

**Spiritual Music**  
*of*  
**Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan**  
**with Commentary**  
*by*  
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This paper appears to be an early draft  
of which a number of pages are missing.

It also includes an early version of  
“Music and Cosmic Evolution”  
which was later rewritten under the title  
“Essays on Music and Cosmic Evolution”  
and is included with that.

A later version of “Spiritual Music” is at present not known.

## Draft Study Spiritual Music

### Part I

Commentary on Chapter XIV, XV, *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* by Hazrat Inayat Khan

### Chapter I

### Music, The Celestial Art

GATHEKA: In all ages the thoughtful have called music the celestial art. Artists have pictured the angels playing on the harp; and that teaches us that the soul comes to the earth with the love of music.

TASAWWUF: The idea that there are angelic beings is not confined to one race or religion. It is true that people of lesser evolution are acquainted only with spirits and fairies and not with angels. This may be because spirits and fairies are connected with psychical and mental processes, whereas the realm of the angelic beings is that of the heart. This is called Djabrut by the Sufis and Devachan (literally) by the Hindus, or Brahma-loka.

Music may be considered celestial from two points of view. In the one point of view which shall be explained under the section "Cosmic Music" we can see how all creatives express those tone-qualities and especially the kind of music which is in accordance with their evolution. From the other view we discover or idealize the angels as the very beings of music, the best reproductions of which are found on earth in the cooing of doves and of little infants. This particular sound or tone-quality belongs to the Holy Spirit which is said to have descended upon Jesus Christ in the form of a dove. The Holy Spirit is the Divine Breath and the Word; both Breath and Word are Sound, the most apparent expression of which is that of the dove.

Although the civilizations of the Chinese, Hindus and Hebrews were apparently developed separately and although their religious traditions seem each to be sui generis, all accepted the idea of divine beings or celestial-denizens as creatures of music, and as they had control of the vibrations of the universe, and expressed their control through sound, though the instrument form of this music was differently expressed, the basis was everywhere the same.

According to the esotericists the soul, created by God, has dwelt within the spheres of the angels before coming to the cycle of manifestation and carries with it the properties of all spheres and planes. Therefore in a sense the human being is beyond the angels, being created in the very divine image and his potentialities are infinitely greater than his conceptions.

GATHEKA: In Arabia there is a story told what when God created the body of the first man, God commanded the soul to enter the body, and the soul refused to enter, saying that it seemed to it a prison, that it would not enter this prison. Then God asked the angels to sing and dance; and as

the soul heard music it was moved to ecstasy, and in that ecstasy it entered the physical body. It is an old story; yet it gives one the key to the secret of music, that it is now after being born on earth that man loved music, but that the soul came on earth with love for music.

TASAWWUF: The soul, created in the divine image, has the substances of all planes within it and also their essentials, both essences (Zat in Sufic terms) and attributes (Sifat in Sufic terms). The soul is composed of the finest vibrations and out of these fine vibrations come courser vibrations and atoms, the play and interplay between which constitute the various planes of existence, of which there are several, the earth-plane being the densest and farthest, according to the nature of its atoms and vibrations from the source.

Looking at the universe there from, the very Word of God is composed of all these atoms and vibrations, which together constitute the music of the cosmos. For when sound is adapted to definite wave-lengths and cycles it becomes music, whereas otherwise it would be noise. The Word of God is therefore the essence of all music and as this Word becomes, so to speak, the soul of man, the soul is the nexus of music.

And what is ecstasy? Ecstasy is a state in which all the particles of the being are set into rhythmical motion with emotional effects, bringing the consciousness into a state of great joy and freedom. Then one is not conscious of self, at least not of a discrete self, and all it feels are those vibrations of joy and delight. So one becomes unconscious of externals. And nothing produces ecstasy so well as music, which itself being the product of vibration, sets into motion the sympathetic vibrations on all planes: physical, emotional, mental and spiritual, according to its incipient nature and motive.

The Hindus have a science called "Mantra Yoga" which means union with the cosmos through sound. Repetition of the divine word produces union in a state of sobriety, but when sung the words cause ecstasy and intoxication. The Sufis, especially those of the Mevlevi and Chisti schools have made use of proper music to produce the state of ecstasy and thus aid the soul to rise above the bounds of materialism and limitation.

GATHEKA: And if one says, "Why, then, does not every soul love music?" the answer is that there are many souls who are buried. They are living, but they are buried in the denseness of the earth; and therefore they cannot appreciate music. But remember, if they cannot appreciate music, they cannot appreciate anything else; because music is the first thing and the last thing to appeal to every soul.

TASAWWUF: There are any ways by which one can prove this and its careful study is recommended to psychologists. Generally speaking when one does not respond to music, in any or all of its three forms: singing, dancing and instrumentation, there is a defect in breathing. Any and every form of deficiency in this respect shows that there is an incomplete connection between the inner and outer aspects of the personality. People who cannot sing are often found lacking in other respects, especially as regarding expression. Those who do not dance or do not respond to rhythm

are said to “have no soul,” at least their feelings are underdeveloped. And as to criminals, it can especially be noted that they are often lacking in one or another form of musical appreciation, although man is not necessarily a criminal because he breaks the law. But the very diseases found so often among criminal types, e.g. syphilis and tuberculosis, indicate deficiencies in breathing, and therefore spiritual defects.

The question then arises, how to remedy this defect? The first thing is to make an analysis of a person according to the cosmic viewpoint. This is too little understood today to be of practical value. According to the Hindus and Buddhists (and this is explained in “Music and Cosmic Evolution”), there are many grades of beings in the universe, who can largely be distinguished by the sounds they emit, and of course, by their breath. Man contains within his orbit all grades and stages of evolution and according to his sounds he is (or, according to the channel which the Word finds open for its expression).

The second type of analysis is according to the ego. Hindus distinguish between the sattvic, rajasic and tamasic types, which we can call the spiritual, the active and passionate, and the lethargic. It is the lethargic who are not yet awakened. Sufis distinguish five types: the material, emotional, thoughtful, compassionate and wise. And besides these there is a biochemical form of analysis, which, while not yet in vogue, is very scientific and helpful.

The analysis helps to distinguish the condition of a person. Then we must begin where he stands and sometimes it is necessary to awaken the response to rhythm as with a little child. For there are child-souls and old-souls, the grade of soul being quite independent of the age of the body. And one of the greatest mistakes of modern knowledge, and one which is help hastening it to its doom, is the supposition that “all of us were born yesterday.”

When the principles of rhythm, tone, melody and harmony are thoroughly understood and applied music will be the most practical prophylactic for the curing of physical, emotional and mental ills. But music will have to be understood in this largest sense. The Sioux Indians and the Zunis are able to heal by their wise choice of rhythm and melody and we, with all our ability to appreciate Brahms and Beethoven know nothing of the fundamentals of the science or art of music. We begin and the end; we don't know the beginning or the foundation.

GATHEKA: The Hindus say that the man who does not appreciate music and poetry is an animal without a tail; and the Heaven of the Hindus, the Paradise, is made up of singers. They call them Gandharvas, male singers and Apsaras, female singers. The Hindu imagery what seemed best to make a Paradise was music.

TASAWWUF: The oft repeated Christian prayer is “Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven,” but it can be questioned whether any religion has taught otherwise and whether or not the ideal way offered to the world by the wise of all periods was not patterned upon celestial harmony. This is most obvious in the teachings of Confucius, themselves based upon earlier traditions, that harmony is the very basis of civilization and statecraft and alone the rampart against anarchy.

Confucius spoke of the Ancients, but it can be doubted whether he was actually referring to a golden age on earth. For the early Chinese language was extremely realistic and had to be adapted to metaphysical expression, just as their art was later altered in the same direction.

The word “Shemayim,” which we translate into Heavens, refers to the realms of Shem, in other words, to the planes of celestial light and sound. The Hindu Ashman has the same meaning. From the emanations of the heavens the earth and the material world was formed and sustained, although in turn the heavens also depend upon earth.

According to the Hindu and Buddhist conceptions the highest and lowest planes are shrouded in silence, the former being of complete light, the latter of darkness, which are symbolized by the two reciprocally formed words Ararat (light upon light) and Tartaros (darkness upon darkness). Below man are the tirthaga-yoni or raksha and the asura, the asura being between the raksha and man. Rakshas are depicted as animal-like creatures, though processed with a human or sub-human mind; they have no tails. They are subject to all the animal emotions such as lust, rage, gluttony and are lacking in any feeling of consideration. They delight in the pain of others, even in the pain of each other. We can hear their sounds in many carnivorous animals as the puma, tiger, wolf and hyena; also the kite and vulture.

The asura is more advanced but has not the faculty of self-control. Many herbivorous animals emit asuric sounds; thus the cow, goat and domestic dog. Among the birds, the loon is in this class, and perhaps the owl.

Above mankind there are two grades of evolution which can be expressed in musical terms, the creatures of intelligence and the creatures of light. But words like “Apsara,” “Nero,” “Houri” all mean creatures of light. We speak of jinn and angels. The music of the gull is a jinn type; most song-birds; and especially the dove repeat angel-music.

This subject will be dealt with at further length later; it is introduced here so that the student can follow the context.

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## Chapter II

## The Appeal of Music to Man

GATHEKA: And now we come to the question, why does music appeal so much to man? The first thing is that the whole manifestation has its origin in vibration, in sound. It is called **nada**, the sound which was the first manifestation toward the creation of this world, of the universe.

