

CHAPTER - I

FOUNTAIN - HEAD OF  
MUSIC AND RELIGION

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MUSIC AND RELIGION1. OF MUSIC :

MAN is the crown of creation as well as the apex of Nature's creativity. The distinctive glory of man, differentiating him from other species of life, lies in his superior powers of cognition, will to improvise and ability to create things that endure and yield joy. His powers of observation and perception have ever helped him not only in appreciating and creating things of beauty but in exploring and enunciating the immediate as well as the ultimate truth of life.

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Right from the hoary days when man began to think, he has been countenancing forces which help or hinder the progressive realisation of the aims or ideals of higher life by leaders of forces that promote or demote life at various levels of existence. Among the factors and forces which have served man as levers of creativity and promoters of enriched human existence, urge to know, inculcation of artistic and aesthetic trends and tastes, and cultivation and promotion of various disciplines of art, culture and religion, of science, adventure and research - howsoever crude or primitive in the beginning - have been of prime importance. But, when and where exactly the first flower of human culture and creativity bloomed forth, nobody can say with authentic certainty. Conjectures about replies to these or such other kindred queries may be very many, but they have no roots in authenticity. This much is, however, agreed upon by scholars of human history, sociology and anthropology that our country, now known as India, was one of the four<sup>1</sup> foremost and most ancient seats of human civilization.

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1. Rev. Hieras of St. Xavier's, Bombay in his 'Introduction to Prof. B.G. Ghokhale's 'Story of Ancient India Civilization', p. (iv) Mac Millan & Co. Bombay.

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From the archaeological excavations at Mohenjodaro and Harappa during the twenties of this century, the history of Indian Art and Culture which hitherto was deemed to have begun with the Vedic Aryans, not only shifted backwards by centuries but offered to the amazed world an incontrovertible evidence of the prevalence in this land of ours of a very rich, highly organized, dynamic and progressive civilization of people who were well - versed in the art of deep contemplation, creative profundity and reflective excellence of enriched mundane existence. The Harappans - people who regarded Lord Shiva, 'Hara', as their Father God, 'appa' - had cultivated alongwith the people of the City of the Dead, the Mohen-jo-darians, art of yogic discipline and 'atmic' contemplation as a result whereof various arts of secular and sacerdotal life came into being. We have no literary records to bear evidence to the ideas of beauty and joy conceived by them but we have ample archaeological evidences to bear testimony to the things of art, beauty and joy created by them. Among several arts of use and value that

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unleash blessings of higher life of culture, art of music and dance were of deep human import and concern. The Vedic age that followed the Indus Valley Civilization of the Harappans and the ~~Indus Valley Civilization of the Harappans and the~~ Mohenjodarians saw the art of music blooming forth in full swing. That is why the Noble Prize Winner, Rabindra Nath Tagore sang out :

प्रथम प्रभात उदय तव गगने,  
प्रथम सामश्व तव तपोवने ।

(Pratham Prabhaata Udaya Tava Gagane;  
Prathama Saamarava Tava Tapovane)<sup>2</sup>

"It was in thy holy sky that the first dawn  
(of human consciousness and culture)  
announced its majestic appearance. It was  
in thy gay gardens of penance and godliness  
that the musical notes of Sāama Veda first  
filled the skies ! "

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2. Rama Dhari Singh Dinkar : Samskriti Ke Char  
Adhyaya,  
New Delhi; 1973; p.21

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With these words of grateful acknowledgment the poet was inspired to address his motherland Bhārata. Curiously enough but rightly indeed is our land called by this meaningful name. Etymologically, 'Bhā' stands for light and 'Rata' implies absorption. Thus the land where majority of people loved to engage themselves in the realization of the supreme truth or light of life came to be designated as Bhā-rata. Meditative contemplation on the light of life served as the Fount Eternal of the Seekers of the ultimate truth which they realized as the very ground or essence of existence, of all that comes to human gaze, of all that is. That has ever been the paramount source of inspiration and the dominant note of people's pursuit in our country. Without grasping this basic and fundamental view or tenet of our life, any effort to understand and evaluate Indian art and culture would go vain. The earliest literary record that bears testimony to this assertion is Rk Veda which happens to be the First Book in the library of mankind. This and the other Vedas i.e., the Sāma, the Yajur and the Atharva Veda which comprise the earliest literary expressions of Aryan Wisdom are not in any way the product of human ingenuity or brainy

