

CHAPTER - IV

MUSIC AND RELIGION :

THE SEEKER OR THE SĀDHAKA

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MUSIC FILLS the universe¹ and Religion holds it. Universe is the song of God and religion is its rhythm, its breathing and controlling force. Music and Religion have a close kinship in their very origin and organization. The kinship needs to be understood, realized and relayed in its true perspective. In the revelation of music religious discipline is an inevitable help; in

1. 'Sangeet' (Hindi) Silver Jubilee Issue, March, 1960, p. 22 : "तस्मान्नादात्मकं जगत्"

being religious for self-realization music as 'Nāda Brahma' is an inescapable divine station and succor. The seeker or sādḥaka of music as well as religion has to properly appreciate, assess and live it. Let us enter into this spiritual harmony of music and religion by qualifying ourselves as seekers.

The seeker in both these realms has to first recognize the nature and goal of both the religion and music. The goal is already set and fixed, it has neither to be forged nor to be formulated. It has simply to be reckoned and realized through a devotional and loving discipline as taught by the Master Musician and Master Mystic in case of music and religion respectively. The sādhanā or discipline in both the cases is quite different but the goal for both the disciplines is the same viz., 'moksha-prāpti' i.e., spiritual deliverance from ignorance of one's own self and from the consequent bondage of finitude and separative and limiting ego-consciousness.² Music is by nature the Song of the Cosmos while 'Dharma',

2. G.H. Tarlekar : 'Sangita Ratnakar by Sarngadeva'- A Commentary in Marathi in three volumes, Vol. 1, Verse 1.1 & 1.30, pp. 1 and 15 : Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya Samkriti Mandal, Bombay, 1st ed. 1975.

often called Religion, is the Law of the Cosmos in its essence. God is one and so is Dhārma.

Nature of Religion or Dharma:

'Dharma' is the Bull on whom rides Sachchidānanda Shiva for divine dispensation. Dharma is the Cosmic Law, the constitutional basis of the universe. There is no valid or authentic means other than the Guru or the Shāstra to know it. Shāstra is the body and Guru the life-breath of 'dharma'. By segregating the two no analysis or conduct of dharma can ever be possible.³

Dharma is neither an axiomatic concept born of human contemplation, nor any name of a special creed, cult or ritual. It is a life-principle, the very ground of existence.⁴ It can thus be neither propagated nor interpreted. Though certain codes of conduct are adumbrated or experimented in the name of religion, yet merely on that account it would be erroneous to assume that Dharma is sufficiently promulgated.

3. Samvit Sphuling, xxxiv number, Winter Issue, 1984, Bharat Printers, Jodhpur, p. 12.

4. Ibid, p. 12.

The Vedic maxim 'Dharanat Dharmah'
(धारणात् धर्मः) announces that 'dharma is that which holds'. The holding power of anything is, for example, its dharma i.e., it is the dharma of fire to burn for it holds it. When the entire universe becomes the object of awareness, then 'that principle' in and through whom is held the whole cosmic life may reveal the meaning of Dharma.

Guru is a Perfect Man. In him is available the total view or vision of life. Thus it is said that Guru is the finest form, fount and commentary of dharma. 'Maha-jano-Yen Gato- Sa- Panthah' i.e., the Way taken or trodden by the Great ones is the way. When the seeker follows with faith, devotion, and restraint whatever is given out or revealed by the Guru in his contemplative or meditative ease, the gateway to dharma, leading to 'moksha' is immediately opened.

For convenience sake, Dharma is regarded to have four fundamentals or bases: Veda, Smriti, Nobility of Conduct (Shistāchāra) and self-contentment (आत्म-तुष्टि).⁵ Veda is irrefutable,

5. Ibid, p. 13.

divine and fundamental basis. No other proof which contradicts Veda or is proved to be anti-Vedic can be treated as 'dhārmika'. But if it is not possible or within the competence to arrive at the true import of the Vedic word, then reliance on Smṛiti is resorted to. The sages have promulgated the Vedic meaning therein in the form of daily conduct of goodness. If clear indications of Vedic import are not discernible even in Smṛitis, then the ideal conduct acceptable to contemporaneous society or the injunctions of the truly cultured ones need to be preferred. In the ultimate analysis, a man may observe or assimilate in his life these three valid inspirations in view of his goal and station in life taking into consideration his own strength, quality, temper and culture. Or, even a noble conduct born of shyness, fear and compulsion cannot become the means of self-fulfilment and unfoldment. That's why 'atma-tushti' is said to be the 'tureeya-pāda' of Dharma.

It is merit-worthy for a seeker to have a thorough grasp of all this on the Path of Self-realization.

