LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

AN INQUIRY INTO
CONTEXTUALIZED CHRISTIAN EXPRESSION
IN NORTH INDIA

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ABSTRACT

AN INQUIRY INTO
CONTEXTUALIZED CHRISTIAN EXPRESSION
IN NORTH INDIA

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The riches of India’s ancient and diverse culture are proclaimed from the music that communicates the heart of Bharat Mata – Mother India. This sentiment resounds across the vast geographical area of India in songs from Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, Christians and Bollywood composers. The question of how Christians might express their faith in light of societal, historical and religious amalgamations is the topic of discussion for this project. The inquiry will focus on the music culture of North India, specifically as it is expressed in the city of B____, Uttar Pradesh. A six week field study was conducted in India to interview Hindu musicians and non-musicians. Audio and video recordings were made of the interviews, and photographs and recordings were made of various performances. The analysis endeavors to fill the gap concerning an understanding of the need for contextualized Christian expression and recommendations are presented for carrying out the task.
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

If someone mentions the word, “India,” pictures of brightly colored saris, rare Bengal tigers, the Taj Mahal, or perhaps, the stunning political revolution of Gandhi may come to mind. The riches of this ancient culture exceed the vibrant images of historical and contemporary memory, and even greater treasures are proclaimed from the music that communicates the heart of Bharat Mata – Mother India. This sentiment resounds across the country’s vast geographical area in songs from Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists and Christians. With widely differing cultures north to south, and unique people groups found within each state, district and city, the question of how Christians might express their faith in light of societal, historical and religious amalgamations is the topic of discussion for this project. The inquiry will focus on the music culture of North India, specifically as it is expressed in the city of B_____, Uttar Pradesh, and endeavors to fill the gap concerning an understanding of contextualized Christian expression.

Project Significance

India is the seventh largest country in the world (land mass), with the second largest population at 1.2 billion, which includes over 2500 unique people groups, living in 28 political states and union territories (CIA - The World Fact Book 2009; List of Chief Ministers in India 2009). Over 2200 people groups are considered least reached (Joshua Project 2010): they have no Bible in their language, no churches, and few, if any, Christians laboring among them. In light of these statistics, the significance of this project may seem infinitesimally small. However, just as massive oceans are filled one raindrop at a time, the need for researchers to investigate stumbling blocks and remedies to the reception of the Gospel will be met one people group at a
time. Though only a small raindrop, this project is significant in terms of its contribution to the greater whole of evangelism in India.

The Significance of Music

“All the religions have taught that the origin of the whole of creation is sound.”

(McIntosh 2005)¹ A key area of expression in any cultural setting is music. In the context of Hindu spiritual expression, music is one of the vehicles that transports devotees from a state of being that interacts with the natural world to one of engaging the supernatural (Viladesau 2000; Gort 1989). Music tends to generate a real time experience, and is similar to prayer and meditation in which it compels one to forget the past, suspend thoughts of the future and live in the present where God is encountered.

The music of India in the North is called Hindustani and tradition holds that it can be traced to a prehistoric and mythological past (Sahai-Achuthan 1987). It has a Persian influence on account of the period of Islamic conquest and is contrasted with the Carnatic music of the South where resistance to foreign invasion enjoyed greater success. Counted among the world’s most well-known and ancient, Hindustani music has emerged virtually unscathed by the West considering India’s colonial past and modernized present (Neuman 1980). In light of this art’s veracity to remain intact despite an existence in a world vastly different from the one which gave it birth, it follows that evangelical work should give great consideration to it.

Appavoo, Giles, Choondal, Sherinian and Dicran advocate the use of folk music genres for expression among Christians in India. These scholars state the bulk of contextualization research has been carried out in the southern area of India (Giles 2003; Dicran 2000). Few

¹ This quote is attributed to a Sufi teacher from India named Hazrat Inayat Khan who subscribed to the universal oneness of all faiths and creeds. Though the quote is poignant in light of its corroboration with the creation account in Genesis, on the contrary, I cannot disagree with Khan’s philosophy more.
address Northern tribal music, and only two theses were found that dealt with indigenous forms from the North repurposed for Christian worship. In the thesis *Hindi Christian Bhajans: A Survey of their use By Christians and a Critique by Hindu Music Professionals* a Hindu meeting called a *satsang* was conducted in the United Kingdom by an evangelist and singer named Subhash Gil. Indian spiritual songs were sung and an invitation was made to the Hindu participants to receive Christ. The response was so encouraging to Gil that he wrote to a colleague, “It has brought home to me once again the power of music to reach our communities. We must persevere with this strategy and not let go.” Later in this document, similar responses to contextualization were documented as occurring within India. (Dicran 2000).

Additionally, there is a compelling inclination to investigate why Western music is used at all in a largely, non-Western Christian culture. It may be useful to trace the historical perspective of why Indian instruments and song forms were not used from the very beginning. There may be concepts to glean for the purpose of adding a greater degree of sensitivity to contextualization research and the application of the results. Acknowledging similar work has been done that provides an excellent vantage point, there remains an unmet need for area-specific and current ethnomusicological research so that the Christian communities involved in these studies have the opportunity to determine whether the contextualization of spiritual expression will increase the effectiveness of their ministries.

An Invitation

A couple\(^2\) in India’s northern state of Uttar Pradesh is interested in distancing their ministry from liturgy handed down by the Western Church. They are optimistic that

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\(^2\) Because Christian workers are not granted visas to enter India for the purpose of making converts, and because tensions between Christians and Hindus have resulted in violence not far from this area, this paper will substitute fictitious names for all workers and a coded letter for the locations in which they work.
contextualizing Christian expression in the spiritual community they oversee will generate a positive effect on evangelism, church growth and discipleship.\(^3\) I was invited to the city of B____ as an ethnomusicology intern to study the indigenous forms of Hindu expression during the annual bathing festival known as *Magh Mela* and at local Hindu temples. The *Magh Mela* is the smaller version of the *Kumbha Mela* that takes place in B____ every twelve years which is the largest periodic gathering of humanity on the planet (Narain 2010; Doane - CBS News 2010).

Six weeks in January and February of 2010 were allocated for this study during a time and at a place that explodes with the richness of Hindu spiritual expression. B____ is a city located at the convergence of a mythical river with two physical rivers – a sacred area according to Hindu tradition. This confluence of rivers is formed by the Ganga, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati rivers. Hindu devotees bathe in

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\(^3\) In an email dated September 7, 2009, John Collins from X___ quoted my host’s goal as, “One thing I would like is to have M. J. do visits/recording/analysis of Hindu music in temples, monasteries, and pilgrim fairs. I… think this is a hugely strategic task in light of ministry plans to break through a persistent barrier, namely the perceptions that Hindu seekers of Christ have about the current, more westernized ways in which Christianity is discussed and expressed.” I assumed from these statements that this study was for the purpose of contextual research on behalf of a single Christian fellowship in B____. As it turned out, this assumption represented only a quarter of my host’s goals and this will be discussed in greater detail later in Chapter III and IV.
these holy waters believing they can be cleansed of sin, thus breaking the endless cycle of reincarnation, and allowing for the attainment of unification with Brahman (Milner 1994).

**Definition of Purpose**

The intention of this project is to produce an inquiry into the contextualization of Christian worship music in B_____, Uttar Pradesh, India: to explore what constitutes Hindu musical expression, and how a Christian fellowship might successfully incorporate indigenous musical forms. Some of the overarching questions\(^4\) driving this inquiry include:

- What forms are found in indigenous Hindu devotional contexts where there is music?
- What forms are found in North Indian Christian worship influenced by the West?
- What indigenous elements (if any) might satisfactorily incorporate into the local Christian fellowship?
- Once implemented, what tools are necessary for soliciting and evaluating feedback?\(^5\)

Contextualization is defined here as discovering what elements constitute indigenous musical expression and which ones may be appropriately borrowed for the local church. They include: instruments, ensemble configurations, song genres, song forms, performance practices, recordings, songbooks (including artwork for recordings and songbooks), choice of musicians, musicians’ clothing, accompanying movement, and any other external manifestations of an inner, spiritual experience associated with music. This study embraces Hiebert’s definition of “**critical contextualization**” where “…old belief systems are neither rejected nor accepted without

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\(^4\) A complete list of detailed research questions can be found in Appendix A.

