, because rhythm and words—and so a specific disposition of swaras—are now brought in. It may be noted that whereas the *aroha-avaroha* and *vādi-samvādi* of a *rāga*, and the basic form of the *bandish*, are pre-fixed and merely given to—and accepted by—the artist as he sets out to sing, the full form of the *rāga* is to be evoked by utilizing the various qualities of the notes and the possible (and permissible) diversity of their relations in different *saptaks* and at varying pace. The *rāga* thus comes to reveal its implicit vitality and depth, its heavenward reaches and freedom to operate creatively within the embrace of a

determinate musical complex, and its ability to serve as the locus of different emotions. This is why, I repeat, the more insightful of our older musicians prefer to think of a *rāga* as a living something.

A *rāga*, I suggest, is *a living form* not merely in the sense which Susanne Langer gives to such form—that is, as a kind of organism in respect of the life of which we cannot determine the *exact* individual contribution of each organ [43]—but essentially because it reveals the dynamic features of life, say, animation and vitality, the self-gathering of a discipline, depth and repose, and the varying and regulated pursuit of an end, which is here the evocation of a distinct melodic atmosphere (*rāga-rūpa*) *or* of a specific *rasa*. The question of the relation of *rāga* to *rasa* is a tricky one. Our answer here, I believe, can only be divided. On the one hand, there is plenty of good music today which has nothing to do with *rasa*, and is admired only for its sweetness, shapely structure and adroit fluency. On the other hand, no singer has so far been able to separate Adānā from a suggestion of valour and agressiveness *(veer rasa)* or an exposition of Jogiyā or Sohni from a semblance of tender feeling (or *karuna rasa*). In other words, the *relation* of *rāga* to *rasa* is possible, but not necessary. Perhaps it could also be said to be *desirable*, in case we choose to hold on to the traditional emphasis on spiritual liberation as the ultimate goal of music; for *rasa*-experience is supposed to help the active pursuit of the four principal ends of life (*purusharthas)* by creating interest and attunement.

One point in the definition I have put forth still remains to be clarified. What exactly do I mean by saying that *rasikas*' responses to the same *rāga* are bound to differ in detail, in accordance with their individual capacities for technical grasp and aesthetic sensitiveness? Surely not that a particular piece may appear Kedārā to one *rasika* and Bhoopāli to another, but only that, though the grammatical identity of the *rāga* being presented will remain the same for any two *rasikas* (not *kanrasiyas*), the total impact of the melody is likely to differ in the two cases because of individual differences in training and interest. Thus, to illustrate, of the two *rasikas* who may be listening to the same exposition of *ālāpa* in *rāga* Hindol, he who is interested, maybe, in the aesthetics of music will be struck in particular *tranquil* stretches of voice across the distant notes—say, from *sā* to *gā*, *mā* to *dhā*, and *dhā* to *sā*—and the other one, in case he cares (we may say) more for the grammar of music, will probably admire the singer's adroitness in unfolding the canvas of a narrow (संकड़ा) *rāga*. I am not suggesting, I repeat, that a *rāga* is bound to appear *grammatically* different to different *rasikas*; I am only emphasizing the inevitability of some differences in our *total* individual responses to the full-blown aesthetic form of the *rāga*.

In the end, let me indicate how, in the context of Hindustani music, aesthetics as metacriticism may be done more explicitly than it has been done so far. The aesthetics that I here speak of is an attempt to determine the *meaning and truth* of 'critical' judgments. Consider for instance, the following remarks which may be

freely made by a music critic (or *rasika*):

1. The Sitar maestro was in top form last evening; the music he produced was truly *spiritual.*
2. How *pure* and *profound* was his *ālāpa* in Gurajari Todi. Only a consummate *ālāpiyā* can evoke such effects.
3. How expressive! This is authentic classical music, to be sure.
4. What a wonderful Tabla recital. And how magical is our art of rhythm. A whole *new* world of time is here created by means of patterns and passages of remarkable beauty and variety.