Even if religion claims to be the result of divine revelation,⁶ the forms and contents is necessarily the product of the human ingenuity. Religion reflects both God and man. As religion is to be lived, not a theory to be accepted or a belief to be adhered to, it allows scope and validity to varied approaches to the Divine. There may be different revelations of the Divine but they are all forms of the Supreme. Thus true religious life must express itself in love and aim at the unity of mankind, nay at the unity of cosmic creation, for oneness of God implies oneness of religion, though it may shape itself into various structures. The aim of dharma is essentially the attainment of spiritual perfection in man.

Religion is thus God-centred, God as Law; and the highest life enjoined by 'dharma' is what follows naturally from vital faith in the reality of God. Since the indwelling of God in man is the highest truth, conduct which translates it into

6. Dr. Radha Krishnan : Indian Religions, Orient paperbacks, Delhi, 1983, p. 23.

practice is the ideal conduct.⁷ For a perfect man then 'dharma' is an inspiration from within, for others it is an external command, what custom and public opinion demand. Moksha is ideal towards which humanity has to move : this is precisely the call of Dharma. All life is set to the music of this ideal.⁸

Nature of Music:

Music is God's song sung in and through the singing mystics. The great musicologist, Matanga says that 'Music as 'nāda' (नाद) is God Janārdana :

नादरूपः स्मृतो ब्रह्मा, नाद रूपः जगदिनः ।
नादरूपा परशक्तिः, नादरूपो महेश्वरः ॥

All the lovers and practitioners of music have only one solemn obligation to discharge : listen to this Song of God sung through mystic's musical

7. Veda Vyasa : 'The Mahabharata', Anusasan Parva, 162 and Santi Parva, 33.

8. Dr. Radha Krishnan : 'An Idealist View of Life' George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London; 1947, pp. 89-90.

9. 'Sangeeta' : a Hindhi Monthly : Silver Jubilee Issue : 1960, March; p. 42, Cf. Matang's Brahtdeski. 1.17-18.

throat and climb the acme of spiritual liberation, 'moksha', which is the summum bonum of human life. The Sage Yajnavalkya holds the view that the expert knowers of the 'tattva' of Veenā-Vādāna, the jatis of Sruti-s and 'tāl' attain moksha effortlessly.¹⁰

Swami Prajñānānandā writes in his classical treatise "A Historical Study of Indian Music" : "The real aim of man is to reach the goal of Self-realization, and through the medium of music this achievement is fulfilled much sooner."¹¹ The paramount concern of music is thus the same as the prime object of man on earth : ^{to} ~~go~~ get the blessed boon of the Divine Knowledge that makes men free from the chain of delusion forever and ever."¹² Thus it is observable that both Music and Dharma have spiritual freedom and its attainment as the common goal of human life.

10. Ibid, p. 47.

11. Swami Prajna-na-nanda : 'A Historical Study of Indian Music'; Ananda-Dhara Prakashana, Calcutta, Feb., 1965, p. 429.

12. Ibid, p. 429.

Music in India is, therefore, a divine art which has the power to establish a dialogue between Man and God, between Man and Nature, on the one hand, and to forge unity of man, God and Nature, on the other. Music is divine by nature. The ideal of music is indeed to get the highest and yet the sweetest means to man's ultimate end of God-realization. In fulfilment of life's loftiest goal, whether through the austere adherence to the discipline of music or religion, the seeker has first to assure, if not prove, of his receptivity i.e., 'patrata (पात्रता) to his Master. For, the spiritual culture of India is God-centred and Guru-revealed. The Teacher who entertains the students for receiving lessons in 'Brahma-Vidya' or 'Sangit Vidya' has to be sure without doubt that the seekers are well-qualified and deserve to be initiated. Dikshā depends, generally speaking, on Patrata.

Qualifications of a Religious
Seeker of Brahma-jnana:

Men are the offsprings of divine ambrosia : मानवाः अमृतस्य पुत्राः ¹³, but to partake

Dr. A.C. Bose: The Call of the Veda, Bharatya Vidya
13. ~~Re Veda~~ : Bhawan, Bombay, 1960; (Rk. Veda 10-13.1)
P. 86

of that ambrosial divinity already inherent in man, one has to show his credentials to Guru or Godman. Srimad Bhagawadgita says that only a man of faith (श्रद्धापूर्वकं ज्ञानं) is entitled to receive the holiest of the holy on the path of self-realization.¹⁴ Adi Samkarcharya points out, on his own, that the following merits one has to earn in order to be a loving receipient of the waters of wisdom of Life:

"He alone is considered to enquire after the Supreme Reality, who has discrimination, detachment, qualities of calmness, etc., and a burning desire for self-redemption."¹⁵

1. 'Viveka'

The seeker has to keep in mind the art of music as well as experience of the Supreme is the award of his own efforts, sincerity, purity, perseverance and loveful dedication.¹⁶ Teachers,