\(^5\) Fitzgerald and Shrag published a conference paper addressing the need to properly assess the quality of music produced in songwriter workshops. This work sheds light on potential starting points for evaluating tools and processes for this inquiry (2006). Totten created a tool called the “Ethnic Art Analysis and Research Guide” that is a potential resource for this task (Totten 2003).
examination. They are first studied with regard to the meanings and places they have within their cultural setting and then evaluated in the light of biblical norms.” (1987)

**Intended Outcomes**

Three results are anticipated for this project. Audio and video recordings of tradition bearer performances and interviews will be made. Field notes giving further description and insight will be created that correspond to these events. The media captured in recordings and related notes will serve as the data for analysis. Suitable forms for contextualized expression are to be identified with the assistance of my hosts. These discussions are to include the local church for whom the borrowed forms are intended to be of benefit. In the process of the discussion, if it is found that certain forms are appropriate for contextualizing Christian expression, the discoveries will be implemented in three areas: worship services, songwriter workshops and recording sessions.6

**System of Assessment**

A feedback loop is to be inserted to measure the success of the undertaking. To help determine the value of the project’s outcomes, three processes are defined as a means for evaluation:

1. A process to determine whether a true understanding has been discovered of what is needed for successful contextualization
2. A process to determine whether the implementation of those discoveries has been successful
3. A process to determine whether the contextualization produced (or to be produced) generates a more effective ministry

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6 This third objective is considered optimistic in light of the short duration of the project.
Delimitations of the Study

The study is to be confined to a six week period conducted in and around the city of B____, Uttar Pradesh. The *lingua franca* is Hindi, but with the urban area drawing a variety of people groups from the surrounding countryside, it is possible that a Hindi dialect may be spoken by some subjects.⁷ Only informants speaking Hindi or a Hindi dialect local to Uttar Pradesh are to be included. The pool of candidates for interviews and performance recordings are to come primarily from the *Magh Mela* bathing festival, but also local Hindu temples, and other festivals. People from all over India and the world travel to the *Magh Mela*, so restrictions on the geographical origin of participants are important. In summary, to be included in the study, the informants should speak Hindi or a local Hindi dialect, currently live in the state of Uttar Pradesh, and consider their heart music to be North Indian folk or otherwise Hindustani in essence.

A few limitations will be noted here. My linguistic ability is restricted to English, although I will be assisted by translators. Additionally, the subjective nature of the topic being studied, as well as a relatively short amount of time to digest scholarly material on the subject prior to traveling overseas will also limit the breadth of this work.⁸

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⁷ Hindi is not the language spoken among the largest number of Indians, however it is the *lingua franca*, the official language of Uttar Pradesh, as well as the nation (Lewis 2009).
⁸ A fair amount of research and preparation was done on the music culture of the Uyghurs of Xinjiang China in anticipation of the Lord opening the door for this study to take place there. With the outbreak of ethnic violence and the subsequent government lockdown in the summer and fall of 2009, this project was redirected through the only open door which was in North India.
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This survey of the literature on the music and music culture of North India focuses on the area of Uttar Pradesh wherever possible. Because the impetus for this project is driven by concerns on the part of my hosts about Western liturgical forms and their potential to impede the acceptance of Christianity, the opening of this chapter looks at a number of issues and works on this topic. The remainder of the chapter is thematically structured to follow the order of major topics found in the analysis section of Chapter III. Elements of musical style consist of subsections on tonal system and melody, rhythm, meter and tala, texture and tone color, as well as form and text. Topics that follow include transmission and organology. Under the heading of genres and song forms, works on folk songs, Drupad, Khyal, Qawwali, and Bhajan are presented. This is followed by physical setting, performance practice, and attitudes and state of mind. The chapter concludes with a few observations on the content and topical availability of literature.

Historical, Cultural and Religious Background

While a few states in southern India can claim Christianity as the religion of the majority, the country as a whole contains the largest number of unreached people groups of any nation in the world with the latest 2001 census documenting 2.3% of the total population as Christian (Joshua Project 2009; Census of India 2007). Christianity arrived in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh in the 16th century as a result of an invitation from a Mughal emperor, yet the number of Christians today is less than 1% (Gospel for Asia 2010). Despite the Church’s presence in Uttar Pradesh for centuries, the data from these sources suggest that evangelism has encountered an impressive degree of resistance. A long list of reasons is pontificated by scholars, journalists,
clergy, and armchair gurus representing Christians, Hindus and secularists from within and outside of India. Acknowledging the sovereignty of God, His unfolding plan of redemption for the people of India, and His perfect timetable for it, four possible stumbling stones contributing to this resistance are considered.

Colonial Legacy

Some Hindus perceive Christianity to be a holdover from the colonial era. For over a century, blame for this failure has been placed at the feet of a religion that is perceived as intrinsically Western, with many regarding it as a type of hegemony the Europeans and Americans continue to impose through missionary efforts (Copland 2006; Spinner-Halev 2005; Shourie 2000). Though this perception is perpetuated mostly by pundits outside the Church, nevertheless, the Church must take responsibility for it. Concern regarding foreign influence has been voiced among Indian disciples of Christ for many years:

The Native Church in India should be one, not divided; native, not foreign. . . . (H)enceforth, (Western churches) shall not impose by rule… the accidents of denominational Christianity, at once divisive and exotic, with which they themselves happen to be identified. (Banurji 1892).

East Versus West

For the Hindu who would embrace Christ, yet another objection arises having to with a dichotomy bound up in East versus West paradigms. Western Christians tend to emphasize doctrine while the Hindu mind places greater emphasis on devotion:

When we speak of the Eastern Christ we speak of the incarnation of unbounded love and grace, and when we speak of the Western Christ we speak of the incarnation of theology, formalism, ethical and physical force. Christ, we know, is neither of the East nor of the West. (Mazoomdar 1893)
Furthermore, any contextualization effort in India will not be as simple as repurposing existing forms. Unlike the West where new music genres are adopted frequently and with ease, Hiebert writes,

In India, even the direction you place your head when you sleep has theological importance. If that is the case... religion and culture, and forms and meanings cannot be arbitrarily separated. One cannot simply change the meanings of old forms in order to communicate the Gospel, for the ties between them are rooted in social convention and cultural history. (1987)

Indigenous Versus Western Forms

A third issue proceeds from the previously mentioned two, whereby European and American missionaries have historically imported a Christianity that unnecessarily removes indigenous cultural constructs and replaces them with Western cultural mores. Indigenous forms have been marginalized as pagan while those originating in the West are esteemed to be holy.

