

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTIONThe Nature of Art :

The problem of art has been honoured as a special department of Philosophy under the name of "aesthetics", variously defined as "the science of the fine arts" or "the science of expression". A philosophical interest in a particular subject matter, such as taste, or beauty, or even the great topic of "expression" does not establish a science; if "the beautiful" is the field of aesthetics, this field is wider than that of the fine arts; so is the realm of "expression". It is better not to map an unknown continent in advance, but simply to study whatever philosophical problems the arts present, and trust that any careful analysis and constructive handling of even quite special questions e.g. "What is expressed in architecture?" "Is musical performance a creative art?" or "Is taste related to talent?" will show their interrelations and define the general field of the relevance.

A great deal of thinking has been done, sometimes in close connection with general philosophy, sometimes as a theoretical excursion from criticism. In the course of such serious reflection on the arts, certain dominant ideas have emerged that constitute a sort of intellectual vocabulary of contemporary aesthetics.

In broadest outline, the ideas which occur again and again in different guises and combinations are : Taste, Form, Representation, Immediacy and Illusion.<sup>1</sup> Each of them is a strong Leitmotiv in philosophy of art, yet the theories grounded on them, respectively, have a peculiar way of either openly clashing with one another, or leaving at least one topic out of consideration. Thus, theories of art as sensuous satisfaction, i.e. appeal to taste have to traffic very carefully with emotion. The theories which make form paramount usually rule out any appeal to emotion, and often find representation a curse than asset; those which build chiefly on the concept of representation do well with illusion, and even with emotion, but they cannot treat form as an independent value, and reduce the function of taste to a mere office of censorship. Immediacy, which is a metaphysical virtue of pure reality, or concrete individuality, entails the idea of intuition as a direct perception of all there is to know about a work of art. It fits well into theories of taste, and is at least compatible with most of the emotion - theories, and with the subtler treatments of representation; but not, as is commonly supposed with the notion of art as form. The uniqueness of a form is logically impossible to establish. As for the motif of illusion, it is generally coupled with its opposite reality and serves rather to raise difficulties than to solve them.

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1. Langer S.K., Feeling and Form, P.13.

The general disorder of our intellectual stock in trade in the realm of aesthetics is further aggravated by the fact that these are two opposite perspectives from which every work of art may be viewed: that of its author and that of its spectators or hearers or readers, as the case may be. One perspective presents it as an expression the other as an impression. Most aestheticians can treat the problem of artistic impression more authoritatively than that of expression; when they talk about the moods and inspirations of artists, or speculate on the sources and motives of any particular work, they leave the straight and narrow path of intellectual conscience and often let a quite irresponsible fancy roam.

The theories of expression, though harder for a layman in the arts to handle, are more fertile than analytic studies of impression.

The dominant ideas occur in both types of theory, but they look different when viewed from such different standpoints. This circumstance adds to the apparent confusion of aesthetic notions. What, in the impressionist perspective, figures as taste i.e. a pleasant or unpleasant reaction to sensory stimulation, appears from the opposite angle as the principle of selection, the so-called "ideal of beauty" which is supposed to guide an artist in his choice of colours,

tones, words etc. Emotion may be taken either as the effect of a work on the beholder, or as the source from which its author's conception arose, and the resultant theories will appear to treat the whole subject of emotion entirely differently e.g. one will tend to the sort of laboratory psychology that seeks aesthetic principles in radio audiences, the other to a psychoanalytic study of artists. The contemplation of form from the standpoint of impression yields such notions as universal Law, Dynamic Symmetry, Significant Form; from that of expression it involves us in the problems of abstraction. Representation may be taken as the function of directing the percipient's mind to something beyond the work of art or the artist's motive for creating the work. Similarly, the problem of illusion is treated from the critic's point of view as a demand on our credulity, our willingness to "make-believe"; from the studio point of view it is treated as play, "escape" or the artist's dream.

Some aestheticians speak in terms of "significant form" and another in terms of dream. One says that the function of art is to record the contemporary scene and another maintains that pure sounds in "certain combinations", or colours in harmonious spatial disposition, give him the "aesthetic emotion" that is both the aim and the criterion of art.

