

ANANDA IN THE AESTHETICS OF INDIAN MUSIC

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Man has created art ultimately to be re-created by it. The function of human re-creation has been carried on by art, on the one hand, by embellishing the process of man's existence and, on the other, by rebelling against the tyranny of that very existence. The purer an art has grown the deeper has been its debt to the experience of existence and also the profounder its indifference to the facts of it.

This difficult function of art, of enriching the inner life while ignoring it outwardly has reached its culmination in music, the purest of all arts. Music, at the summit of its perfection, has striven to symbolise the highest and most subtle reachings of the mind, refusing at the same time to reflect or represent anything that is on the surface of life or in nature. It has conveyed the deepest feelings and subtlest suggestions to the perceptive but it has contained little that the rational faculties of the mind could recognise or grasp.

This referential contradiction inherent in music (granting that music is referential) of assembling much without resembling anything is, in a way, art's retort to man for his own inner contradiction of dreaming incessantly of aesthetic values, while clinging tenaciously to the trivialities of existence. And more than a retort it is a reminder to him that the meaning of life as a spiritual experience could be realised best when life itself has been forgotten as a material fact.

Naturally, therefore, man's response to pure music has remained reverent but reserved. He has run to it and away from it in direct pro-

portion to how much of himself, he felt, he had to give to the adventure of aesthetic abstraction, on the one hand, and to the urgency of sensual delight, on the other. The deeper and sweeter an idea felt or expressed by man, the purer has been the form of music evoked by him, to cope with and correspond to it. The process of musical dilution, conversely, has followed the graph of man's preference for the grosser media of experience and expression, having clearer meanings and quicker impacts.

Combined Art

Pure music being rather difficult of assimilation has been sought to be diluted always and everywhere by adding to it other arts more representational in character, and appealing in effect. Such dilutions of music, through the arts of poetry, painting, dance, drama and the like, have given birth to various artistic compounds of great charm and popularity, and have practically revolutionised the field of collective entertainment and the process of the democratisation of art. In fact, it is these compounds that constitute, to-day, the bulk of mass-entertainment. But a word of caution must be borne in mind while admiring or advocating any of these. Bulk is not the last word on beauty. The hourly requirement of the mass-mind must not be permitted to blot out the occasional needs of the individual. Music may be and has to be diluted for the routine pleasure of the group, but its purity has to be preserved, for the abiding good of the individual.

In speaking of the purity of music and the good of the individual one is apt to be reminded of the Indian system of music — its nature and purpose. This does not in any way imply a reflection on other systems of music. Nor does it suggest that Indian music, as it stands to-day, is pure in its entirety. In fact, the very concept of music *sangeetam*, in vogue since medieval ages, defining it as a mixture of dancing, instrumentation and singing — “*Nrtyam, vadyam cha geetam cha*” — indicates that dilution of music had become an artistic concession to a popular demand in India long ago. But history records that there was a system of music known to ancient India called the *margee* system, the system of eternal search. Though there are reasons to suppose that the system fell into decay more than two thousand years ago, before Bharata wrote or compiled his *Natyashastra*, the earliest treatise on Indian music now

available, it cannot be denied that it has left its imprint on Indian music for all time. This influence has lost much of its clarity. But there still can be discerned the purpose of a search for spiritual experiences through musical symbolism. Modern research into an ancient search, one hopes, may throw useful light on pure music and its possible contributions to the good of man on various planes and in various fields of his existence and evolution.

Pure music, is an art devoted to perceptivity symbolism. This makes things rather difficult. For symbols are vague and perceptivity is coloured by temperamental leanings. A pure musical phrase always finds itself open to varying interpretations and exposed to diverse reactions. Hazy in its meaning and uncertain of its appeal it has always to depend for its understanding and appreciation on the slippery variables of aesthetic values and individual tastes.

Philosophic Background

Values have philosophical implications and tastes have cultural backgrounds. An attempt to appraise any system of music must, therefore, take into account the philosophy that initially inspired it and the culture that it primarily belonged to.