excellence but natural flowing out in singable word or mantra-form of the divinity already in man. That accounts for the epithet 'a-paurusheya' given to the Vedas. Of all the Vedas, the Sama Veda is the most musical one. All the master-musicians and the historians of classical music of India have a consensus of opinion that the Sāma Veda is the first and fundamental source of music in India.<sup>4</sup> This is indubitably the oldest literary document of mankind and is the only one wherein we first find the origins of our classical musical heritage. It is believed that the Sāma Veda beamed and branched out in thousand musical streams of divine wisdom (सहस्रवल्मी सामवेद). Obviously thus there must have been in vogue different and several kinds of Sāma-gāna i.e., music of the Sāmaveda. The 'richas' (ऋचा) are the 'yoni' or the womb of the Sāmagaṇa. The sage of the Chhandogya Upanishad<sup>5</sup> says : ऋचि अद्युदं सामगीयते " i.e., It merits thorough appreciation as well as gentle assertion

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4. Dr. Vasudeva Saran Agarwal : *Bharatiya Sangita Ki Prāchīn Pramparā* in "Nibandh Sangita" (Published by Sangeet Karyalaya, Hathras, U.P. I Edition). May 1978 P. 185

5. Ibid, P-104

that the Sāmagāna of the Aryan Rishis is in essence and origin, the Song of Soul, highly elevating in Spirit, refreshing in impact and intuitive in character. Sri Aurobindo, the great sage of modern India, writes in his small but monumental work "The Foundations of Indian Culture" that the Veda was the 'word discovering the Truth and clothing in image and symbol the mystic significance of life', an intuitive and rhythmic utterance, the mantra<sup>6</sup>. The singers were 'in possession of a high mystic, hidden truth.'<sup>6</sup> Historically thus the origins of music in India are traceable to the Sama Veda, but mystically the evolution and enrichment of our music owe solely to the self-realized Saints and Seers of Sāma Veda who could not but blissfully sing out their ecstatic state of supremely transcendental consciousness of God-Realization in Vedic melody.

The Vedas are not the works of human creativity, but the 'revelations' of the Unmanifest divinity, the Brahman (ब्रह्मन्) of the Upanishads. These works of Wisdom are divine in origin, divine

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6. Dr. Vinayaka Hari Date ; Yoga of the Saints :  
Munshi Ram Manoharlal Publishers; 1969; p . 73.

in content and divine in form. Likewise the music of India is divine in descent, divine in essence and divine in expression. Music of India is indeed a divine art and God, the Brahman, is the First Master Musician who sang through the Vedic Rishis. Music is thus the Revealed Melody whose appeal, as art, is universal.

Revelation, it needs to be cautioned, is not any external message delivered to man from without, but a divine afflatus springing from within, the result of inspiration through God-intoxication. Far from being the output of human mind, howsoever excellent or brilliant, Revelation is a divine delivery working through the holy human heart.<sup>7</sup> Thus the music of India, like the Vedas, is undoubtedly 'a-paurusheya' in its origin in the sense of its being flashed forth from the depth of the silence of the soul during the transcendental meditations of the Rishis - Purusha prayatnam vina prakritibhuta.<sup>8</sup> From the mystic viewpoint God became music, the Spirit turned into Sound Eternal. This is perhaps

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7. Prof. R.D. Ranade : Essays and Reflections : Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan Prakashana; 1951; p. 33.

8. " पुरुष प्रयत्नं विना प्रकृति भूता — " Ibid; p. 42.