We must know the nature of art and its relation to feeling, the relative autonomy of the several arts and their

fundamental unity in "Art" itself, the function of subject-matter and medium, the problem of artistic communication and truth. We must specify the meanings of the words: expression, creation, symbol, import, intuition, vitality and organic form to understand their interrelationship.

A great many problems for instance, whether performance is "creation" or "recreation" or "mere craftsmanship?" Whether drama is "literature" or not? Why the dance often reaches the zenith of its development in the primitive stage of a culture when other arts are just dawning on its ethnic horizon? take unanswerable form.

Sachs regards the parallelism of ethos-pathos fluctuations in the several arts as a proof that all the arts are one.

The old division between the two perspectives, that of the artist and that of the beholder - art as expression, against art as impression - is not bridged by acceptance of an eternal tug of war between the opposed "poles", prescribed form and emotional content. The critic, who is to find sensuous beauty in the forms, to view them at a proper "psychical distance" and with mental equilibrium; the poles are aesthetic quality versus emotional stimulation. If self expression is the aim of art then only the artist himself can judge the value of his products. If its purpose is to

excite emotion, he should study his audience and let his psychological findings guide his work, as advertising agents do.

The most expert critics treat the emotive aspect of art as objective as the physical form, colour, sound pattern of verbal text itself.

Art is to be valued for the immediate impression it affords, for something received at the moment of appreciation not for any purely hypothetical after-effects. If we can ask of a work of art is that should affect us. The art has a part to play in the formation of our whole response to life. Anything which is expressive of the inner life of its creator is Art and to this Art beauty is of secondary importance. Harold Osborne in his "Aesthetic implications of conceptual Art happenings etc says, Gestural paintings. The work of Art was to be thought of a gesture which expresses and communicates the internal feelings, moods or what not of its maker. A work of Art does not on the face of it reveal the process of its production. Ordinarily a work of Art does not introduce the spectator to the manner of its production. Even if the process of production were recoverable by single observation, it could not be shared by the observer. The artist's mood and emotion in his work are connected with the realization of a creative idea (sometimes

called 'inspiration') and with a certain pleasurable excitement in the manipulation of materials and exploitation of techniques which he has mastered".

Equally false is the idea that paintings can be regarded as gestural communication of the artist's occurrent emotion. With music and other arts the emotional content is experienced in appreciation as an expressive feature of the art work rather than as an internal emotion of the observer. It is too naive to suppose that a musician must be sad when he writes sad music or that the listener must be sad in order to recognize the sadness of music. The artist's personal emotions, one must accept are of primary interest only to his psycho-analyst or his intimate friends.

It is the aesthetics of the Chinese, Indian and other oriental art rather than of western art which demands that the artist shall first by strict self-discipline bring his personality into harmony with overpersonal - Reality before communicating that Reality through self-expression to the world. The European doctrine of self-expression at any cost, despite its prevalence has little to recommend it. In the experience of music at any rate total involvement is not necessarily foreign to aesthetic appreciation.

In his selected poems Baudelaire<sup>2</sup> writes about art and expression. Baudelaire imagined that "it might be

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2 Enid Starkie, Charles Baudelaire (Selected poems), translated by Geoffrey Wagner, London, 1946, p.15.

possible to find one art which could compromise all the languages, would appeal to all his senses..!" In his poetry he endeavoured to use the idiom of all the arts, to render what his eyes saw not merely in line and colour, what his ear perceived, not only in harmony, but to glide imperceptibly from one mode of expression to other. Since "les parfums, les, Couleur Set les Sons Se repondent". Then he could render colour by means of harmony and sound by means of colour and line."

Bernard Bosanquet, has said, "The essence of art and beauty does not lie in a symbolic relation to an unseen reality behind the objects of common-sense perception but in mere imitative relation to those common objects themselves. A beautiful thing should be reading apprehended in its parts and also as a whole. Emotional utterance, rational content, free dealing with reality all these are the elements of arts".

Henry Bergson has said, "Subjective time is the real time" Croce and Santayana who have both produced aesthetic theories, have never had the influence on artistic thought that Bergson still exercise; they have said many things about the arts, whereas Bergson has said many sentimental and amateurish things. But metaphysically he deals with matters that go to the core of all the arts, and especially of music.