Music was born in India in that dim and distant past when its philosophy is known to have equated the supreme bliss of life, unequivocally, with the fusion of the individual with the Universal; when its culture is supposed to have accepted this equation unquestioningly. Whether this ever brought any material good to India and if so how far, is a moot question. But it certainly gave to all the Indian arts a quality not easy to match. And more than any Indian art its music retains its pristine quality and structure in a recognisable state.

Conceived and evolved in an age when the Indian mind was fascinated, rightly or wrongly, more by the ultimate unity of things rather than by their apparent diversity and yearned more to explore the central meaning of life than to expound the orbital facts of existence, Indian music came naturally to acquire an artistic form meant to express a mainly mystical content. It emerged as a spring of self-expression to flow eventually into the ocean of spiritual experiences. It touched

the mind only to silence its thoughts, so that the spirit in its infinite serenity, might enjoy the primeval melody of being, unfolding itself into becoming, called the *pranava nada* — the creative sound — by the ancients, and the *anahata nada* — the non-vibrational sound — by the medieval mystics of India. Relics of this ancient purpose lie scattered about in the fabric of Indian music till this day when in the midst of all its emotional exuberances it seems to aspire fondly to the ecstasy of silence.

Music grew in India under the protective care of the Vedas as an inseparable playmate of two of its main off-shoots — *yoga* and *bhakti*, the former being the science of mental discipline and the latter the art of the ego's ascent to the spirit. Having lost much of their original appeal and significance *yoga* and *bhakti* now exist in India mostly as topics of academic discussions and nuclei of rituals and ceremonies. But Indian music with all its medieval and modern tinkering and tamperings remains much the vehicle and voice of *yoga* and *bhakti*. It has provided for experience-scarred Indian minds a centre of aesthetic concentration and a channel of ecstatic outflow. To those who have approached it not merely as a pastime or a profession but as a serious exercise of self-sublimation it has proved, as testified by many, a unique aid to association of mind and integration of personality. Whether this widely acknowledged contribution of music to man, be it called "spiritual" in ancient terms, or "psychic" in modern terminology, is a fact or just hearsay, needs thorough scientific investigation. Considering that Indian music in its ultimate analysis, is a symbolised adventure for contemplative enjoyment of abstract beauty, an investigation into it can be meaningful only when the adventure is duly appreciated and the symbolism is correctly understood.

The origin of music has been ascribed in India to the god Shiva and its perfection to the goddess Saraswati. Shiva, also called *Mahakala*, is the personification of ecstasy and the symbol of eternity. Saraswati represents the faculty of knowledge and the inspiration behind all arts. Clothed in this symbolism Indian music aspires to be an art guided by knowledge and motivated by inspiration to bring to man a sense of eternity and a state of ecstasy, which is all that he in his mortal frame can taste of immortality. Such tasting may be to him as much a need as a luxury.

Interpreted thus Indian music embarks upon an organisation of sound for the organisation of man's mind and thereby his personality. It creates a sonic atmosphere for the creation of a mood and a mentality. This process of linking the physical with the psychic with chain-reactions, needs a language of symbols for a heart-to-heart talk between the two mental faculties of expression and appreciation through a medium which is as concrete as it is abstract.

That the human mind has resorted to music, the language of symbols, in its most human moments is one of those facts of life which, though never properly accounted for, has always been admitted. Man has evoked music on all important occasions of life and death, never fully knowing why, but strongly feeling that he must. The recognition of this feeling has led in India to the perfection of the musical symbolisation for the attainment of a subjective sublimation through an objective accomplishment, the achievement of an inner unification of the mind by means of an outer integration of musical principles. This correlation has sought to make beauty the language of bliss — *ananda* — and music a food for the mind.

The qualities of a healthy mind are many but the principle ones are those which enable it best to stand firmly and cheerfully in its grim struggle for existence. The foremost of these, as recognised universally, are steadiness, rationality, precision, concentration and balance. It is the proportion of these qualities, that determines character.