Sometimes people resist the Gospel, not because they think it false but because they perceive it is a threat to their culture, especially the fabric of their society, and their national and tribal solidarity. ...There are features of every culture which are not incompatible with the lordship of Christ, and which therefore need not be threatened or discarded, but rather preserved and transformed. (The Willowbank Report 1978)

Neglecting to contextualize Christian expression has the potential to produce an undesirable effect. Indian theologian Sunand Sumithra says,

If we are to bring the message of the Gospel to Indian brothers and sisters, we must be absolutely careful to bring neither more nor less than the Gospel. It is in contextualizing that it is possible to remain faithful to the context of the Gospel... faithful to the text and relevant to the context. (1990)

Hinduism’s Complexity

While each of the previously mentioned points of contention has to do with Christianity’s historical ties with the West, perhaps what is at the heart of this complex problem originates with the perceptions of Hinduism held by Western Christians for decades, if not centuries. Hinduism
is largely misunderstood to be merely a religion, when it encompasses nearly every aspect of Indian life – an immense, yet deeply personal gestalt. The need to re-evaluate this idea becomes clear after reading the definition of Hinduism handed down by the Supreme Court of India in 1977:

Hinduism incorporates all forms of belief and worship without necessitating the selection or elimination of any. The Hindu is inclined to revere the divine in every manifestation, whatever it may be, and is doctrinally tolerant, leaving others including both Hindus and non-Hindus whatever creed and worship practices suit them best. A Hindu may embrace a non-Hindu religion without ceasing to be a Hindu, and … regard other forms of worship, strange Gods, and divergent doctrines as inadequate rather than objectionable. … Few religious ideas are considered to be finally irreconcilable. The core religion does not even depend on the existence or non-existence of God or on whether there is one God or many. Since religious truth is said to transcend all verbal definition, it is not conceived in dogmatic terms. Hinduism is, then, both a civilization and conglomerate of religions, with neither a beginning, a founder, nor a central authority, hierarchy, or organization. (Richard 2003)

A great frustration to Western workers whose worldview includes rigid, either/or paradigms can be explained by this observation of the Hindu culture:

At no point is Indian thought more alien to Western thought than in its assertion that there are many levels of truth… The assertion is… all truths, all social practices, can be encapsulated within the society as long as there is willingness to accept the premise on which the encapsulation is based. (Thomas and Juergensmeyer 1989)

Bharati says,

If we accept Judaism, Christianity and Islam as ‘religions’ and if, compelled by intellectual honesty, we want to apply the same term to comparable phenomena, we cannot avoid concluding that there are a number of different ‘religions’ existing side by side within ‘Hinduism.’ (2004)

**Hindu Perceptions of Christianity and the West**

One of the most useful and contemporary books on this subject is *Living Water in the Indian Bowl: An Understanding of Christian Failings in Communicating Christ to the Hindus*, authored by Dayanand Bharati. Though the text has been criticized in missiological writings as
being harsh and emphasizing the inappropriate actions of those who did not act in accordance with Christ’s teachings, Bharati communicates authentic concern for effective evangelization of India. Asserting that the witness of Christ to the Hindu has been formulaic and laden with imperialistic attitudes, immunizing would-be-seekers against the Gospel, the author suggests that a spirituality centered in Christ and practical to the daily life and culture is the missing ingredient. Other failures seen by Hindus include the perception that Christians act more out of compulsion in sharing the Gospel than out of a genuine love and concern for those they are evangelizing. Without an understanding of the Hindu worldview, Bharati believes the majority of workers will continue to fail at effectively communicating the message of Christ in India (2004).

While Bharati’s message centers on the failings of evangelical work due to a lack of understanding and sensitivity toward the Hindu culture, a short, succinct journal article by Aghamkar titled *Traditional Hindu Views and Attitudes Toward Christianity* is an excellent source of information on the Hindu perspective on Christians and Christianity. The author begins his treatise by examining what the Hindu Renaissance leaders had to say to the masses about Christianity. Most Hindus hold to the belief that the Gospel came to India via the white colonial powers and was to be vigorously resisted as the “religion of the imperialists.” Another notion held in the indigenous mind is that Christianity dislodges a Hindu from his status as a citizen of their beloved Mother India. Moving toward Hindu religious views, Aghamkar says the belief exists that their religion is eternal and therefore impossible to change. Another widely held belief is that all religions are equally valid paths to God; therefore, it is superfluous to exchange one for the other. On the other side of the coin is the attraction of the Hindu to Christ;

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9 Curiously absent from this myth is the fact that Christianity arrived in India long before making its way to Europe and the United States. The churches in the southern regions of India trace their lineage to the disciple Thomas (Dempsey 2001).
his ethical teachings, simple lifestyle and self-sacrifice. However, Hindu scholars who considered the life of Jesus showed no interest in the Old Testament, letters of Paul and other books extolling the all-sufficiency of Christ (Aghamkar 2008).

In stark contrast to the previous two Indian Christian authors is a virulent Hindu perspective by Shourie that points out the failures and offenses of missionary work. The title *Harvesting Our Souls: Missionaries, Their Design, Their Claims* hints at the sentiment of the book. Penned as a four hundred page indictment against Christian missionaries (with a modicum of angst directed at Muslims), this author’s zeal for the subject is apparent from page one:

> The conversion of even an individual causes grave disruption. His family is torn apart. Tensions erupt in the community. This is all the more so because after converting him… the converters make the person do and say things that grievously offend the community… to do things which are forbidden in his original religion or community… to eat flesh which is prohibited.

Shourie claims that conversion is the primary activity of every church group and grave consequences precipitate from it. The author’s harshest criticism is aimed at the Roman Catholic Church; although, much of this could also be said of Protestant Churches.

In the second chapter, the author downplays acts of violence against Christians in the late 1990’s, even declaring them to be conspiratorial or fabricated lies perpetuated by propagandist media sources of Christian organizations. Jarring in its cold and unapologetic handling of the murder of Graham Staines and his two sons in 1999, Shourie’s only motive for the account is to highlight the missionary activities of Staines. Conversions accomplished “…in a deceitful manner by giving allurements” is presented as the motive for the killing from the official trial documents. The newsletters of Staines’s Australian sending organization are reprinted as evidence for this.

At this point, I set the book aside to do some independent research on the “propagandist” accounts as well as the author. Shourie holds a Ph.D. in Economics, studied in the United States,
and has held important jobs in Indian government since 1998 such as his current position as Minister of Communications and Information Technology. He is an educated man of financial means and one of significant political influence. On his web site were other articles that took aim at any movement presenting a threat to Hinduism (The Arun Shourie Site n.d.). As for the credibility of his reporting and analysis on the incidents of the late 1990’s, I would call it into serious question. After reading independent accounts from sources such as Human Rights Watch, it appears Shourie’s bias clouds his judgment.\textsuperscript{10} If nothing else, it makes him remarkably unsympathetic to victims of violence who happen to ascribe to a religion other than Hinduism.

Chapter three asserts Christians are only interested in “body counts,” or numbers of converts. In the next twenty-three chapters, the author demonstrates extensive knowledge of the Bible, its stories and its history, taking the opportunity to point out actions of missionaries that are inconsistent with Scripture – or more aptly it reveals Shourie’s misunderstanding of Hebraic writing style and Kingdom concepts. Challenges to divine authorship and scriptural inerrancy are presented while citing so-called contradictions by famous atheists. Despite this, Shourie renders an incredibly accurate account of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, all the while citing Bible verses. Though the author can quote Christian scriptures, he does not grasp their significance: “As for Jesus’ death washing our sins, even after two thousand years’ efforts to explain how this is possible the Church has not been able to carry conviction.”

In the final chapter titled, \textit{A Few Things To Do}, Shourie returns to implicate another round of Christians victimized by crime as liars and charlatans. He continues to paint his picture of missiological intent:

\begin{quote}
(M)issionaries have but one goal – that of harvesting us for the Church… They have developed a very well-knit, powerful, extremely well-endowed organizational
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{10} See Human Rights Watch article (Narula 1999)
network for attaining that singular goal. … Their quest for power and control (and) their commercial interests are all entwined with… conversion.

Documented with well-researched articles that the caste system is alive and well, even within Christianity, the author exudes triumph that this social construct of Hinduism has prevailed against all effort to eradicate it. He warns that effort by the Church to press the government to act on behalf of the lower castes must be resisted and again, assigns a hypocritical motive for the Church’s action. Citing a law passed in 1967 and upheld by India’s Supreme Court that prohibits conversions by force or inducement, Shourie argues for harsher fines and longer prison sentences for Christian lawbreakers (2000).

