

# The Methodology of Teaching Indian Classical Music

## *A Statement on the Problem*

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*Author's Note: 1. This is a statement\* on some of the issues connected directly and, often, implicitly with the given problem, the problem of how to determine a viable methodology of teaching Indian classical music in a changing environment. I consider the problem here with a brief reference to its immediate historical background and various associated matters.*

*2. I have confined myself in this essay to north Indian classical music with which I happen to be a little familiar; it may hence be kept in mind that whenever I use a more inclusive category—'Indian classical music'—I actually refer to the former. However, I believe that many of the basic problems of teaching south Indian classical music are analogous to those faced in north India.*

*3. I deliberately refrain from using the rather loaded term 'Hindustani music', especially in our present-day milieu; I use instead 'Indian (or north Indian) classical music', which doubtless is a much more neutral term.*

*4. If some of the ideas and views expressed in this write-up appear to convey an extreme viewpoint, offered here with a kind of rash abandon, that is because I tend to think that this may prompt a lively debate, with the best of results.*

### I

#### BACKGROUND

THE PRESENT PROFILE of Indian classical-music education, one must be frank, does not put up a devilishly splendid picture. For one thing, its teaching method—and there is a whole chaos of facile practices here—has not panned out exceedingly well; and our music education, we shall soon see, easily gives out and reveals a largely confusing scenario. This is but reflection, to a large measure, of changing times. Caught between our regrets for the past and our fears of the future, we have been making do with many an uncertain and unthinking practice in the teaching of our classical music<sup>1</sup>. It's time then to pause and ask questions. It's time, indeed, to consider the historical causes of the present unenviable state of affairs in the realm of our music teaching and then plan for the future. That calls for, in the first place, a glance at the past, at

least our immediate past; and we shall gain if we begin by considering the record left during the last hundred years or so by a few of our sensitive minds, men with fine musical consciences.

Let us then begin with Rabindranath Tagore. A little more than a hundred years ago, in 1881, the year in which Sourindro Mohun Tagore set up his well-known Academy of Music<sup>2</sup>, young Rabindranath, then only twenty years old, described—in a striking talk delivered at Calcutta's Bethune Society—classical music in India (as practised then) as having grown, as it were, into a kind of frozen music: a music that was stripped of its inner life-blood, its power to convey significant musical ideas, its essential *Bhāvas*. Absent in spirit, music was present only in body. Just as, he said,

our Sanskrit is a dead language, so is our *Samgīt-śāstra* a dead *śāstra*. Life has gone out of them; there remains only the body.

In both their recitals and mode of teaching, the usual *ustāds* of Indian classical music, sages as far as the beard, were mainly concerned with the rigid rules of *rāgas* and *tālas*, with unthinking and set *Alaṃkāras*, or with dry grammatical *rotes*<sup>3</sup>.

Tagore is known to have revised with time some of his views of Indian music, but not his considered opinion on the state of classical music in north India and the means generally available for learning it. Writing about half a century after the public talk referred to, Rabindranath Tagore in an essay titled 'Music Education at the University', published in 1928, repeated among other things what he had said in 1881. Whenever we wished to listen to or tried to learn classical music, he said, we had to look for and go to our *ustāds*. For it was they who had been the traditional custodians of Indian classical music; and the world had been their oyster:

Their body, mind and heart are all wholly immersed in this sole task, right from their childhood. A good voice is not essential to them. Many of them in fact lack such a thing, while many others despise a good voice. The individuality of talent in music is superfluous to them; such a thing might even obstruct their very work [of pure preservation]. It's a matter of pride for them that they carry on their back an ancient tradition in its purest form.<sup>4</sup>

It was an agonizing experience for the poet, this sunless cultivation of our classical music, which gloried merely in breeding the past, adding very few laurels to the tradition, and which passed on a

heritage, unchanged and untarnished, from one generation of learners to another.

Writing in 1885, Krisnadhan Bandyopadhyay, whom even V. N. Bhatkhande admired for his fine musical knowledge, noted the painful lack of a scientific system of music teaching and education in the country. The teaching of music, he showed, had become a trade with the traditional *ustāds*, who were always chary of sharing their *Vidyā* with people not belonging to their family or kin. Jealously would they guard, and go on guarding, the secrets of their knowledge, which was why they would not think of composing books on how to teach and learn north Indian classical music. Those who on the other hand felt the need for such works had not generally the ability and knowledge to write such books. It seemed true to Krisnadhan Bandyopadhyay that music specialists in India did not really believe that there could be books to help the teaching and learning of our classical music. There were, he said, several treatises on music available in ancient and modern Indian languages; but most of these related to the so-called theory of classical music, far removed from its existing practical aspects, unrelated to music as actually performed; and even in matters of pure theory most of these works were muddle-headed<sup>5</sup>.

Some decades later, V. N. Bhatkhande (whose new system of music teaching earned unqualified admiration even from Rabindranath Tagore<sup>6</sup>) was to echo similar views, when for instance he wrote that

... in order that a body of artists who represent any particular art should be proficient in it, they must be well-versed in the fundamental principles of it. In the present moment, unfortunately, most of our professional artists are not learned in the science of music and the theorists are not well-versed in the art.<sup>7</sup>

This was plain talk, which above all brings into focus the unfortunate lack of a dialectical relationship between theory and practice in the tradition of our classical music.

Such views on the state of north Indian classical music and the mode of its teaching and instruction as obtaining in this country fifty to hundred years ago, I feel, cannot simply be laughed away. Framed on the basis of direct empirical observation, these were the considered views of men of such extraordinary musical knowledge and insight as Tagore, Bandyopadhyay and Bhatkhande; and there must have been others who thought not much differently. These views,

moreover, have an unmistakable relevance to our own day. Two central facts or, if you like, two sides of the same fact, stand out in bold relief from these observations. First, classical music in north India had, willy-nilly, turned into mere craft, cut off generally from most mental-intellectual work. Which, I may say, was an expression—and this is our second fact—of the long-standing disjunction between meaningful theory and fruitful practice that had grown up over time in Indian classical music, a disjunction which had more often than not dwarfed the scientific development of music-teaching methodology. Witness the many listeners of north Indian classical music who have long been used to regarding technical wizardry and virtuosity, sparkling skill and craftsmanship, as the highest marks of musical expression. Such popular equation between fine workmanship and good classical music in our country, I believe, cannot be a mere accident; this must be a reflection of what has really been happening for a pretty long time.

As is well known, the traditional method of the teaching our classical music has generally been informed by the philosophy and methodology of the *guru-śiṣya-paramparā*. Indeed, the musical proficiency that had blossomed forth in high-order classical music in India had grown up over generations, during the last few centuries at least, largely through an accumulation of technique and skill, these well-guarded skills and techniques being handed down from father to son or from guru to *śiṣya* (who in many a case was the son or nephew or one of the family). Thus emerged in India a self-immersed musical culture confined usually to the charmed circle of a few *Gharānās*. In most cases, in their closed-door milieu<sup>8</sup>, these *Gharānās* would be primarily concerned with the perpetuation of skills and techniques for a select few. It is difficult to imagine how in such a situation the teaching and learning of classical music could have been generally connected with any serious effort to study and grasp its theoretical, historical, aesthetic or philosophical bases. The usual method of teaching in such a milieu would naturally require the students to follow unquestioningly whatever the guru or the *ustād* taught, almost as the holy decalogue. Our distinguished musician, Ravi Shankar, who himself studied music in an eminent *Gharānā*, writes in his autobiography:

Unlike western musicians who spend a number of years learning the entire history and background of their musical traditions and their own instruments, Indian musicians for the most part learn from their *gurus* as much practical, actually performed music as they can, and dwell relatively little on theoretical ideas

and concepts of history. . . . Musicians, therefore, concentrated primarily on practical music and memorized the traditions handed down them by their musical ancestors. Customarily, the *shishya*, or disciple, absorbed without question or criticism all that his *guru* taught; and, so, analytical and objective judgment was never developed in the students<sup>9</sup>.

Doubtless, in certain exceptional cases the *guru* or the *ustād* would be a man of keen musical insight, imparting in his own style to the sensitive student the perceived intuitions of his art. But in most cases it was musical craft that was passed on from the teacher to the student within the bounds of the *Ghārāna*.

However, the remarkable thing about the basis of the traditional *Ghārānā* system of music instruction and teaching in India through the *guru-śiṣya-paramparā* is that it was akin, in some respects, to the characteristic ethos of most pre-modern forms of craft specialization. In both cases, skills were handed down from father to son, or from master to apprentice, generation after generation. Like forms of craft usually restricted to a particular family or a group of families or an occupational caste or guild (witness, for instance, even the medieval European guilds with their highly rigid and restrictive regulations), classical music in India was also generally confined to the boundaries of *Ghārānās*. In both cases, again, it was the perpetuation of and immersion in a single-minded activity generation after generation that primarily mattered—the chiselling and yet finer chiselling of the specialized skills and techniques of the craft. Hence the amazing, almost unbelievable, flowering over time of musical skills and techniques in India!

Referring to the admirable quality of the fine Dacca muslins or the superb Coromandel calicoes as well as the magnificent proficiency in their making, Karl Marx in a celebrated passage of *Capital* observed with his characteristic insight:

It is only the special skill accumulated from generation to generation, and transmitted from father to son, that gives the Hindu, as it does to the spider, this proficiency.<sup>10</sup>

Music of course is not the making of muslin; but the point, I feel, is well made. This is the reason why Rabindranath Tagore found that in the performing art of north Indian classical music the run-of-the-mill *ustād* would generally turn out to be a very dexterous performer, much less an artist, parading a rare standard of workmanship and artifice. But workmanship is to music what alloy is to

gold<sup>11</sup>. In the process, what became the major casualty in the transmission and instruction of Indian classical music was the crucial task of uniting the technicalities of the craft with the necessary mental-intellectual work. And so Tagore believed:

As real art has an innate life of its own, it has intellect and mobility. But since workmanship is mere ornamentation and lacks the properties of life, its predominance turns all embellishments into fetters. It then stops the natural growth of art; it obstructs its mobility. What then goes on . . . is not something which is spiritual but mundane. In other words, there no longer remains the life-giving intellect but mostly worldly accumulation. That is why I do not find intellect in our Hindustani music<sup>12</sup>.