TASAWWUF: The mystical doctrine of this appears in *The Mysticism of Sound* of Sufi Inayat Khan, especially in the first chapter. There one learns that the world was created out of silence and to silence it returns. The realization of this is one of the goals all Yogins and esoteric students.

The word **nada** reappears in the English word “node” and “note” used in music. A node is formed by the crossing of vibrations within a given medium, as a column of air, or pipe. A note is the sound of music, of definite pitch, of a given number of vibrations within a stated time. The Hindus speak of “Nada Brahma,” that the very God is Sound. They also revere Saraswati, the Divine Goddess of Sound.” She is regarded as the consort of Brahma. Saraswati and Brahma correspond to Sarah and Abraham and according to Philo the word Abraham means “father of a multitude of sounds.” Esoterically and mystically the Hindu and Hebrew religions are not so far apart.

GATHEKA: In the Bible we read, “In the beginning was the Word, and Word was God,” and the paraphrase of this is that the human body was made of tone and rhythm.

TASAWWUF: Even the most literal reading of the Bible ought to convince one that man was created in the divine image; that God formed his body out of the material elements, breathed into it the “Breath of life” and the Divine Word was then implanted within the body to sustain it. This body is called the temple of the Holy Spirit, but these teachings, although succinctly expressed, have been only too often accused by the former of taking liberties in the interpretation of the texts.

The fact is that the Hebrew writings are subject to four interpretations: the literal, the companion, the inference and the secret, but these interpretations are by no means contradictions. Each expands the doctrine of the more restricted meaning until we come to the cosmic or divine view. Thus to understand Christ, we should have, as Paul advised, “put on the mind of Christ.”

Summing up those interpretations, the body, the temple of the divine spirit, is composed of vibrations, and the cosmos is composed of vibrations. And what is music? Music is an art and science of the use of musical sounds, sounds resulting from a definite number of vibrations within a given cycle of period of time. The note that we hear is physical to our physical ears, but it has overtones and parallels and inferences and secrets that extend to the innermost spheres of sound. Thus the Word acts in us and through us.

It would not be wrong to say, “With rhythm and music God created the universe.” The ancients held that the laws of music and the laws of the universe were related. This doctrine permeated the teachings of Pythagoras and of Ptolemy, who differed in so many other respects; and it was held by Kepler and the elder Galileo. The study of the stars and the study of notes and moods were related in days gone by, and the attitude of the wise and of the devotee was totally different from that of modern times. Music was a divine art.

Yet today we use the term **tonicity** with respect to the health of the body. Physicians palpate to determine the condition of health of an organ, or a region, or of the whole body. And vibrations are used to heal it. Call these vibrations light, X-rays, electrons, or go further and accept the doctrines of Dr. Abrams; all indicate a new direction is being taken and that toward the esoteric traditions.

What does the word “cosmos” mean? The literal translation is “order,” but then what kind of order? What does order mean? The tradition is that God first sent out the finest vibrations,

vibrations of extreme fineness, of exceedingly rapid motion and short wave-length, of the nature of light. But they were emitted with sound also, and the word “Shem” signifies light and also sound. So one may proclaim, “With rhythmical music God created this universe.” This is called the doctrine of emanation, doctrine common to all Gnostics from the most ancient Egyptian school where it is ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus to the modern theosophists.

GATHEKA: The principal thing in the physical body is the breath, and the breath is audible. It is most audible in the form of the voice. That shows the audible quality. That shows that the principal signs of life in the physical body are tone and rhythm, which make music.

TASAWWUF: Although the Bible begins by saying that God spoke when He created the world and speech depends upon breath; that He created man by breathing into his nostrils the breath of life; and although the New Testament teaches that God is Pneuma, by translating the word pneuma as “spirit” and the Hebrew “ruach” as the spirit of wind, the Hebrew and Christian religions have lost the knowledge of the importance of breath which is still regarded as fundamental by the Hindus and many Buddhists.

For the breath is the very conveyor of life in the body. Without that breath there would be no life. The life flows into the body through the nostrils and there is a counterflow out of the nostrils in exhalation. The significance of each of these movements is studied by the disciples of the sacred path. There is a vast amount of knowledge therefrom which is common to Yogins and adepts but of which the world in general has been kept ignorant, partly because mysticism has been preserved as a secret cult, but largely because the materialistically minded have not realized the simple truth of the function of the breath on all planes and its relationship to life in the highest sense, being the vehicle of all life.

Sufi Inayat Khan has presented the teachings of mysticism to the West in many of his writings both those for the public and those for the seekers, and in his *The Mysticism of Sound* he has presented the fundamental proposition which, if followed, becomes a veritable Mantra Yoga—a union with God through sound. But although the principles are simple, the ego habit of mind presents a tremendous obstacle in the path of most people who at best appreciate the intellectual aspects of it.

So one may say that the body is an instrument of the breath and in speaking and singing we demonstrate that. According to our evolution, condition and state the sounds of our voice vary, both in singing and speaking. When we speak we therefore say more than what may appear, for we hide neither emotion nor thought from the clear visioned. And not only is it possible to make use of the body through breath, it is also possible to make use of the breath through body; the body may become an instrument of breath. The body is therefore not denied or decried by the true mystics; it becomes instead the temple of the Holy Spirit.

And when we follow the ability of children to learn music we can see that at first they are attracted by rhythm and gradually develop in the faculty of expressing tones. This is because rhythm comes

from the earth and tones from heaven. To use Hindu terms, rhythmic is of Prakriti, tone of Purusha.

GATHEKA: Rhythm appeals to man, because there is a rhythm going on in his body. The beats of the head, the beating of the pulse and the movement of the heart, all these show rhythm. In other words rhythm, the rhythm of mind, makes an effect upon this rhythm which is continually going on in the body; and in accordance to its influence it affects the physical body.

TASAWWUF: This explains why people respond to poetry, music and dancing. Why they make all kinds of dances, different dances which have different movements and affect people differently. It also explains why people like military music, watch parades and enjoy bands. All of these affect the body, perhaps the heart-beat also. It is a living experience though few may explain it.

Havelock Ellis has struck a deep chord in his *The Dance of Life*. He concluded that one could ascertain the evolution of any race or tribe on the face of the earth by their types of dance. He could have taken one step more and determined that according to their music all creatures can be measured, not only the human but the sub-human on earth; and perhaps the non-human on other planes. He might have seen that we can measure our civilization by their music and art and learn whether there is sign of progress or decay. That he wrote in a limited fashion can be expanded to cover all things.

Although rhythm affects the body and comes from Prakriti, that is atomic-formation, it has its base in the mind. One sees the effects in the body, even though the cause be hidden. Each kind of music, each rhythm has its particular result. That is why there were war dances, rain dances, harvest dances among the ancient peoples everywhere, which are still preserved by those who have not accepted modern civilization. It would seem that all the vibrations of the universe have their pulsations and their undertones, producing what might be an endless chain of rhythm. We can mark out those pulsations in time but we do not always understand their significance although three is the beat of fire and four of earth.

Now there are many analogies in modern science, which if understood and applied in the world of music will hasten the spiritual outlook. For instance one may say that the metal iron has certain vibrations, is associated with certain vibrations. These vibrations, marked out in time, would make certain rhythms. If one could reproduce these rhythms there would be an effect upon man; he might assimilate "iron" foods more easily and gain "iron" qualities. Mosely through the study of the X-ray spectra discovered the basic rhythm of metals and all chemical elements. This was a great step forward in science.

The study of Mosely's law, of modern meta-chemistry, of spectra analysis and related sciences shows that the elements have selected vibrations in their make-up. So has every soul. But the soul has bodies from all planes, and the individual being more than of the earth is affected deeply by rhythm. So music, dancing and poetry together or alone touch the emotions and reach the mind.

GATHEKA: The notes appeal to a person because of the breath. Breath is a sound, and its



vibrations reach every part of the body, keeping it alive. And therefore the sound that affects vibrations and the atoms of the body gives a sensation. This is only the explanation of the appeal of music to the physical body.

TASAWWUF: The physical body may be regarded as sonorous only to a limited extent, this quality increasing as the breath finds its way through it. The pipes of the organ are sonorous as they make way for the column of air, and the reeds and horns also depend upon air or breath. Man has the breathing apparatus for the production of sound and the ears for hearing, but there are suitable passages in the body which aid both the creation and reception of sound. And besides this, breath has its own sound although it may require keen observation to really know this.

Karma is a mystery to many people. How does the mind affect the body, how does the body react upon the mind? Why is it that karma is reaped generally rather than personally? This becomes clearer when we realize that we all live in the same ocean of breath and therefore partake of the same life. In this sense we are our brother's keepers and what one does indirectly everyone does.

The breath is the instrument by which consciousness reaches outward from the innermost planes and depths of personality and by which also the outer world, with its actions, thoughts and emotions effects us inwardly—if we allow it. By the control over breath man can protect himself against any external forces, and also by control over breath he can draw upon the reservoir of life and extend the sway of blessings to others. For the breath-development is spiritual development. Breath and spirit are one; only by this much more is meant than the mere inhalation and exhalation of gases through the nostrils.

Through breath the physical body becomes a receptacle of life and partakes of the akasha, the all-pervading ether which is the medium for the highest aspects of sound. As the breath becomes refined man becomes refined and his evolution extends in all directions. Then he can distinguish finer types of music and in his turn his ability to sing, dance and play will be developed.