14. Srimad Bhagawat Gita : 4.39.

15. Adi Samkarcharya : Viveka Choodamani, Verse 17.

16. Swami Prajna-na-nanda : 'A Historical Study of Indian Music' : Anandadhara Prakashan, Calcutta, Feb., 1965, p. 429.

environments and external guides can only help them to manifest the powers and experiences that lie latent in their subconscious mind. They are the best inspirers, aiders or instruments. The seekers themselves have to ~~unlock~~ the door that confines the unfathomable beauty and greatness of music or soul.¹⁷ In order to unlock this treasure, Adyācharya Samkar enumerates four major qualifications essential for the Seeker of Brahma-Vidya :

(i) Viveka; (ii) Vairagya; (iii) Shat-Sampatti and (iv) mumukshattva.¹⁸

"Viveka" is the capacity in man to discriminate between the real and the unreal, *between the true and the false,* between the permanent and the impermanent. It is indeed a faculty which we employ in almost all our day-to-day decisions and this discriminative faculty, when brought to play within the constitution of the individual, is called 'viveka'. However ~~xxxxxx~~ acutely intelligent the generations may be, it is left to the special blessing of the few to have the right "taste" in life: meaning, this subtle power of intellect to delve deep into

17. Swami Prajna-na-nanda : 'A Historical Study of Indian Music': Anandadhara Prakashan, Calcutta, Feb., 1965, p. 429-430.

18. Acharya Samkar : Viveka Chudamani, 17.

things and happenings, and discriminate therein the true from the false. Those who have evolved sufficiently exhibit a large share of this faculty, but those who have not got it now should not despair at its absence, because this faculty is not a God-given instinct which has to come into us from the heavens, but it is the aroma of the bosom wherein one's mind and intellect are fully developed and have, to a degree, integrated. Where there is a large amount of 'viveka' we can immediately presume that the individual has a fairly well-integrated personality.

Says Adyacharya Samkar :

“ ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या इत्येवं रूपो विनिश्चयः ।
सौख्यं नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः समुदाहृतः ॥

Discrimination is the capacity to know, out of the mixture of things, the real from the unreal. Philosophically, a thing is called the Truth or Reality when it is changeless and ever-present.

2. Vairagya:

'Vairagya' is not what we generally mean by its orthodox translation given as 'detachment'.

The word, in the realm of Brahma Vidya is only a "fulfilment of Viveka".²⁰ Having discrimination between the real and the false, it is no more an antagonising act for a human being to pluck himself away from the false things. When intellectually he is once convinced, through his discrimination, of the fallacy of the way of thinking, detachment is the fructification of that discrimination and it automatically takes place to a degree he is convinced by his 'viveka'. In fact, wherever 'viveka' is strong, 'vairagya' gains in essence and efficiency.

Thus 'vairagya' is not to be construed as a flight from external objects and circumstances which are seemingly conducive of joyous experiences, but it is a mental condition in which the mind no longer runs after things and beings of the phenomenal world in the hope of gaining peace of mind and soul. The idea is that through 'viveka' when the individual has come to at least intellectually appreciate that the sense-objects have not in

20. Swamy Chinmayananda : Talks on Viveka Chudamani, Chinmaya Publication Trust, Madras, 1971, p. 34.

themselves any intrinsic value of joy and that they are ephemeral, naturally, his mind will never take off for wandering flights into the realm of objects with a craze for them.

Philosophically, our saints and seers, scholars and scriptures have declared time and again that human mind tends to incessantly hover round and land on objects only when it is convinced that there are three desirable qualities in them : (i) 'Satyatvam' i.e., there is a sense of 'reality' in them; (ii) 'Nityatvam' i.e., there is belief in the 'permanency' of their 'existence'; and (iii) 'Samichinatvam' i.e., there is a faith that they contain potentialities for satisfying man's craving for lasting 'joy'. In other words, he sees in them sat, chita, ananda and when his viveka convinces him of the presence of un-realty, ephemerality and sorrowfulness in the objects of the phenomenal world, man's mind will not harp on them. On the contrary, it will turn towards the Real, the Eternal and the Blissful the moment 'viveka' is truly awakened in him that God alone is 'Sacchidānanda'.

3. Sat-Sampatti: (षट्सम्पत्ति)

'Satsampatti' is the sixfold treasure of virtues countable as sama (शम), dama (दम), titiksha (तितिक्षा), shraddha (श्रद्धा), uparati (उपरति) and samādhana (समाधान).

This third qualification constitutes the spiritual wealth of the seeker with which he needs to enter the Royal Pathway to God-hood. These six virtues are the foundational moral traits which lend permanence to the first two characteristics of a spiritual seeker, Viveka and Vairagya.

(i) Sama (शम)

'Sama' stands for the calmness of mind. Vairāgya towards things ephemeral, unreal and non-joyous needs the peace of mind²¹ to be stable and constant. A disturbed or unquiet mind is inimical to the sustenance of vairagya; the power and efficacy of vairagya is very likely to suffer derailment in want of 'sama'. Even in the studies of social and physical sciences, a properly geared

21. Swami Akhandananda Saraswati: Ishavasyopanishad: Satsahitya Prakashan, Bombay, 1979, p. 16.

mind is of utmost need. For, Brahma Vidya calm composure of mind is an absolute necessity without which the Upanishadic profundity and wisdom of the Vedas can never find entry into the seeker's heart.