This, then, is the reflection of what had emerged over time as an unfortunate wedge, a paralyzing disjunction, between intellectual creativity and high-order workmanship, between theory and practice, in Indian classical music. Because of this, writes Ravi Shankar,

. . . today one often finds a certain tension between musicologists and performing artists in India, particularly in the North . . .<sup>13</sup>

Probably in very few countries of the world had the theoretical study of music and its practical work become separated in such water-tight compartments and for such a long time as in India. I may even hazard that the wedge between the two was almost institutionalized during the period since the 17th century. According to one interpretation, it was in that century that Saif Khan Fakir Ullah, author of *Rāgadarpaṇ*, was struck by the vain and overbearing craftsmanship of the famous musicians of the Mughal period, including even the legendary Tānsen. Most of them, he said, were utterly unlike the Saṁgīt-nāyaks of earlier times, who used to combine in them intellect with skill, knowledge with proficiency, theory with practice<sup>14</sup>.

Despite this long-standing trend in the realm of our classical music, Rabindranath Tagore saw in an optimistic vein the sure signs of a new age in which our Saṁgīt would once again acquire its living character, its inner spirit. But, judging from the growing trends in music education in the country, he felt that the time had now arrived for an all-round dialogue and debate on the problem, without which no real improvement would come our way<sup>15</sup>. About fifty years later, Bhatkhande in the same vein thought he saw something in the air which promised a new era "at no distant future", in

which the art and the science of Indian classical music would reach a fruitful unity<sup>16</sup>.

What changes, then, do we observe in the state of our music teaching and education within this span of fifty to hundred years?

## II

### PRESENT SCENARIO

Times surely have changed. Due primarily to changes in our objective situation, and as a result largely of the rise of modern-day media, the isolationism and self-immersion of the Gharānā system, in this contracted world of discs and tapes and the printed word, are now—some believe—almost fey. One can easily understand why we come across, in this situation, the oft-expressed regret at the gradual disintegration of the Gharānā system and the associated mode of teaching music through the guru-śiṣya-paramparā. The regret, I believe, is largely based on an idealized image of the system, the preconditions to whose effective functioning were often not fulfilled in actuality. Even Ravi Shankar, for whom the system of teaching and instruction associated with the philosophy and methodology of the guru-śiṣya-paramparā justifiably reflects “a beautiful relationship” that is now “fading” out, has to take recourse to certain ‘ifs’ in his statement on the system:

*If the student is talented, sincere, faithful to his guru and devoted in his practising, and if the guru is teaching with utmost dedication and not being miserly with his knowledge, there is a distinct pattern for learning Indian music.*<sup>17</sup>

Ravi Shankar, himself a remarkable musical talent, has been fortunate, as he so often says, to have received his training from a great guru, Allauddin Khan; and those ifs were all realized. But, as a *method*, this mode of instruction depends not so much upon an objective system as upon an individual, the guru or the ustād who, despite his possible personal idiosyncrasies, represents a musical system himself. There is hence no guarantee that this individual's musical knowledge or his method of teaching would be always of the first order, especially when such knowledge or such method, as has been seen, might not be related to much theoretical work and reflection.

Some observers, again, consider the disintegration of the Gharānās as “dangerous for the music”<sup>18</sup>. Such a view is also

prompted by an idealized portrayal of the Gharānā system, in which efforts at musical creativity are postulated through an idealized presupposition of an inter- or intra-Gharānā competitive spirit leading to serious efforts at better and yet better music, and an equally idealized assumption of a long course of reflection and experiment by the Gharānā ustāds. The reality, as has been shown, was largely different, what with the self-contained isolationism of the Gharānās in the decentralized and fragmented world of a pre-modern society! As has also been implied, the so-called cumulative reflection and many-sided experiments by the usual ustāds amounted in a large number of cases to a kind of self-immersed exercise by rote—and that, too, merely in perfecting skills and in preserving the purity of grammar! Such being the usual run of things, it was the music which remained generally bound within certain stereotypes, due note being taken of exceptions.

Indeed, the gradual disintegration of the Gharānā system, with its traditional isolationism and its usual secret-society mentality, is at present apt to make north Indian classical music open to broader sections of the people. In the past, because of the closed-door, restrictive and esoteric milieu of the Gharānās, and because of the dispersed way of living in a pre-modern society, many potential musical talents would usually remain untapped. In the second place, the world of north Indian classical music is now probably in a better position to build up a wider universe of musical discourse. In place of an immersion in the specific style of a Gharānā, we may now have a broader framework of comparative reference points, in which the best elements of a style can probably be discriminately grasped and explored by students of music. This does not necessarily mean, as some suspect, that a homogenous standardization of style will steal quietly into the realm of our classical music. For, comparison in the best sense of the term is the mother of all meaningful dialogue and is at the back of much creative development! Thirdly, and most importantly, the disintegration of the Gharānā system now offers us an opportunity to build up a scientific system of music education in India. In the past, with the typical ustād or guru of a Gharānā, the mode of instruction would usually consist of a blind and unthinking process of imitation of the teacher, even of his obvious defects and, sometimes, even his mannerisms. As a commentator aptly explains the crux of the matter:

... one hardly finds scope for seeking an answer to 'how' and 'why' either from the *gharana ustad* or someone else. The natural seed for research and advanced study was nipped in the bud in

the name of regard for the *ustad*, submission to him. One can find how undaunted faith to the extent of being blind made the pupil self-enclosed and without initiative. He made the defects in the style of his *ustad* as part of his own style and hardly made any effort to improve or further enrich the traditional style. He could not think of research. Faithful reproduction of the style formed [a] rigid framework [for him].<sup>19</sup>

Doubtless, the disintegration of the traditional Gharānā system has now released the *preconditions* to the making of a more scientific methodology of music education, in which the long-standing, almost institutionalized, wedge between what I call meaningful theory and fruitful practice can be ended, leading to an all-round unity of body, mind and head in musical work.

The emergence of such objective preconditions today is however one thing; to fulfil these conditions in actuality is quite another. Such indeed is the impression that one gathers from the existing state of instruction and education in the realm of north Indian classical music today. At present, there are three systems of music teaching in the country. To say, however, that at least one of them has attained a viable, scientific dimension would amount to facing reality with fond concealments.

In the first place, there still exists in India the system of music instruction based in some respects on the traditional mode of the guru-śiṣya-paramparā, although this may no longer be of great importance in quantitative terms. The mode of instruction offered in their private capacity by some musicians connected in one way or another with certain earlier Gharānās would fall into this category. Its greatest single merit, which is now being felt more and more acutely in the context of today's tendency to deal with music in crowded class-rooms, is its very personal method of teaching—the great personal care with which the guru is ideally expected to groom his pupils. Secondly, these Gharānās, or whatever is left of them, still act today, to some extent at least, as a repository of old and rare songs and Bandishes. To be sure, the importance of these compositions, even if only for comparative purposes, cannot be overstressed<sup>20</sup>. It is probably because of these plus points that one or two trust bodies and enlightened industrial houses have set up in the recent past certain music institutes for imparting instruction to music students under the care of a few eminent representatives of certain traditional Gharānās. With their opulent resources, these institutes may well be able to overcome, if modern approaches to teaching and modern-day equipments are used, the primary methodic

limitations of the traditional Gharānā-based mode of teaching cited earlier.

The second system of music instruction now available in India, the most popular in numerical terms, is represented by a large number of music 'schools' and 'colleges' that one comes across in every little neighbourhood in towns and, sometimes, even in villages, most of these being under private or semi-private management. The diffuse growth of such music schools in recent years reflects in one sense the increasing demand for music education, even if part-time, on the part of the middle classes. In the main, however, this reflects the growing commercialization of music as a consumer commodity and hence its obvious impoverishment. A report published on this trend in a Calcutta journal in 1980 was plainly captioned 'Flourishing Trade in Music Schools'. These institutions, the report shows, have mushroomed to such an extent that there now exist as many as 8,000 such schools and colleges within the municipal area of Greater Calcutta. Other metropolitan centres of India cannot be far behind!

Some of these music institutions are affiliated to one or two statutory universities. It would be interesting to study the conditions of such affiliation and to consider whether these conditions are generally fulfilled by these institutions. A much larger number of these schools and colleges are however affiliated to certain music organizations of north India, which have chosen on their own the task of awarding diplomas or certificates under many a glittering nomenclature. Curiously, some of these diplomas have even earned the recognition of the powers that be; and the equivalence committees of some universities have been generous enough to accept these diplomas as equivalent to their own university degrees or diplomas in music.

All this is very curious because it is well known—and this is also highlighted by the said empirical survey—that the conditions of study and examination in most of these music schools and institutions do not reflect strikingly high academic standards and values. In about eighty per cent of these institutions, teachers work mainly on commission basis. That is to say, the more students a teacher can draw, the more money he is able to earn. And it is not very uncommon that a teacher who specializes in Khayāl would effortlessly teach, say, Dhrupad, or a vocalist would merrily offer practical lessons in all kinds of instrumental music. The said diploma-awarding organizations of north India, to which many of these music schools and colleges are connected, have got something in the name of syllabuses, which duly catalogue the usual

quotas of 'theory' and 'history' as well as the usual brands of rāgas and tālas. But these are not, these cannot be, normally treated and tackled in many of these so-called schools and colleges. There always exists, if anything, a sheer physical limitation. The weekly class-days in most cases are not generally more than one or two—Saturdays and Sundays usually—and there are numerous students and very few teachers. Yet, nearly no one fails—many are awarded even the first class—in the final examinations conducted by the diploma-awarding organizations. And this irrespective of whether or not there are recurrent reports of large-scale copying in the written papers and whether or not the evaluation in the practicals is done extremely cavalierly—a single examiner often evaluating the performance of examinees in different branches of instrumental and vocal music<sup>21</sup>. It is, then, only a kind of squeezed-orange musical knowledge that these myriad institutions and schools are generally capable of offering; and we are here in the midst of a system filled up with precarious practices and suspect values!