Now, in respect of the above, the following questions may well be put; and anyone who raises and discusses such questions would be doing aesthetics in the way of metacriticism:

1. What is *spirituality* in music—in instrumental music, specially, where there is no language to serve as the vehicle of spiritual thoughts?
2. When is music *pure* and *profound*? What do these predicates mean?
3. Is 'authentic' music necessarily 'expressive'?
4. Is it proper to hold that the world of rhythmic time is *new*, that is, quite different from the actual time that we experience in everyday life? and is rhythm an independent art at all?

Now, most of these questions are being discussed in the West today by those who are actively engaged in doing philosophical aesthetics in relation to their own music; and, by way of concluding this essay, I now set out to do the same, if briefly, in relation to our music, and as demanded by the questions I have listed:

As in life, so in the region of our music, *spirituality* could be taken in its one admitted sense of avoidance of mere ornament, and as commitment to a sense of values that makes for a deepening and elevation of personality. Our *ālāpa* (of the Dhruvāpada manner) or even on Veena or Sitar—all, of course, in the hands of a maestro—could be said to look spiritual where it is reposeful (or *vilambit*), where the *raga's* constituent *swaras* appear to be not merely sung (or played), but contemplated with a measure of reverence, as it were; and where the entire presentation is not only euphonious all along, and free from flippant turns and twists that are merely decorative in effect, but expressive of the power of musical discipline as manifested in effects of depth, tranquillity, and even sublimity. It is, again, *ālāpa* (as sung), which may be said to be the paradigm of *purity* in our music. But here, we may note, '*purity*' is not exactly what it is taken to mean when artists and aestheticians interested in painting emphasize the value of pure form, or the ideal of utter independence from representational content. Such independence is of course there in *ālāpa* because language is totally eschewed; but, what is more, we have here the additional freedom from determination by *tāla* or beat-measured rhythm. The Western view that only instrumental music can be 'pure' is a mere bias [44]. Our vocal music as *ālāpa* is 'purer' because it is able to charm us without the use of language *and rhythm*. Positively, *ālāpa* is 'pure' in the sense of being

quintessential. Besides of course a few (meaningless) letters, its only material is the essence of music, or that without which music as art just cannot be, that is, regulated tones and tonal passages.

As for the concept of *profundity*, it is an important, though quite recent, emphasis in Western aesthetics. But it is, in my view, basically wrong to seek to understand profundity in music on the analogy of the way it appears in literature [45]. If a tragic play is profound it is so importantly because of its serious subject-matter, say, our common human foibles which cause so much of avoidable suffering, or the inevitable ups and downs of life. A music recital, on the other hand, comes to wear the look of profundity primarily because of its reposeful manner, and its ability to work up sonorous effects of serenity and grandeur by means of formal devices alone, and obviously not because of any subject-matter which is either wholly missing, as in the case of *ālāpa*, or is of negligible consequence, as in the Khyāl-*gāyaki* of artists like Ustad Ameer Khan where the overpowering quality of music just does not allow the text of the *bandish* to make our minds dwell upon things and happenings that fill our everyday world.

Our third question is relatively easy to answer. Expression as the projection of a feeling or emotion cannot be said to be *essential* for music. *Sthāyīs* and *gats*, and even most of the *tāns* that distinguish Khyāl-*singing*, are freely admired only for their design and fluency, and in spite of the fact that they are not expressive in the ordinary sense of the word[46]. As for the fourth question, whether rhythmic time is unique, it does not seem proper to opt for a negative answer simply on the ground that our everyday time and musical (or rhythmic) time are both known in an identical way, that is, by means of attention, memory, and anticipation. Why I say so can be easily explained. As in life, so in rhythm, the character of time as experience depends very vitally on *what* is experienced. The experience of waiting for a loved one is at once that of a period that seems to move very heavily; and, where it is experienced as the form of beauteous patterns and *passages*, comprising only *bols* or mnemonic syllables, time cannot but be experienced quite differently from what it appears to be in real life, that is, as the form of stray happenings or routine activities.