A healthy mind is a blissful mind. A proper proportion of the qualities mentioned is a condition precedent to the desired measure of its health and blissfulness. To strengthen these qualities is to fortify the mind. It is to this task that Indian music mainly addresses itself by trying to translate the desired qualities of the mind into the fundamental fibres of its texture, psychological traits into physical symbols, and needs of blissfulness into norms of beauty.

We have observed that the purpose of Indian music is to enable the mind to comprehend eternity and to enjoy ecstasy. It tries to bring this comprehension to the mind through rhythm and this enjoyment through melody. The synthesis of the two is what the full-fledged

elaboration of a *raga* strives to produce and what may be called the third dimension of Indian music.

This dimension is created by a harmony not of notes but of patterns of melodic motifs and rhythmic flows blended together. It is an artistic perspective to enable the mind to realise itself.

Sound, as known to physics, is born of motion generating vibrations in a given medium, for our purposes in the medium of air. Motion implies speed expressed in sound by the frequency of the vibrations. If the frequency of the vibrations is unsteady the resultant sound is noise. If, on the contrary, it is steady there is a note. If a series of notes is accompanied by a collateral series of rhythmic beats the two steadinesses reinforce each other. The notes and the beats may vary from moment to moment in their patterns and the range of such patterns may be infinite. But below all these variations they must have a foundation of integral steadiness to give a meaning and a sense of direction to the variations. This stability is the very basis of Indian music. In its musical symbolism a movement of steady notes and beats stands for a flow of steady impressions and expressions. This concept of steadiness is pursued by Indian music to its logical end. If the needs of artistic freedom tend deliberately at times to disturb the tonal or rhythmic steadiness, the effort is a calculated one to drive the quest for steadiness deeper into the mind through an apparent lack of it on the surface. It is through such efforts that the listener is repeatedly aroused into receptivity to the slightest nuance, for a better appreciation of the basic steadiness of the musical flow.

A musical piece in any tonal system of music has to have one particular note as its fundamental note, differences occurring only in the manner and extent of stressing it. Indian music stresses it as much and as often as possible and is, therefore, possibly the most tonal music in existence. The presentation of a *raga* always starts with it, often ends with it and comes back to it again and again. Sounded continuously as a sonic background this note adds both to the compositeness of the music's shape and to its comprehensibility.

This note, called the *shadja* constituting the centre of the structure of a *raga* symbolises the Indian philosophical concept of *aum*, the eternal

dynamism from which all appearances emerge, in which they exist and into which they all must ultimately merge back.

The *shadja*, or tonic, is the central term of reference of Indian music. All the notes constituting a *raga* must stand in well-defined tonal relations to it, deriving from it their musical connotations and serving the purpose of emphasising it from various tonal angles through diverse melodic phrases. In fact, the elaboration of a *raga* may be described as but the presentation of the *shadja* in a certain broad composition of mathematical relations, the composition being fragmented into myriad sub-compositions all fused together and flowing in rhythmic sequences of varying patterns round the *shadja*, now concealing and now revealing it, driving it deeper and deeper into consciousness.

This supremacy of the *shadja* has proved, as it was bound to, the principal barrier to a harmonic evolution in Indian music. For harmony is the process of achieving an increased tonal colourfulness through polyphony and an enhanced chordal mobility, through modulation at the expense of the precision and rationality of the notes. This is why orchestration in its harmonic sense has remained unattended to in Indian music and Equal Temperament, a necessary musical evil for easier modulation, is frowned upon by many. How happy or unhappy this state of affairs is, is a matter of opinion. But there are quite a few who hold that to Indian music, being what it is, clarity of tonal vision is more precious than colourfulness of harmonic vista, and mental poise more meaningful than sensual mobility. Thus, the *shadja*, the musical symbol of mental unity and pose, remains at the centre of Indian music to give it the necessary precision so necessary for contemplation. For only when the musician, be he a singer or an instrumentalist, has the *shadja* sounding continuously in his ears, can he hit time and again the exact shade of a note which has a peculiar psychological effect in its *raga* context.