Shourie’s book and various writings have aroused others in India to address his claims. In a paper by Kuruvachira, the author notes,

Much of what (Shourie) has written is a studied and systematic way of spreading misinformation about the minorities in order to destroy communal harmony. They are also characterized by intellectual flabbiness, lack of objectivity, and a one sided presentation of facts to a purpose. In a country whose religious pluralism and secular fabric is currently under serious threat, Shourie’s writings are clearly provocative, and they further damage the delicate relationship that exists between religions and communities.

The author continues in well-documented detail with a refutation of seven accusations found in multiple writings of Shourie. Kuruvachirar notes that a number of Shourie’s complaints are lifted from other texts hundreds of years old. Acknowledging some offending practices are indeed woven into Christianity’s 2000 year legacy, they are no longer found in the majority of contemporary practice (Kuruvachira n.d.).

Richard writes, “The old paradigm of introducing the blessings of Christian civilization to replace the darkness of Hindu civilization, still today apparent in much Christian teaching and practice, must be abandoned in favor of an incarnational (contextual) approach that seeks to plant
the seed of the Gospel within Hindu civilization.” (2003) It has been said that a diagnosis is easier to produce than a cure, and that is almost certainly the case with Christian failings in India. To be sure, there are success stories to be found. But it seems clear from the survey, that historically the Church has largely underestimated the significance of Hindu culture.

**Contextualized Christian Expression**

Lest anyone accuse me of heresy, it will be emphatically underscored that a saving knowledge of Christ manifests quite independently of the forms used in musical worship. This is the work of the Holy Spirit – period. Distinct from this phenomenon is another mystery where metaphysical processes between God and mankind exhibit a dual nature. We see from the book of Genesis that the work of the Creator is accomplished independently of any sort of action from the created. On the other hand, it is often seen in Scripture that God requires (but does not need) our cooperation. For example, prior to raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus asked that the stone sealing the tomb be rolled away (John 11:39). If our Lord can cause the dead to rise, he certainly does not need our assistance in moving a stone, yet human involvement was required on that day for this incredible event. In sharing the Gospel of Christ, the parallel to the Lazarus story is obvious: God requires us to roll away the stone – speak the truth in love, so that His work of raising the dead – revealing the truth of the Messiah and the impartation of the Spirit, will manifest.

Acknowledging the dual nature of our cooperation with the will of God in the Great Commission, it stands to reason that investigating the best way to fulfill that command in each culture would be prudent. One way to approach the task of generating a culturally appropriate witness for Christ is to begin with awareness that there is, or at least historically has been, a severe lack of it in India. Given the survey of the first three author’s works, the fact that it has
been missing should be firmly established, but is there a biblical precedent for such an approach? Scripture sheds some light on this from the life of the apostle Paul. Addressing the Greeks at the Areopagus, Paul initiates his message within the context of the host culture’s unknown God (Acts 17:22-33). Though some rejected his message, we know from verse thirty-two that at least some were drawn to his contextualized message. But neither does Paul compromise the message in the process. In I Corinthians 1:22-25, Paul says he preached the same Gospel to both the Greeks and the Jews – “…Christ crucified…” and though it resonated in each culture differently among those who would not believe, for those “…God has called, both Jews and Greeks,” the truth of the message was clear: “Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God.”

The danger inherent in this task is syncretism and a diluted, or worse yet, a corrupted message that leaves the resulting church impotent, isolated and dependent upon the missionaries who delivered the Gospel message (Saint 2008; Parmar 1960). Gaddis stresses that the art of making disciples of all nations using a contextualized approach is one of balancing cultural relevance with biblical integrity in theological education. In his thesis, it is emphasized that the greatest hope for inculturating the Gospel message is found in how national leaders and laity are equipped. Beyond basic biblical doctrine and avoiding pitfalls common to India, understanding how authentic Christian faith is expressed within the indigenous culture is paramount to achieving success. This requires equipoised elements in theological, relational and spiritual areas to be cultivated in all earnestness (2002).

Moving deeper into a framework for how this can be accomplished, Hiebert developed a model in the 1980’s that he calls Critical Contextualization. Originally conceived for the Indian context, it was expanded, revised and published repeatedly for a broader missiological audience. Integrating concepts from anthropology, theology and missiology into a contextual methodology, Hiebert’s landmark work provides pivotal insight to the task. He presents three options for
handling a culture’s traditions, asserting only one is viable. There can be a wholesale rejection of all things indigenous because of their close association to pagan worship. On the other side of the spectrum is their outright and uncritical acceptance born out of a desire to minimize cultural change, avoid a “foreign Gospel,” and honor the heritage of the converts. Hiebert embraces the third and only viable option, building on the idea that in any given cultural context there will be elements that can be successfully appropriated, and others that need to be abandoned, if only for the first generation of believers.

Beginning with the need to view all areas of life through a biblical lens, a campaign to identify significant cultural elements is recommended as an important first step to be undertaken by the indigenous church. With the assistance of a missionary or other mature national, the church is led to critically examine each element in light of Scripture. Some will be rejected as unworthy of cultural expression for the Christian; others will be accepted as appropriate. Once the customs are analyzed, the practices that remain must be arranged into meaningful rituals that adequately express the indigenous culture as well as a biblically sound Christian worldview (1987). Hiebert’s model is supported by at least two theological components. With contextualization choices made by the entire church and not just its leaders, the process affirms the priesthood of all believers (I Peter 2:9) with individuals exercising their God-given gifts and abilities (I Corinthians 12).

Kraft writes, “Jesus came from heaven to communicate in the most effective way. He told stories to a story-oriented society (and made little use of literacy, even in a literate society).” Beyond a conceptional structure and presenting detailed specifics on the application of contextualization theory, Kraft covers the broader topic of enculturation as it applies to the arts as well as a number of other areas such as education, societal groups, worldview, ethics, material culture and race while making a watertight case for the process. He notes that Westerners’
tendency to compartmentalize cultural elements results in the lack of awareness of the tight integration of the arts within a non-Western culture. Folklore, music, drama, dance and the visual arts are all seen as potential vehicles for cross-cultural witness and have the potential to reach into the individual’s innermost being. Music especially, employing the idiom of poetry, becomes a powerful communicator of cultural values.

The story of the rivalry between John and Charles Wesley is told where they debated the strength of singing versus preaching as a teaching tool. Kraft asserts that the latter’s 6500 hymns have probably had the greater influence.

A key concept in effectively contextualizing the Gospel message is the understanding that there is a separation of meaning from form. Meaning is associated with the performing arts, but they do not communicate lexically, especially the deeper significance of the rituals. These connotations are culturally learned. Kraft gives a nod to Hiebert’s four categories of meaning continuum that run from one extreme of “arbitrary linkage,” through the middle ground of loose and tight linkages, to the other extreme where “forms equated with meanings” are so tightly bound so as to give the impression of inseparability. Extrapolating this key concept further, four unique principals govern the understanding of cultural forms and their meaning:

1. Forms allow for the culture’s significance to be communicated from one member to another.
2. Some measure of differing meaning will be realized in different cultures when the same form is presented.
3. The same or similar meaning can be represented in different cultures by entirely different forms.
4. Culturally appropriate forms must be chosen in the process of Christian witness or the message will be misunderstood (Kraft 2006).
The primary roadmap on the journey of contextualization should be Scripture and the letters of Paul represent a good starting point. Other examples can be found in both the New and Old Testaments. Anchored in solid biblical theology are both Hiebert’s and Kraft’s volume of work on cross-cultural witness. Though I have presented only a short summary of a few key points, both authors give the reader a solid orientation to the art. It is important to note that the intent of Christianity should not be to dislodge worshippers from forms they love and cherish, as long as the forms are God-honoring, Kingdom-oriented, and have been studied with discernment by the indigenous church. Keller warns that finding the balance is the key: “If we over-adapt to a culture we are trying to reach, it (may mean) we have bought into that culture’s idols. (...) If we under-adapt to a culture, it (may mean) we have accepted our own culture’s idols.” (2010)

The idea of contextualizing Christian expression is not new. A quick search on the Internet will return many sites revealing the mission board annual reports of Protestant and Catholic exploits in India from the nineteenth century that document the leveraged use of indigenous musical forms. All things considered, it is an endeavor that does not contain inherent success. However, the task may turn up some pleasant surprises along the way as there are always movements of fresh air from heaven that make it through the windows of our cloistered gatherings, and we do well to breathe them in.