Susanne K.Langer's<sup>3</sup> views on 'Art: About beauty in picture and poem' are significant. She says, "I also believe that Art is essentially one, that the symbolic function is the same in every kind of artistic expression, all kinds are equally great and their logic is all of a piece, the logic of non-discursive form (which governs literary as well as other created form). But the way to establish these articles of faith as reasonable propositions is not just to say them emphatically and often and deprecate evidence to the contrary; it is, rather, to examine the differences, and trace the distinctions among the arts as far as they can be followed. They go deeper than, offhand, one would suppose. But there is a definite level at which no more distinctions can be made; everything one can say of any single art can be said of any other as well. There lies the unity. All the divisions end at the depth, which is the philosophical foundation of art theory.

Francis Moreller said, "Works of Art are like picnics or spanish inns where you constume what you have brought". Harold Osborne:- Theory of Beauty(1952).

D.G.Rossetti<sup>4</sup> said, "Picture and poem must bear the same relation to each other as beauty in man and woman; the point of meeting where the two are most identical is the supreme perfection".

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3 Susanne K.Langer, 'Feeling and Form', Routledge and Kegan paul, London, 1979. p.103.

4 D.G.Rossetti., Collected works of Dante,Gabriel-Rossetti,p.15

I.A.Richards<sup>5</sup> argues that the function of art properly conceived, is to organize the various subjective or psychological factors in the person having the aesthetic experience.

John Dewey<sup>6</sup> has developed into a theory of art "as a kind of experience".

Oscar Wilde said, "art is not self-expression not a mere out-pouring of feeling".

Virgil Aldrich<sup>7</sup> explained that "And what the art work expresses or exhibits - the content of the expression - seems, in his account, to be primarily just this formative power of the mind".

Aldrich further states that a work of art is an inner creation of the imagination. The true creative work is the inner intuition and formulation of the work of art is emotionally charged image: "what the artist does is not so much to create the object but to reveal it, via the medium, to the organ of aesthetic vision".

He further states, "A work of art is a class of appearances satisfying certain requirements of coherence and comprehensiveness".

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5 I.A.Richards in Virgil C.Aldrich., "Philosophy of Art", p.10

6 John Dewey., 'Art as experience', New York(1934).

7 V.C.Aldrich., 'Philosophy of Art', p.16, pp.30-31. }

Emil Zola<sup>8</sup> said, "Life imitates art". Also she said, "A work of art is a portion of nature seen through the temperament of the artiste". "But the work is accomplished by the employment of materials and media whose character is exhibited in the total composition, in its style. And the portion of nature that is the subject matter of the work expressed in its content makes its own demands on the style. One can say then that style is more comprehensive and subtle thing than form. The style is thus an overall form - quality and by it you identify a person".

#### Aesthetics and Arts :

The word 'Aesthetics' comes from the Greek word 'atotikos'. Later on this word came in the form of 'Asthesis'. Hegel used the word with regard to philosophy of fine arts. Before the 19th century if we make a survey of music of romantic age we find poetry and painting included in music. But in 19th century importance of poetry, painting and music was equally stressed.<sup>9</sup> So in 19th century music, poetry and painting were interwoven. There were eminent musicians, poets and critics during this period. We had Weber, Berlioz Schumann and Wagner. Wagner in his 'The Art work of the future' has written about the confluence of these Fine Arts. Each work of art is an end in itself - W.H. Bossart.

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8 Emil Zola., in V.C.Aldrich 'Philosophy of Art', p.46.

9 Leonard G.Ratner., 'Music-The Listener's Art', New York, 1957, pp. 200 and 230.

Aesthetics tries to fix the meaning of words that we use about objects of Art and beauty. Aesthetics today is regarded as meta criticism, a basic study of problems relating to criticism.

Aesthetic theorist desires to understand the Artist in order to satisfy an intellectual interest of his own.

Aesthetics is treated as a branch of philosophy.

Aesthetics is treated in laboratory for artistic speculation.

The philosopher analyses the concept of musical values, nature and beauty in relation to ultimate reality and theory of Aesthetic value.

Aesthetics broadly means a devotion to Beauty, beauty found in arts and in whatever is attractive in the world around us.