Thus the peaceful state of mind when it rests constantly upon the contemplation of the Goal (the Brāhman) after having again and again detached itself from the chaos of the sense objects, through a process of continuous observation of their defects, is designated as 'sama' or calmness. This is the first of the six great qualities which are unavoidable in the constitution of mind and intellect which are making a pilgrimage to their complete fulfilment of Brahma-Gyāna. In short, the more one gains control over the mind, and through that control, one withdraws the mind from its revellings in a mad field of finite objects, the more it will become equanimous, peaceful and serene, and this condition of 'calmness in the mind' consciously brought about by a lived discipline is implied by the term 'sama'.

2. Dama (दम)

(ii) 'Dama' is peace of the senses, as 'sama' is peace of the mind. Dama is a system of discipline in a relatively outer field since it prescribes control for the sense organs. To withdraw one's mental rays that shoot out through sense organs for

the perception of their independent sets of objects and to absorb those rays of perception in their respective centres of activity is Dama or Self-control.

(iii) Uparati: (उपशान्ति)

When thus one has gained a degree of proficiency in both 'Sama' and 'dama', self-withdrawal (Uparati) automatically happens wherein the seeker's mental condition is such that it does no longer get affected by any disturbances created by the external objects.

At this point, it is worth bearing in mind that 'sama', 'dama', and 'uparati' may not appear difficult of attainment. It is possible that one may understand that 'uparati' is a very difficult and distressing feat, but in fact, the more one tries to practise, the more easily one shall come to realize that after all what is required of a seeker is but a verbal explanation of the state of mind of any one who is trying to achieve or execute a great work. Even in the material sphere, one finds that these are the qualifications unavoidable in an individual if he wants to ensure his success in his performance.

'Uparati' is peace in work as are 'sama' and 'dama' represent peace in mind and sense organs respectively. Vairagya from excessive 'Karma' is uparati, says Swami Akhandananda Saraswati.²² In whomsoever 'Viveka' are 'Vairagya' are ripened, in him 'uparati' develops easily together with the peace of mind and senses. For, 'uparati' is the result product of 'sama' and 'dama'. When Brahma, the Creator, could not give correct answers to the spiritual questions put to him by Sage Sanak etc., due to his excessive absorption in his work of creation, how can an ordinary human being have Brahma Vidya without 'uparati' etc. ? Srimad Bhagawad Purana states : 'Nābhya-pashyata Karma-dhi-hi' (नाभ्यपश्य त कर्मधीः).²³

(iv) Titiksha (तीतिक्षा)

'Titiksha' is the capacity to endure the attacks of pairs of opposites (dwaṇḍwā-ghātaḥ : द्वन्द्वघात) with serenity and without the feelings

22. Swami Akhandananda Saraswati: Brahma-Sutra-Pravachana : Sat Sahitya Prakashana Trust, Bombay, 1976, p. 24.

23. Ibid, p. 24.

of revenge or struggle for redress.

This virtue in man is a psychological sign of the spiritual stamina a seeker is equipped with. The quality of 'silent endurance' is glorified in all the religions of the world. Meek surrender and silent suffering are the watch-words and essential attributes of any religious seeker. History bears testimony to the fact that even they, who were intent on accomplishing a revolution in politics or economics - in a world external to himself - had to make, silent sacrifices in order to establish that philosophy in public mind. How much more then it is essential in the inner revolution of an individual who is trying to get freedom from his own psychological and intellectual limitations? This spirit of 'titiksha' i.e., endurance is one of the most essentials of a seeker of religious truth of life. Once the human mind gets convinced of the goodness and value of new vision or way of life, no sacrifice is un-entertainable, no difficulties are unsurmountable, and no pains remain unendurable for that individual. This power or capacity to accommodate cheerfully all its vicissitudes and suffer patiently any obstacle or impediment that might come its way is titikshā.

(v) Sraddha (श्रद्धा)

As 'titiksha' is 'vairagya' towards the body, so 'Sraddhā' or faith is vairagya towards pride. Whenever one develops faith in somebody, he becomes humble before that one and his pride or ego tumbles down. Acharya Samkar regards 'Sraddhā' as that spirit of faith by which an individual understands readily the exact import of the Scriptural texts as well as the profound words of wisdom and pregnant advices of the Preceptor by which alone the Reality becomes manifest.