Ethnomusicology Studies of North India

Overview

To begin a review of the literature specific to North India and Uttar Pradesh, a few works serve as touchstones to the greater phenomenon of Hindustani music. The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music Online, Volume 5, South Asia: The Indian Subcontinent is an excellent primer that contains a section on the music of Uttar Pradesh. On the broader topic of
Indian music in general, the volume includes maps, photographs, illustrations, a discography, an audio CD containing music, and bibliographic information, as well as the essay specific to Uttar Pradesh authored by Henry and Marcus. The latter is found in part three on musical regions.

Henry begins the piece by giving consideration to the demographics of the state including the three major language families found there: Himalayan in the north, Magadhan in the east and the amalgamation of languages prominent in the remaining geographical areas that fall into the Western Hindi family. Elements typical of the music culture in this area include: devotional text, gender-specific performance, high value placed on vocal music, the use of the *dholak* and *harmonium* and the prevalence of monophony. The undisputed winner in terms of sheer number of compositions is the women, and three categories of musical occasion are listed that represent them: life cycle rituals, calendric rites and recreation, with the latter including work songs. A cursory presentation of style and text is included. A section on informal men’s groups follows with the most common occasion being a devotional context. Though not specific to Uttar Pradesh, or even North India, part two focuses on such topics as: transmission, religious rituals, dance, drama, social issues, and the diaspora. Similarly, part one introduces the reader to an overview of the musical scholarship of the entire sub-continent (Henry and Marcus 1999).

Grimes moves in for a closer look in his dissertation, *The Geography of Hindustani Music: The Influence of Region and Regionalism on the North Indian Classical Tradition*. By examining the changes in Hindustani music, due in large part to India’s independence, and where the average performer profile changed from being a low-caste Muslim to a high-caste Hindu, the shift in regional centers producing musicians influencing the art is explored. *Gharanas* are known for training soloists whose style is distinct to that family’s tradition, and accompanists from various regions tend to play with a certain technical style. For instance, city centers known for *tabla* include Y____, Farukhabad, Punjab, Ajrada, Delhi and Lucknow. Grimes presents a
number of gharanas’ and artists’ stylistic contributions in the context of regional areas, and how they influenced various genres such as khayal, qawwali, and dhrupad over time (2008).

Agreeing with Grimes, Van Der Meer says, “It is often assumed that traditional cultures, as in India, are rather inert and that the art forms hardly ever change. . . . I felt that at least an effort to discover the roots of such change would be valuable as a contribution to the study of art history.” (1980) Where the former author’s work gives good insight into the regional aspects of Hindustani music with a nod to changes over time, the latter elaborates on a variety of technical elements that comprise static phenomenon in the first half of the book, and then covers topics of a dynamic nature in the second half.

In the first chapter, the details of the fundamentals of raga and tala are handled. Because of the inseparable association of raga, song genres and songs, the next two chapters cover ragas in the performance of dhrupad and khayal, making some notable comparisons. Of particular interest is an item of confusion based sociological and historical information for the song genre khayal. Claimed by Hindus as being Indian in origin and development, a Muslim will say its origin and development is largely Persian. Van Der Meer sorts this out nicely while basing his logic on empirical evidence. Chapter IV presents another take on raga based on groupings of permutation, structure and expression, and while admitting there is considerable overlap in these processes, the performer is usually mindful of at least one. Chapter V covers poetry, melody and rhythm. To illustrate poetic themes, excellent examples are given conveying a variety of sentiments. The author also covers topics such as rasa, social environment, gharanas, education, the influence of great musicians, and changes in Hindustani music (1980).
Elements of Style

Tonal System and Melody

*The Raga Guide: A Survey of 74 Hindustani Ragas* is by no means an exhaustive work. It is a unique book containing a balance of theory and practice, and explores seventy-four *ragas* in performance recordings and transcriptions. As an audio engineer with decades of recording experience, I especially appreciated the quality of the recordings. Producer/engineer Robin Broadbank created an exceptionally pleasing balance of realism in the ambient quality coupled with remarkable clarity. In generating this treatise, the works of no less than eleven authors writing in Hindi and nine authors writing in English were consulted. The first eight pages covers a number of definitions and conventions, and the remainder of the work presents many of the *ragas* in contemporary use. Included is a *ragamala* album (artwork) depicting the sentiment of each *raga* (Bor 2002).

Returning to Van Der Meer’s work for a closer look at melodic composition, the author asserts that the dual nature of *raga* is often the cause for oversimplification of its definition and disagreement among musicians. Comprised of a technical aspect as well as an ideational component, *ragas* are the framework that simultaneously supply restrictive rules and great permission for improvisation. A host of elements are defined that combine to form the rules: scales, ascending and descending phrases, note order, duration and emphasis, use of shrutis, and phrases. The author makes use of historical data, music theory and contemporary practice to reiterate concepts long understood in Hindustani music as well as introduce new ideas from his personal research. Since melody cannot be divorced from rhythm, Van Der Meer includes a section on *tala* as it relates to *raga*. Of particular interest regarding the older and deeper concept of *raga*, the author asserts it is receding and leaving a shallow replacement: “(Underway in India is a) replacement of a *raga* concept based on a totality of musical characters which form an
almost living entity by a *raga* concept consisting of a simple set of rules to be obeyed while improvising.” (1980)

Though both of the previous authors touch on the concept of *shruti*, or microtonal variation, neither sheds a great deal of light on the subject. Others such as Jairazbhoy in *The Rags of North Indian Music* (1971) and Danielou in *The Ragas of Northern India* (1980) go into mind-numbing detail for the non-initiate. A good compromise is a section from Wellesz in his work titled *Ancient and Oriental Music*. Here, there author covers the fundamentals such as the generally accepted theory that there are twenty-two *shrutis* found within the octave. He visits a number of musicologists and mathematicians through history who have presented scientific definitions of the *shrutis* for Western audiences. Similar to other theoretical concepts regarding Hindustani music, much is left for debate. The bottom line from Wellesz work is that, for the Indian musician, the *shruti* is a generic name for any interval smaller than a semitone (1999).

Jairazbhoy’s work on *The Rags of North Indian Music* mentioned in the previous paragraph is a highly technical look at this indigenous system of melodic theory. An overview of contemporary classical music by way of introducing the nature of melody, melody line accompaniment, drone and percussion opens the first chapter. The key ingredients of *raga* are presented next with the author describing the *alap* and the succeeding composition which is set in a unique *tala*. A brief survey of *tala* is given with a few notated examples. The term for the composition in instrumental music is given as *gat* and in vocal music the same is given *chiz* with the author pointing out distinctions in these.

Next, Jairazbhoy dives a little deeper into the nature of *raga*, declaring that each one has an “…ethos of its own.” Combining technical terms with related musical principals, a notes subsection tackles somewhere on the order of thirty vocabulary items complete with notational examples, matrixed references and footnotes. Special mention of the author’s summary of *shruti*
is important. Key points include the idea that shruti are not sustained ornamentation, but are only used in oscillation. He also points out that ancient theory holds they served to distinguish one raga from another, but because the absolute definition of intervals has been lost in antiquity, they are no longer functional as such.