GATHEKA: But music reaches further than the physical body; it only depends what music it is.

TASAWWUF: Those who have studied music from the physical standpoint as part of the science of physics learn that every note or tone is really a chord, consisting of a strong fundamental of definite pitch—which we usually call the note—and a series of partials or overtones which are made of the multiple vibrations of the fundamental—2, 3, 4, 5 and so on up to about 16 times the original number of vibrations per second, all heard simultaneously and producing an integrated compound appearing as an individual. When a note of music is struck that has no overtones, it is not very pleasant to hear. Then we say that it lacks “timbre” or quality, it is harsh even though it is music.

It is interesting to note that the ego has the same nature. The separated ego, that which is very strong and individualistic, does not make much music. It sounds hollow, it lacks spirit. And the person who practices brotherhood, who has extended his sway of Love, who does not see tremendous differences between his personality and others is regarded as a friend or as a beautiful

soul.

If one should try to sing a note and just makes the physical sound, it is not so pleasant. It is just physical music, its production is physical, its affect is physical. But music is like prayer. If prayer has a high ceiling, so to speak, if it reaches the higher planes it will have deep effect. But most prayers are mental, so they rise not above karma and rising not above it add to it. That is why sometimes ten million people praying together cannot stop a war. They do not add to each other, all are reflected back from the finer vibrations of the higher planes. These prayers are too dense. But an adept who has control of this breath, his ego and his thought can pray and this prayer will arise above the lower planes, above the wheel of karma and so can affect events.

And if we add emotion and thought to a note, it comes out in the quality. We have added overtones. Even if these overtones are not directly perceptible to a physical instrument—they are not physical overtones necessarily—they will touch the finer bodies of man, they will produce a deeper appreciation. And if heart is added, then the very soul of man gives expression in that music. And the same is true in dancing and instrumental playing as in singing; as deep the breath, as fine the vibration, so will the effects be. Thus music can become magic, give rise to magic.

In the use of instruments one must also bear in mind that according to the materials of which they are made, so will the expression be. The reed is a living thing, metals are not so living. That is why the trumpet is adept to martial music, the flute to romance. And when the saxophone was invented made of metal, while its physical resonance was increased, its “spiritual overtones” are necessarily less than those of a clarinet. Wooden instruments and gut have more life than metals. A glass or metal violin might produce an excellent physical tone, be even perfect from the physical standpoint, but its feeling capacity will be limited even in the hands of a master. For there are many tangible and intangible effects in music: physical, psychic, mental, emotional, moral and spiritual.

GATHEKA: There is a tradition that the first language that existed in the world was of music, it was then that the language of words came.

TASAWWUF: Of course from the metaphysical view this is so. The angels are resonant beings. Whatever they feel they cry out. Everything of their nature is in their sounds, and they communicate thereby. They do not use words. Words are more limited than thoughts; a single thought can give rise to a multitude of words. So a single feeling can give rise to a multitude of thoughts. And sometimes a piece of music can stir up different thoughts, different emotions in different people. It is the same music, but it affects them differently.

When the soul descended into the sphere of thought its means of communication necessarily differed and then words were needed. But only those words were pitched on certain tones which clarified their meanings. The Chinese language, which makes use of a comparatively small number of word-forms depends largely upon tone and inflection. And there are enough vestiges to indicate that the original Indo-Germanic language also made use of tones. When inflexions were dropped from every day speech they were still retained in poetry and sacred writings, which were always

chanted. Even the Hebrew Bible had to be chanted, there is always an inflection in the reading of it.

Little infants make sounds which we do not usually recognize but which are clear to other infants. The birds have singing tones, they produce music and this music serves as a vehicle of communication and communion. Many lower animals have mating calls, or express thought and feeling by the beating of wings and other devices. Sometimes not only are their sounds unintelligible to man but even inaudible, although it can easily be demonstrated too that they do make such sounds. Thus it is possible to drive a nightingale or dove to cover by imitating those birds' forms of warning-calls. Or to make a round like that of a hawk or eagle would also send them away in flight. And by ability to repeat certain sounds men have been able to attract the lesser developed creatures, even to make friends therewith.

GATHEKA: Even now among the primitive races there is a language of sounds; and at the same time the languages of the world which are more musical are more impressive, and from the languages which have less music in them there is less impression.

TASAWWUF: In a certain sense the beasts, especially the anthropoid apes, have their languages and their music. It may seem to us quite incomplete but no doubt it is sufficient for their needs. After all, it is man, not the animals, who has to name things, to coin words to cover so many thoughts, who has the dual faculty of looking within and without, who can rise easily above the psychic strata, who has the self-will-power which is lacking in the animals. And no matter how developed or thought a beast, such as a horse or elephant be, he has not the natural faculty of naming things, his curiosity is limited and he depends largely upon psychic reflection.

Yet the natural languages of man have one thing in common with the animals: that by reflection and impression they can and do convey emotions and thoughts. The inflexional languages are regarded as "most civilized" by the people that speak them; more attention is paid to the voice then and less to the tone. The Indo-Germanic and Semitic peoples (or combining them, the Caucasian) use influential speech as they have developed science, mathematics, engineering, poetry. They have given the world civilizations and power, and, apparently, destruction.

The Chinese language is to a totally different sort. They employ monosyllables, and very few of them. They therefore distinguish them by pitch or stress. They use simple sounds in many ways. Therefore we find among them the highest artistic development and a sense of wisdom and eternity which is not so common elsewhere. So the Chinese may be called impressive and they impress others while the Caucasian are expressive and even though they have imposed their culture and especially their rule far and wide, it does not mean that they have converted hearts.

GATHEKA: It is not only the words that convey a certain meaning; it is the tone that very often conveys the meaning. And sometimes the same word can have two meanings or opposite meanings, if it is in a different tone.

TASAWWUF: If we study languages we can easily prove this. Thus the words "daemon" and

“devil” have a remarkable history, going so far as to reserve their meanings. Many words such as funny, idiotic, wizard, clerk, have had strangely different meanings in different ages. The forms remain, the thoughts behind them change. But again thoughts remain and forms change. This makes it difficult to understand the literature of different ages and has caused so much confusion in attempting to understand sacred scriptures such as the Bible and Qur’an without having the point of view of the writer. No student of chemistry or biology would be satisfied until he had performed the experiments, at least in part, and so gained the point of view of the writer; but in religion it has been different. But as thought never suffices for spiritual understanding, the thought-language does not touch the heart, does not unravel the heart.

Elocution and dramatic art have therefore been used to stress words to bring out their meaning, especially in terms of feeling. Their use in this direction is explained in “Spiritual Drama.” And in both speech and music, if one can awaken the heart-qualities within himself he can affect others, in time awaken the understanding of others. This is one of the secrets of all spiritual unfoldment.

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### **Chapter III**

### **Some Ancient Bases of Music**

GATHEKA: The history of the Sanskrit ages says that Shiva, or Mahadeva, was the first inventor of an instrument. When he was wandering about in the forest, busy with spiritual development, he wanted to have some source of amusement, a change in his meditative life.

TASAWWUF: Shiva is the Lord of the Yogins and was probably a great teacher who appeared in very ancient times and taught the science and art of union through breath and sound. Gradually his name was applied to the God Rudra and he became identified with the Divinity, so that today millions of Hindus are known as Saivites. Shiva has become the God as the Destroyer, Assimilator, Destroyer, Changer and World-Mover. As Natayana he is the Lord of the Dance. He gave to the world the basic principles of spiritual music, whether as song, instrumental piece or dance.

Shiva spent much of his life in the solitude and laid down the principles of the caste system, based upon the principles of earth, water, fire, air and ether. But he also divided the life of every man accordingly so that each one was infant, student, householder, forest dweller and wandering ascetic; the last was the spiritual or etheric aspect of life for the individual, wherein he was beyond cast. There was thus a balance between society and solitude in the existence of every person, of women as well as of men.

The earliest music and the earliest musical instruments did not appear on earth by magic, but by inspiration. Fabre D’Olivet has explained this at length in his *La Musique*. He has translated Genesis V. 21 thus: “And the name of his brother was Jubal (Universal fluid, principle of sound, source of joy and moral prosperity): he who was the father (founder) of every luminous conception, and that which is worthy of loving admiration (arts and sciences).” (Hebrew Language Restored) In *La Musique* Fabre D’Olivet wrote:

“Music must not therefore be considered as the invention of man, for never has a man existed upon the earth capable of inventing a science, and never will he exist. A science is not invented. It is a gift that the human spirit makes to humanity, by means of one of its inspiring faculties. The inspired science, whatever it may be, descends in principle, enveloped in its spiritual seed, unformed and faint in its primal elements, but containing in itself, in potentiality, all its developments.

“The first men who receive it have only just an obscure knowledge of it. Many even do not recognize it at all and die without having known the treasure that lurked in their breasts. Others, however, show forth feeble glimmers of it. Generations succeed one another whilst it develops itself in silence, increases and expands in the midst of a nation. Then certain men, more fortunately organized than others, become distinguished; and by their success awake the attention of their contemporaries. A new course is opened? The love of glory, that of honors or of riches, according to the kind of science, now inflames men’s hearts and serves as a vehicle. A noble emulation urges thousands of competitors, rouses them to surpass one another and hastens progress, so much the more because it was slower at the beginning.