Sraddhā is very necessary for a healthy mind. It is virtually the peace of the heart. For a smooth and meaningful life on the spiritual path, 'Sraddhā' in the Seeker's heart is of paramount importance. Lord Krishna says in the Gita that only a man of Sraddha gains Gyana:²⁴

“ श्रद्धावान्निभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ”

In spiritual disciplines all over the world, what matters most is humility born of faith. Pridelessness and humility are the two sides of

24. Srimad Bhagawadgita : 4.39.

the spiritual coin of 'Sraddhā'. The Seeker of Brahma Vidya has got to be soft-hearted, for mindfull of pride is incapable of receiving the light of truth which Guru imparts and Scriptures intend to reveal. The Upanishadic Rishi instructs the Spiritual Seeker to go (to Truth with the capital of faith in the heart (श्रद्धावित्तो भूत्वा).²⁵ Sage Narada defines 'Sraddhā' as unflinching faith in the words of the Scriptures and Preceptors.²⁶

(vi) Samādhāna (समाधान)

The last of the 'Sat-sampatti', Samādhāna or Tranquility is that condition (experienced within) when the mind is constantly engaged in the contemplation of the Supreme Reality in all conditions; it is not gained through any amount of intellectual oscillations. Says Ādi Samkarāchārya:

सर्वदा स्थापनं बुद्धेः शुद्धे ज्ञेयिण सर्वथा ।
तत्समाधानमित्युक्तं न तु चित्तस्य लालनम् ॥

25. Swami Akhandananda Saraswati : 'Brahmasutra - Pravachana; Sat Sahitya Prakashan, Bombay; 1976, p. 24.

26. Devarshi Narada : 'Bhakti Sutra', Gita Press, Gorakhpur, 1978, Sutra :

27. Adhyacharya Samkar : Viveka Chudamani; Verse 26.

'Samādhāna' is not to be misconstrued as an ineffectual attitude towards both good and bad - especially insults and failures, threats and despairs ! Some believe that 'Samādhāna' is the mental attitude of an individual who has completely hardened himself and has grown to be insensible to the lashes of failures or to the spears of insults. That is not so. It is, on the other hand, a state of poise and tranquillity that the mind comes to gain when it is sufficiently convinced and trained to revel continuously on the concept of a perfect ideal, atonce universal, omniscient and omnipotent.²⁸

Samādhāna may thus be regarded as that poise or equanimity of conscience i.e., chitta, where all the vacillations of mind are at rest.

To sum up : equipping oneself with this sixfold spiritual wealth of qualifications, the Seeker should endeavour to behold self in ones' own self, as well as in the self of all :

शान्तो दान्त उपरततितिक्षुश्च समाहितः ।
श्रद्धावित्तो भूत्वा आत्मन्येव आत्मानं पश्येत् ॥ 29

28. Swami Akhandananda : Brahma-Sutra - Pravachana, Vol. 1, Sat Sahitya Prakashan, Bombay, 1976, p. 26.

29. Brahaddaranyopanishad : 4.4.23, Vol. II,

The word 'Bhōōtvā' means that after qualifying oneself with these six virtues, one should 'see self in self'. It deserves to be noted that these six qualities in a Seeker are the end-result of vairagya; and that all of them are the hexagonal hues of the peace or calmness in the mind : 'sāma' is calmness in the mind; 'dāma' or self-control is calmness of the senses; 'titikshā' is the calmness of the body; 'uparati' is calmness born of vairagya from excess work; 'sraddhā' stands for equipoise and calm of the heart; and 'samādhāna' is poise in chitta or conscience. Peace is itself the fulfilment of 'vairāgya'. So, these six names seem to mean differently, but are full of one single meaning 'peace' only. The difference is mainly due to the fact that 'shanti' itself has taken these six names because of their positional placement or functions, as observed above.

4. Mumukshutva (मुमुक्षुत्व)

The fourth major and essential qualification of a religious or spiritual Seeker is a burning desire or intensely felt urge for salvation, 'mukti', known as mumukshā.

"Mumukshuta" is the impatient and burning desire to release oneself from all bondages created in man through the ignorance of his Real Nature. The ignorance creates illusory chains of egoism for the body and the liberation is caused at the knowledge of the Real Nature of the Self. Because of Man's non-apprehension of his Real Nature, misapprehensions about himself arises in his mind, such as the ego-centric identification with the body, mind and intellect together called the 'ego' and it is those identifications that give man his sense of limitations. The limitations are not of the Self. The Self knows no limitations. To rediscover oneself from this ignorance is to end all sorrows and achieve the Wisdom of the Reality.

It is discernible thus that the first four ingredients of a spiritual seeker are : Viveka, Vairāgya, sat-sampatti, and mumukshutva. In a siddha these very qualities live in full blossom, but in a seeker they are in a seed form.

The Mundakopanishad prescribes four more qualifications : (i) love of truth; (ii) resolve to undergo austere penance, when necessary;

(iii) celibacy; and (iv) concern for ending one's own impurities or faults. It says :

अत्येन लभ्यस्तपसा शैष आत्मा
 सम्यग् ज्ञानेन प्रसूचयेत् नित्यम् ।
 अन्तः शरीरे ज्योतिर्मयो हि शुभ्रो
 यं पश्यन्ति यतयः क्षीणदोषाः ॥

The Self is attained by one who cultivates veracity, austere concentration, wisdom and continence. When thus the impurities end, the ascetic seeker sees the resplendent Self within himself.