I turn, in the end, to the final question. Can rhythm fairly claim to be an *independent* art? My answer is a ready yes, and I base it on the following reasoning:

As Susanne Langer rightly insists, any art that claims to be autonomous must fulfil at least three requirements: first, its material should be distinctive; second, it has to have its primary creation because of which it may be said to do what no other art does; and, thirdly, some such criteria of evaluation have to be there as are uniquely relevant to it. Now, all these three conditions are admirably met by our rhythm. Its *material* is *bols* (or mnemonic syllables) arranged in respect of pace and design; and neither life nor any other art can be said to use this material in the way it is done here, in the region of rhythm. The *primary creation of rhythm is the automotive symmetry of pure pace.* Patterns, here, are numberless in

principle. But the one thing that has to be all along there in a rhythmic recital is the suggestion that, after the tempo of all subsequent drumming is set by the pace at which the very first *bol* has been played, the entire rhythmic work appears to proceed on its own impulse, because the mind happily acquiesces in the flow in virtue of its own native liking for evenly paced movement. Finally, the ability to reach the *sama* with split-second accuracy—and in a well designed way [47]—is a criterion which relates only to the evaluation of a rhythmic recital, or to a piece of music considered in its aspect of rhythm.

This, then, is roughly the way in which aesthetical thinking in our music may be done, that is, as a regulated blend of the three approaches I have distinguished. Our emphases may vary, but it is certain that the task deserves vigorous pursuance.

In our forty-five years of existence as an independent nation we have so far failed to produce any whole book on the aesthetics of Hindustani music; even essays on the subject have been few and far between. Nor has any one published any analytical booklet on the music of our different *gharānās* though most of them have able representatives in the Capital itself which can boast of its many cultural institutions, including the Sangeet Natak Akademi. This is a clear lacuna in our musical scholarship, and it is not only necessary, but possible, to fill it. I cannot show how our music can lead to spiritual liberation. But I see it clearly that this art admits of an infinite amount of aesthetic analysis, and that such analysis not only delights but benefits the intellect. No *rasika* believes that the purpose of music is only to tickle the ear; and it is surely more sensible to hold that this art of melody and rhythm also touches the heart and frees it for a while from merely personal involvements. But if, as the traditional conception of music's ultimate end seems to imply, our whole personality stands to gain from a serious and disciplined concern with this art, how can we shut our eyes to its implicit intellectual significance? Works on the history and grammar of our music are easily available. But aesthetical study of the art, as a sober rational enterprise, is yet to shape itself. □

NOTES

1. Books used in preparing this essay were kindly supplied by the libraries of Sangeet Natak Akademi, Delhi, and Faculty of Music and Fine Arts, University of Delhi.
2. Works on music appearing *before* 1947 do not seem to make the attempts I here speak of. But I must explain why I say so:

   a. Atiya Begum Fyzee-Rahamin's *The Music of India* (Luzac & Co., London, 1925) is very sketchy. Here, no concept of music has been subjected to critical thought. Consider, for instance, the following utterance: "Time or Rhythm is an important factor in the science of music . . . Sum [is] the first . . point of a performance, and also the climax when the singer. . . with the drummer come[s] to a happy termination."

   Such writing does not even envisage the questions that ought to be put. Is there no difference

between the time of our everyday experience and time in music or rhythm? If there is a difference, it cannot be proper to speak of "Time *or* Rhythm", as if the two were identical. Again, how do the formal features of time as we experience it in life — that is, as abidance, lapse, succession and simultaneity — enter into our music as rhythm? And should we not distinguish the content of everyday time from the filling of time as artistically created or rhythm? Finally, does every performance of music *begin* from the *sama*? Surely not. The vocalist may rather begin by using the catch-phrase (पकड़) as an approach *to* the *sama*, and not from the *sama* straight. And is not the *sama* also the focal beat of the cycle? Do we not merely *begin* from, but also return to, the *sama* repeatedly, completing the individual rounds, as we play or follow the cycle? (See my book *The Winged Form*, Sangeet Natak Akademi, 1979, for such distinctions as *sama* as the source of rhythmic 'design', as focal beat, as *bol*, as merely contemplated, as destiny, and as a check-point for the evenness of *laya*, pp. 73.91.)

b. D.P. Mukerji's *Indian Music— An Introduction* (Kutub Publishers, Pune, 1945) is just as casual at places. Here are some instances:

"Indian music, being music, is just an arrangement of sounds"(p. 8)

— Of sounds, I ask, or of sounds of *definite pitch*, that is, of tones?