Swami Jswarananda Giri : Samvit Sphulinga ; No 31 ; Sant Sarovar Mt. Abu , p-10

the essential import of the use of the idiom 'नादतनुम्' (Nada-Tanum) by Sri Nibhishanka Shāringa Deva, the great and glorious writer of the magnum opus on music of India called, 'Sangeet Ratnakar'. In the very first verse of Invocation<sup>9</sup>, he sings out :

ब्रह्मग्रन्थिजमारुतानुगातिना चित्तेन हृत्पङ्कजे  
 सूरीणामनु रत्नकः श्रुतिपदं योऽयस्वयं राजते ।  
 यस्माद् ग्रामविभागवर्षिश्चनालंकारजातिप्रमो<sup>2</sup>  
 वदे<sup>3</sup> नादतनुं तमुद्धरजगद्गीतं मुदे शंकरम् ॥

i. e.,

"I worship for divine joy that Samkar who is the embodiment of Sound Eternal (नादतनुम्) and music of the Universe (जगद्गीतम्), who shines by Himself (स्वयंराजते) in the heart-lotus (हृत्पङ्कजे) of the wise (सूरीणाम्) giving delight to their ears by intrinsically and intuitively audible music (श्रुतिपदं) through the mind (चित्तेन) subtly following the breath arising out of the 'Brahma-granthi' (ब्रह्मग्रन्थि) and from whom arise 'Grāma (ग्राम i. e., collection of स्वराः), vibhāga-rachanālankāra-jati etc."

9. Saranga Deva : Samgita Ratnakar : 1.1.

God, the Indwelling Atman, sang and music filled the universe. He sang in and through the meditative and contemplative silence of the Rishis. Music of our Rishis is eternal and elevating, perfect and purely vocal, beautiful and bountiful, divine and delivering. Divine is thus the origin and divine is the destination of our classical music. It demands of its devotees sincere and devotional adherence to a discipline under the Spiritual Guidance and saintly grace of a master-musician to whom music has come or comes as Song of God. Long before Jesus Christ<sup>10</sup> filled the world of man with His biblical music, Lord Krishna had himself descended in the divine form of music and filled our land with Sāmagāna. For, does not Sri Krishna say in His 'Song Celestial' - the Bhagwadgita - "Of all the Vedās I am the Sāmaveda" (वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि Bhagwadgita, ch. X).<sup>10</sup>

But, what are the Vedas ? Etymologically, the word 'Veda' is derived from the Samskrit root 'Vid' which conveys Wisdom comprising three co-related ideas viz., (i) to be or exist; (ii) to know; and (iii) to get or receive. The first is

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10. Thakur Jaidera Singh: 'Sāma Vedic Music' in Readings on Indian Music; edited by Gowrie Kuppaswamy & M. Harikaran; College Book House M. G. Road, Trivandrum, 1979, chapter 3; p. 19

suggestive of being or 'Sat' (सत्), the second of knowing or 'Chit' (चित्) and the third of enjoying blissfulness or 'ānanda' (आनन्द). The Veda, therefore, symbolically suggests Sachchidānanda<sup>11</sup> and is thus God (ब्रह्म) manifesting Himself in Word-form, in the form of Music divine through human voice par excellence.

A hymnal verse in Taittiriya Brahman says : 'Rk' refers to all forms, 'Yajus' to motion, and 'Sāma' to 'tejas' or resplendence or expression of life eternal which is the song celestial of the Almighty.<sup>12</sup> The hermenaic interpretation of 'Sāma'<sup>13</sup> given in the Chhandogya Upanishad tells us that 'Sā' signifies 'Vāk', or speech-form and 'ama' stands for 'Prāna' or life-force : 'यद् ह्येतद् स च अमश्च संवाकतम् तत् साम अभवत्, तत् साम्नाः सामत्वम्' . When there is Samaveda or harmony between Sa (सा) and ama (सम), between form and life, then we have Sāma. Sāma is thus the cosmic music of the ब्रह्मन् and it has the force to enliven its listeners, elevate them to the sublime

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11. "Readings on Indian Music" ed. by Gowrie Kuppaswamy and M. Hariharan, p. 19 - Sama Vedic Music by Thakur Jaideva Singh.