By implication thus the Seeker of Self-realization in religious field should be in possession of the aforesaid eight qualifications: four mentioned by Jagadguru Sri Samkarāchārya and the other four by the Rishi of the Mundakaupanishad. Then alone he would be acceptable to the Spiritual Guru for proper initiation in spiritual life and religious discipline.

Qualifications Necessary for the
Seeker of Excellence in Indian
Classical Music:

1. Discipleship:

Whosoever desires to be a musician in the Indian classical sense shall have to be, first of all, in possession of such a mental attitude and ability that would qualify him for the fulfilment of the desideratum of his life i.e. to rise to the stature of a master musician. To be a master, one has to be a disciple. The quality of discipleship is therefore, the first qualification of any seeker of perfection in music. A verse in Sanskrit points out that discipleship is the fountain - source of all the 'guṇās' or qualities necessary for a Seeker of truth and perfection in any branch of knowledge, be it Brahma Vidya (the science of knowing the Brahman) or Sangitā Vidyā (the science of achieving excellence in music). It says :

नमो भूषा पूषा कमलवन भूषा मधुफरो,
वचोभूषा स्वत्यंवर विभवभूषा वितरणम् ।
मनोभूषा मैत्री मधुसमय भूषा गिरीवनः
सदैव भूषाभूक्तिः सकलगुण भूषा-च विनयः ॥

'The glory or ornament of sky is Sun; the honey-bee is the glory of the garden where lotuses

31. Swami Iswarananda : 'Samvit Sphulinga', Samvit Sadhanayana, Jodhpur, Vol. 18 1978, p.2
गुरु अद्य

bloom; truth is the glory of tongue; distribution of gifts or dāna is the glory of pelf and prosperity; friendly disposition (towards all) is the glory of mind; Spring-time is the glory and grandeur of the hills and forests; spontaneous outbursts of good-sayings is the beauty and grace of a speaker in any assembly. Truly, 'vinaya' or discipleship with polite humility is the fountain of the entire world of virtues.

'Vinaya' means and implies the capacity in a man to lead his life and himself in a special way enjoined upon the seekers by the scriptures and masters. "Vi" (वि) means special and 'naya' (नय) means to lead. Thus the seeker has to be aware of the '^{operandi}modus operandi' of life's discipline demanded of him for the realization of the ideal in view. In the field of music, the seeker is required to go to the best knower of music - theory as well as practice - in a mood of utter humility, with absolute keen-ness to enquire about everything of music, and with real intention to serve the cause of music and thereby please his master too. Lord Krishna, the Flute Player and Singer of Song Celestial says :

(102)

तद्धिष्टिं प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनः तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥

'Know that by surrenderful salutations, by all-round enquiry, and by purity of performance. They who are wisdom incarnate and have envisioned the tattva will impart instructions unto you.'

Three qualifications of a Seeker are mentioned in this verse of the Bhagawadgita :

(i) 'pranipāta' i.e., to prostrate before the Teacher; a man of ego cannot bend or bow down; a seeker has to be humble; for a mind full of ego fails to receive the flow of wisdom because its power to intake remains arrested by the shackles of pride; (ii) 'pariprasnena' i.e., by enquiry. The seeker has to be intelligent enough how to enquire, why to enquire, what to enquire and to whom to enquire from. This is the second requirement to be fulfilled by the seeker; and (iii) 'Sevayaa' i.e., by serving the ideal as per the instructions of the Expert guide or guru. Here the term prescribes not only a qualification, but also point out the urgency of sādhanā.

Obviously, thus, discipleship in any branch of learning is a blend of humility, intelligence and devotion and has its roots in 'Vinaya' - the ground and seed of all gunas or essentials of being qualified.

2. 'Viveka' : Power of Discrimination:

Since 'Vinaya' is the root, viveka is its fruit. The seeker of the soulfulness of music must have in the first instance a musical 'ear'. Ear is the main instrument for receiving the spirit and structure of music. Sravan (श्रवण) of Sangita from 'Gurumukha' is the first and foremost requirement in picking up the art of music. One who has no ear for music will have 'viveka' of 'svaras' in absence where of no 'svara-nu-sandhāna' will be possible for him. Through 'Vinaya' the seeker approaches the Guru, but through 'Viveka' alone the intake of Guru-gāna and 'Svara-bodha' will be a reality. Otherwise, what ever is heard will dwindle into a wasteful outpour of music from Gurumukha. The seeker should, therefore, be in possession of the power to discriminate between different 'Svaras' - Sa, re, ga, ma etc. If this 'ear' or ability of discrimination is missing, the seeker will miss the music.