"Tala is a metre covering a definite number of beats (*mātrās*) and a definite number of bars, not necessarily equal in the number of beats" (p.56).

— What about *bols*? Are they not vitally important for our rhythm?

c. B. Swarup's *Theory of Indian Music* (Swarup Brothers, Allahabad, 1935) contains an impressive amount of information about our traditional musicology; but is also disfigured by such uncritical generalities: "The Indian word for emotion is *Nada* . . . Music is therefore the language of emotions" (p.207). "The author himself admits in the footnote, if only by implication, that the translation of *nāda* as emotion is improper. But what *I* object to, as being unsupportable by the evidence of actual music, is the thesis that music is the language of *emotions*. What *emotion* do we find in a *drut gat?* Where such a *gat* is well played are not our appraisal words 'shapely', beautiful, 'swinging', or 'sparkling' rather than 'expressive'? And in the opening stages of *ālāpa* of the Dhruvapada manner, does one find emotions or simply a reverential access to individual *swaras*; a kind of feeling for their melodic insides, so to say; and an overall introvertive depth?

3. Thus, if I remember aright, it was only in 1952 that the well-known flautist, Mr P.C. Wadhera, began contributing a *regular* column to *The Times of India*, New Delhi. As 'a music critic' *I* started doing the same for *The Hindustan Times* about three years later, my first write-up appearing on 27 March 1955.
4. Both these theses were written by Delhi University scholars, the first by Lalit Bala Mathur (1983) and the second by Anjali Mittal (1992). I am grateful to the University's Faculty of Music for assigning their supervision to me.
5. It is true that I have published more than a dozen aesthetical essays on Hindustani music in *Sangeet Natak*, the journal of Sangeet Natak Akademi, alone; but they cover a span of more than 25 years. And they have not so far been integrated as a book on the aesthetics of Hindustani music. Nor are they directly related to the major problems being discussed today in the region of contemporary Western aesthetics of music and rhythm.
6. Summit Publications, Kanpur, 2nd edition, 1981. I hasten to add that the author himself sees and corrects this mistake on p. 5 where aesthetics is spoken of *as the study* of the creation of art and beauty.
7. Ibid, p.189.
8. Ānanddhārā Prakashan, Calcutta, 1963.
9. Ibid, p. 386.