The *shadja* justifies scientifically its symbolic role as the central point of unity in Indian musical concepts, since no note which is either a lower harmonic, nor one bearing a precise and rational relation to such, has any place in the large but intimate family of *shrutis* of the Indian scale. An uncompromising loyalty to it may diminish its outer sonic perspective, but it keeps its inner symbolic purpose intact. A unitarian

music has to curb the extensiveness of its operations if it wants to retain the intensity of its appeal.

The edifice of Indian music having been built on the foundation of stability and its steel structure constructed with rationality and precision, provided by its allegiance to the *shadja*, architectural shape is given to it by a series of delicate balancings of opposites, such as infinity and definiteness, heterogeneity and homogeneity, consonance and dissonance, symmetry and asymmetry.

Sense of balance between opposites may well be the latest acquisition and the highest faculty of the human mind. Beauty or ugliness are not things of objective existence, but feelings of balance or imbalance subjectively interpreted. A form of beauty is a certain integer of balances. These balances symbolise in music a mental equilibrium reflected in terms of temperamental stability. Adopted as a musical principle, balance can be man's highest psychological gain.

There is no numerical limit to the admissibility of notes in the Indian scale. They can be infinite in number. But a strict limit is imposed on their tonal quality and mathematical character. This makes them definite in their infiniteness.

The first of such limitations is with regard to their heterogeneity and homogeneity. Indian music accepts the principle of plurality of prime numbers constituting themselves, or through their multiples, the mathematical values of the notes. This gives the notes the element of heterogeneity necessary for maintaining the supply of novelty to music. But novelty in order to be truly pleasing must be counter-balanced by familiarity. The initially unknown must ultimately be knowable. Hence, the element of homogeneity is introduced by restricting plurality within certain limits.

This restriction varies in its measure with various systems of music. A system based entirely on the cycles of fifths and fourths only—the Chinese system for instance—forms its scale by an up and down movement of the exclusive ratios of 3 : 2 and 4 : 3. This is obviously a restriction admitting only of two prime numbers 2 and 3. In such a system homogeneity dominates over heterogeneity with rather inconvenient results.

One of them is that the Octave is never logically reached, the cyclic movement either under-reaching or over-reaching it. Another is that the major and the minor thirds and sixths, important members of the scale, remain inadequately represented.

A system based, on the other hand, completely on the divisive method opens its doors to a larger number of prime numbers for the formation of notes. But the door is opened sometimes a little too wide, as in the Western system of Just Intonation, admitting a hoard of higher prime numbers like 11, 13, 17 and so on, reversing the former tilt of imbalance making heterogeneity prevail upon homogeneity to virtually an indefinite and undefinable extent.

The Indian system, as appears from its traditional scales, is a compromise between the two systems mentioned above. It employs both the cyclic and the divisive methods of note-formation by adopting the principle of restricted plurality of the prime numbers, on the one hand, and by pursuing their cyclic formations to desired lengths, on the other.

The prime numbers accepted by the Indian system seem originally to have been four — 2, 3, 5 and 7. Of these 2 being an even number is just indicative of unison and repetition. This leaves the three odd numbers 3, 5 and 7 as the generic numbers of the scale.

This assumption is strengthened by the fact that the original Vedic notes are known to have been three — the *udatta*, the *anudatta* and the *svarita*. Since the three notes are considered to have been generic and remain unidentified with any of the later notes of the Indian scale, it may not be unreasonable to assume that they were related in some way or the other with the three prime numbers — 3, 5 and 7.