It is so because ear is the only gateway through which music can find entry into the seeker. No amount of mere study of the treatises on music by the seeker will be of any avail. Music has to be learnt from the Master Musician. This accounts for the 'Guru-Shisya' or Teacher-Taught oral tradition of music in India.³³

In India, oral tradition spreads over a wide range from music to medicine and from metaphysical speculations to municipal practices. It is not usually appreciated that the pervasive pursuance of oral tradition was not making virtue out of necessity. The cultivation of oral tradition had not become necessary because India suffered from ignorance of penmanship. Writing and cognate processes existed abundantly in ancient India. The oral tradition did not and does not rule out the existence, knowledge or use of writing. Written and spoken word co-existed, though, however, the oral tradition was clothed with a special sanction and validity. Music, it may be noted, cannot be read and learnt; music can be heard and

33. Ashok D. Ranade : 'On Music And Musicians of Hindoostan', Promilla & Co. Publishers, New Delhi, 1984, p. 4.

then learnt. This is more applicable to the learning of classical music of India. It was thus that Guru became indispensable for accuracy and authenticity of wisdom delivered and music sung. Performance-oriented excellence necessitated Guru-oriented centres of learning, be it the Gurukul or a university at Takshasila, Varanasi, Nalanda or Ujjain.

That's why the bearer, preserver and transmitter of wisdom - the Guru - is given the highest veneration and held in the holiest esteem :

गुरुः साक्षात्परब्रह्म . Guru is verily the Supreme Reality, Brahma in human form (नरहारी). So the प्रणिपात attitude behoves a disciple and because God is omniscient, the questions of supreme importance pertaining to knowledge - mystical and mundane - should be addressed only upon Guru for valid verifiability. Emergence of Guru as an institution and his supremacy in the oral tradition is a cumulative effect of three fundamental features of learning : Significance of spoken word or sung 'svara'; inescapable importance of listening; and the audience as the measure of the excellence achieved by the seeker. Guru is however the final authority.

Guruship is not an empty honour but an authority to be earned.³⁴ Discipleship is also not a ritual badge of initiation, but true humility before Guru and love of learning in action. As a consequence what transpires between Guru and Shisya is qualitatively much different from what takes place in a teacher-student tie on tuition basis. Oral tradition doesnot fail to accord recognition to this unique relationship which elevates a transaction or an exchange into a communication and at the same time aims at transmuting facts into information, information into knowledge, and knowledge into deeper insight culminating into intuitive wisdom.

Thus are 'Vinaya' and 'Viveka' the two fundamental essentials to qualify anyone to be seeker of art excellence in music.

3. Vairagya : Detachment:

A lover of music, in order to learn it, has to practise detachment for things and associations that hinder the fulfilment of his aim. Not

34. Ibid, p. 39.

only a musical 'ear' is of utmost necessity, but a music-worthy throat (कण्ठ) too.

A seeker with a hopelessly bad throat is not fit for music. His voice should be tolerable to the extent it works for melodious singing, if he wants to be a musician. He should, if he has a good throat, avoid eating or drinking things which are non-conducive to singing. If, on the other hands, he wants to be an instrumentalist he should have, beside 'vinaya' and 'viveka' and vairagya good fingers. Good fingers are those which can soon be adjusted to the playing-needs of an instrument. Good fingers do not mean thin and artistically long fingers only; they mean their adjustibily with the instruments to be played. If the seeker is a lover of flute-playing or of any trumpet-like instrument which needs blowing, he should be free from the disease of asthama; he should have free and unaffected nose and throat as well. Moreover, he should have a sound health, for without a healthy body no music-exercises can be undertaken

for the desired duration.³⁵ And, again, if the seeker wants to become a noted dancer of great name and excellence, he must have strength in legs, stamina in body and elasticity for quick and exact foot-work.

Precisely, 'vairagya' is the other side of the coin of 'viveka'. It is viveka in action. The seeker's life should be a tripartite confluence - triveni (त्रिवेणी) of vinaya, viveka and vairagya. Excellence in art is achieved by a seeker whose discipleship has the grace of humility, beauty of discretion and flavour of dispassion.

4. 'Sat-Sampatti' or Six-Fold Riches of Composure:

'Sat-Sampatti' is, as observed in the foregoing pages, the legitimate offspring of real discipleship; fruitioning of viveka and vairāgya in the seeker's life, thought and deed. Peace of mind, of sense organs, of body, of action, of heart and of conscience is of essence in the

35. Bhatta Shobhakar : 'Nardiya Shiksha' : A Commentary in Sanskrit; Sri Pitambar Pithe, Sanskrit Parishad, Datia (M.P.), 1964, p. 3.

constitution of the Sixfold riches. How can a disturbed, ruffled up and divided mind be the recepient of the advice and instructions, svara-bodha and svarālaāpa given or sung out by the Master of Music ?