Aesthetics the word first appeared in 19th century. It came to stand for certain ideas about life and art.

Aesthetics appears as a view of life, the idea of treating life in the spirit of Art. John Keats said, "Beauty is truth, truth beauty."

Thomas Aquinas defined beauty, as that which being seen, pleases simply as an object of contemplation whether

via the senses or within the mind itself. Beauty is something immediately experienced felt upon the pulses.

Aesthetics is a study of question like what is beauty? What is relation of form to matter in literature, Art and music.

Aesthetics refers not merely to the beautiful, not merely to the philosophical study of the beautiful but to a particular set of convictions about Art, literature and music.

Aesthetics stands for a broadly coherent body of attitudes both to life and Art. The enjoyment of beauty can by itself give value and meaning to life. Most people would accept that Art is different from life. Art has no reference to life. In England and France people were ahead in the development of concept of Art for Art's sake.

Aesthetics commonly attaches a high value to 'Form in Art, the value of a work of Art being dependent on Form rather than on subject-matter. There are various views of relation of form to matter. One view is that form is something that can be separated from matter. Form is all, that is important as far as artistic quality is concerned. Other view is that form and matter are not clearly separable. Walter Pater says that all Art aspires to the condition of music, in which form and matter are indistinguishable.

Definitions of Aesthetics :

Croce<sup>10</sup> on Aesthetics says..."Aesthetic is the science of the expressive (representative or imaginative activity...")

According to George Santayana<sup>11</sup> "Aesthetics is concerned with the perception of values". Also "Beauty is a species of value".

William Knight's<sup>12</sup> views about Aesthetics, "The word aesthetic is not a particularly happy one. It is often vaguely used in philosophy as well as in ordinary speech; and, in some quarters, it has become a byword of opprobrium - a sort of symbol of intellectual weakness".

In the view of George Santayana, beauty is constituted by the objectification of pleasure. It is pleasure objectified.

In view of Dr.K.C.Pandey<sup>13</sup> "The word 'Aesthetics' stands for science and philosophy of Fine Art".

According to K.S.Ramaswami Sastri<sup>14</sup> "Aesthetics is the science of Beauty as expressed in Art".

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10 Benedetto Croce., 'Aesthetic': Translated by Douglas Ainslie, Vision Press, London, 1953, p.155.

11 George Santayana., 'The sense of Beauty', New York, 1955, p.16 and p.20.

12 William Knight., 'The philosophy of the Beautiful', London, 1891, Preface, pp. 6-7.

13 Dr.K.C.Pandey., 'Comparative Aesthetics' Vol.I, Banaras, 1950, p.15.

14 K.S.Ramaswami Sastri., 'Indian Aesthetics' Srirangam, Sri Vani Vilas Press, 1928, p.1.

What is Music?

The roots of music go back in history, but its beginning was not art. There seems to have been a long pre-musical period when organized sounds were used for rhythmatization of work and ritual for nervous excitation, and perhaps for magical purposes. Probably song of some kind, as well as drummed dance-rhythm is older than any musical interest. According to Von Humboldt "man is a singing creature". If we accept this view then music is not necessarily given as soon as there is song; then man might have sung his reveilles and musters, his incantations and his dances, long before he knew that vocal forms were beautiful and could be sung without signifying anything. Work rhythms, dance measures, choric utterance, these are some of the influences that formed music out of the sounds that are natural to man, that he utters at work, or in fastal excitement, or in the imitation of the world's sounds-cuckoo's cry, the owl's hoot, the beat of hooves, feet, drums or hammers.

All such noises incipient "themes" musical models which artistic imagination may seize upon to formal tonal ideas. But they do not themselves enter into music as a rule; they are transformed into characteristic motifs; intervals, rhythms, melodies, all the actual ingredients of song are not supplied but mere inspired by sounds heard in nature.

All the themes are easily detected in folksongs, frankly or obscurely present, sometimes clearly interpretable, sometimes of indeterminate symbolic character.