The third type of music instruction now prevalent in India is represented by the mode of institutionalized, formal teaching at statutory universities and government-sponsored colleges affiliated to these universities. This probably is the most important area in which, I believe, serious standards of a scientific and viable system of music education can be built up in the present situation, with some effort. The existing state of affairs in many a case here is however far from encouraging. As I see, several key problems confront this area of music education; and one of them is surely the lack of appropriate resources.

It seems that some of our educational policy makers and planners have been long used to moving on the basis of utilitarian premises in allocating funds or in developing a planned management of music education, in the name of what are called social priorities. Even the University Grants Commission, which had in the past often acted as a spark-plug in pushing through significant, even unconventional, ideas in higher education, has not treated the discipline of classical music with the consideration it really deserves. Thus, for instance, till as late as 1979 UGC did not come forward with a prescribed set of minimum qualifications for appointment to teacherships in the music or fine arts faculties at universities and affiliated or constituent colleges, whereas such things in regard to other disciplines had been settled years ago. It must be said at the same time in favour of UGC that under a reference from the Union Ministry of Education and Culture it has been currently trying to persuade the universities to set up new departments of

music and performing arts or strengthen existing ones<sup>22</sup>. Despite such persuasion, music appears still to hold a very low position in the hierarchy of priorities of most universities in the country. With the result that in those few universities which offer music education, the department of music is often the most neglected department. It usually exists as a second-class citizen of the academe, not yet admitted to full franchise.

Some simple figures may tell the story. At present, in India, we have more than 120 universities, including institutions deemed to be universities. Of them, only two were set up as music-cum-fine-arts universities, one of which has already assumed the character rather of a general-education university. Of the remaining universities or deemed universities, only twenty—mark well the figure, which doubtless reveals our priorities!—have departments or centres of music and fine arts under their direct management<sup>23</sup>.

Witness, again, that of the three oldest universities of India, set up 125 years ago in 1857 in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, Calcutta University has no department of music at all. While Bombay University's centre of music has only one person listed on its teaching staff, Madras University's department of Indian music is limited to four teachers only<sup>24</sup>. Indeed, many of the twenty university departments of music, barring a few, are extremely understaffed; in certain cases these departments consist of one or two teachers only. We in West Bengal—and many of us here are prone to considering ourselves as culturally an advanced community—may do well by keeping in mind that while West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh have each a music-cum-fine-arts university, Madhya Pradesh has as many as six government-run music colleges. West Bengal has only two very small government-sponsored colleges of music<sup>25</sup>—one of which is in a particularly wretched condition, run on a ridiculously low government grant<sup>26</sup>. Things are thus not much different from what Rabindranath Tagore saw around him in Bengal in 1936. Referring to the increasing craze for earning degrees by rote memorization after the introduction of English education in the country, Tagore wrote in a moment of despair and agony:

The idea that comprehends music as an honourable Vidyā then became extinct. . . . [So] the Education Department of Bengal could not recognize Saṃgīt. There thus remained no cause for the educated elite to feel ashamed of the fact that an absence of taste, knowledge and experience in music was a mark of lack of education.<sup>27</sup>

Nothing could thus be more urgent than to impress upon the powers that be the need to deploy more resources and take up a development plan for music education at universities and colleges. One must remember in this connection that music as an artistic discipline has its special needs and requirements, and cannot be treated at par with such general subjects as, say, economics or chemistry. Above all, music cannot be treated in a crowded class-room. But our music classes at universities and colleges are already overcrowded; and the number of teaching hands available is usually very low<sup>28</sup>. Such and other problems now constrict either directly or indirectly the development of a scientific and viable methodology of teaching Indian classical music at universities and colleges. To which question I now turn and begin with the teaching method that is commonly practised in our country.

In all the three systems of music education now prevalent in the country, the method usually chosen in teaching classical music is basically more or less the same. At universities and colleges, things may be a little more formally organized; and a student may be offered a little of theory and history or, at a higher level, something on aesthetics, psychology and even acoustics. But the mode usually adopted to teach these theoretical aspects of classical music is more often than not almost wholly separated from the method of teaching practical music. The latter, I believe, is more or less the same in all the three systems of music education now obtaining. Let us hear the observations of a foreign writer, observations which, I feel, are of some special importance, if only because of a certain objective detachment with which they have been made:

There is no definite system of teaching [classical music] in North India. Sometimes an artist does not teach his pupil at all; in other cases the student is overloaded with music material. Yet, one thing is common in all teaching methods in North India: they are based on copying... This system implies a large degree of directness in the transmission of musical material. The teacher sets the example, the pupil is required to reproduce it. ... A highly whimsical approach has been a notorious trait in many teachers ... Teachers frequently get angry because a pupil is not doing exactly like them. This is very typical.<sup>29</sup>

There is no need to deny that this work of imitation—not merely in learning the musical alphabets—constitutes the major part of a music student's work, even in the formalized university system generally. This imitative method, I believe, may be somewhat

useful in learning the basic musical alphabets and in mastering the techniques and skills of the craft of music, but not so much in grasping the complexities and sophistication of Indian classical music, the why and the how of the matter. By this method, a teacher normally wants his pupils to pick up musical ideas—the crux of the matter—only by listening to his music. He sings or plays a rāga, either in bits or in full; and he expects, like many of our ustāds of the past, that his students will thus acquire the necessary feel of the rāga personality just by listening to him. It is not often that attempts at producing meaningful intellectual-analytical formulations to aid the student's conception of Indian classical music and enhance his artistic sensitivity are considered necessary, to arrive at a comprehensive grasp and understanding of the raga as a coherent musical idea. For the student, then, the knowing here is not even in the doing, but mostly in the copying.

This method of music teaching founded on direct imitation of the teacher is however quite often defended with the contention that, as musical materials are abstract and fluid, no black-and-white analytical method is capable of capturing the inner 'soul' of our classical music, and that if and when a student reaches a certain level of proficiency by copying the teacher, he develops his own music through his intuitive perceptions of the musical art. Now, as we shall see, the ability to develop one's faculty of sense perception is not naturally given, nor is this an easy task. It calls for serious work and reflection, sustained practice and education. A teaching method which primarily fosters imitation on the fanciful theory of copy-first-and-think-later, I believe, is unlikely to help the student develop even his perceptual abilities. In fact, this is a teaching method which can seldom provide the student with a conscious and knowledgeable sense of direction; it is more likely to lead him on the other hand to move gropingly and haphazardly in an uncharted sea. It is thus not a difficult method to get lost in.

This is to say that although the theoretical study of our classical music has now become a part of the music curriculum in the university system, the teaching method in many cases has not succeeded well in providing a dialectical integration between theory and practice. At least partially this is reflected in the common run of syllabuses for the courses of study in classical music at universities and colleges, whatever may be the level of study and teaching, be it pre-degree, undergraduate or post-graduate! In these courses, the emphasis is naturally on the practical papers, which are often regarded, rightly enough, as the core area of music teaching. That is to say, the pulp is constituted by a few papers

on theory and history of music. Now, however legitimate might be this core-and-pulp separation, it at least implicitly shows that theory—the pulp—still remains merely an outer surface, a mere shell. In a word, theory and practice remain only superficially linked together; one does not ordinarily come to pervade and cut through the other.

Also, the courses of study in a subject, it will be readily admitted, are themselves apt to influence its method of teaching. Now, the courses of study in Indian classical music at universities and colleges are in many a case based on carefree syllabuses which call for rationalization. For example, the so-called practical papers of these syllabuses often represent an almost haphazard *mélange* of *rāgas*, *tālas* and all that, without much apparent methodized connection. What, again, is offered in many cases in these syllabuses in the name of history is often anecdotal biographies of legendary musicians—very colourful indeed, charismatic almost, but not always based on acceptable historical evidence. Or the history of Indian classical music sometimes becomes a study of stray or even dead and irrelevant manuscripts. Not much effort is generally made to analyze the long-term historical trends in our musical thoughts or styles nor is any serious attempt made at a rational periodization of our musical history and analysis of the principles of such periodization for a subject which is not as simple as political chronology.

Also, the theory that is usually prescribed in the common run of these syllabuses amounts in many a case to a mere definitional description of such things as *Nāda*, *Swara*, *Śruti*, *rāga*, and all the rest of it. Or it often turns into the study of a high-order problematic of acoustics or physics on the one hand and an equally clinical analysis on the other of such obsolete things as the ancient classificatory *Grāma-murchhanā-jāti* schema, far removed from living music today. It is not very frequently that we come across significant schemes to aid practice by theory and freshen theory by practice in a single, undifferentiated process. We do not always try to explicate, through theoretical discourses followed up and sustained by practical demonstration, such essential things as the relationship among the basic ingredients of our *rāga-saṃgīt*, its texture and firmament, its characteristic structure of form and content, the underlying principles of art that inform the inner construction of Indian classical music, *et al.*

There are, as I find, several other problems relating directly and indirectly to the teaching methodology of classical music which continue to plague our university and college system of music

education. However, as I have already indicated, some of the now-visible limitations of music teaching in this area are not probably difficult to overcome if, among other things, sufficient funds are forthcoming and if due emphasis is placed upon careful planning and management of music education. In such planning, one must of course keep in mind our classical music's specific requirements as a special discipline for our traditional universities, most of which still appear to be tuned only to the wave-length of our general-educational philosophy. Nothing however will avail if a rational method of teaching Indian classical music is not immediately designed.