Jairazbhoy presents Bhatkhande’s system of organizing ragas according to their modes and melodic rules, called thaats, with notated examples giving the reader a good picture of this concept. Some unique ragas are selected to demonstrate the enormous variety of thaats, such as ones exhibiting chromaticism. Contrasting Hindustani thaats with Carnatic versions, as well as a table that shows which thaats correspond to the ancient Greek and Ecclesiastical modes is encountered next. The Western model of the circle of fifths is borrowed to illustrate the circle of thaats, however a number of gyrations are induced to force it to fit, as Hindustani music does not adapt well to the system of just intonation, and results in the author’s “spiral of fourths.”

With drones playing such a prominent role in Hindustani music, Jairazbhoy devotes an entire chapter to the topic. Presenting the idea that the further the melody departs from the tonal center, the greater the dissonance becomes, a number of consonance-dissonance topics are discussed. The author’s observations of performance practice in relationship to the drone results in the theory that the octave is divided into two tetrachords and this results in a tendency to attempt to balance these in the execution of raga. The final two chapters are the result of this theory and they go into great detail about how performers balance the tetrachords via alternative notes, that include a deeper pass on the topic of shruti, or “transilient”\textsuperscript{11} scales (1971).

For those with a keen mathematical mind, a journal article from the world of computational cognition may be of interest titled, *Melody Revisited: Tips from Indian Music Theory*. A team of mathematical theorists studied the melodic structures of two ragas in order to

\textsuperscript{11} Scales that omit notes
“tighten the mathematical definition of melody.” Rasas Bageshree and Bhimpalashree are scrutinized in a quantitative context for melodic contour commonality and diversity in the absence of any metrical analysis. The data is summarized in thirteen charts and two plots examining a variety of criteria that borders on probability theory (Chakraborty, et al. 2010).

Rhythm, Meter and Tala

A highly technical and thorough, yet fairly accessible book titled Time in Indian Music offers a very thorough presentation on the subject as it pertains to Hindustani music. Clayton communicates in clear fashion some rather deep theoretical concepts as they relate to time measurement, cyclicity, linearity, meter, metric cognition, tala, syllabic structure, theka, rhythmic density, tempo, performance practice, bandish structure, and rhythmic variation. Grounding the reader in historical usage and employing indigenous theory and terminology wherever possible, the author maintains that there are enough points of congruence between the Western concept of meter and the Hindustani concept of tala to build a cross-cultural concept of musical rhythm. Underscoring the critical nature of musical time in Hindustani music theory, the author asserts even the nature of raga is dependent upon its execution in time: “The rag is a dynamic, temporal generative principle which can have no satisfactory representation in static… form.” Notational examples from performances of well-known dhrupad and khyal compositions are used to help communicate key concepts presented in the text. An audio CD containing recordings of thirty-nine performances that help to reinforce the theory presented in the book is included (Clayton, Time in Indian Music 2000).

Slightly less lucid, but no less useful is a book on the subject of tabla rhythm by Sudhir Kumar Saxena, the first tabla player to teach professionally at a major university in India. In The Art of Tabla Rhythm, the author travels through time to describe the development of the
instrument, to practical aspects such as maintenance, and then commits the remaining majority of the text to details of tabla rhythms within the context of Hindustani composition.

Beginning with “Alphabets of Rhythm” the author accommodates the English and Hindi reader by making use of both languages when describing rhythmic components. Even here within the elementals begins a discussion of improvisation and aesthetics where interlacement versus translocation is deemed superior in a particular context. In the next chapter on “Vocabulary of Tabla Rhythm,” the indigenous verbiage becomes so thick (to the extreme of providing terms in Devanagari script to the exclusion of English), that a lexical reference becomes a necessity. It is unfortunate that the one provided in the back matter is insufficient to the English-speaking novice. The majority of these terms are defined in a generic performance context, and where applicable, the author directs elucidation toward tabla performance. The diligent reader will be rewarded with a good inventory of rhythmic vocabulary and concepts. The sections dealing with solo and accompaniment performance, followed by a lengthy chapter on gharanas, are only useful to a reader seeking a comprehensive understanding of rhythms as they uniquely apply to tabla performance. A short chapter on composition introduces the reader to aesthetics as they apply to this endeavor, although the author confesses his he is not an aesthetician (Saxena 2008).

Texture and Tone Color

In Semiosis in Hindustani Music, the topic of texture and tone color plays a minor role in this study on symbols; nevertheless, a few characteristic qualities can be gleaned. Martinez notes that in considering timbre, the human voice more than that of any instrument has been the topic of scholarly study. Traveling back in time to the second century, the author quotes Bharati as he describes the qualities of a skilled singer. Their voice should be “…loud, compact, smooth,
sweet, careful and distinctly related to the three voice registers (head, throat and chest).” The most highly esteemed of these being smoothness and sweetness. Martinez also quotes Rowel as saying that the “ideal vocal sound should be… oily smooth and honey sweet.” (2001)

Van Der Meer counters statements made in Martinez’s book with the notion that historically, vocal production is left as natural as possible which included a wide range of tonal qualities. He gives examples of high-pitched singers with shrill voices, deep sonorous ones, as well as delicate ones. Even out of tune “cracky” voices are found on occasion. The author’s aim is to assess changes over time to the larger phenomenon of Hindustani music, and one significant aspect includes a reduced amount of vocal training going into the lives of people whose increasingly Western lifestyles have less and less time for performance education. Additionally, only singers whose vocal ability is seen as promising from their youth are groomed and therefore less variation in the current generation of singers seems to be the result (1980).

While the texts reviewed above appear to contradict, texts consulted for other chapters in this paper esteemed a purer timbre for the voice which agrees with Martinez. In contrast to the preferred vocal timbre, the instrumental side embraces the Hindustani concept of jawari or jivari. Though only one text I managed to locate gave this concept more than a sentence or two of definition, the term equates to the overtone-rich jangling or buzzing sound characteristic of instruments such as the tanpura and sitar. According to Ranade, to create jawari, “a thread is inserted between the string and the bridge as a part of permanent construction or as a part of the procedure readying the instrument for … playing…” This is also accomplished through the existence of sets of sympathetic resonance strings. The author goes on to mention that similar procedures are performed on other instruments such as the tabla, and while nothing specific is carried out in the construction of a harmonium to give it additional jawari, the ones that have a greater degree of it are held in higher regard (2006). Another brief reference to instrumental
texture is found in an account of a performance in *Time in Indian Music*: “… the drone has… become thoroughly fixed in the listener’s mind… a dense cloud of harmonics produced by the *tanpuras* which seems to envelop performers and audience alike.” (Clayton 2000)

Taking these writings together, then, it may be inferred that two types of tone color are esteemed in contemporary Hindustani music: a pure, smooth and sweet tone for the voice, and a richer more dense and fibrous tone for the instruments. This reality may be reflected in the rhythmic accompaniment as *Time in Indian Music* demonstrates rather scientifically that metric density spans a very wide gap from ultra-sparse in unmetered sections to the über-dense in climactic, developmental sections (2000).

**Form and Text**

In the book *Hindustani Music and the Aesthetic Concept of Form*, Mittal spends a great deal more verbiage on aesthetics than he does form. Though the bulk of the text is in English, it is unfortunate that the examples contain a fair amount of elucidation in Devanagari script. To the pragmatic mind, attempting to grasp the mystical significance of form coupled with incomprehensible illustrations may tempt the reader to set the text aside, however, diligence pays off in the acquisition of important insights.

Denouncing form in art as mere shape, and presenting contrasting viewpoints of the primacy of form versus content, Mittal argues for their ideal interrelation as a highly desirable objective. For the purpose of this review, the crux of the work comes in chapter five titled, “The Knitwork of Musical Form.” Noting differences and similarities between musician and listener, the author suggests that a common experience of form is Hindustani music’s dynamic character, versus a static one. Investigating structure and aesthetics, the author asserts *laya* (the melodic pace or tempo), the use of *raga* (melodic framework), the *tala* (cycle of beats), the centrality of
the *sama* (primary beat), all come together to support the meaning of the text resulting in not only form, but beauty.