12. Ibid. ~~19/20~~ p. 19

13. Ibid. p. 20.

heights of soulfulness of joy, attract and ensure the happy return of the audience with increasingly richer understanding and love for the divine import and impact of the music of the Seers. Not only this, Music has made its home in the human heart. It lives there permanently as God lives.<sup>14</sup> Thus is it that India of the ancient Vedic seers is still 'a land of music'. Music is a part of the life of our people. They sing while they plough, while they harvest, while they work and pray. They sing even while begging ! There is a song for every occasion. Whether one is born, named, married or dead, there is a song befitting every occasion.<sup>14</sup> Their music was not the result of self-realization, but was the product of the impact made on their heart by music of the singing seers of the Sāmaveda. Thus was it that music of early India ran on two tangents; the classical music of the self-realized Vedic minstrels of God and the music of the masses which too was refreshing and joyous, heartfelt and inspired, full of melody and love for life. Music may thus be either mystic or mundane, eternal or ephemeral, sacred or profane.

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14. Readings on Indian Music. ed. by Gowrie Kuppaswamy, Ch. 5, p. 44 by Naushad.

Music whether mystic or mundane filled the universe of man. It did not matter whether it was the ashrama of a Guru, the hut of a sage, the home of a householder, the shrine of a deity, the school of a teacher, the field of a farmer, the place of a potter, the theatre of an artist, the procession of wedding or death ceremony, or even that of pilgrims on way to holy sites of faith and worship, music always occupied an important place in man's activity. And music with him was 'as abundant as it is varied'.<sup>15</sup> From Kashmir to Kanyakumari, from Kandhar and Kirthar ranges to Assam, it is music all the way.<sup>16</sup> So much so that man bereft of love for music, art and learning, came to be regarded as an 'animal' in human form or a 'man without tail and horns'. Precisely, the classical music of India reached the heights of melody and perfection beyond ordinary human imagination. Music, to the singing seers became the king of all arts, not simply because it is independent and needs nothing extraneous to human voice, but mainly because it springs forth spontaneously from the fount eternal of Song Sound

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15. p. 44, Ibid. Naushad.

16. Ibid. P. 44

known as Nāda Brahma residing in the heart-lotus of man. That inspired the world renown poet, Rabindranath Tagore, to assert that Indian music is "essentially impersonal" and "intuitively revealed" music, above the pairs of opposite and that the master musicians of India have been by this very virtue the "pupils of God". Writes Swami Prajnānānda in his world-acclaimed work "Music of the Nations", a thing which I cannot but quote ad verbatim :

"Indian Music possesses truly an universal and divine ideal and for which it excels all the systems of the world. The Indian seers of music say that though it lives and moves on the shifting soil of the mundane world, yet it transcends it by its unworldly nature and divine beauty and it animates and elevates the level of consciousness of everyone who sincerely cultures it and reverently adores it. It breathes always the spiritual air and contains within it an inherent power of healing and soothing the aching hearts of suffering and crying multitudes..... And, as in the past so in the present it is

charming and attracting the taste and temperament and conquering the hearts of all the people of the world".<sup>17</sup>

The Vedic Seers are thus the recorded human medii of the Indian Music which is God in melody-form. Precisely, as God is the mother of music in India, so is the Indian classical music the mother of music in the world.

That is why Indian classical music is essentially a divine melody in praise of the Almighty Paramātma; and the greatest musicians of India have been truly men of God. That is why music is hailed as the revealer and paver of the pathway to spiritual freedom, Moksha.<sup>18</sup>

Singing is an act of Worship. When one is lost in the realm of Sound Eternal, one has the glimpse of the Brahman activity, one becomes able to enter and express in musical human voice the divine and infinite bliss of liberation and spiritual realization of the One without the Second, one is fulfilled in life sublime, serene and sonorous which is the music of the universe. Thus said Adi Samkarāchārya that "those who sing here sing God."

17. Swami Prajnānānda: "Music of the Nations" (A comparative study)  
Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd. Delhi. 1<sup>st</sup> published  
18. आशुतोष etc. मोक्ष मार्ग स चकारि Y.S. IV 4.15 1973; p. 34-35.  
~~Swami Yogi Vakkas~~ A sep page 53.