### III

#### DEADWEIGHT OF PREJUDICES

What however is much more difficult to overcome is a bewildering chaos of certain long-standing prejudices and presuppositions that continue to be associated with our very idea of music. These presuppositions, I suspect, are apt to impair the building up of an imaginative and viable system of music education, both in terms of teaching methodology and the content of the courses of study in music. One such prejudice of course relates to a subject to which I have already referred on several occasions in this essay—that is to say, our never-fading fixation about the many-splendoured virtue of the traditional Gharānā-based instructional methodology, through which a student absorbs with religious fervour the memorized traditions and skills transmitted by the guru. If such a mode of teaching has been for centuries at the back of our classical music—at once divine and beautiful, sublime and full of bliss—the results, we are told, naturally justify the traditional method of instruction. This, it seems to me, is the consideration why even our cultural media are not wary of fostering such idealized themes as those of 'Gharānā āur Paramparā'. However, the methodic limitations inherent in our traditional teaching mode in Indian classical music, as well as the impact on it of a changing milieu, have already been mentioned and need not detain us here any longer.

Another powerful presupposition that works at the back of our view of music is that Saṁgīt is essentially divine. Whatever might have been the implied philosophical meaning of such a view, the moment we pronounce that music is divine, we at once build around music an aura of mysticism and supra-human spirituality, not always intelligible to the usual parameters of ordinary, down-to-earth human thinking. The common people hence often view the great

musicians of India, some of them having been great seers themselves, with a sense of awe and reverence; often they are considered as belonging to a supra-human realm, enjoying god's special gifts, a kind of charisma. Indeed, as tradition tells us, music is a kind of spiritual discipline through which one can reach God.

The truth of the matter seems to be that when, for instance, we say *Nāda Brahma*—sound is divine—what we actually imply is that music has in it a great moving power, a power to provide us with sublime *Ānanda* and *bl.ss.* And even a musician himself may feel at times a sense of 'religious' bliss, a sense of elation and joy, when he is able to enjoy the creative delight in accomplishing his difficult objective of making really fine music. In all civilizations of the world, music has been one of the chief means through which humankind has initially tried to correspond with the mysterious architect of this world, with God. But, all this does not make music itself a non-human, divine phenomenon.

An oft-repeated claim that one comes across in India in this connection is that good musicians can, really fine music can, express something divine. Now, if this 'divine' means some kind of religious feeling, then it will be as absurd to say that a musician through his non-discursive art form is capable of expressing his religious feelings as to assert that he is capable of portraying through his music his social outlook, economic values or moral attitudes. If, on the other hand, this 'divine' means that fine musical creations are inspired by religious feelings, then such an assumption will lead us to the equally muddy conclusion that if two musicians having equal creative ability begin performing, the one who is more inspired by religious fervour will be able to produce the greater music<sup>30</sup>. There is not much sense, then, in presuming the divineness of music in the ordinary sense of the term. Like all other art forms created by human genius, music has to be learned to be mastered, and learned with effort and purpose, not by divine grace.

There is, as I see, another kind of popular notion about Indian classical music which makes the music look like the carrier of human emotions only. With the resultant implication that such music can do well without conscious manipulation of its materials and does not call for much mental-intellectual work. We are often told that even if it requires some learning, especially the learning of techniques and idioms, really good musical creations are not the work of the intellect, but of emotion. And people listen to music not for satisfying their intellectual thirst but for emotional pleasure. Two distinct but related claims are thus involved here—music as an

outlet and expression of the artist's emotional feelings, and music as representation and experience of emotional states.

Thus, in the first place, we have the commonplace stereotype of a musician supposedly giving vent to all his emotion in performing his music. Actually, however, it is difficult to imagine how a musician can work and perform without much that is consciously planned and executed. Above all, what he needs most during his recital is intense concentration; and concentration is the contradiction of emotional exuberance. No artist can perform if he does not keep himself constantly alert, continuously applying his judgment, at every step, every moment. His recital of a raga can hardly be a matter of mere emotional exercise. He is required not merely to follow the general layout of the rāga he is rendering and the regulation of the chosen typological form (e.g. Dhrupad, Khayāl, etc.) but also to consciously apply the skills at his command and the musical thoughts he has cultured. It is with these inputs that he renders the rāga he has chosen, including the improvisation permissible within the omnibus framework of north Indian classical music.

It is true of course that an Indian musician can, for his part, improvise in his work; but he can do so only within the prescribed limits of the rāga selected, the structural pattern of the typological form chosen, the mould of the accompanying tāla selected, and the various Kartabs laid down. It is also true that within these limits a talented musician can perform at a certain level with many creative flashes; no determinate set of rules and Kartabs may always adequately explain his music when it reaches that level. To an extent, then, an Indian musician can come somewhat close to the idea of self-expression. Nevertheless, if that is emotional self-expression, it is usually in the sphere of improvisation and inventiveness deployed by the musician in the work of embellishing the melody of a given rāga. This is also what Tagore seems to have implied in his talk with Albert Einstein in August 1930 when he tried to explain to the scientist some of the essentials of our music. Within "a definite outline" of our "compositions" and within the "prescribed regulation" of our system, he explained, an Indian musician "can give spontaneous expression to his musical feeling", in the sense that he is free to apply his skills "in the creation of melodic flourish and ornamentation" and thus can have "sufficient freedom" within the limits of his personality "for the fullest self-expression"<sup>31</sup>. Now, needless to elaborate, even this work of self-expression in melodic embellishment cannot be rendered by a musician as instant emotion, for it would be, after all, based on

not merely a certain level of his technical efficiency but also some well-cultivated musical thoughts and devices connected with his musical culture.

I think it will be useful in this connection to imagine how the mind of a great artist is usually apt to think and work<sup>32</sup>. This may also help us to dispel the widely held notion about the basis of an emotionally prompted performance of a musician. Or the even more widely held impression—one more myth about Indian classical music—that there is some hidden, secret formula, some inherent mystery, in the making of high-order music! Many of us fancy that unless this secret open-sesame is revealed to us, unless we can grasp this inner mystery, we can neither learn nor master our great classical music. This of course is absurd. In an objective sense, it might have been even one of the side-effects on our popular psychology of the secret-society mentality, mentioned earlier, with which many of our traditional Gharānās had guarded their skills and compositions. Nevertheless, this popular fancy does not seem to have grown up without a basis in reality.

Whenever we face new or unknown objects, there at once crops up the question of how we can understand what they are. We cannot learn them as naturally as we learn to breathe or eat or sleep. We have to make an effort, which we generally do by referring these new and unknown sense impressions to the previous sense perceptions stored in our memory and then trying to identify them in the light of our earlier experience. The objects remain understood by us if we fail to identify them. They may then seem to be mysterious to us. In our classical music, apart from charming technical virtuosity, some new musical flourishes or some novel melodic lines rendered by a talented musician may greatly impress us and give us immense sensuous pleasure. But if these novel expressions are not perceived by us, they may evoke in us a sense of wonder, a sense of the mysterious. This probably is one of the sources of the widely held belief that there must be some inherent mystery in the making of good music, which ordinary humans cannot very well understand.

Human senses, we know, are the instruments of our feeling, through which we form our perceptions of the external world. In our contact with the external world, we go on accumulating sense impressions. In themselves however these impressions do not signify anything to us, unless we can perceive their meanings. If the many different feelings that we feel at a particular point of time as a result of our contact with the external environment—the smells that we smell, the things that we see, the sounds that we hear, and

so on—are merely added up, the resultant picture might then grow into a chaotic heap. For, many of these sensuous reactions may not be necessarily connected with one another and may not hence form a coherent whole that can be meaningfully situated in a single experience. So, in order that we become conscious of a particular matter, we have to overlook most of these sense receptions in favour of one or a few of these which we feel belong within the known parameters of previous experience stored in our memory. Thus, the fact that we overlook many of the sense receptions and do not understand them shows that we have not learnt to use our senses in that direction. The use of our mind in the perceptual act hence signifies that our ability of sense perception is not naturally given. That is to say, sensibility and intellect are closely linked; one cannot do without the other in the perceptual process.

Now, all great musicians and artists cultivate and develop a special ability to feel through their senses. We ordinary humans can also see what an artist can see. Sunset and sunrise, for instance, we see daily; there are such things every day, but we seldom see them really as the artist does.

In artistic work, what is necessary is a much greater insight, which can endow a work of art with new values or with a new sense of discipline. Much more than us, a great artist or a great musician employs all his energies to develop his ability to feel through his senses, in order to arrange his many sense receptions in a special way and build up some coherent order in them. Very much like a scientist, an artist or a musician has to learn to look at the world around him in a special way, in order to shed new light on the world. To discover how to look at things in a new way is his major responsibility. Often it might so happen that a sensitive mind can tacitly capture new meanings far apart from what he can show explicitly, with evidences. Recall for instance how Einstein could perceive through his mind his revolutionizing ideas, *in petto*, long before he was able to formulate them with all the necessary data.

Such perceptive knowing happens no less with sensitive artists. Indeed, both the scientist and the artist develop a special faculty to see what they know to look for. However, such feeling does not appear naturally, as a matter of course. This feeling is the reflection of a cultured and cultivated way of feeling. It bespeaks really hard work, both for the artist and the scientist. There is no magic here, nor any short-cuts. Music, like science, demands continuous practice and experiment, inquiry and reflection. Like science, all art calls

for a process of careful learning about how to perceive things in a specially sensitive way.