“Finally, a man of genius appears; his investigating mind embraces the science in its wholeness; he sees at a glance what it has been, what it is and what it can be. Boldly he takes possession of it and, uniting its divided branches in a single sheaf, gives them new form. By his victorious ascendance he forces the divine inspiration, until then disseminated, to concentrate in him alone; and reflecting it as from a luminous center, eclipses all that has preceded him, enlightens all that must follow and leaves to his successors no other hope than that of imitating him. This man possesses the primal inspiration, of whatever kind it may be. He dominates science, but he neither creates nor invents. So when he himself or certain sages among the nations write on the science that he has illustrated, it is always to the Universal Being, to God Himself or to one of his faculties, that they attribute the creation and the invention.

All the Hindu traditions point back to the Rishi Narada as the founder of music and mantra-yoga. But a perusal of most of the works on Yoga reveal that they are dedicated to Shiva, either alone or with his consort variously called Sakti, Lakshmi, Kali, etc. And the Hindus have always held that when there was a need either God descended in form, as an Avatar or incarnation, or sages, who have abodes in the Himalayan mountains sacred to Shiva, appeared among humanity with the necessary teachings.

From another view the ancients and the moderns too, accepting the principles of emanations or vibrations, saw in music an aspect of cosmos or universal order, the basis of the laws studied by scientists. In all ancient countries some record was kept of the movements of planets and relationships were marked between notes of the gamut and the movement of these planets. Although this idea has been especially ascribed to Pythagoras, it was far flung and still had credence among learned men as late as the time of Kepler, who stringently held to it.

The study of metaphysics, especially from the mystical view, takes into account the existence of

various planes, their peculiar natures and their relationships one to another. Thus they find the principles of music even outside the realm of sound. And it is possible that out of the knowledge of the day in the realms of meta-chemistry, celestial mechanics and other grand sciences a new picture and a new attitude will be help toward music.

GATHEKA: And so he took a piece of bamboo and two gourds, and attached them to the bamboo; and out of the sinews of the animals gut-string was made, and by putting it on that instrument he made the Vina. Therefore the Hindus call the Vina a sacred instrument; and for many years they did not allow other strings to be used but gut-strings.

TASAWWUF: It should not be taken literally that the Vina was the first musical instrument. It could not be used by primitive man, even though he were instructed by divine beings. Primitive man first learned to use gourds, reeds and strings separately. But to the sages none of these were entirely satisfactory as their value with respect to spiritual evolution was limited.

The music of drums and gourds is of the earth element and possesses the earth quality. They do not always possess pitch and so do not express definite tones. Today the orchestra uses the tympanum which is formed of a membrane stretched over a huge contraption, almost hemispherical in form, of metal and wood. And in various parts of the world one finds the xylophone, gong and gamelan, percussion instruments which are tuned and keyed, but their tones are not so simple, that of the gamelan and especially of the gong being a group-tone acting as a note—a most important feature and one which may become very important in all the science and art of the future, as Rudhyar claims.

The gut-string is also very ancient. It gives out the earth quality in another way. Its resonance depends largely upon the sounding board of the instrument. There have been many changes in the shape and size of these sounding boards. The most interesting characteristic about them—and one can learn this from instrument makers or by reading books on the subject—is that one can produce on the sounding board all the tones that the strings will give forth. Thus it can truly be said of a good viol, that its kingdom of heaven (that is of **shemaim**, or sounds) is within itself.

Reeds are found in many parts of the world and it would appear that many primitive people have learned to use them. Just why and how has not always been studied, but according to the mystical traditions sages and holy men have appeared in all parts of the world at various times and instructed peoples otherwise quite ignorant. This is one of the ways by which diving blessings came to mankind.

Each kind of music and each instrument is in some way limited. The range of reeds is usually that of a few notes, seldom more than an octave or two. A string instrument may be plucked or struck so as to give more notes, and the scale or octave thereon can be divided variously. The more the scale is divided, the more refined the music and where many tones are used in the gamut we may call it intensive music, while when many octaves are employed it is extensive music. The music of India is especially intensive; that of Europe especially extensive. Each has its significance.

Most of these instruments are limited in amplitude or loudness. But while drums and conch shells and gongs may be heard at much greater distances, they are not keyed instruments, and so do not produce melodies.

GATHEKA: No doubt afterwards this instrument was improved.

TASAWWUF: The earliest Vina appears to have had two sounding boards of equal size. The strings were so attached as to facilitate the productions of “intensive music” and it often contained unplucked resonant strings. Its quality approached that of the human voice. For this reason and also because it was ascribed to Lord Shiva it was adopted mainly to spiritual music while the tamboura, in many respects similar, was employed for more secular pieces, just as the saxophone has been used in these days, although one cannot really compare the saxophone to the tamboura.

Later Vinas seem to have approached the shape of the human body, there being a larger sounding board below, a smaller one above. The body has the head above, the trunk below, the head being small compared to the trunk. So the gourds of the Vina were made unequal, and afterwards hollows of wood or metal were substituted for the reeds. Also greater care was taken as to the size and shape just as the great Italians took care of the size and form of their violins.

GATHEKA: In all ages why gut-strings has proved to be more appealing to the human soul is that it comes from life; it was a member of a living body, and even after being separated from the living body it still holds: “I am living.” Compare the violin with the piano; the sound of the violin is living. The piano may drown it, but the life that comes from the gut-string manifests as a voice.

[Ed—Here is a gap in the commentary and text from the Gathekas: pages 14-15 are missing.]

If we study the psalm of praise that Moses offered in the book of Exodus, we can discover it has an esoteric basis. The early psalm was like the Vedic mantra (Moses was instructed by Jithro in this science and art), produced in a state of ecstasy or superconsciousness, and chanted in order to elevate the consciousness of the devotees. Words were employed in those days to help the sound, to elevate the personality, to raise him above the denseness of earth.

GATHEKA: Then by the Hebrew it was called **musiki**; the Arabs call it **musiki**, and the Persians called it the same. And then we find in different languages of Europe the same word coming as music.

TASAWWUF: This subject has been explained also in Fabre D'Olivet's *La Musique*. That author has carefully related the sacred backgrounds of the subject and shown how the Greeks derived much of their knowledge from the Near East, and how we in our turn have been indebted to the Greeks.

## Chapter IV Psychic Principles of Music as seen in a study of the Hindu Art

GATHEKA; The Hindu tradition considers four different cycles of humanity, of the human race; Krita Yug, the Golden Age; Treta Yug, the Silver Age; Dvapara Yug, the Copper Age; and Kali Yug, the Iron Age. This cycle in which we are living is the Iron Age.

TASAWWUF: One may read about these different ages in the sacred and traditional books of the Hindus, particularly in the Puranas. These traditions in general are not so different from those of other branches of the Aryans, and especially among the Greeks there were many of the same ideas. The Sufis have inherited many of the more or less esoteric doctrines of both the Semites and Aryans and their moral teachings have been expressed as golden, silver, copper and iron rules (see Vadan of Inayat Khan).

GATHEKA: In Krita Yoga, in the Golden Age, therefore there was the music of the soul, a music that appealed to the soul, that uplifted the soul, that raised the soul toward cosmic consciousness, the music of the angels, the music which is healing, which is soothing.

TASAWWUF: According to the esotericists, the soul is all sound and yet the nature of the soul is silence. It is very difficult for the mind of man to grasp the full significance of this and though we repeat endlessly: "The kingdom of heaven is within" this repetition does not bring the realization and knowledge. But the soul in the state of silence is not directly conscious and has no particular or rather particularizing experience. So it covered itself with light as a garment and entered that sphere which the Sufis call "Djabrut" or the angelic plane.

Djabrut is the world of heart and all its faculties, attributes and activities belong to the heart. The soul passes through that plane on its way toward manifestation. Therefore it is looked at as a past experience. Whether we study the records of the Greeks or Chinese or Persians or Etruscans or Mayas, it is the same; they refer to the golden age in the distant past, but this was not an experience on earth.

**Gizai rub**, or food for the soul, is the name given to music by Sufis, who among the esotericists have given special attention to it as a means of elevating mankind from the earthly consciousness toward the cosmic consciousness. They have three special means by which this is done, namely singing, dancing and instrumental music. Singing which is most important is called Gayan, instrumental music Vadan and dancing Nirtya or Nirtan.

The music of the Golden Age is that of the angelic world which is composed of the highest and finest of sounds. Not only are the vibrations of that plane exceedingly fine and high but the qualities too. So that if one can set this music into operation it touches the heart and feelings of everybody. We hear it especially in the cooing of doves and of little infants and to a lesser extent the songs of praise which the little birds express at dawn.

There are two ways by which man can recognize this music, an outer and an inner method; and



there are two ways by which he can produce it, an outer and an inner method. Now the outer method of hearing may be intellectual, but it always follows the inner hearings; one cannot have that experience without recognizing at once the same qualities in the outer world. For the planes are interlinked, though each be finer than the one below, and there is no entire separation in God. Only after one has had the inner hearing, when he hears the birds or sees the infant they become reminded of the divinity of music and the ocean of sound.

The inner method of hearing comes largely from practices to which the devotee must adopt himself. One can see the pictures of Milarepa the great Tibetan saint, with his hand to his ears. Caves, deserts and silent forests offer the best means of discovering the Saute Surmad but there are Yoga exercises which aid in the opening of the interior, and they together with meditation and concentration and above all, loving selflessness, awaken the heart in man so that he will discover this Golden Music.