All the sounds which meet our alert and retentive ear in the course of the days's work become fixed forms for our minds, because they are heard over and over again in nature, industry, or society; but they give rise to music because they are intrinsically expressive. They have not only associative value, but value as rhythms and intervals, exhibiting stress and release, progression, rise or fall, motion, limit, rest. It is in this musical capacity that they enter into art, not in their original capacity of signs, self-expressions, religious symbols, or parrot-like imitation of sound. Musical materials likewise, presumably had other uses before they served music; that does not imply that music is "really" not an intellectual achievement and expression of musical ideas at all, but in reality a mere invocation of rain or game or a rhythmic aid to dancers or what not.

Primitive emotional sounds, like bird-songs or the sing song speech of sentimental persons, to the dignity of music. They are musical materials, but their unconscious use is not art. This is true even of certain tunes, "The old Gray Mare" was made for marching, and is a real aid to rhythmic tramping, but its musical function is quite secondary.

Certain spinning songs are musically just bad, they are not with melody. The same is true of drummed dance-rhythms with shouts or verses.

It has often been remarked that music, as an artistic medium is of very recent date. In 'The Threshold of Music' William Wallace<sup>15</sup> asserted that the Greeks, and even our ancestors of five or six hundred years ago, could not hear what we can; they could not distinguish consonance from dissonance. He points out some interesting facts in support of this theory notably that to the Greeks, as to the Chinese before them, music was essentially an intellectual exercise. Instrumental music was practiced only as a craft supplying one of the physical pleasures of life, like catering or massage and had none of the prestige of the true arts; wherefore musical instruments were few and crude. So he concludes that ancient musicians simply had not the "inner ear" that is normal, now-a-days not only for gifted persons, but for the average man, who quite naturally hears melodies in the context of some harmonic structure. If we reject Wallace's hypothesis, that "musical sense" evolved only with a recent neurological development due to evolution, we assume the burden of a better explanation.

According to Langer music has very few natural models. Bird songs, cries, whistles, traditional cattle calls, and metallic clangs are scant materials; even in intonations of

the human voice, whether purely emotional or semantic, are indefinite, elusive, hard to hold in memory as precise forms. There are hardly any given musical configurations in nature to suggest organized tonal structures, and reveal themselves as significant forms to a naive, sensitive, savage ear.

The molds and scaffoldings in which music had to take shape were all of extraneous character. Pictures have visual models, drama has a direct prototype in action, poetry in story, all may claim to be "copies" in the platonic sense or in the simple Aristotelian sense of "imitations". But music, having no adequate models, had to rest on the indirect support of two non-musical aids - rhythm, and words.

Thyths are more fixed and stable, more definite than intonations. That is probably why the rhythmic structure is the first aspect of music to become formalized and precise. Thythm can be simultaneously expressed in many ways - in shouts, steps, drum-beats, by voice, bodily motion, and instrumental noises. Words and acts and cries, whistles, rattles, and tom-toms, may all be synchronized in one single rhythm; no wonder the rhythmic figure is easily abstracted, when it is rendered in such multiple modes! It is obviously one and the same metric pattern, a general dynamic form, that may be sung, danced, clapped, or drummed; this is the element

that can always be repeated, and therefore traditionally preserved. Naturally it offers us the first logical frame, the skeletal structure of the embryonic art of music. This explanation is provided by R.Wallaschek<sup>16</sup>.

The most obvious tonal material is, of course, the human voice; and the spontaneous function of the voice is natural utterance - cry or speech. Bücher<sup>17</sup> has shown that habitual purely emotional exclamations tend to verbal forms. He further stated, "The adjustment of speech impulses to the demands of rhythmic tonal figure is the natural source of all chanting, the beginning of vocal music".<sup>18</sup>

Definitions of Music :

Rabindranath Tagore<sup>18</sup> views music as "Music is the purest form of Art, and therefore the most direct expression of beauty. Therefore, the true poets ..... seek to express the universe in terms of music". (ROLLAND)

Romain (Rolland) defined that music, like life, is divine in essence, so nothing makes feel the truth of this better than music's ever-welling spring which has flowed through the centuries until it has become an ocean.

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16 R.Wallaschek., "On the Origin of Music", Mind, XVI(1891) 63 : pp. 375 - 386.