This process of learning for a musician is thus not a matter of any supra-human mystery. Nor is this a purely emotional exercise or expression of the musician. Admittedly, a musician who is deeply in love with his art is apt to be also highly involved in the music, always enjoying it, always revelling in it. This, I may say, is often the case when an artist is swayed by the emotive colouration of Indian classical music. Then his music-making may well acquire great emotional embellishment and colouration, at times leading to intense emotional involvement on his part. This is sometimes reflected, for instance, in the facial expressions of vocalists and their oft-contorted gestures (although of course these could well be the mark of cultivated habits and, even more, personal idiosyncrasies). This is probably because an Indian classical musician is concerned not so much with the cool, off-stage task of composition as with his personal handling of the idealized mood or emotion of a given *rāga*-melody—elaborating it, expanding it, dwelling on it. The resultant effects may hence sometimes become intense and almost hypnotic. Despite however this possible and very natural subjective involvement, an Indian musician is nonetheless required to work always with an objective and critical attitude towards the well-established discipline of his music. In any case he does not create his music in a fit of sudden emotion nor even in a state of emotional exuberance. Indeed, he *thinks* his music while he plays or sings it. And this thinking is but an expression of years of cumulative reflection and intensive practice, through which he has learnt to develop and enrich his perceptual abilities.

I now turn to the question of the supposed power of music to convey and create experience of emotional states. The problem, I believe, is particularly crucial to an understanding of our *rāga-saṃgīt*. For, our traditional conception of musical aesthetics has been usually encapsulated in the theory that every one of our *rāgas* denotes, and so the listener perceives, a particular *rasa* or sentiment and a particular *Rāgabhāva* or emotional idea, and that even each musical tone has an emotional colouration which it is capable of representing to the listeners. If indeed each musical note conveys directly a specific sentiment, then every *rāga* consisting of five or more notes may end up in a chaotic riot of five or more sentiments. One may of course argue, as many do, that the differing combinations of these notes in the *rāgas* denote distinctly separate sets of sentiment when seen as a combination. But, to say this, when one begins with the assumption that each note conveys a separate

sentiment, is to interpret a thing in terms of the interpreter's convenience. If, again, a *rāga* conveys an emotional idea, its delineation should then naturally call for a conscious awareness of the problem of homologous compatibility between the particular *Bhāva* of a given *rāga* and every structure, every formal moment, every *Kartab*, etc. of the different typologies (*Dhrupad*, *Khayāl*, etc.) of our *rāga-saṃgīt*. There are other questions of course; but basically all the problems will warrant a critical theory of musical aesthetics. Unfortunately such a theory for classical music has not yet reached its take-off stage<sup>33</sup>; and we are still in the spell of the traditional dramaturgical *rāsa* theory<sup>34</sup>.

Needless to say, the basic ingredients and elements of music are capable of striking many chords in us. Rhythm and tempi for instance can physically move us. Music in a slow *Laya* and *tāla* can produce in us, say, a feeling of serenity, while fast music may create in us a playful response. Change the *Chhanda* suddenly; and our response may be immediately transformed. The tonal colour of an instrument or voice may often sound to us tender, majestic, bold, grim, and so on, that is, in a generalized sense. I may even hazard that a good musician understands something about the psychology of his listeners as well. To some extent, he knows what kind of musical device would evoke what kind of emotional response among his audience. Witness in this connection the effective role of background music in drama or film. Now, such properties of music are related to our physiological and physical qualities; and one can understand the fairly obvious emotional states created because of them. But this does not make us any the wiser about the so-called ideative qualities of our *rāga-saṃgīt* nor about the effects on us of a *rāga-melody*; and it's melody which constitutes the prime subject matter of our music and is associated with our emotions.

In fact, in many a sophisticated rendering of a *rāga-melody* one may not always be able to identify what special kind of an emotional state is being portrayed or whether any emotion is being conveyed at all. If each *rāga* is ideationally expected to convey a specific emotional state, then how can the same emotion be portrayed and experienced if the *rāga* is performed through the different structural moulds of the different typical forms (e.g. *Dhrupad*, *Khayāl*, etc.) of Indian classical music? If a particular *rāga* is ideationally expected to express, say, peace and tranquillity, wouldn't a fast, playful *Jhālā*, which seems to have been one of the essential *Kartabs* with every instrumentalist regardless of the *rāga* chosen, create a different response in us? In any case, it seems that since the materials of

music are fluid and abstract in character, it cannot, like drama for instance, tell a story. Music's power of communication is of a non-discursive kind. Music is also not like painting, where you can instantaneously get an overall view of the subject. Music exists in time only. Even the song texts in our actually performed vocal music, I feel, are not terribly important. Words—in most cases they are not intelligible anyway—here may be used to a large measure for timbre and colour; and voice itself may come to perform the role of a musical instrument, as it were<sup>35</sup>.

In any case, nobody goes to a music recital to experience real-life emotions. We go to music rather for aesthetic enjoyment, for Ānanda or even for intellectual—sheerly musical—pleasure. There is a world of difference, I believe, between emotional response generated by music and our real-life emotions. It would be however interesting in this connection to refer to what was realized long ago by Abhinavagupta but what we do not always keep in mind. This great aesthetician could show that the rasas and sentiments are not the emotions that we feel in real life. There can never be something nearing a one-to-one correspondence between the two; and there must always remain an aesthetic distance. Moreover, the emotion that may be felt in music is a detached feeling, felt not in a worldly way. The feeling here is Alaukika, which may be a manner of saying, I believe, that it has a relation—though distant—to the Laukika or the worldly<sup>36</sup>. Again, it was Abhinavagupta who found that this unworldly feeling of rasa is at a higher state generalized into one single experience of Ānanda or bliss<sup>37</sup>. In other words, we must accept that music's power to convey and make us experience real emotional states is obviously limited<sup>38</sup>. Probably no language in the world has the necessary equipment which, I believe, can describe in exact terms the emotional effect of a piece of music. We may describe it only very vaguely, in broad, general terms, and can only say that good music, at one level, can give us Ānanda and joy.

The legend that it is through emotion that music is created and experienced—a legend that is apt to impair, as I have said, the adoption of a scientific methodology of teaching Indian classical music—has thus much less in it than meets the eye. And here's another point that I wish to make in this connection. There cannot be, as some sensible critics have told us, anything absolute about human reactions to music. It's in time and space that music exists, as we do. Our reactions to music at one level, I believe, are hence largely conditioned by the socio-cultural traditions of the society in which we are born and the period of time in which we live. The rāga Mālkauns may express for us Indians a sentiment of heroism

and majesty, as some claim. A Westerner who is accustomed to responding to a completely different musical system may however discover a totally different sentiment amid the so-called grandeur of our Mālkauns; or he may even remain fully unaffected by it. A melody which conveys peace and repose for us might well sound grim to a foreigner. Every musical culture, that is to say, has its own conventionalized and stylized devices of musical expression. Even in a particular musical culture, the music of an age may not be able to evoke the same responses in the people of a later period. For instance, the Vedic chants, assuming that one can render them correctly today, might sound musically quite pointless to a modern Indian listener. There then remains the question of individual tastes, dispositions and backgrounds, which all surely condition our responses to music.

Made by man, Indian classical music is a sophisticated and hence a contrived musical system. It represents basically a well-cultivated way of thinking. There has grown up over time its own conventions and usages, its own stylizations and associations, through which we attribute to it its power and ability to convey a particular *rasa* associated with a particular *rāga*. Our reactions to our music are also for the same reasons largely learned reactions; they are the outcome of our acquired acceptance of musical conventions, formulas and associations. As a matter of fact, the *Rāgamālā* paintings or the poetic *Dhyānamantras* of our tradition, as some say, may be seen as our first notable attempt to build up the ideal-type images of our *rāgas* when our musical theory was trying to free itself from its subservience to drama.

It is through such man-made musical conventions and their historical associations that we tend to judge the success of a particular *rāga*-demonstration. As a result of our association, this demonstration might even evoke in us intense sadness and sorrow, bringing tears to our eyes! Thus, when we say that the *Rāgabhāva* in a particular demonstration by a performer has been beautifully expressed, what perhaps happens is that the performer has depicted well the conventionalized ideal-type image of the *rāga* played or sung. That does not however necessarily prove any the more the said *rāga*'s immanent qualities and attributes as organized sound in depicting ideal image.

The concept of *Rāgabhāva* hence looks like a largely acquired concept. One may easily grasp the significance of its physical dependence upon a nucleus of notes or of the artistic principle, for instance, of *Tirobhāva* and then *Āvirbhāva* as one of the means of its aesthetic delineation; but its inner message—its ideative content—

cannot probably be depicted without the meaning that has been conventionally attributed to it through its long-standing association with a particular ideal type. All this doubtless implies that such a formalized system as Indian classical music, with its specialized communication medium, its expressive modes and formulas, cannot be properly learned merely by aid of emotion or by rote exercise—or even by divine inspiration. Its teaching methodology should hence possess everything that is necessary to help a student grasp intelligently and sensitively all the intricacies of Indian classical music and its specialized idioms and devices.

## IV

## WANTED : A NEW METHODOLOGY

( There is then neither a divine nor a royal road to Indian classical music; and we are at present desperately in need of a scientific and viable methodology of teaching and instruction for our music. Now, in determining a methodology that can really be viable, we cannot possibly overlook the objective historical milieu in the country. And as I have tried to persuade my readers, our hope lies mainly in the sphere of formalized music teaching that can be imaginatively built up in the university system of music education or in specially designed public centres and institutions of music.) This, I feel, has two sure advantages. First, it will be no longer necessary for music teaching to depend upon a method in which a single individual teacher, the *ustād* or the *guru*, who—as we have seen—traditionally represented a one-track system of teaching. A music department at universities and colleges is, at least ideally, expected to provide a band of good and imaginative teachers—and they may include eminent representatives, if available, of our earlier *Gharānās*—whose musical ideas may not necessarily proceed along the same channel. This can reasonably provide a good enough universe for a student acquiring his musical ideas and knowledge in the comparative framework of differing musical viewpoints. In the second place, the new formalized music teaching in the university system, freed from the bounds of our traditional values of music instruction, may well be based now on an objective methodology of teaching classical music, promoting the faculty of analytical and objective judgment in students, along with enhancing their musical sensitivity.