To the singing seers of India, thus, God is the fountain-head of music. Nay, as Sarngad<sup>eva</sup>~~har~~ says in his Sangeeta Ratnākar, God assumed the form of Sound Eternal, the Music of the Universe ('uni' means one and 'verse' implies 'song'). God is music and music God in the same fashion as water is snow and snow water.

## 2. OF RELIGION:

In this age of rapid scientific advancement and fast developing technology, it has become a fad or fashion for many a modern man to regard religion, which has once been a driving force and the light of life of most of the ancient cultures and philosophies, as an "opiate" of masses that divide man against man, nation against nation, culture against culture. They condemn it as an obstacle on the path of human progress and peace, as an inhuman force that breeds contempt and dissension and foments fanaticism and war. Such a view which treats religion as inimical to democratic faith in the essential dignity of man, universality of human fellowship and harmony of creation is born more of nescience of the true spirit of religion and

nauseatic attitude towards the abuse of religion by the Church across the ages than of any scientific findings against the truth of religion proper.

The heart and essence of Indian experience about religion is to be seen not merely in the words of Wisdom contained in the Vedas but also in the lives of the living Saints and in the ideas they inspiringly realised in fullness of their life - ideas about meaning and purpose of life. Life is not a blind march into an unknown future directed and controlled by the invisible and iron hands of destiny. Behind the countless names and forms of life - the plant, the animal and the human - there is the Supreme Consciousness at work to which the ancient Indian seers have given the name 'Brahman'. Religion is to realize this Consciousness of unity of life and creation. Recognition of unity in life and creation is thus the highest truth which a true man of religion loves to live and realize in life. Such a life of understanding and enlightenment which experiences and thrives on unitive truth and principle of life - which is the

hub and heart-beat of religious faith and life - can by no stretch of imagination ever be regarded as permissive of division, distrust and dissension that characterize the world of men and women today. Even East and West lose all differences, for human beings are everywhere human and hold the same deepest values. The considerations of colour, caste, country, culture, race, sex etc. which today divide man against man and nation against nation are, in reality, opposed to the very fundamental spirit of religion. For, to a man of Faith, all are rooted in God; and, as such, all carry in them the essence of divinity. Religion is in essence the realization of this very divinity ingrained in man. A religious man is thus a Godman and his life is a luminous and self-evident specimen of the ceaseless flow of supreme consciousness which is at once human and divine, which is wholly spiritual without being sensual at all though ever vibrating in and through human body.

This may appear to be self-contradictory, for how can one be human and divine in the same breath. But this is more than truism. Has not this been the studied observation, objectively

verifiable as universal, that man is capable of being a satan in human form. A Samskrit verse<sup>1</sup> tells us :

पुण्यफलमिच्छन्ति पुण्यं न कुर्वन्ति मानवाः ।  
पापफलं नैच्छन्ति पापं कुर्वन्ति यत्नतः ॥

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i.e.,

'Men wish to enjoy the fruits of good or meritorious deeds, but they do not do good. They do not want to suffer the consequences of sin or evil, but they practise sin with endeavour and ingenuity.'

It is a familiar conception of Indian thought, writes Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, that "the human heart is the scene of the age-old conflict between good and evil. It is assailed by weakness and imperfection but is capable also of high endeavour and creative effort."<sup>19</sup> Man is composite of life-giving and death-dealing impulses: यस्य ह्यथा अमृतं यस्य मृत्युः<sup>20</sup>

19. p. 41 "The Present Crisis of Faith" - An Orient Paperback edition, 1970.

20. Rg.veda XI. 12.32

The Mahabharata says :

अमृतं चैव मृत्युश्च द्वयं देहे उतिष्ठितम् ।  
मृत्युरापद्यते मोहात्, सत्येनापद्यतेऽमृतम् ॥

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i.e.,

Immortality and death are both lodged in the nature of man. By the pursuit of moha or delusion he reaches death; by the pursuit of satya or truth he attains immortality. We are all familiar with the verse in Hitopadesha<sup>21</sup> that hunger, sleep, fear and sex are common to men and animals. What distinguishes men from animals is the sense of right and wrong. Life and death, love and violence are warring in every struggling man.<sup>22</sup>