As in the case of a seeker of Brahma Vidya, so also in the case of a seeker of Sangita Vidya, discipleship made up of discretion, detachment and tranquility of body, mind and intellect including that of sense-organs is of foremost importance and necessity. Faith in the spoken word of the Master is of Supreme significance. A seeker of music has to learn only from this word and with unshakable faith. Musical notes must flow from the Master's heart to the Seeker's heart through the latter's ears. Faith in Guru facilitates this flow to reach the bosom of the disciple. As the flow becomes ceaselessly perennial and as the seeker becomes more and more responsive and receptive to it, the music begins to sprout and reverberate in deeper recesses of the seeker's heart. In seeker's serene and sombre responsiveness music is born to bloom.

For music to be born in the heart of a saadhaka, a lot of endurance - titiksha - is expected on his part. No great achievement can be had in a puny time. Flowers blossom only in seasons and fruits take time to ripen. Till then the plants and trees have to bear the ravages of summer and winter, even suffer a fall off of leaves in autumn. Similar is the case of a seeker of perfection in the perception and performance of musical lore. Enduring without murmur and with pleasure the hardships that befall during the course of learning, one has to wind one's course towards the lofty ideal of excellence in music. Narad's endurance in learning divine ragas and music is legendary. But this alone works for 'samādhāna', the equipoise and tranquillity of mind necessary for Sangita Sadhana.

5. Mumukshutva : Urge for Emancipation:

Musicians in ancient India learnt music for spiritual freedom. In modern times too such mystic-musicians have made history in music and mysticism. The names of Tyaga Raj, Purandardas,

Muthuswami Dikshitar, Shyam Sastri ^{are} and recorded by T.V. Subba Rao as classic composers and saint-musicians.³⁶ Our seers and scriptures and all the testaments on Music are unanimous on the point that 'knowledge is a liberating force' - सा विद्या या विमुक्तये . Nāda Vidya is Brahma Vidya and whosoever learns it from the Guru is destined to divinity and deliverance. Bharat Matanga, Yastika, Shardoola, Kohal, Dattila, Kambal, Vishwavasud, Narada, Tumburu, Hanuman, Arjuna, Rāvaṇa, Someswar learnt most from their respective Gurus and became such lofty and liberated souls who preserved and promoted the dignity and divinity, greatness and glory integral to the classical music of India.³⁷

In modern times, however, as a result of the overpowering impact of advanced industrialism, growing technology and film-culture, this main aim of our music has been given up in favour of

36. T.V. Subba Rao : Studies in Indian Music : Asia Publishing House, Bombay & London, 1965, pp. 101, 103, 113, 119 & 123.

37. Dr. G.H. Tarlekar : Sangita Ratnakar : Commentary - Vol. I, Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya Sanskrit Mandal, Bombay, 1975, p. 11.

excellence in music performance for pelf and prestige. The divine aroma of music is missing today. A saint-musician is a rarity today, if not a non-entity. The seeker of sangita vidya - today is losing the old, earlier and pristine sanctimony for austere practises in music for the realization of self-illumination or God-hood. In spite of the loosening hold of divinity on the discipleship of music there are great masters of music, both vocal and instrumental, who have brought glory to the classical music of India, added feathers to their own personalities and earned eminence and immortality in the world of music all over the globe.

Comparative Evaluation of Seeker's
Qualifications in Music and
Religion : Conclusion in
Kinship from Seeker's
viewpoint;

It is heartening to note that discipleship in music and religion places almost a similar, if not the same demand, on the seeker. The seeker has to be dedicated and faithful to both music and musician from whom he has to learn; to both Brahma Vidya and Brahma Gyāni from whom he has to receive lessons. 'Sravana' (श्रवण) is of supreme

importance in both the cases. Guru enters the disciple through the word he speaks, through the musical notes and sounds (Svaras) he sings out. No Guru, No Gāna. No Guru No Gyāna. Guru is central to both. So is shisya. No shisya means no learning in Sangita or Brahma Vidya. Thus the Guru-Shisya param&parā is the unbreakable link between music and religion, Guru being a mystic in both the cases. Though, ofcourse, this foundational link has thinned down in its significance today because the deep and pervasive spell of self-and-prestige-mindedness in the world of music and also religion (to some extent) has dethroned 'moksha' in favour of 'mammon' as the supreme and guiding goal of human life, yet the universe of music and world of religion are not altogether shorn of pure Nāḍopasakas such as Omkumar Nath Thakore and great Mystics and Maharshi such as Sri Raman, Sri Aurobindo and Ram Krishna Param Hansa.

Both in discipleship and devotion, on the one hand, and Guru-ship and benediction, on the other, music and religion enjoy close kinship till date, inspite of modernism and the impact it has made on the life and literature of India in

the recent past. It remains to be seen what way the cat in music and religion is going to jump ! If the past stays as a testimony and if, the present day till toward 'Hare Krishna' movement fructifies in the desired direction, future of friendship and fellowship of old between music and religion from Seeker's viewpoint appears bright without any fear of impairment.