It will be argued, I am aware, that the practice of formalized music education in the university and college system, now more

than a generation old, has not so far done very well. It has not been able, we're often told, to produce till now many musicians of fine attainments. But from abuse, wisdom tells us, no argument can be drawn against proper use. The major causes for this apparent lack of success in the university system of music education, I believe, cannot be seen as something inherent in the system. It may be fruitful, actually, to look for these causes primarily in a state of affairs to which I have already referred—that is, the lacklustre academic planning and management at universities and colleges, as well as the notable lack of success in evolving a scientific methodology of music teaching. Unsure of ourselves, we have more often than not treated music the way we generally treat other common subjects of our academe, say, history, economics or chemistry. We have made music into another stereotype, forgetting its special status and requirement as a discipline of the performing arts. Our method was thus without life, and listless.

In any case, it's time we bade farewell to a teaching methodology that would unthinkingly go for a largely imitative and intuitive mode of learning our classical music, chiefly as an expression of glittering virtuosity. Music, after all, cannot live by skill alone—or by mere grammar. Such precariously facile orientations cannot, for obvious reasons, help the students develop their own musical personality. The material of music, it is true, is abstract and amorphous. (But that does not entail that its teaching methods should be amorphous as well, with little room for promoting conscious mental-intellectual work, so necessary for developing in students a fine sense of musical knowledge and artistic sensitivity. Nothing now is more urgent therefore than to adopt a new approach to music teaching, based on the requirements of a scientific teaching methodology, keeping in view the special needs of our classical music as a discipline in our traditional universities and colleges.) An approach that will be capable of providing, in contrast to what has often turned out in the past to be an unthinking and haphazard search, a conscious and knowledgeable sense of direction for students, to arrive at a sensitive and intellectual grasp of Indian classical music.

To speak however of the need to provide students with intellectual grasp in teaching a form of art-music may provoke protests from certain circles. This may even, if I may say so, flutter the musical doves, as if all that is sacred, divine and intuitive in music is now on the scaffold. I therefore hasten to add that in a general sense, actually, this intellectual grasp of a music student is nothing besides the active and purposive interest that his mind is apt to take in understanding thoroughly the complexities of his art.

At bottom, it is not merely a question of mastering in a hard way the specialized techniques and skills of the craft, not merely the work of grasping with all seriousness the necessary technicalities of the art, but also the fundamental question of an *intelligent* and sensitive cultivation of the why, the wherefore and the whereunto of the matter, the very soul of our classical music. It is this *intelligent* cultivation in the best sense of the term that a viable methodology of teaching Indian classical music is called on to promote among its learners.

If it is agreed that this is to be the major objective of our new teaching methodology, the primary task would then be to design and structure it in such a way as to end the long-standing wedge in the tradition of our music teaching between theory and practice, and to forge an osculant union of the two. As has been shown, the teaching of theory and practice even in today's university and college system of music education does not unexceptionally run together; more often than not the tracks are separate. The tracks must now meet and become one. The study and teaching of theory and practice in our classical music must now go hand in hand. This calls for an instructional method sometimes named applied theory and, if I may add, theoretical practice. The teaching methodology is hence to be so structured and oriented as to utilize theory as a spark-plug to practical music and to use practical work as a revelation of musical theory—simultaneously, concurrently, and together.

In drawing up the detailed structure of this methodology, it is necessary to combine within a single teaching process and within the same class-room the teaching and demonstration of theoretical and practical music, to ensure an intimate and living dialectical correspondence between the two, that is to say, as far as practicable. I feel it will in fact be possible to a significant extent to discuss and consider a point of theory and to sustain or criticize it by practical musical demonstration in the same class and vice versa; this may be extended in certain cases even to the teaching and learning of techniques. I can of course visualize the difficulty in or even the impossibility of tackling for instance the history of Indian classical music or of Indian culture in general in this manner, a point of history supported by some practical illustration. However, it will be readily agreed, I'm sure, that a meaningful study and teaching of our music history can offer at least two significant things to our students—an idea of earlier musical *thoughts* and some impression about the various musical *forms* and *styles* of the past, as far as they can be gleaned, that is, in view of the unfortunate lack of appropriate source material. While such theoretical know-

ledge can surely help the students develop a fine discriminating sense of artistic creation in a comparative historical framework, some practical demonstration of a little of such earlier music, up to a certain point, can possibly be organized simultaneously. There is no reason why we cannot have what may be called music-appreciation classes or music-laboratory classes in which at least the available recorded music and compositions of the distinguished musicians of our not-too-distant past are heard and analyzed, their specialities grasped and their styles noted.

Likewise, practical demonstration and theoretical explication can go hand in hand, to a notable extent, to constitute a viable teaching methodology in unmasking the relationship among the basic elements of our music—melody, rhythm and, if you like, tone colour—and the technicalities that this relationship entails. The same teaching procedure can be fruitfully utilized in exposing the characteristic texture and firmament of our *rāga-saṁgīt*—the role and significance of such things as the *Melas* or *Thāṭas*, *Swaras* and *Śrutis*, *rāga*-structures, modes of embellishment, etc. If moreover the conception of *Rāgabhāva* can sustain and uphold, over and above its acquired ideal image, the assumption

that *rāgas* are not [a] coincidental combination of characteristics and that *rāgas* that do not embody the principles of sound cannot survive<sup>39</sup>,

then there is all the more reason why our teaching methodology should underline the need for a concurrent theoretical-cum-practical study of the concept of *rāga* and *Bhāva*<sup>40</sup>.

The same teaching methodology of combining as far as feasible the theoretical and practical modes may also be imaginatively applied to lay bare what appears to be of fundamental importance in the teaching and understanding of music: the question of our classical music's characteristic structure *vis-à-vis* its major modern-day typologies (e.g. *Dhrupad*, *Khayāl*, etc., or the present-day typical form of classical instrumental music, which cannot be strictly speaking classified as either *Dhrupad* or *Khayāl*) as revealed in the dialectic of its form and content, which is how a musician's material is coherently organized; the question of determining the relationship among the structures of individual formal moments<sup>41</sup> in a section of the *rāga* (i.e., formal moments in relation to one another as separate, distinct moments in a section of a *rāga*-demonstration, e.g. the relation among the different *Aṅgas* in the section of *Ālāp*) and the relationship of these formal-sectional moments

with the overall form of the *rāga*-structure; the related question of whether these formal moments in a given typology of Indian classical music (at their different levels, sectional or otherwise) are not parts of a formal mould that admits of no change<sup>42</sup> or whether the overall structural form in Indian classical music (that is to say, in any of its types, e.g. *Dhrupad*, *Khayāl*, etc.) does not represent an exteriorized form that provides always the broad mould; or the question, among others, of linkages in the network of various formal moments of a *rāga*, which probably is the most difficult problem for a musician—the question of how to solder the different moments without leaving any outer mark of the soldering work, the problem, that is, of building up a sense of uninterrupted flow (*Lāg-ḍnāt*) which provides an immanent sense of continuity of the *rāga*-idea, a sense of direction that must seem compelling, inevitable, inexorable.

Likewise, it will be fruitful for our methodology to combine systematic theoretical formulations with practical work in regard to the fundamental artistic principles that go to constitute the inner threads and supports of Indian classical music as a creative art and the hidden props and devices associated with them. This will probably bespeak, for instance, the principles relating, among others, to the question of formal balance and coherence in the midst of diversities and variations; the role of repetition (which is probably more justified in music's evanescent and fluid material than in any other art form and which constitutes, as it were, the spinal structure of our music) and the various kinds of repetition (e.g. symmetrical repetition and asymmetric repetition, repetition through variations and even inflections, repetition through phased and sectional growth, repetition through ideative development, etc.); the question of non-repetition; the role of motifs and leitmotifs (other than things like *Pakads*); the part played by embellishments and decorative work; the question of the relative status of sections in relation to the *Laya*, *Chhanda* and *tāla* in building up the climax of a musical idea of the *rāga*; the role of improvisation within the given structure of the *rāga* in relation to the formal mould of the typology and the *tāla* chosen; the question of the relationship between the ideal *Rāgabhāva* and the need or otherwise of rendering meticulously each and every *Kartab*; and so on and so forth. The same methodal procedure may also be applied, as far as feasible, to help students develop a sensitive feel for and grasp of the aesthetic-philosophical bases of our classical music, although of course a scientific critique of musical-aesthetic theories and of musical philosophies will have to be conducted largely on the theoretical plane only.

Unless thus and in a similar way our new methodology of teaching Indian classical music is enabled to overcome the traditional theory-practice dichotomy, the future of formalized music education in India will remain uncertain indeed. This, I feel, is a matter of cardinal importance; and we must in this connection also try to understand sympathetically the reason why the usual practising musician in our country is used to condemning all talk about theory in music. This, I tend to believe, is largely because our theory is not always significantly helpful to the practical, actually performed music. In an area of the performing arts like our classical music, pure theory—which has little explicit or even implicit relevance to the actual performance and tangible representation of music—it must be admitted, has mostly an academic interest. Such theory may be important, of course, but as far as it can go. What is far more important than this kind of theory is theory as a useful, practical aid to the revelation and understanding of Indian classical music's myriad complexities as a sophisticated performing art.

Today's reaction, even though partial and discrete, to what has been primarily an imitative, intuitive and uncritical method of teaching and learning Indian classical music in the past is quite understandable. But that does not call upon us to throw away the baby along with the bathwater. That does not warrant us, I believe, to fall on the other hand for the meretricious charm of a positivistic methodology, with its fetish for a maze of clinical, sterile and heavyweight analytical manoeuvres in teaching the art of Indian classical music. Unless this extreme positivistic approach can be scrupulously avoided, there will be a persistent danger of absurd intellectual exercise, the latter-day counterpart of medieval European discourses on how many angels could stand on the head of a pin or of our own musical exercises on how many rasas or subsidiary rasas can each note of a Saptak directly produce. Theory must be sensible and meaningful, stripped of its deadwood; it must be close to practice, to help practical music unfold and enrich itself. It must not be above all a deadweight upon a student's musical sensitivity and his perceptual activity in the learning process. The skyline, which can always be a promise to him, must not be a bound. That is why it is not irrelevant musicology but meaningful theory which is to dialectically combine with fruitful practice to constitute the life-blood of our new teaching methodology.