As for producing it, the inner method must proceed the outer method. As we sing, ordinarily the notes and sounds are products of the personal will. The will through the body makes use of the breath to create sounds. But the spiritual method is different, that there the breath through the body makes use of the will. Then the body becomes an instrument for the etheric element, which otherwise cannot be set in motion, having no other instrument on the physical plane excepting the human body and that very seldom. When one by refinement elevates the status of his body, he creates the capacity of receiving the etheric breath. It is by that means that light is introduced into the flesh; it is by similar means that the angelic sounds can be produced. And after one has learned to produce them in the unconscious or semi-conscious state of "not-self," it is comparatively easy to do it afterwards in the conscious state. Then one can reproduce to a degree most of the sounds of nature, and what is more, the feelings thereof, and so touch the heart of others.

Zikr is a practice of the Sufis by which their most sacred phrase is uttered in the chant, and so elevates the consciousness, purifies the body and thus prepares it to become a temple of the Holy Spirit, and refines the personality. The Mantra Yogins among the Hindus have even simpler methods, so simple that modernists would hardly appreciate them. For they can, by the perfection of the sounding of a single note, rise to the divine consciousness.

As an instrument is a creation of man, usually, it cannot give forth what is not in it. Only the musical instruments of God, so to speak, can give forth the perfect music. Thus the wind in the trees, the waterfalls, the sea. But sometimes a reed instrument or a conch shell will give forth deep tones, deep so far as the feeling is concerned. And as for dancing, as the whole body is used in it, it can become a veritable bridge to God if one only knew how to apply the principles.

GATHEKA: And the music of Treta Yug, which means the Silver Age, was the music of the heart, the music that appeals to the depth of heart, which created sympathy, love in nature, which inspired one to feel and which helped the heart quality to develop.

TASAWWUF: This music is found most often in the sweet songs of birds, but also in natural sounds. The song of the nightingale stands foremost in this class, as that of the dove stands foremost in the golden music. Man, however, is able to produce silver music without entering into the depths of his consciousness, provided he has developed fineness and he can communicate it through instruments as well as in song and dance. The secret of it comes from his heart concentration, that by regarding the heart as the center of his being, and holding on to it, he puts feeling into his words and sounds.

Isadora Duncan no doubt was correct in seeking the center within her personality around which to base the dance. She discovered this, as she thought, in the solar plexus—which led to her undoing. If she had found the heart she would have been successful. And since her time there have been some dancing teachers who have discovered this heart-center and so been successful whereas their greater known predecessor failed.

The music of each plane is able to affect the bodies of the lower planes. One might say that the music of the soul touches all the bodies and aspects of the personality, but especially the feelings. The music that comes out of man's heart can only touch the heart of others in accordance with his development, power and fineness, but all feeling touches the mind, the emotions and the flesh. There are songs which produce rest, reverie, deep feeling. The mother crooning a lullaby to her baby is producing silver music.

Now as the soul-expression can be used for spiritual development, the most remarkable result of Silver Music is its psychic effects. These are various. For instance it may stimulate the mind of others. Many people listening even to good classical music feel a sort of inspiration; it may be the highest for which they have capacity. Others feel their emotions and accordingly are drawn toward courage, sympathy, refinement, gaiety, joy; or even in a counter-direction at times for the effects of the music can be varied, even more varied than those of drama.

When this type of music is understood it can be used for healing. The most efficacious healing music of the day is that based upon proper rhythm. The rhythm is the child of earth and the melody is the offspring of heaven. As the Bible teaches, the sons of God may unite with the daughters of earth. But the classical music of Europe and America is chiefly intellectual, and its scientific bases, much less its philosophical significance, have been given little study. That is why it is not successfully applied to healing; whereas Sioux, Zuni, Zulus know something about this art.

Right rhythm has the tendency to produce the same rhythm of breath. The breath is the veritable channel of life and health. And right melody puts the mind in a suitable condition correcting the abuses of mind which are among the main causes of disease. Sacred phrases and mantras have the effect of clearing out the mind; they are mental purgatives, so to speak. And one cannot draw from music more thought and more feeling than has been put into it. Therefore traditional sacred and folk melodies are the best, for they have attracted a tremendous amount of Baraka, spiritual blessings with living magnets and psychic effects, which can be conveyed to the ailing one.

But the work of music is not only to protect, it is also to develop, to promote. Therefore its psychic importance is greater than its healing importance. Spiritual music alone would have the effect of refining the bodies and elevating man to the degree that he could not do his work in the world. Therefore a strong psychic foundation is excellent for it becomes a connecting link between the spiritual world and the world of healing, even of the mental world, and the physical.

The secret of it is simple, begin with the heart. Place the consciousness in the heart and feel the sound as if emanating therefrom in singing; feel the magnetism therefrom in playing, and feel the center of gravity therefrom in dancing. And when there is a spirit of devotion, a love for God, a sense of reverence, this becomes easy.

In *La Musique* Fabre D'Olivet says, in his advice to young composers:

“Listen to this secret, those who seek for the perfection of the musical art. Know that there exists a correspondence among souls, a secret and sympathetic fluid, an unknown electricity which puts them in relationship with one another. Of all the means for putting this fluid into movement, music offers the most powerful. Would one communicate a sentiment or a passion to those who listen to him? Would one awaken in them a memory, or inspire them with a presentiment? Let him vitally conceive this sentiment, this passion; let him imbue himself with this memory, this presentiment; then work! That which he desires will be effected. The more force one puts into the feeling the more he will see his listeners feeling with intensity. They will experience, unconsciously and in proportion to his force and their sensibility, an electric connection which he will have impressed upon the sympathetic fluid of which I have spoken. Let him not be uneasy to know how this is done, how this connection can survive the motive principle which shall have determined it or ask that it be confided to paper. Those metaphysical depths are not at this moment of his domain. Let him do what I have told him, if he can, and let it take its course.”

GATHEKA: The music of the Copper Age was the music that appealed to the mind, the intellect, that one could see the intricacies of musical science, the difference of many different scales, the quality of rhythm.

TASAWWUF: In at least three parts of the world: Europe, India and Japan, this development has been carried on in an extreme degree, although wherever there is advanced civilization there is bound to be Copper Music, and the copper state of the arts. Spengler has, perhaps, more than any other man, made a careful study of the civilizations of the world and their corresponding arts, sciences and philosophies. But he has left it open to some disciple to take the same impersonal attitude to the subject as a post-Einsteinian philosopher or scientist takes to time-space.

Symphonic music in nearly all its forms belongs to this class. Indeed all thought-out music is “Copper” and really **represents the thought forms, philosophy, mental and psychological condition of the composer—in sound**. Those who have studied modern theosophy in any of its aspects have perhaps been given an idea of “thought-forms” and these forms are expressed in color and line. But there is no reason why a “thought-form” should not have a sonorous as well as

a pictorial representation. The sonorous representation forms the basis of much of the music of the day.

Of course as the mind develops, it both explores past knowledge, extends it, embellishes it, and also seeks new and broader horizons. This has lead to intensive and extensive music. The music of India is intensive with its 22 notes in the octave (there are, however, variations of **seven** notes which have a certain degree of freedom). And this has permitted the creation of a large number of moods, or ragas. These moods are both musical and emotional, for the munis and rishis, who have given India all of its fundamentals, knew the secret of thought-form and emotional-expression and have again and again intellectualized the artistic and scientific aspects of the music and expressed the theory as well as instructed the performers.

The music of the West has become more and more scientific until, perhaps, in Schoenberg, we have seen the employment of gigantic orchestras, with numerous instruments, permitting a tremendous number of colors and patterns, and an endless variety of sounds without increasing emotional intensity and coming to the very threshold of noise. Percy Grainger (he and Cyril Scott, the occult-composer, are chums) has even taken one over that threshold, but skipped back, having a modicum of interior development, leaving it to others to go into the chasm.

Thus we can see that the Chinese with their five notes are rather blunt people, practical, active and ingenuous. The Hindus, contrariwise, are emotional, refined and sensitive. While the European, though not blunt as the Chinese, is not nearly so refined as the Persian or Hindu; and the Arab, with his third notes, stands between the European and Asian Aryan.

(It would be unfair here, to develop this subject further without paying tribute, or at least giving honorable mention to Dane Rudhyar. This man, far ahead of this times, has not only filled the purposes of Plutarch, Spengler and Fabre D'Olivet, quoted above, but has tried to express his thoughts and feelings from transcendental heights wherefrom few readers may be able to follow. And the introduction of many astrological and Hindu terms makes it most difficult to follow him upon any purely intellectual basis alone.) Rudhyar says that when half-tones are used the people are more material, with third tones more emotional and with quarter tones more aesthetic. It is doubtful if this can be disproved.

To understand the Copper music in its fullness one has to know much of the scientific aspects of it and some grounding in Helmholtz, the master-scientist of the 19th century, is needed. For Helmholtz was not befogged by tradition, nor by conventional agreements independent of nature to fix scales and tones. He studied every form of harmony from every possible aspect and saw tremendous possibilities in scales of 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, up to 24 notes per octave. He also recognized huge possibilities in Hindu, Javanese and other types of music. In our day Theremin and Cowell have tried to follow Helmholtz and are often regarded as freaks or scientists rather than musicians and artists!