Of these the last and the biggest one — 7 — is supposed to have been dropped out of the Indian scale in and around the age of Bharata for reasons not clearly mentioned. Indicative distinctly of artistic decadence this event has been regretted by Bharata by saying that the *gandhara grama* had vanished from the earth in his time. One may guess that the element of heterogeneity being heightened in music by the presence of notes formed by 7 and its multiples, the latter was dropped,

not because the notes were theoretically undesirable but because they were practically difficult.

Be this as it may, the Indian repertoire of notes has the distinction of being as big as it is balanced. Notes of intricate formations are not only admissible in the scale, they are welcome. But the intricate must also be intimate through ties of relationship. The new must also be near. The element of surprise must be counter-balanced by that of satisfaction.

Having achieved a proper balance in the formations of its notes Indian music proceeds to do the same in the construction of note-patterns, known as *jatis* in the age of Bharata and as *ragas* in the ages following. This is sought to be done by determining broadly the limits of the proportions in which consonance and dissonance, symmetry and asymmetry, must enter together into any such construction.

The term balance, it must be noted, is a dynamic concept. It varies in its implications with variations in the inner mood and outer climate of musicality. Different shades of balances are, therefore, required to reflect different musical moods and climates. It is probably the principle underlying this theory of a variety of balances that constitutes the basis of the time theory of Indian music which ascribes different seasons and different parts of the day and night to different *ragas* having different sets of balances. How far the time theory is scientifically correct is an interesting subject for objective verification and, if properly investigated, can yield promising data for building up the now forgotten technique of music-therapy.

The terms 'consonance' and 'dissonance' are not found clearly defined in any of the ancient musical treatises now available. But broadly speaking they denote relations between any two notes in terms of the ratios constituted by the numbers expressing them. The smaller the constituent numbers of the ratio the greater the consonance. The bigger the numbers the greater the dissonance. In this sense the two terms are relative rather than absolute implying a sort of marked mutual negation. Where the negation is not marked, that is, where the numbers of a ratio are neither big nor small, the relation born of it is termed as 'assonance'.

It is interesting to note in this connection that in the Medieval Ages the number of original *ragas* came to be considered as six. Since there is no unanimity of opinion with regard to the component notes of these *ragas* and since there is also an absolute lack of any theoretical basis for the number of the generic *ragas* being six, it may reasonably be assumed that the epithet of *raga* was originally used for the main consonances, the basic roots of the cyclic formations, which were six — 3 : 2, 4 : 3, 5 : 3, 5 : 4, 6 : 5 and 8 : 5. Being the six highest consonances of the scale, these basic roots may well have been called *ragas* originally, being the most pleasing elements of any note-pattern.

Obviously the differentiation between consonance, assonance and dissonance is a matter more of classification than of definition. A general analysis of the known *ragas* suggests that the six basic roots of the cyclic formations mentioned, denote consonance. A relation once removed from these basic roots in the process of cyclic formations denotes assonance, such as 9 : 8, 10 : 9, 16 : 9, 15 : 8, 16 : 15 and 9 : 5. Those twice removed like 27 : 16, 40 : 27, 32 : 27, 45 : 32, 64 : 45 and 27 : 20 are dissonances.

This classification is of fundamental importance in the construction of a *raga*. Both consonances and dissonances must occur in certain prescribed proportions. The outer properties and patterns of notes may be infinite but the inner proportion must be definite. Without a clear stamp of accepted proportions a *raga* simply cannot come into existence.

Such a balancing of consonances and dissonances cannot, however, alone create a *raga*. It must be supported further by a balancing of symmetry with asymmetry.

We have seen earlier that Indian music is rather incompatible with a scale of Equal Temperament. One reason for this, already noted is the unswerving allegiance of the former to the principle of centrality symbolised by the *shadja* demanding precision and rationality. The other reason is its emphasis on balancing symmetry with asymmetry to achieve a correct composition of the two.

In addition to its other drawbacks equal temperament has too much of symmetry in it for the liking of Indian music. If all its notes were to be played chromatically, from end to end, the sequence would be positively painful to the Indian ear.