This methodology is of necessity called on to work out the details of a host of related matters such as the question of planning the course structure and content in a rationalized manner in relation to the pre-degree, undergraduate, post-graduate or like stages in

the university system of music education. It is also necessary to consider the problem of the duration of each such course of study in music, which would probably require more time than analogous courses in general education. Other such items will include the question of how to use modern-day instruments and equipment in teaching or the problem of determining a viable system of examination and evaluation in classical music, especially the question of an objective, impartial and continuous assessment process. There are, needless to say, many other items which may directly or otherwise influence our new teaching methodology and which hence call for careful consideration. However, I refer below to two such matters which, I feel, require some brief comment.

In the present-day university system of music education, there are two major problems: the problem of time-bound teaching within the four walls of the class-room, and the greater problem of teaching often a large number of students. Result: a distressing lack of personal care for the pupils, especially in a subject in which the lecture-work by a teacher delivered from a distant Katheder inside the class-room is hardly of any significance at all. The present-day crowded condition of music classes is all the more paralyzing as each individual student of music has his own particular needs and requirements which call for loving attention from the teacher. Also not all students have identical or even similar receptive states of mind *vis-a-vis* music. It is therefore always necessary to set up a largely flexible mode of teaching in our classical music, determined by the genuine needs of each individual student. For, after all, the knowledge that a student of music acquires must ultimately rest on his personal understanding of and personal involvement with musical expression. However, a personal mode of teaching would require, needless to explain, more teaching hours and, of course, many new teaching hands in a department of music. Due emphasis on this mode thus cannot but entail a very low teacher-student ratio, which in turn would call for many more teaching personnel and hence a much larger outlay of financial resources. The matter also entails the problem of how to find really qualified teachers who would combine high-order musicianship with undoubted command over theoretical, practical, historical and aesthetic knowledge of Indian classical music.

Another problem. Not quite unconnected, I feel, with the question of a viable teaching method. Providing careful attention to individual students is also a matter of selecting the right students for music education. It is not always that universities and colleges seem to consider it necessary to test a student's aptitude as one of

the eligibility conditions of admission to music classes. Admittedly, it is not easy to decide about the essential and undisputed marks of aptitude in music. Who, indeed, is a musical person? I think the most essential mark of such a person is his sensitivity to music. But, of course, this is a difficult enough thing to measure. There is no reason to think, either logically or on empirical grounds, that one who can easily recognize the different notes is necessarily of a profound musical temperament, while one who can effortlessly copy a singer is inevitably a musical talent. On the other hand, a weed may be a flower in disguise; who can tell!

Finally, let us keep in mind that the success or failure of a methodology of teaching in an art form cannot always be measured in grossly tangible terms, by, say, the mere number of great or even successful artists it actually produces. At one level, it is the making of the entire artistic culture that counts. We are often told that an *ustād* is born and not made. This may be true, but probably only in the sense that some men are born with greater sensitivity, with a greater ability of perceiving through the senses. Or, it is probably truer to say that some men are born into a family environment or social milieu with a greater radiation of cultural sensitivity. No one is however a genius by birth. No genius is made without intelligent cultivation of his talent, without—as has been seen—intelligent cultivation of his perceptual ability, even if some kind of native talent inheres in him. One who is, as it were, a born *ustād* will surely do better, and immensely, if his native talent is chiselled by an intellectual, sceptical and yet sensitive knowledge of his art.

It may be true that not many of our students will become great musicians. To become great is, by definition, uncommon. But let us listen to a distinguished literary critic:

It is unlikely that many of us will be famous, or even remembered. But no less important than the brilliant few that lead a nation or a literature [and, let us add, a music] to fresh achievements are the unknown many whose patient efforts keep the world from running backward; who guard and maintain ancient values, even if they do not conquer new . . . [frontiers].<sup>43</sup>

And so I may say, after this eminent critic, that the destiny of Indian classical music is not wholly governed by its stars, but also, and no less, by the inconspicuous triumph of the many musicians who bravely maintain its heritage, and keep it fresh, radiant and undiminished.

Also, we do not realize that music appreciation—only a solitary

Indian university, as far as I know, offers a course of study leading to the award of a certificate in music appreciation<sup>44</sup>—is no less important than rendering music. After all, a musician's recital has no meaning if it is not appreciated, and appreciated properly, which calls for an intelligent level of listening to music. Indeed, music cannot live if there is not a body of intelligent listeners who are alive and critical, who listen intently and with feeling, who listen with their whole soul and their whole intellect. In fact, what excellence of standard and quality can be infused into our classical music if the unknown many, scientifically trained students of music and its knowledgeable lovers, can come to acquire a high state of musical skill, knowledge and sensitivity! Also, a musician, if he is really a star, is sure to play or sing a hundredfold better if he finds his audience intelligent, knowledgeable, and musicians themselves. Never will however this become possible if, among others, the methodology of teaching classical music cannot create in students, our potential musicians, an intellectual symbiosis of meaningful theory and fruitful practice, and develop in them their bases of musical sensitivity<sup>45</sup>.

Today, at this crucial stage in the history of Indian classical music, we are hovering between two worlds—one almost dead, and the other yet to find a life of its own. On the one hand, the basis of our traditional system of music teaching connected with the philosophy of guru-śiṣya-paramparā is fast disintegrating; on the other, we are still to build up the foundation of a modern methodology of music instruction. Thus the urgency of a broad-based dialogue on how to determine a scientific and viable methodology of music teaching, which may be based, among other things, on modern approaches to teaching, as well as lessons drawn from the merits and limitations of our past mode of instruction.

Here, for instance, is what is said in this connection by Ravi Shankar:

... We should be extremely concerned with *methods of teaching* and we must endeavour in every way to preserve our rich heritage through high standards in the teaching of *its practical, theoretical and historical aspects*.

Ravi Shankar does not however stop merely at this. He passionately urges the preservation of the mode of teaching associated with the tradition of guru-śiṣya-paramparā and speaks of the need to make it live again with suitable modifications. Here is his cherished blueprint of music instruction today:

In my dreams I saw a school run on the basis of the old *ashrams*—a small but complete community somewhere beyond the city, with some very talented disciples—not too many—and a carefully chosen group of *gurus* to teach the different styles of singing and of instrumental music.

At the same time, Ravi Shankar, who considers it essential to include in his music curriculum even the study of the ancient scriptures and the training of yoga, wishes very much to combine his method of instruction “with modern approaches to teaching”<sup>46</sup>. What, then, are these modern approaches that must inform the teaching methodology of Indian classical music today?

There is one more incidental thing which, I feel, should draw the attention of all who are concerned one way or the other with the teaching methodology of Indian classical music. This is to underline the need for an all-India platform, something on the pattern of Indian History Congress, Indian Philosophical Congress, etc., which may meet at least once a year to consider the present-day problems of music education in the country and compare notes in research. This could also be a national body through which public opinion may be mobilized to persuade the exponents of our public policy and the makers of our academic management to see, in this age of consumerism, that an absence of taste and knowledge in *Samgīt-vidyā*, as Tagore said, implies a distressing lack of essential education, a lack of real culture. For *Samgīt* is a great civilizing force; it's open to all and bars none. □

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

\*This is the keynote paper presented to the three-day All-India Seminar on ‘The Methodology of Teaching Indian Classical Music’ held at Burdwan University in January 1984. Extensive extracts from this paper have been published in the June, July and August 1984 issues of the Madras monthly *Sruti*.

1. The want of a scientific methodology of music teaching in India has been rightly highlighted by some commentators. Notable among them is S.S. Awasthi: *A Critique of Hindustani Music and Music Education* (Jullundur, n.d.). Also cf. Ravi Shankar: *My Music, My Life* (London, 1969), 13f.

2. I refer to this because it is widely claimed that the Bengal Music School and the Bengal Academy of Music, set up at the initiative of Sourindro Mohun Tagore in Calcutta, were the first of their kind, in the sense that *a new kind of music teaching*, with the aid of books and a system of notation, was first started there, and a policy of encouraging the study of Indian classical music and its practice, by the establishment of music schools and the award of titles to eminent musicians, was adopted. [See Raja Sourindro Mohun Tagore: *Universal History of Music* (first published in 1896; second reprint: Varanasi, 1963), 87f.]
3. Rabindranath Tagore: 'Music and Feeling' (in Bengali), *Rabindra Racanāvali* (hereafter *RR*; in fifteen volumes; Tagore birth centenary edition: Calcutta, 1961), XIV, 875ff. All translations are the present author's.
4. Rabindranath Tagore: 'Music Education at the University' (in Bengali), *ibid.*, 1010f.
5. Krisnadhan Bandyopadhyay: 'Introduction', *Gītasūtrasār* (in Bengali; in two volumes, first published in 1885; third reprint: Calcutta, 1934), I, vi. In the preface to the second reprint of the work brought out in 1897, the author, referring to the general opposition of many musicians and ustadhs to the building up of a scientific system of music instruction, repeated that "the cultivation of music would not improve unless music teaching was introduced in schools". See 'Preface to the second reprint', *ibid.*, vi.
6. Rabindranath Tagore: 'Music Education at the University', *RR*, XIV, 1010 and 1013. Note the statement: "The main point that is to be settled in the present debate is the question of who is the most qualified person to build up a department of music at the university. I have got not an iota of doubt that Bhatkhande is the man. No one else possesses the many-sided insight that he does in regard to the Saṁgīt-vidyā of India. Moreover, everyone must recognize the extraordinary ingenuity of the system of teaching devised by him."
7. V. N. Bhatkhande: *A Comparative Study of Some of the Leading Music Systems of the 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th Centuries* (Bombay, n.d.), 2. The only euphemism used by Bhatkhande was the rider: "I am only speaking of my part of the country." His analysis was in fact relevant to almost every part of north India, due note being taken of exceptions, which could not have been many, in any case.
8. It was not generally easy for an outsider to enter the exclusive domain and the inner reaches of these Gharānās and be initiated into their jealously guarded techniques and skills. Which is why we find even in this century that sometimes an aspirant young learner would marry into the family holding the esoteric knowledge of the Gharānā in order that he could learn specialized skills.
9. Ravi Shankar: *op. cit.*, 10.
10. Karl Marx: *Capital* (in three volumes: Moscow, 1974f.), I, 322. The word 'Hindu', used in the then current European practice of Marx's time, means of course 'Indian'.
11. Rabindranath Tagore: 'Freedom of Music' (in Bengali), *RR*, XIV, 893f.
12. *RR*, XIV, 993.
13. Ravi Shankar: *op. cit.*, 10.
14. Cf. Rajyeswar Mitra: *Musical Thought in Mughal India* (in Bengali: Calcutta, 1964), 4f. 31 and 73. The manuscript of *Rāgadarpaṇ* is available, among others, in Calcutta's Asiatic Society Library.