This very truth is explained by modern psychology in technical phraseology. There are two instincts in each human being, those which conserve and unify called 'erotic' instincts and those which destroy and kill called 'aggressive'

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21. X-10.121

22. आहार निद्राभय मैत्रुणं सामान्यमैतद् पशुभिर्नराणाम् ।  
धर्मो हि तेषां अधिको द्वितीयो, धर्मेण हीनाः पशुभिः समानाः ॥

instincts. These two sets of instincts do not work in isolation. They get mixed up, writes Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, like the waters of the river Yamuna, the dark daughter of Yama and those of the river Gangā issuing forth from the tangled locks of Siva.<sup>23</sup> Religion consists in not simply differentiating the erotic instinct from the aggressive one, but in subordinating both to the sway of reason, on the one hand, but in strict and sincere observance of a spiritual discipline which makes for man's perfect inner purity conducive to self-realization. Self-realization is a state of spiritual illumination where, through ceaseless devotional adherence to truth, worldly attachments are nullified in the sense that though living in the world the seeker of self-realization does not remain worldly and that he attains the light of life and love supreme called immortality. That experience is a fever in which the mind is on fire and the spirit in exaltation. In such exaltation God is with the seeker. But the presence of God is one thing, the experience or consciousness of the presence of the divine is quite another. The great Iranian mystic Jalaluddin Rumi says : "I was

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Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, "The Present Crisis of Faith," 1970  
 23. p. 42, ~~Present Crisis.~~ of An Orient Paperback addition, page 4

a mineral; I was a plant; I was an animal; I am a human being and I want to rise from my human level to a spiritual level. That is which was ahead of me. I am That now."<sup>24</sup>

God is omnipresent. He is in man's heart too. The Vedanta says : Tattvamasi, i.e., "That art Thou."<sup>25</sup> Lord Buddha has said that each one has the essentials of Enlightenment : Atmadipo Bhava.<sup>26</sup> Jesus has said that the Kingdom of God is within you.<sup>27</sup> Hazrat Muhammad has said that God is nearer to you than the very <sup>artery</sup> ~~artery~~ of your neck.<sup>28</sup> All these people are affirming not only the presence of a Divine element in human beings but that God is the fountainhead of all the religions known to man in the world so far. No God, no religion and vice versa.

24. "President S. Radhakrishnan's Speeches and Writings" (May 62 - May 64), Publication Division 1965, p. 140.

25. Ibid, p 140

26. Dr. Nagendra Singh: Baudha Darshan; Hindi Vikas Samiti, M.P. 1969 P 28

27. The Bible: The Luke; 17:21.

28. Dr. S. Radha Krishna: President's speech & writings Vol I (May 1962 - May 1964) Publication Div. G.O.I. 1965 P. 141

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Though God is one, religions or religious approaches to God are many. And, there lies the rub ! This has come down to us from early centuries. People may come from different countries, approach different ways, so long as they are pilgrims on the road, they may have their differences, they may have their quarrels, but when the pilgrims reach the end of their quest, they will feel that they belong to one supreme family, they form kindred spirits, whether they come from Islam, Christianity, Hinduism or Judaism, they belong to one Church of God Universal.<sup>29</sup> We may not belong to the Church of Christ, or Buddha or Muhammad ... .. but we all do belong to One Universal Spirit, which is called by different names in different religions. Saint Paul says : "We may have our quarrels. But when we see God face to face, our quarrels cease and we are able to beackon to each other as belonging to the same family." Long before, the Vedic Rishis had declared manavaha amritasya putraha ( मानवाः अमृतस्य पुत्राः )<sup>30</sup> i.e., 'human beings are the children of Ambrosia', that is, of God.