17 Bücher., 'Arbeit und Rhythmus', p. 380.

18 Rabindranath Tagore., Sadhna, London, 1961, pp.142-141

K.S.Ramswami Sastri<sup>19</sup> says, "Poetry is architectonic like architecture, statuesque like sculpture, graphic and picturesque like painting and rhythmical like music...."

R.W.S.Mendl<sup>20</sup> has deeply thought over the qualities of music in 'The value of Colour'. He said, "Truely swar has also a colour of its own. It does not rise in the form of wavelines on oscilloscope. Not only this, each raga has a picture of its own according to its mood."

About the relation between music and architecture we have Zucker Kandl's<sup>21</sup> views :

"The relation between music and architecture is not negligible. Though music is Audio as well as performing art and architecture is visual art". He also says that Schlegel has described architecture as 'frozen music'. So accepting the opposite of this, we can call music as "flowing architecture". In music there is relational harmony between various factors viz. correctness of note, tonal equilibrium, rhythm, aesthetic suggestiveness etc.

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19 K.S.Ramswami Sastri., Indian Aesthetics, Srirangam, 1928, pp.32-33.

20 R.W.S.Mendl., 'The Soul of Music', Rookliff Salisbury Square, London, 1950, p.179.

21 Victor Zuker Kandl., 'Sound and Symbol', translated from German by Willard R.Trask, Pantheon Books, 1956, p.240

S.Alexander<sup>22</sup> has also written about relation between music and architecture. "As has already been said, there is equal importance of relational harmony between music and architecture. In music this relational harmony depends on a code pertaining to swaras i.e. swara-shastra. And in architecture this relational harmony largely depends on space-interval, linearly of structures etc.

Bernard Bosanquet<sup>23</sup> has written about the symbolic art form. "The whole set of particular arts, Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, Music and Poetry, recurs within each of the three progressive Art-forms, the symbolic, the classical, and the Romantic, according to Hegel. Thus for the symbolic art form architecture is central, or characteristic - for the classical art - form, sculpture - and for the romantic art - form, in conformity with its greater mobility and variety, the three remaining arts painting, music and poetry are characteristic but music above all is the central romantic art".

Hegel about music says, "What music claims as its own is the depth of a person's inner life as such, it is art of the soul and is directly addressed to the soul".

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22 S.Alexander., 'Beauty and other forms of Value', London 133. P.104.

23 Bernard Bosanquet., 'A History of Aesthetic,' George Allen and Unwin, London, pp.345-346.

Going through all the definitions stated above, music may also be defined as an art of combining sounds with a view to Beauty, Form and expression of emotion.

Music is the greatest of all arts. It is greatest because artistes having intuition and attentive listeners are brought together with Nada-Brahma.

If we study the history of Hindustani music, we find that India was invaded by many nations. So there was inter-change of ideas and fusion of many cultures. Hindustani music was influenced by Arabian and Persian music.

There have been many changes in Hindustani Music after the independence than it was almost two centuries ago. Earlier Hindustani music was largely limited to Courts and Durbars only. It was mainly considered the privilege of the princes. The court musician had to please his employer. Pandit Ravi Shankar regards Indian music as part of Indian religion, he is of the view that Hindustani music presupposes some sort of spiritual orientation.

The value of music lies in the proper appreciation and application of aesthetic part of music. This aesthetics of music is the essence of music.

Purpose of the Study :

In the present study of Form, Feeling and Hindustani Music: A comparative study of the aesthetic theories of Hanslick and Langer, the researcher has made a comparative study of Aesthetic theories of Hanslick and Langer with special reference to Hindustani music under following heads:

- (1) Introduction
- (2) Of Musical Form
  - (a) Hanslick
  - (b) Langer
- (3) Feeling and Music
  - (A) The Meaning of Feeling
    - (a) Hanslick
    - (b) Langer
  - (B) The Music - feeling relation
    - (a) Hanslick
    - (b) Langer
- (4) Form, Feeling and Music
  - (a) Hanslick
  - (b) Langer
- (5) Summary and Conclusions

Having done a post-graduate course in Music and German language in the Banaras - Hindu - University almost twenty five years ago, there was a strong desire to make a deep study of the works of eminent authors on Aesthetics. With the background of German and Music, I was tempted to undertake this work.