15. *RR*, XIV, 875f.
16. V.N. Bhattachande: op. cit., 2.
17. Ravi Shankar: op. cit., 12f; italics added.
18. Wim van der Meer: *Hindustani Music in the 20th Century* (The Hague, 1980), 137.
19. Suresh Vrat Rai: 'Some Unexplored Areas of Research in Indian Music', *Sangeet Natak* (hereafter *SN*). 56, April—June 1980, 46.
20. Even Tagore, a consistent critic of the usual kind of the Gharānā ustād that he saw around him, noted the sterling worth of their work, in the role they performed in guarding an ancient Vidyā in its untarnished form and in preserving its grammatical purity, as well as in collecting and hoarding numerous songs and compositions. A society which has not sense enough to recognize the value of such a utilitarian role, Tagore said, not merely commits a grievous wrong to these musicians but also harms itself. See Rabindranath Tagore: 'Music Education at the University', *RR*, XIV, 1010.
21. Arjun Pathak: 'Flourishing Trade in Music Schools' (in Bengali), *Parivartan* (Calcutta), II (16), 16 February 1980, 17ff.
22. See, respectively, the University Grants Commission circular letters No. F.I.—68/78 (CP) dated April 1979; No. F.I.—7/80 (E—1) dated December 1980; and No. F.I.—25/80 (CP) dated 27 August 1980.
23. The two music-cum-fine-arts universities are the Indira Kala Sangit Visva-vidyalaya of Khairagarh in Madhya Pradesh (founded in 1956) and the Rabindra Bharati University of Calcutta (founded in 1962). The latter has already built up a strong humanities faculty as well, now situated in a separate campus. Other 20 universities which have under their direct management departments or centres of music are the Allahabad, Annamalai, Banaras Hindu, Bangalore, Baroda's Maharaja Sayajirao, Bombay, Delhi, Garhwal (at Srinagar in Uttar Pradesh), Gorakhpur, Guru Nanak Dev (at Amritsar), Himachal Pradesh (at Simla), Jodhpur, Karnataka (at Dharwad), Kurukshetra, Madras, Mysore, Rajasthan (at Jaipur), Saugar (at Sagar), S.N.D.T. (at Bombay and Pune), and Visva-Bharati (at Santiniketan) universities. See A. Christodoulou & T. Craig (eds): *Commonwealth Universities Yearbook 1982* (in four volumes: London, 1982), III, passim.
24. *Ibid.*, 1503ff., 1486, and 1687 respectively.
25. *Ibid.*, 1604, 1501, and 1508.
26. See the West Bengal Education Department Order No. 434—Edn (U) dated 27 May 1975, sanctioning a very small annual grant of Rs 38,400 to the said music college to meet *all* its annual expenditure including staff salary. Consider the absurdity of the situation when the pay of the juniormost college lecturer placed at the bottom of the present pay-scale of Rs 700—1600 comes to about Rs 16,000 a year. Often, even the amount, for instance, of municipal tax that an ordinary college is required to pay annually, one of the hundreds of items of expenditure in a college budget, is higher than the amount of the grant.
27. Rabindranath Tagore: 'The Place of Music Education and Culture' (in Bengali), *RR*, XIV, 913.
28. Rabindranath Tagore ['Dialogue and Discussion 4' (in Bengali), *ibid.*, 942] could very well foresee this problem. Witness his considered statement: "I am not very optimistic about the arrangements that are being made for music education at universities, because it is pointless to make arrangements

- for the mass in the realm of the arts. One cannot find within the four walls of the class-room the kind of inspiration that works at the back of musical creativity. The merit of the system will be exhausted in making the students familiar with notations or in teaching them a few set songs. Education in music cannot be effective amid large groups; it is necessary to give emphasis on small classifications to make teaching effective."
29. Wim van der Meer: op. cit., 139f.
  30. Cf. David Randolph: *This is Music* (New York, 1964), 88.
  31. Rabindranath Tagore: *Saṅgītcintā* (in Bengali; Calcutta, 1966), 302.
  32. I reproduce here, with grateful acknowledgement to the author, the brilliant explicatory line of thought given in this regard by Asok Mitra: 'What is Painting' (in Bengali), *Deś* (Calcutta), L (26), 23 April 1983, 34f.
  33. It must be recognized of course that some good initiatory work in this area, especially in regard to the question of linking up the traditional rasa theory with the concept of rāga-ideas, has been done notably, among others, by Prem Lata Sharma: 'European Aesthetics and Indian Sangita Sastra', *Nada Rupa* (Varanasi), II (2), January 1963, 39-90; and 'Rasa Theory and Indian Music', *SN* 16, April-June 1973, 57-64.
  34. As is well known, the traditional conception of musical aesthetics in India, associated with the theory of rasas, has its roots in viewing music as an accessory to drama. Thus, Bharata speaks of eight rasas [Bharata: *Nāṭya-śāstra* (translated by M. M. Ghosh; second edition: Calcutta, 1967), vi, 15]; and many commentators had suggested the inclusion of Śānta rasa as the ninth one [Cf. V. Raghavan: *The Number of Rasas* (second edition: Madras, 1967), 1ff.]. Beginning with Bharata, some still believe that each Swara or note can convey a particular rasa. Many of the recent-day commentators continue to hold that our classical music is capable of expressing the rasas or sentiments *directly*. Some have gone for experiments to assert that there can be some homology between the traditionally given sentiment of a raga and the empirically observed effect of a musician's performance [B.C. Deva and R.G. Virmani: 'Meaning of Music', *SN* 10, October-December 1968, 54ff.], without ascertaining whether both the performer and the listeners were not preconditioned and hence predisposed towards accepting the sentiments by association in any case. Some believe that the Amśa-swara or predominant note of a rāga provides its characteristic rasa [Cf. E. te Nijenhuis: *Indian Music: History and Structure* (Leiden, 1974), 34ff.], while many present-day artists transfer this role to the Vādī-swara or the sonant. Others, again, take up the idealized versions of the rāgas as given in the Rāgamālā paintings [Cf. O.C. Gangoly: *Ragas and Raginis*, I (Bombay, 1935), passim. or their poetic Dhyānamantras [Cf. Swami Prajñānanda: *A Historical Study of Indian Music* (Calcutta, 1965), 316ff.]. The ideational aspect of the rāgas has been traditionally linked in the discussion of musical aesthetics to the performance hour or to seasons [Cf. B. C. Deva: *An Introduction to Indian Music* (New Delhi, 1973), 66ff.]. No great clarity has been attained in the consideration of Indian musical aesthetics by further attempts to introduce the so-called colour theory of sound (Cf. Swami Prajñānanda: op. cit., 358ff.). Yet others continue their consideration of the rasas without any reference at all to the rāgas. [Cf. J. Singh: 'The Concept of Rasa', *Aspects of Indian Music* (revised edition: New Delhi, 1970), 53ff.]
  35. Cf. Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy: *The Rags of North Indian Music: Their Structure*

- and Evolution* (London, 1971), 22: "... in practice the voice came to be used more and more as a musical instrument, with words serving primarily to lend colour and timbre to the music."
36. 'The Rasadhyaya of the Natyasastra, with Excerpts from the Abhinavabharati', J. L. Masson and M. V. Patwardhan: *Aesthetic Rapture* (in two volumes: Poona, 1970), I, 23ff.
  37. R. Gnoli: *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta* (second edition: Varanasi, 1968), xxiiff.
  38. In fact, Prem Lata Sharma could well show some instances of the lack of homology between the rasa theory and the experiences derived from music. [See her 'Rasa Theory and Indian Music', *SN* 16, April—June 1973, passim.]
  39. Wim van der Meer: op. cit., 109.
  40. *RR*, XIV, 880.
  41. Music exists in time and movement. It is always mobile. Hence, instead of using the bare word 'form' which does not necessarily give the impression of its movement and mobility, I consider it worthwhile to use the term 'formal moment', the word 'moment' being applied here in the Hegelian sense, in which movement is the only constant. 'Moment' is mobile; an 'element' or 'factor' is a thing at rest.
  42. Can we say, in other words, as we can very well say in the case of Western music, that the *form* of a good piece of classical music is uniquely different, and that every good composition is based on a somewhat new form?
  43. F. L. Lucas: *Style* (London, 1955), 27.
  44. Banaras Hindu University; see A. Christodoulou & T. Craig (eds): op. cit., III, 1376.
  45. Cf. my mimeographed paper titled 'The Theoretical Problematic of *Purāṇa Bāṅlā Gān*', presented to the Seminar & Lecture-recital on the 'History & Characteristics of *Purāṇa Bāṅlā Gān*' held in January 1982 at Burdwan University under the auspices of Padmaja Naidu College of Music. This is forthcoming in 1986 in the special issue guest-edited by me of the *Journal of the Indian Musicological Society*, devoted to the theme 'The Music of Bengal'.
  46. Ravi Shankar: op. cit., 13f., 15 and 88f. respectively; italics added.