In the Indian division of the octave, as appears from ancient treatises, four units were used, the large semitone (16 : 15), the limma (256 : 243), the small semitone (25 : 24) and the comma (81 : 80), instead of the single unit of the tempered semitone ($12/2$) as employed in the Western Equal Temperament. The Indian division of the octave is asymmetrical enough to prevent the formation of a heavy sound-structure. On the other hand it is symmetrical too in a certain sense, providing for the *raga*'s fixed proportions of consonances and dissonances.

The similarity of any two tetrachords in an octave is an exception rather than a rule in the structure of the *raga*. Where there is a tetrachordal similarity an extraneous note is often introduced in the *raga*, either in the ascent or in the descent, just for breaking the monotony of this symmetry. In addition to this the initial — *graha*, the dominant — *ansha*, and the final *nyasa* notes, of a *raga* are so arranged as to create an effective functional asymmetry in its elaboration.

But asymmetry also has its limits. There is a strict limit to the minimum and maximum distances between any two notes or groups of notes within an octave. The dropping out of notes from a diatonic scale in order to make it hexatonic or pentatonic must not disturb its over-all symmetry. Both in its static forms and dynamic formations, a *raga* must obey, through all its phrases, however lengthy or brief, the basic laws of compositional balance.

A perfect balance is *yoga* — “*Samatvam Yoga Uchyate*” — says the *Bhagavad Gita*. *Yoga* consists in the total suspension of the thought process — “*Yogashchittavritti-nirodhah*” — adds Patanjali, the author of the *Yogasutra*. Guided by these two tenets, linking metaphysics with psychology, Indian music has developed its principles of *raga*-balancing to achieve a state of relaxed abstraction, called *samadhi* in the *yogic* terminology, and an aesthetic counterpart of the hypnodal state known to psycho-

logy. This is a state of self-association through contemplative concentration, an attainment of *ananda* through an achievement of beauty.

Almost all the theistic philosophies of the world hold that the root cause of all human sins and sorrows is man's unawareness of the fact that he is a part of the integral intelligent purpose of the universe, called by various names by various branches of knowledge.

Indian philosophy holds further that this awareness, if and when it comes to man, should come not as an intellectual concept but as a spiritual experience, not merely changing his out-look, but transforming his personality. Such an experience or transformation, it adds, cannot come to man easily through any of his own intelligent efforts, unaided by an awakening of the intuitive part of his mind. For such an awakening, man can only wait and pray.

Yoga teaches man how to wait for it receptively. *Bhakti* trains him in praying for it effectively. And music has come forward on the aesthetic plane to help man wait and pray for self-awakening more proficiently and pleasantly. It places a chain of beauty in his hands to bind the bliss-hungry part that he is, with the blissful whole that he belongs to.

The chain with which man is supposed to entwine himself for his deepest pleasure and highest good must, in the fitness of things, be equally rigid and flexible. The links of the chain must be strong enough to hold him tight and pliable enough to permit his free movement. Forged by the Indian mind this chain supplies only the outlines of art leaving the details of it to be filled in by the artist himself. The blending together of definite laws with infinite freedom is a proud distinction of Indian music.

The result is an opening up of the impersonal beauty of a *raga* or a *tala* to the personal touches of its exponent, releasing a flow of expression, as rich in its content, as free in its movement. There is so much to be said and with so much of ease that expressions are overtaken by ideas which by the sheer rush of their flow become pressed together into an unbroken continuity of contemplation. If the contemplative flow is at length silenced it is not because the source of the flow has been exhausted but because the receptacle of enjoyment has overflowed.

The inner continuity of this is revealed by a unity of mood. Since the centre of both the flow and the mood happens to be a *raga* the entire musical event comes to be identified with the *raga*.

This explains two important concepts of Indian music. The first is that every *raga* has its own peculiar mood, and the second is that only one *raga* unit, whether individual or composite, having but one specific mood, pure or complex, can be presented at one time. The reasons for this is that a free flow of movement in order to be meaningful must create a definite form of mood and, further, that a mood in order to be effective must be effulgent. On rare occasions fleeting shadows of other *ragas* and moods may be passingly introduced as transitory embellishments, but this must be followed for the purpose of creating temporary tensions, by immediate reliefs.