GATHEKA: And then the music that belonged to the Iron Age had its influence on the physical

body; that helped the soldiers to march and moved people to dance.

TASAWWUF: Even from the biochemical view we can see that the assimilation of iron into the body strengthens it, while foods with copper (e.g. milk) help the nerves and so the mind; foods with silver and gold in them, although the amounts are small, help to make the accommodation for the finer aspects of light. So in using the names of metals symbolically, the ancients and the occultists have not always been far from the truth.

As has been stated, melody appears to descend from heaven to earth and rhythm to re-ascend from earth to heaven. Through the body rhythms can produce emotional states, even to the degree of causing ecstasy or at least intoxication. Thus the instruments of the “iron” age are largely percussion but the piano especially and string instruments can also be used for percussion effects. Besides this there is the “slap bass,” and the substitution of jazz or embellishment for direct melody. Then one feels the music within the body, there is little thought to it and the effect is physical and emotional, often sexual, while the psychic power is drawn toward the earth.

Much of “iron” music appears as degrading although it has perhaps existed for a long time on the earth. It is only when it appears among people who have been used to higher types, where there have been copper and silver influences that one notices it. And it is true that when we are pulled down toward the earth there is a waning of our spiritual potentialities. The question then arises: can vital force be set into an opposite direction? But before this can be answered we have to know more of the nature both of music and of vital force.

Havelock Ellis in his *The House of Life* has suggested the tremendous possibility, not only in measuring people through the dance but of using the dance to direct the spiritual energies of the individual and of the race. The earth-rhythm, par excellence, is of the beat of four and this stimulates the limbs and adrenals, fostering physical courage. The war-dance around the fire adds another element to it and raises the feelings of the warrior. The harvest dance is of another type and the rain dance introduces another, the water element. Here music and dance come to the borderland of magic.

The Hindus have preserved a singularly large number of rhythms but in Europe there has been a restriction in this direction, only a few even of the rhythms of ancient Greece being preserved. And with all the revolutionary tonal effects that have been used as bases of experimental or of artistic expression since the time of Wagner, little has been done with rhythms. On the contrary, the introduction of “free verse” in poetry has led to movements in two opposite directions: the one toward cosmic rhythm, the other toward chaos; thus in emancipating himself from conventions man stands on the borderland between spiritual freedom and anarchy. To use the Hindu terms, liberation from Rajas may elevate man to Sattva or degrade him to Tamas. So even before the war, the elements—if so they can be called—of anarchy and perversion were on the increase.

[Ed—Here is a gap in the commentary and text from the Gathekas: pages 22-36 are missing.]

However there is one thing which has been mentioned in many places and which merits repetition here. And that is, that the raga has its particular season, mood, notes, time and place; often a special color and surroundings and a working knowledge of mysticism, only too rare in the East and practically entirely absent from the West is more helpful than anything else for the understanding as well as the playing and writing of Hindu composition.

GATHEKA: Now, these ragas were made by four different classes of people; by those who studied and practiced folk songs, and out of folk songs arranged themes or ragas.

TASAWWUF: Folk songs and plain songs are often quite simple melodies or modes, but they are indeed based upon thought. The thought is usually of a practical nature growing out of the occupation and the movements of the occupation. Thus the boatman pulling a barge, the wheelwright, the potter at his wheel, the shepherd and the weaver naturally have different rhythms and themes suited to those rhythms. They are indeed mantrams of their work. Not only is music to ascend to heaven, in devotion, but it is to be used upon earth to make all work an art of blessing.

Much of such music appears as instinctive and was not always thoroughly analyzed. But out of it grew national music, dances and symphonic form. Often these symphonic forms have been adapted to instruments of fixed pitch and so the folk-tunes were modified. But again, it has been that the folk music supplied the music and the instruments were made to repeat the proper tones.

GATHEKA: And then there were mathematicians, who by mathematics made out so many hundreds of ragas, or even more than hundreds.

TASAWWUF: Roughly speaking arithmetic is the mathematics of modern Europe, geometry of ancient Greece and algebra of India, and the musics of each resemble in a sense the corresponding mathematical sciences. In India the mathematicians arranged the different scales and coordinated the notes. They also studied the rhythms and adopted spans by which they could be taught and otherwise persevered. They are responsible for the fixation of pitch and the production and reproduction of musical instruments which could be played one generation after another so that the art of music, its sciences and its fundamentals could be preserved down the ages. And when we study Hindu music from the scientific side, following perhaps the principles that Helmholtz has offered in his *Analysis of Tone*, we discover as he did, the high merit of the ancient mathematical musicians of India.

In recent years there has been a growing recognition of the value of the musical tradition and stimulated by the late Maharajah Gaekwar of Baroda, a movement was instituted to preserve all the types of Hindustani and Deccan music both for its own sake and for the benefit of the world.

GATHEKA: And then there were poets, dramatists—for their use they made ragas and their wives raginis, and their sons and their daughters, and their daughters-in-law and their son-in-law; and in this way they made families of ragas in their imagination.

TASAWWUF: This suggests at once the need of inner development for the complete understanding of the Hindu music. The mathematicians offered the theory, that it was possible to create an endless degree of form-ragas and scales, combining various and varying notes and employing a multitude of rhythms therefor. But if they alone had been followed, music would have become degraded as it indeed has. They could supply the forms, the physical bodies, but they could not endow it with spirit. It was at this point that the poets and dramatists, usually adepts, turned their creative genius and made the music sublime.

Spiritual concentration is the living art. In the West the most complete concentration would enable a performer to repeat exactly the works of a composer and perhaps to add all the feeling possible, and that would be in that realm perfection. But in the East where form is incomplete without life, it is possible to concentrate with improvement and to make the impression that one has received growth. Besides every mood has its complement and its opposite, and a study of emotions, psychology and breath made it possible, once a raga is given, to create a ragini therefrom, the latter being, so to speak, as the wife of the former.

Then a concentration upon the raga and ragini together, with the active side of the personality dominating would produce a son, and with the passive side of the personality dominate a daughter. Then the “son-in-law” raga would have the same relation to the “daughter” and the “daughter-in-law” to the “son,” as the original raga had to the ragini, being the emotional, intellectual and psychological supplement, complement or reciprocal opposite. In this way every mood, feeling, emotion and thought could find a musical expression and when music was played or sung it vibrated upon all planes. And this, together with the direction it takes, warrants its use of the term “spiritual.”

GATHEKA: And then the artists, who made out of the three different ragas they practiced made the scale, a certain theme, and they named it a certain raga. On this scale of ragas the music of India was based.

TASAWWUF: From the sacred point of view music as an art was not separated. Painting uses forms and color, poetry uses words, but the direction of the devotion and concentration was the same; all were for the sublime purpose of drawing man closer to the gods. Hellenic art originally at least, had the same purpose and purport. Then, when one intoned the poetry or “melodized” a sacred picture, the proper arrangement of the tones used, according to their pitch, formed the scale.

GATHEKA: The artist had the credit of every song he sang and every theme he played, because although the theme might be only of four bars, or eight bars, yet he improvised on it, and made it more interesting. Therefore an artist in India had to be at the same time a composer.

TASAWWUF: The first step was to produce the melody correctly, and this meant not only as to form but as to mood and thought. The time, the place, the conditions and especially the method of breathing were most important and when one has this knowledge of breath it complements,

perfects and even supersedes the other factors. Then, after the song has become master on all planes, it grows like a tree, into something mightier and finer.

According to the Eastern principles, there are four types of perfection through the negation of personality and assimilation into the higher states: (a) assimilation in the living teacher; (b) assimilation in the one who has passed on; (c) assimilation in the perfect ideal whom one has never met directly; (d) assimilation in the Perfect Divinity. In the West at best one can repeat what one has learned from the teacher, or what has been received from the previous generations, or perhaps from one's contemporaries, and even those endowed with genius have no means of getting beyond stages (a) and (b), if indeed they exhaust all the possibilities thereof.

The Oriental begins with the guru and he not only learns from the external being of the guru but is fed by the internal personality of him. Then as he grows in his assimilation he finds a new life within himself, and as this new life begins to express it is no longer imitativeness; it has its own channel, and is directly connected with one's own personality. Just as the Hebrew Bible teaches, "And it was morning and it was evening, the first day," so the spiritual passes through a stage of not-being, expansion, new growth and expression of personality (morning).

After one has passed through that stage he may go into another stage wherein the teacher who is no longer in the world becomes directly or indirectly his guru. And then he may reach the glorious stage of assimilation in his ideal, being it Buddha, Krishna, Mohammed. And finally he goes toward the highest grade of assimilation into the All-Being, after which he reaches the perfection of sound, in the Universal Silence (Saute Surmad).

Each of the grades and sub-grades of development and becoming has its musical parallel and counterpart, and as the internal personality grows one's musical expressions necessarily change. More life is put into the themes and they are varied in the light of this life. That is why mantrams are used because they anchor the personality and chain the agitations of self-will. The mantram which may consist only of a few notes, repeated in the light of one's changing personality offers endless variation. And the raga, being in part an external movement, often related to nature, offers esthetic as well as devotional expression.