Improvisatory permission does not result in a torrential flow, but contains musical pauses that allow the listener a breath to enjoy what has just been performed. Furthermore, pauses generate a type of pleasurable tension that anticipates what is to come. Pauses come at individual notes as well as between notes as defined by each *raga*.

Mittal asserts that rhythm can be considered an independent art form, with its own set of unique materials and aesthetics, and should be examined separately from melodic aspects of music. The Hindustani rhythmic concept of *tala* is a form in and of itself and the author identifies the constituent ingredients as: *laya*, *matra* (a beat marking sub-divisions), *zarab* (flexible location of the *matra*), *bol* (non-lexical syllables identifying the *matra*), and *sama* (first and stressed beat of a cycle). This section also reveals their inner organization by use of compositional examples. One such example illustrating a *visama* rhythmic pattern, where the last syllable is not concurrent with the *sama*, the author makes note that not only its consummate beat, but its entrance must avoid the *sama*. The concept of *theka* (non-cyclic, elemental rhythmic patterns), is examined and they seem to be the most readily identifiable rhythmic forms, comprised of inter-related elements of *bols*, beats and tempo. Mittal presents a fifteen beat *theka* in analysis, showing that an “accent of abandon” at beat 8½ creates a perfectly subdivided pattern.

The author goes on to undertake the massive subject of *raga* as a distinct melodic form, conveying the idea that they are comprised of the scales and other organizational rules distinct from rhythm. Adding to *raga* concepts presented earlier in this paper in the section on *Tuning, Tonal System and Melody*, Mittal asserts each melodic form of *raga* is beyond a mere type. The concept of a matrix is presented where horizontal, vertical and intersecting characteristics exist
and this idea is explored in *alapa* and *dhamar* by using illustrations of text. Of particular interest was the analysis of one *tarana* where a string of non-lexical syllables was capable of adding to the emotion of the worded section of the composition (2000).

In the book *Hidden Faces of Ancient Indian Song*, the author traveled to India to answer the question of what creates an aesthetic experience from melodic formulas derived from *ragas*, and the answer finds McIntosh plunging deep into the psyche of Hindu thought, sound, and especially music. Covering a great deal of ground in the area of musical grammar, drawing important insight from mystical Sanskrit vocabulary, a significant area in this book covers song text and rhythm. An example is found in the definition of the *giti*, which is a “…melodic phenomena defined by melodic movement… ornamentations… syllables… and tempo.” The author notes that contemporary musical styles repeat syllables, words, and non-lexical syllables, even employing tactics such as syllable “juggling” in order to produce rhythmic improvisation. This is carried out often at the expense of intelligibility. Other specific examples include lines of text manipulated in a several different ways according to various forms of recitation. Using the ear, the mouth and the hand as metaphors representing sound, language and gesture, Vedic accents are examined to illustrate the “law of three” found in mantra recitation and the “law of seven” found in modal forms. Some of the ideas presented fall into the category of ancient *raga* concepts, and as such there is much debate regarding their precise nature (McIntosh 2005).

Returning to the text by Van Der Meer, his chapter on poetry, melody and rhythm covers the topic of how music and text work together. It is noted that while certain vocal techniques are employed in unusual passages, such as in the case of the shouted *pukara*, it is primarily the expressiveness of the voice through the melody that conveys the emotion of the text. Emphasizing the improvisatory nature of vocal performance, the author says, “A composition is taught in a fully metered way (with) every syllable being fixed in *svara* and *matra*, but the
experienced artist always seeks to get more depth out of it through novel arrangements, keeping only the main points of the composition as he learnt them.” (1980)

This review of form and text is utterly incomplete without an overview of each musical genre’s unique approach to prosodic structure. Though the section on genre and song form in this paper seemed to be the proper placement of such a review, time constraints as well as difficulty identifying appropriate texts prohibited such an inclusion. Special mention of one shining example that handles nothing but the poetry of a single Hindustani genre is a book titled, *Hindi Poetry in a Musical Genre: Thumri Lyrics* (Perron 2007).

Transmission

In *The Life of Music in North India*, Neuman explores Hindustani music from the perspective of the musician regarding the cultural aspects of being a performer. Years of fieldwork allowed the author to interview scores of musicians, most of who lived in the area of O__E_____. Six tables of musicians in the back matter categorized by instrument played gives the reader a glimpse into the depth and breadth of Neuman’s study. Introducing us to Hindustani music by painting a historical and cultural backdrop, an outline of the life of a musician begins to emerge as a mixture of the traditional Muslim of lower caste and the more contemporary inclusion of middle-class Brahmans. Emphasizing the importance of skills such as memorization and improvisation, Neuman also asserts that the compositional skill most esteemed is one of showcasing the *raga* – not so much in the exhibition of the composition itself.

Neuman introduces the term *riaaz* in the chapter on *Becoming a Musician* as having to do with a labyrinth of ideas in areas of individual responsibility, such as practice habits, and achievement. Attitudes of the *gurus* are examined and a few quotes give the reader insight on the variable methods and depth to which musical knowledge is transferred. How much a guru is
loved and compensated by the student are factors. Additionally, the student’s capacity for learning is assessed and not everyone receives the same instruction based on this assessment.

A key concept in the book is the historical reconstruction of performers of devotional music over India’s long history. Prior to the arrival of Islamic invaders, music was the prerogative of Brahmans in Hindu temples and patron courts. After this, and during the period of Islamic conquest, Muslim musicians assumed the dominant role, professionalizing the art as a hereditary occupation in the elite and closed social system of *gharanas*. Neuman’s hypothesis for this change includes the ideas that it was a response to cultural modernization and resistance to colonial power.

Neuman examines the *guru-shisha* relationship of the *gharanas* as well as the role of the divine from an indigenous perspective. Though music schools and music education in universities are viable and popular alternatives, the traditional system linked to specific families of musicians is featured in great detail in the text. Thousands of schools exist in North India and they are a valuable source of learning as well as an incubator for an informed listening public. Regardless, the criticism levied against them is their broad and shallow approach to learning. Neuman states: “No student receiving his or her training exclusively from a music college has ever become a recognized performer of Indian classical music.” The aspect of lineage in the *gharanas*, emphasized as both genetic and related to the *guru-shishya* practice is given critical importance.

Of particular interest in regards to contextualization in a Christian context is a brief section addressing the relationship between the musician and the spirit world. *Jinns* are described as manifesting in human or animal form and enjoy good music. Manifesting as malevolent or benevolent, some musicians will not practice certain *ragas* at night due to the attraction of *jinns* and the fearful experiences associated with their presence (1980).
In contrast to Neuman’s book that features *gharanas* as the key component of transmission, an overview of music education can be found in Alter’s chapter on *Institutional Music Education: Northern Area* in *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music – South Asia: The Indian Subcontinent*. The concept of creating an institutional model based on education in the West was born in Calcutta. Pandits such as Sayajirao, Madhavrao, Bhatkhande and Paluskar are singled out for their contributions. Illiterate musicians coupled with oral tradition made progress arduous, until literacy came to be effectively addressed in education in the twentieth century. Bhatkhande’s collections of compositions and theoretical explanations became the most widely used texts in the Hindi language belt of North India. Describing institutional learning, Alter reveals this picture:

Instruction occurs in classes of ten to twenty-five students. Classes are sometimes designated either specifically for practical training or for theory. Even so, the majority of classes emphasize the practical aspects of a student's musical skills. Student schedules include four to five classes per day, each taught by a different teacher and each of approximately fifty minutes' duration. Each class meets either two or three times a week. Generally, teachers explain the intricacies of various ragas and talas from their own individual perspective without specific reference to textbooks. …(T)raining is largely by rote learning. Each class usually focuses on the intricacies of a particular raga. The teacher sings a phrase, which the students repeat either as a group or individually. In a departure from master-disciple traditions, students often notate phrases as they are sung or soon afterward, and keep this notebook of phrases and compositions with them during all their classes. Teachers rarely make this a formal requirement, but it is now common practice. (Alter 1999)