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Dr. S. Radhakrishnan:

29. p. 140. President S. Radha Krishnan's Speeches and Writings; Publications Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting; Govt. of India; New Delhi; 1965; P. 140
30. Rk Veda: quoted by Narain Das in Santmat and Bible; Radha Soami Satsang Beas, Amritsar, 1975 P. 31

Briefly, the saints and prophets of all religions form one great invisible community of God. Though they belong to different conditions of geography and history, they share these basic insights. They may be various in their thoughts and devotion but are constant in their Vision of Divine. The flowers which they offer may be of different kinds but the worship is one. In their view dogmatism and intolerance are the products of spiritual pride and perversity. If we wish to move toward higher levels of freedom, we must break away from the constraining egoisms of the self. All the religions of the world are fundamentally different facets of a single truth, portraits of a single sifter. The Rg.Veda says : Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudhā Vadanti.<sup>31</sup>

True knowledge of religion thus breaks down the barrier between faith and faith. Mahatma Gandhi used to say that cultivation of tolerance for other faiths will impart to us a truer understanding of our own.<sup>32</sup> Such a spirit of sympathetic understanding and awareness was demanded

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31. N. Das: Sant mat & The Bible; Radha Soami Satsang Beas, Amritsar; 1975 P. 11

32. Clifford Manshardt: The Mahatma & the Missionary (1949) P. 131

of men even during ancient time when Asoka, the great Mauryan Emperor, proclaimed through the Rock Edict XII that "the faiths of others all deserve to be honoured. By honouring them one exalts one's own faith and at the same time performs a service to the faith of others ... .. If a man extols his own faith and disparages another because of devotion to his own and because he wants to glorify it, he seriously injures his own faith. Therefore, concord alone is commendable, *समवाय एव साधुः* for through concord men may learn and respect the conception of Dharma accepted by others... .."<sup>33</sup>

Plutarch tells us : 'There is one Sun and one Sky over all nations,<sup>34</sup> and one God under ~~my~~ many names. Nicholas of Cusa regarded all religions as different expressions of the Word of God. "It is you, O God, who is being sought in various religions, in various ways, and named with various names, for Thou remainest as Thou art, to all incomprehensible and inexpressible. Be gracious and show Thy countenance. When ~~Thou~~<sup>Thou</sup> wilt graciously do so then the sword, jealous hatred, and all evil will ~~xxxxx~~

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33. The Edicts of Ashoka, ed. by Nikam and McKeon (1958), pp. 51-52.

34. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan "The Present Crisis of Faith". An Orient Paperback, p. 61. 1970

cease and all will come to know that there is but one religion in the variety of religious rites."<sup>35</sup>

The criticism of religion, more so in recent times, is more a criticism of the false images of God set up by scholastic thinkers. A scientific study of religion and their inter-relations, however, is bound to help us to feel that religion is real only in its being a dynamic and powerful transforming force in the human heart that paves the pathway of God-realization. The unredeemed situation of man, the longing for liberation, the recognition of the Divine Reality and the many ways to reach the Real are found in all religions. But the end of all religions is the same as is the origin of all. God is the fount eternal of Religion, whatever its denomination and whatever the place of its origin. God is also the ultimate end thereof and since God is infinite and absolute, indivisible and endless religion too shares with God those very divine attributes. By true and devotional observance of this religious insight and discipline we not only ascend to God but attain the revelation of God in the heart of man. When

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35. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan "The Present Crisis of Faith". An Orient Paperback, p. 66.

the insight into truth is gained, passions are subdued, ill-will <sup>S</sup>ubsides, and inward conflict ceases. When the spark in us is released it becomes a fire which burns our worldliness and illumines the heart with the light of the Atman. Every religion thus gives us a ladder to perfection which we have to climb by effort. Till we reach the holy heights of divine perfection where we gain with soulful love and unitive regard insight and orientation of seeing indivisible life blooming ~~into~~ into countless and different forms, we are bound to remain at war or variance with each other. Religious spirit demands of us a discipline and dedication of living in harmony with people of no or all faiths, for all faiths and all beings have God as the lone, never-ending and all-embracing fountain-source of their origin, existence and dissolution.

#### SUMMING UP

To a man of faith with roots in the Advaitic Vedanta God is the fountainhead of both music and Religion; and this experience of saints and seers throughout human history, especially so in the history of music and mysticism in India is powerful enough to indicate the existence of an inspiration as well as a rationale behind the close kinship between music and religion in our country throughout the course of its cultural evolution.