10. Ibid, p. 426.
11. Ibid, p. 389. Sweeping generalizations also disfigure, at places, G.H. Ranade's useful work *Hindustani Music (An Outline of its Physics and Aesthetics)*, S. Lal & Co., 1989. Here is an instance: "The chief defects of the Dhrupada-style are however its monotony and *absolute* denial of any scope for musical grace or delicacy" (p. 144, italics added). It seems the learned author has never heard *āradhanatmaka* Dhruvapadas or *drut* compositions say, in Sool or Teora tālas which make delightful use of *gamak* and *lahak*.
12. M.R. Gautam: *Evolution of Raga and Tala in Indian Music*, Munshiram Manoharlal, 1989, pp. 145-46. Unfortunately, however, a few pages later, Prof. Gautam himself forgets the difference he would like us to remember. Thus on p. 151 he says: "Music alone is *autonomous*. It says nothing beyond itself. What does it say? *It is direct expression of human feeling.*" (Second italics added). Such writing is clearly open to question. If music is a direct expression of human feeling, and if it (says or) does nothing except exercising its essential function of expressing feeling, such expression must be said to be a necessary mark of our music. But does all good music express some emotion? As I have already argued, no one who is really familiar with our classical music would here say yes. Prof. Gautam is both a top vocalist and an eminent musicologist. So the defect I have pointed out surprises me.
13. Chetan Karnani: *Listening to Hindustani Music*, Sangam Books, 1976, p. V.
14. S.K. Langer: *Problems of Art*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957, p. 3.
15. I have here in mind the distinction that Bertrand Russell has drawn between knowing by description and knowing by acquaintance.
16. From here on till the end of the para I draw heavily upon the draft of an unpublished essay, 'Philosophy & Hindustani Music'.
17. Nelson Goodman: *Ways of Worldmaking*, Hackett Publishing Co., 1978, pp. 7-17.
18. *Evolution of Raga and Tala in Indian Music*, p. 151
19. *Listening to Hindustani Music*, p. 78.
20. S.K. Saxena: 'Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan' in *The Hindustan Times* of 19 August 1956.
21. Ashok D. Ranade: *On Music and Musicians of Hindoostan*, Promilla & Co., 1984, p. 196. I may add that though I have heard and written on Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan a number of times, nothing similar to Ranade's perceptive analysis I have cited is there even in my full-page article on the maestro referred to in the preceding note.
22. *Listening to Hindustani Music*, p. 85. It may be noted that in my writing, I have chosen to spell the maestro's name as 'Ameer Khan'. For the word is अमीर, not अमिर.
23. Ibid, p. 86.
24. Ibid, p.89.
25. Coleridge himself puts the matter a little differently. 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, p.78.
26. *On Music and Musicians of Hindoostan*, pp. 144-45.
27. *S.K. Saxena: The Winged Form — Aesthetical Essays on Hindustani Rhythm*, Sangeet Natak Akademi, 1979.
28. S.K. Saxena: *Aesthetical Essays*, Chanakya Publications, 1981, pp. 121-189.
29. S.K. Saxena: 'The Concept of Raga — An Essay in Understanding', *Sruti*, Madras, Issue 80, May 1991. Reprinted in *Sangeet Natak*, Nos. 101-102, July-December 1991, pp.32-46.
30. *Listening to Indian Music*, p. 14. Karnani himself, I may add, makes quite a few sensible remarks on *rāga* which can be of help in defining the concept. See, for instance, the following: "Every rāga has its own movement and its own personality." Ibid. however, Karnani's com-

plaint—and the remark I here speak of—were both noted by me only while writing the present essay, that is, well *after* the appearance of my essay on *rāga.*

31. Matanga Muni: ***Brihaddeshi,*** Sangeet Karyalaya, Hathras, 1976, *sloka* 281.
32. Ibid.
33. Bharata's *Nātya Sāstra,* edited by Pandit Kedarnath, 2nd edition (Bombay, Nirnayasagar, 1943), *sloka* 74, *chapter* 28.
34. This is an admitted meaning of *jana.* See Monier Williams: *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary,* Oriental Publishers, Delhi, 1899, p. 410.
35. 'Primary' or immediate because this quality is implicit in the very definition of *swara* as that which reigns (or charms) by itself. Other qualities, such as the seeming tenderness or dignity of a *swara,* may be said to be mediate in the sense that their perception depends on, or is the grasp of, a *cultivated* taste.
36. This is my word for *rāga,* regarded as an organic complex of sounds or *swaras.* I coined this word during the course of my work as a music critic for *The Hindustan Times.*
37. *Nātya Sāstra, chapter* 28, *sloka* 74.
38. As when a *nishād* or *madhyam* is made to appear *as merging into* its adjacent shade, say, in Mian-ki-Malhar or Kedāra respectively.
39. 'Quality' *is* an accepted meaning of *varna:* see *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, op.cit.*
40. This is how Susanne Langer distinguishes the aesthetic meaning of form from such everyday meanings as shape or outline.
41. *Nātya Sāstra, chapter* 28, *sloka* 74.
42. A *bandish* is a rhythmically organized composition which clearly embodies a *rāga* and a *tāla.*
43. *Problems of Art,* pp. 134-35.
44. I have here in mind the view of Peter Kivy in his well-known recent publication: *Of Music Alone—Philosophical Reflections on the Purely Musical Experience,* Cornell University Press, 1991,.
45. Here, again, I refer to Kivy.
46. Expressive, that is, as projecting a feeling.
47. That is, in the way of a shapely *āmad.*