It is true that in the West we have variations and "ad lib" movements which give a degree of freedom. To them have been added "jazz" and "swing" but while these free man from man's conventions, they do not, indeed they cannot elevate his personality. They provide no true basis for inspiration or for expressions which may arise from inspiration. And in India the object of music was not necessarily to please an audience. The musician was the spiritual leader of the audience, he could benefit them. He might even be called the physician of the soul. He had to have knowledge of nature, circumstances, feelings and needs. He had to keep his own heart pure, he had to understand the silence, how to magnetize an atmosphere, and how to tune his instrument to his inner being. Thus music could and at one time did become the avenue over which souls were drawn toward God.



GATHEKA: In improvising there was consideration given to the rhythm and to the raga, that the audience might be able to recognize it. Even today, if a person sings a raga which is not exactly as it ought to be, among the audience there may be someone who does not know what mistake he makes, but who will say: it does not sound right; just as in Spain when a Grand Opera singer sings and if he makes one little mistake, someone from the audience begins to say “No, no, that is not right”; because the picture of the music of the opera has become engraved upon their spirit, and as soon as it seems different from what they are accustomed to hear they know there is something wrong.

TASAWWUF; In the Western world, until the so-called whole-tone scale was adopted, even a person quite ignorant of music could tell when a wrong sound was struck, when there was defective harmony or off-key pitch. But in India harmony is psychological also and follows its own genre. When there is a clash between the feeling supposedly conveyed in the music and that of the “scene” one can notice it. There has to be a certain recognition of the surroundings as well as of one’s inner being. For while the melody comes from above, so to speak, the rhythm comes from below and even if one has the intention of bettering earthly conditions, or helping someone else, he has to begin with what is known and presented openly.

The Sufis, who make special use of music for spiritual development, repeat the most sacred phrases of Islam in the form known as Zikr, which literally means “remembrance.” Its constant intonation impresses upon the inner being of the devotion the All-Pervading aspect of Deity in such a manner that man rises toward the threshold of Divinity, and may become perfected in the merging therewith. First, however, one has to have the notes exact and understand the movements thereof. As this stage is mastered it is possible to study the various ways of breathing and repeat the sacred music accordingly. Then one may learn to employ the music for higher development, as one is able to assimilate the knowledge from the personality of the teacher who has already become trained and perhaps perfected in such methods.

By the use of Zikr and by mantra-yoga it is possible to magnetize an atmosphere or a given area. Such an atmosphere can be adapted to psychic, healing and spiritual benefits of others, accordingly to their susceptibility and response. This magnetization is of great value in purifying the bodies and minds of the ignorant and of the wise.

GATHEKA: But there is one thing most remarkable, that the mystics have played a great part in developing Indian music. They have used it for meditation, because it was invented by Mahadeva.

TASAWWUF: This can be proven by an historical survey and also by an intense examination of the traditions and methods. The mystics, strictly speaking, are those who have mastered the science of right breathing, for it is this control of the breath which enables man to create perfect sounds either from within himself or upon an instrument. Besides this the whole tradition is that the celestial beings are musical and a corollary would suggest that musical beings could become celestial.

It has already been explained how the divine Shiva (Mahadeva) gave man the gift of music

especially for spiritual purposes. And in the devotions, if one dedicate himself to Shiva or Saraswati, the Goddess of Music, or to Parvati, the consort of Shiva, there will be such an inner change that one's spirit will manifest in one's voice.

Music for meditation can be performed in several ways. There is the method of singing and the Sufis have used the sound "Hu" and the Hindus mostly "Aum" (or Om!) for this purpose. It seems a simple and easy exercise, but when one considers the need to pray with all bodies and vehicles of the personality, to direct one's concentrations and thoughts away from the ego and toward the All-Being, and the right form of breathing, it is not always accomplished in a short time. It is to be remembered that one's consciousness does not rise higher than the refinement of one's breath, and a person with a coarse breath does not enter into the kingdom of heaven, no matter what words he repeats, unless he know the principles thereof. It is against this ignorance that Jesus Christ also protested when he mentioned "vain repetitions" but it has to be recognized that down the ages there have been many repetitions which have not brought the devotee or supplicant the result proclaimed showing that there is a deficiency somewhere.

The Zen Buddhists, who employ a silent meditation, have a number of devices which are of most practical help. One is a gong or hollow wooden block which is sounded in a certain manner, or both may be used, each on its own suitable occasion. The knocking against these devices has the tendency to drive all thoughts away from the mind, especially those which clash with the atmosphere and meditation is thus helped artificially. But there is also a school which employs the flute, and from the flute and through the flute the song of unity makes its way into the world.

Sufis also have used both flute and vina to assist in spiritual unfoldment, and the instrumentalist himself must be an adept or master to stimulate the right results. Gongs and bells are also used in many places by followers of different religions to produce the atmosphere of devotion which is most helpful. Chanting is also helpful when the singers know the secret of spiritual musical and mystical sound.

The dance is also employed, but in order to reach meditation the state of rest after motion must be reached.

GATHEKA: And that music is the most wonderful way to spiritual realization, for there is no quicker way and there is no better way of attaining spiritual perfection than music.

TASAWWUF: This is the practical side. The musical vibrations touch all the realms, and this will be seen in another fashion when we examine cosmic music. But so far as man is concerned, in its widest outlook music touches the body, emotions, mind, heart and spirit of man. It therefore quickens him within and without according to its nature and the principles it adopts. But as the emphasis is usually on the physical and emotional sides it does not help man spiritually. As much spirit as is put into it, even more will it give, and as lacking in spirit as it is, even more will it take from man.

We must, however, include all aspects of the art, which is to say, the words, the accompaniment and the movement. The words not only bring the thought-form into oscillation, but through oscillatory movement quicken it and increase its spiritual magnetism, which is to say, blessing. But if the words are of a low order, or if the rhythm is not conducive to uplift, then there is play of shadows and shadow-forces across the mind, which lowers the threshold of consciousness and turns the soul downward so to speak.

The Veda and the Psalm provide the basis for word-selection to be repeated if there is singing or chanting but these can be lessened down to a single syllable such as Hu, Aum, La, Ya, all of which have the tendency to connect the heart with the Oversoul. But the same feeling has to be put into the melody or instrumental accompaniment, which tends naturally to quicken the heart and all aspects of life on the heart-plane and thus raise man a degree in his evolution.

The dance, ritual and pray-movements all rouse and raise the psychic forces which thus become the channels between the physical and spiritual instead of the physical and mental alone. While the downward psychic pull is merely between the plane of the mind and that of the body, the upward psychic force can take man beyond the mental plane. The knowledge of this was formerly known on earth and according to the traditions was the basis of Atlantean knowledge.

We can turn to examples of this in the records of the Mevlevi and Chisti schools of the Sufis, in such books as *The Acts of the Adepts* by Efleki, translated by Redhouse and others and by an even cursory examination of the Sufic institutions. It is possible to use sacred poetry or religious chants by proper and constant repetitions so that a state of ecstasy will be produced or induced. In either event the consciousness will become free from the material surroundings and the devotee will recognize his finer bodies. It is largely according to his degree of assimilation, which means, chiefly, becoming free from his own ego-mould that the results and growth depend on.

The Sufis have a special class of singers known as Khawwalis who are trained along this line and who assist the sheikhs and adepts in their holy work of awakening the inner beings of disciples. They chant sacred phrases or verses of Qur'an until they become literally lost in their duties and become the very incarnations of the words they are repeating. Then they are lights and sources of spiritual blessing (Baraka) to those in their presence, to those who are near to them in heart and even to all the world. For the elevation of the individual and of all humanity are not entirely apart. Paul Brunton, too, has hinted at this in his works.

GATHEKA: Their great mystics, such as Narada and Tumbara were singers; Krishna played the flute. And therefore music has its tradition and practice both attached to mysticism.

TASAWWUF: Although in modern times most examples of spiritual growth through music are found among the Sufis, there is no doubt that music was used for the elevation of the soul by Hindus from most ancient days. Narada and Tumbara, were great Yogins who perfected the use of the mantrams making into a veritable spiritual science.

[Ed—Here is a gap in the commentary and text from the Gathekas: pages 43-62 are missing.]

But although music may thus be used for spiritual purposes, it is not to be exclusively adapted for it. There can always be church music and folk music, sacred art and secular art. Only when the art is devoted to the highest purposes and the artists also appreciate spiritual training, even in their less noble efforts they will gladden hearts. This was seen by those who witnessed Shan Kar, even granting all the criticisms which were aimed at him, criticisms often out of place because he has done much to elevate the art.

GATHEKA: People today so much like music which has more than one voice because they have not heard the one-voice music. The more they hear it and the more they come close to it, the more they will forget the other part.

TASAWWUF: But it will be answered we do have soloists; we do listen to singers and players. Yes, but to begin with there is often an accompaniment and this accompaniment furnishes a background. This background, even with all the best of attentions pulls the senses outward and keeps the consciousness grounded, so to speak. Besides, there are overtones which manifest on the psychic, mental, moral and spiritual planes. We cannot get all we want out of that music. We do not get the healing effects, there are more things missing.

Already there is a growing tendency on the part of many to stay at the cinema for a repeat performance, to go to plays often, to attend the symphony. They are recognizing there is so much in the music, but they have not learned all that there is even in the simplest framework. Music is more than sound, more than form, more than technique. A person to get the best from a picture has to put it on a wall or in a niche by itself. The Chinese and Japanese would never think of putting more than one piece or one group on a wall or in a niche. They can enjoy it over and over it. The same will be true of music when the same attitude is reached.