In the light of this it may be easily realised why Indian music remains mostly unwritten and why a *raga* cannot be played exactly alike by two different artists or by the same artist on two different occasions. It also explains why music has been more an object of individual perfection in India, than of collective achievement, and why orchestration has not been seriously attempted.

A *raga* being what it is conceived to be, its presentation is bound, by its very nature, to be more a process of musically thinking aloud, than a rehearsed execution of a pre-composed musical idea. The structural part of Indian musical art is limited to the determination of a given note-pattern, and to an assignment of certain tonal roles to certain notes of this pattern, as for example to the dominant, the sub-dominant, the initial and the final notes that tend to be prominent in any given *raga*. All else is left to the imagination and skill of the artist, whose own musicality is left free to flower in the form of improvisations. A *raga* presentation is a combination of the constancy of the basic notes and motifs, with the variability of the individual's taste and temperament, a meeting together of art's concept of eternity, with the artist's mood of the moment.

It is obvious that such a combination, or any part of it, cannot be repeated at will. There can be similar presentations but never the same presentation of a *raga* by any two artistes or by the same artiste twice.

One can never bathe in the same water of the river of a *raga* more than once.

This makes Indian music very largely individualistic and personal, and too much alive and delicate to permit its containment into a strait-jacket of transcription. In order to create a desired mood and to reflect a given moment the Indian musician has to choose the hazard of spontaneous improvisation, in preference to the safety of a pre-arranged order, written down to its last details. This is why Indian music distinguishes itself, not so much by memorable masterpieces of compositions, as by eternally fresh *raga*-elaborations, infinite in the variety of their movements.

These characteristics of Indian music account for what are some times called its drawbacks. Being a full and free flow of a certain complex of ideas, reflecting the intricacy of a particular mental situation, it tends to be vague in its pauses and punctuations. Being the picture of a thought and the usher of a mood, what it aims at simulating or formulating is not a well-ordered drama, but a well-defined movement of the mind. It moves as the mind moves, or should move, not in particles of thoughts but in waves of ideas. In such movements, the fewer the jerks or pauses and punctuations, the richer the flow of feelings and suggestions. In this flow there may be little of sharpness and less of suspense, but it may have plenty of grace and a wealth of meaning. What it may fail to provide in terms of a tense drama, it may more than compensate for, with the depth and significance of a waking dream.

It is not very surprising that such a flow of music should require, comparatively speaking, fewer instruments at a time as its vehicle. For Indian music, being more reflective than descriptive, is concerned more with pitch, the subjective quality of sound, than with timbre or volume, its objective attributes. It is interested in sound, not so much for its capacity to provide auditory thrills, as for its ability to symbolise the attributes of the mind in terms of musical principles. All the qualities that combine to build up a healthy mind enter into the creation of a fine musical piece. This is why a *raga* sounds as if it were meant more to be felt than heard.

It is rather unfortunate that the venture of Indian music, although aspiring to have a scientific basis, has failed to receive its due quota of appreciation in this age of scientific advancement in and outside India.

Man has been building a massive science-based civilisation and is fighting mighty battles, but his personality is in sad disrepair and his mind is retreating on various fronts away from self-conquest; and his music although sophisticated and even militant is seemingly, bringing him little inner peace and is indifferent to the problems of his personality.

It is perhaps not just an accident of mythological imagery that Krishna, the highest Indian personalisation of God in man, has been conceived of as a builder, a warrior and a musician all in one; capable of building a philosophy of life on a battle-field through a song — the *Bhagavad Gita*.

Many modern scientists are inclined to feel to-day that if there is a God, He is a mathematician. Ancient Indian speculation had gone a step further. It thought that if there was a God, He ought to be, among other things, a musician.

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