Of course there will be an objection that this will be monotonous. Why will it be monotonous? It was not so to the ancients and it is not so in these parts of the world where the solo is still respected. And one can efface himself better before such music as before prayer. One can concentrate. One does not have several poets recite together, or require the poet to have an accompanist; it would be regarded as foolish, it would hamper the listeners. And today the hearers of music are hampered in many ways though they know it not.

GATHEKA: There are big concerts given in symphony concert-halls in London, in New York, in Paris and all large cities, and if you will carefully notice what the audience likes most, it is a solo on the cello, a solo on the flute, a violin solo. No doubt they are accustomed to hear many sounds, and after the solo is finished they would like to enjoy the other part. But at the same time if you studied them and asked them "Would you like this to go on a little longer or the instruments?" they would say, "The solo for five minutes longer"; because the human soul is the same as in the ancient time, in the modern time, in the East and in the West.

TASAWWUF: The soul does not change, the conditions change. The soul is said to have a keynote and from this keynote come a multitude of vibrations, selected by it in its tuning on the heart-plane, and these vibrations give rise to the foundation which is called personality. Personality is, in a sense, an expression of sound, an incarnation of The Word, and it is effected by sound and by music above all else. But there is a phenomenon comparable to the interference of light. When a number of light rays are sent out in the same direction they “interfere” with each other, and the same is true of sound. And even more, for sound vibrations, being material, interfere and interact with each other on the material plane and their finer overtones do not reach the inner planes effectively.

Do you not suppose that each musician is effected by what he plays? And if music has an effect will not each different tune produce its own particular result? So with modern orchestration the tendency is first toward complexity and then toward chaos. What is called “cosmos” means both “universe” and “order” because the universe to exist as such must have order and harmony. But there always remains the concept of disorder or “chaos” and it has its phenomenal aspect in thought, in manifestation and also in the musical world of sound. So much of music is therefore spiritually destructive. But the solo part, unhampered by “interferences” and “umbras” is like the raga that touches the inner being. When the psychological and other aspects are studied more man will again be able to use the music for healing and sacred effects, even for character building.

GATHEKA: The ringing of one bell has a greater appeal than the ringing of many bells. One sound always goes deeper than many sounds. The reason why two sounds always conflict is that, however much they are tuned with one another, yet they are two; that in itself is a conflict.

TASAWWUF: One recognizes this in that the sounding of a church bell is more pleasing than the carillon. The overtones of the carillon notes always clash, and no matter how well played there are dissonances. Besides, from the standpoint of the science of sound, each class of instruments has its own overtone group and it is even possible than when instruments play in unison that their overtones are not so concordant, and when they play harmonically sometimes their overtones or partial notes blend.

Naturally people who have become used to many sounds will not always agree. But this disagreement is based upon personal experience and can hardly be called philosophical or scientific. In those parts of the world where gongs are used in connection with sacred service and meditation one will notice almost at once the effect of different forms of playing them. Just one sound, yet the psychological aspects of resounding it become apparent.

It has been explained that a note of definite pitch is really a world in itself with an outer covering and other outer garments. It also has its inner garments which are derived from the instrument itself and from the player and the instrument has its inner garments from the materials which are in it and from the maker or makers thereof. And it may be that makers of instruments are in conflict with one another, and this may come out in the music. But in order to make instruments blend it is necessary to have the makers and players harmonize, and little attention has been paid to this

aspect of music, which aspect may be called the very music of life.

GATHEKA: But then there is another tendency which is working hand in hand with this one and which is dragging music downwards. And that tendency is that they are not yet contented with the chords that the great composers—Wagner, Mozart, Beethoven—have written, but they are again making new chords, chords that can confuse thousands of persons.

TASAWWUF: It has been explained that the “classical” chord system of Europe has been perfected largely through the researches of Rameau, Euler, D’Alambert and others. To this the music of Bach and Handel is related and it was based upon scientific mathematics. People in those parts of the world became accustomed to the sounds and found them pleasant and the later scientists have offered detailed reasons why this is so.

The classical system was studied and exploited in many forms and then was finally rejected by Debussy, who felt its artificiality and by Schoenberg, who felt it was outdated and outmoded. There arose a new romanticism, perhaps intuitively correct, but consisting of persons who had little scientific or philosophical background and who seemed to accept their self-created dictum that art was anything turned out by an artist. So a sort of factory-machine-music has come into existence with such deleterious effects that the social order and the mental composure of man has suffered greatly.

The exponents of the new schools have been guilty of the same folly as the “modern” artists, that when they have not sufficient ability or inspiration to produce pure art, they offer a self-created philosophy to explain or excuse their methods and often blame others for failing to understand them. Unfortunately, there seems to be a close correlation between the “new music” and the “new morality,” which has arisen from sexual maladjustments and unnatural tendencies.

Theremin, it is true, has indicated that it is possible to create scales with other harmonic relationships, definite, pleasant and constructive in their effects. But the experimentalists have, for the most part, little background, little ability for hard work, shallow understanding and no psychological appreciation. Absolute music does not consist of selecting notes at random and combining them, or of running groups of melodies together. Yes, Richard Wagner was a great philosopher and thinker, and his influence has been very great, perhaps overpowerful. It stimulated others, worthy and unworthy, and has led to series of revolutions, added by the invention of new instruments and the possibility of exploiting them.

GATHEKA: And what is the outcome of it? It has an unconscious effect upon the nervous system of humanity; it makes people more and more nervous.

TASAWWUF: The effect of vibrations upon the human anatomy and upon the human personality is of itself a great study. Those who have made researches into color-therapy, electronic medicine and similar fields have reached definite conclusions which seem to be true with certain limits. On the other hand, vibrations, such as X-rays are, for the most part, destructive to atomic bodies, and

to all the material forms which are composed of those atoms.

The effects of sound are most definite and more easily investigated. It is true that the hearing ability varies in different individuals and all have not the same response to harmonic expressions. Fortunately, there is still a modicum of aboriginal music which can be studied for its psychological effects, and the definite science will be based on it when the investigators are as impersonal as was Helmholtz.

GATHEKA: And very often you see that those who attend good concerts only go for vanity, thinking, "It is a good concert, we must go" and therefore they will take any chords that will come as long as long as the music has a good name given to it. Call it "air," or "sky," or "clouds," or "laughter," or "cry," some frightening name to it, that is all they need.

And what has happened is that instead of the music giving to the audience, it draws from them. It does not stimulate them any more than does alcohol; first, yes, there is a little stimulation and then there is a reaction. So it becomes psychically debilitating, almost like black magic. One does not always see the strong, healthy persons coming from the concerts, and even when they receive emotional satisfaction, it is not so deep as they suppose. It is not nearly so great as that of the sunrise, or sunset, or a vast mountain view.

Too often, too, conductors and musicians feed upon adulation. They do not necessarily respect their audience, words to the contrary. The applause may mean more to them than the playing, and the playing is for the applause, not for the satisfaction of the listeners. Besides, when the audience is large, there can be little success as the conveying of a personal message through the music. The theater is not a sacred place. And the tendency has been further and further in the direction of artificiality.

GATHEKA: But as Wagner has said, noise is not necessarily music. However new the theater or concert-hall is, that does not satisfy, that does not do any good to the souls who have gone there only to satisfy their vanity that they have been to a good hall; they have spent so much money.

TASAWWUF: One may wonder whether this is not mostly egotism, egotism on the part of the so-called composer to indulge in experiments, to waste time and effort in tonal combinations and variations, in employing instruments as if they were mere machines or mechanical devices devoid of feeling, to turn out "pitched noise." Then, the creation being devoid of depth, a name is given to it, a thought-form is tabbed onto the composition, perhaps something that was never in the mind of the creator as he worked. So there was no inspiration, no concentration—in other words, no real art.

Thus it becomes vanity on the part of those who contribute financially for "new music." They are interested in discovering "talent," which title is often given to the formulators of the most fantastic pieces. And it seems as if the soul of the musician goes into the explanation, not into the composition. He becomes a center for a good investment, financially, socially and otherwise.

Then the public takes on the condition, the same as in Hans Christian Andersen's delightful story, "The Emperor's New Clothes," wherein the crowd all praised the emperor for his marvelous attire until a little child noticed he had nothing on whatever. So the complex people praise new works until they are exposed, while the simple ones either take to jazz or confess they do not like music, not realizing, perhaps, that they have not heard the really fine music.

So hearts are sealed and there is no scope for feeling. Finer natures are crushed and few know where to look. But if one wants to produce melodies on "air," "sky," "clouds," "laughter," or any subject, it is easy if he will study their nature, keep his concentration upon them and draw his inspiration therefrom, using instruments always secondarily. Schoenberg, perhaps, is beginning to see this, and perhaps in the "new age" there will be a new music.

GATHEKA: Music is healing, music uplifts souls, music inspires persons; and there is no better way of getting closer to God, of rising higher to the spirit, of attaining spiritual perfection than music, if it is only rightly understood.

TASAWWUF: How then, can there be understanding of music until one has the sense of understanding itself? Too often we look far afield for this. There is not yet in the accepted education any method for growth of understanding and the awakening of the aesthetic sense. In "Spiritual Aesthetics" this has been proposed with the hope it will stimulate a new outlook on life, an outlook which may be the answer to many of the problems of the times. For, through meditation, devotion and concentration there is a change in the personality, a "spiritual rebirth" which makes all things possible.