Transmission of music in North India, like other elements previously discussed, is not a static idea that sits still long enough to be studied; it is clearly changing right up to the present moment. What makes the topic even more challenging to study is despite the inclusion of texts and written theory presented in formal institutions of learning, it continues to be largely an oral tradition. The following quote concerns the genre of *qawwali*, but could easily be applied to a variety of genres and music contexts transmitted from generation to generation:
The construction of a history of Sufi music rests almost entirely on information derived from oral tradition and what oral informants consider important concerning such factors as the origins of the poetry and tunes, the authority of the sheikh, ritual, the ownership of specific repertories, and the presence in qawwali of elements of the raga and tala system. (Qureshi 1991)

Organology

A practical discovery was made in a book by Ranade titled, *A Concise Dictionary of Hindustani Music*. It has two sections with the first dedicated to musical terminology, but unlike lexical reference found in the West, this Indian author elaborates with great color and tangential notions. In the second and much shorter section devoted to musical instruments, Ranade includes a curious selection of eighteen instruments, their description and occasionally their historical significance. Along with each entry is a nice graphic rendering of the instrument (2006).

*The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* has an entire volume devoted to the music of India. Though this volume will sometimes mix Hindustani topics with Carnatic ones, on the whole, it does an excellent job of keeping to regional divisions of music culture. India, with its long and well-documented music history also has bragging rights on the topic of organology. There is an interesting section on the historical classification of instruments presented beginning with the earliest known references of the ancient Indus Valley culture of 2500-2000 B.C. A brief account of the *Natyasastra* which is an ancient work documenting drama, dance and music alludes to four methods of instrument classification from the period of 200 B.C. to A.D. 200. Each framework takes a wide variety of instruments and categorizes them according to the methodology. The supremacy of the human body as an instrument is evident here as it is even today. Other systems from Tamil and Buddhist texts are presented as well (Flora 1999).
In the same volume but written by a different author under a separate subsection titled *Musical Instruments: Northern Area*, a very useful chapter with broad categories using Hornbostel-Sachs headings can be found. Chordophones, aerophones, membranophones and idiophones are broken out into parental instrument headings. The original photographs in the book which I have seen are quite nice, where the online scans of the photographs are quite grainy, though still quite useful (Miner 1999).

A journal article that unfortunately mixes instruments from the north and the south is titled simply, *Instruments of India*. The opening of the piece begins with a brief summary of instruments encountered in literature throughout India’s history. In the second section, instrument names are given with short but adequate descriptions, and the final section concludes with photographs of some of the more prominent instruments (Krishnaswami 1971).

A postmortem side note to this review of organology literature is in order. Having worked in the media production side of online educational materials for seven years, I was greatly dismayed to find no significant online presence for organology study. The only viable presence is attempted by Wesleyan University’s music department. An elegant user interface is appreciated, but the system is sorely lacking in depth and breadth, as a scant nine instruments were available for the entire sub-continent of India. The Musical Instrument Museum of Phoenix, Arizona shows great promise for a comprehensive online presence, but none is encountered. The existing site provides little more than a recommendation for a personal visit. I was informed that they have plans to create an online presence, but no time frame was given. A monumental work carried out by the University of Edinburgh and sponsored in part by the European Union called Musical Instrument Museums Online (MIMO) has been in the works for years and their web site says the material will be available sometime in the middle of 2011. The existing site does not reveal whether these collections will focus on instruments of the West or
the world. The single best web page with a reasonable offering of organology data is the National Music Museum. Though the interface leaves much to be desired, and no sound samples were available, a large number of instruments indigenous to India are represented in photographs and brief descriptions. As a home to more than 15,000 instruments, the museum seems to be a fantastic repository for researchers. The details of these collections are available by subscribing to an annual membership.

Genres and Song Forms

Folk Songs

That a large and significant repertoire of classical, semi-classical and folk music exists in Uttar Pradesh is well documented in literature. What is missing is a cohesive anthology of this music, especially in the area of folk songs. A short journal article titled *Folk Songs of Uttar Pradesh* claims that at best, contemporary effort to catalog this body of music is scattered and isolated. Sahai-Achuthan enumerates the various themes that folk songs embody, claiming the entire life-cycle is generously covered. She places them in three broad categories of seasonal, ceremonial and occasional songs. Gender plays a role where various songs are classified according to whether they are sung by men, women, both or by an individual.

Seasonal song genres of the rainy season consist of *kajris, barahmasas, sawans*, and *bidesias*. *Kajris* exhibit classical elements such as making use of *alaps* and can be said to possess certain aspects of *ragas* such as *kamoda, jhin-jhoti* and *malhara*. *Phalgun* songs are compositions appropriate for early Spring, and also during this time songs pertaining to the festival of *Holi* are performed.

In the category of ceremonial songs, Sahai-Achuthan describes several genres such as *sohars, annaprasana, mundan, yagyopaveet* and *vivah* as well as their corresponding occasion
such as weddings, marriages and when a child’s head is shaved for the first time. A large variety of colorful song types surrounds the wedding ceremony including improvised taunts that hurl abuse and vulgarity. These song types demonstrate fewer of the classical elements than the seasonal songs, though the author does not tell us anything further about the technical aspects of the form.

Occasional songs tend to display a faster tempo, include the element of dance and are sung by peasants, craftsmen and herdsmen. These song types are given names such as birha, jantsar, nirai, popni and kolhu, but again, no technical information is given that distinguishes one form from another. Tables describing various folk instruments and ragas in which folk songs are typically set concludes the article (Sahai-Achuthan 1987).

An interesting find titled Some Annotated Indian Folksongs contains the song lyrics with a small amount of supplemental information regarding the sentiment, possible translation issues and song contexts. The author claims to have collected five hundred Bhojpuri folk songs from Ballia, an eastern district in the state of Uttar Pradesh in 1961. His informant was an elderly village woman who claimed to have known thousands of songs in her youth. The annotations are detailed, extensive, and very accessible to the English reader (Upadhyaya 1967).

Dhrupad

The fundamental genres of Hindustani classical music that are most often cited in representing a particular raga or tala are the devotional forms of dhrupad and khyal. The former is older, dating to at least the thirteenth century (Henry and Marcus 1999), and the latter arrived on the scene in the eighteenth century. According to Widdess, dhrupad’s objective is to bring an offering of worship or praise to God (or a god), and the performance is oriented toward the deity instead of the audience. Other scholars assert this transcendent feature is expressed by the alap,
and this essentially distinguishes it from other genres. Though ornamentation is frowned upon as being inappropriate for worship, it is permissible in the *alap* as it is a heart-felt gesture. Fast tempos and complex rhythms are permitted elsewhere, as they facilitate an ecstasy in the context of worship (Widdess 1994).

Special mention should be made of a 418 page *pièce de résistance* on *dhrupad* by Sanyal and Widdess titled, *Dhrupad: Tradition and Performance in Indian Music*, a copy of which perpetually eluded me during the writing of this review. Gathering what others have said about it in several reviews, it undoubtedly could answer many questions regarding this genre. In particular, chapters five through eight represent the book’s central work where notation, accompanied by analysis and sound recordings provide full detail on this highly established and devotional song form (Sarrazin 2005).

In Van Der Meer’s work titled, *Hindustani Music in the Twentieth Century*, an entire chapter is devoted to the topic of a *raga* performance within the context of the *dhrupad* compositional form. Having “petrified” by the seventeenth century, he notes the form is well defined and it is distinguished as follows in the opening remarks: “It starts with *alapa* after which the full composition follows, and ends with rhythmic variations.” Other noted features are as follows:

- *raga* development is accomplished in two bookend sections: *alapa* and *bolbanao*
- adherence to *raga* is strict, especially in the introductory *alapa*
- the initial compositional line must follow every elaborative section
- a regular pulse is avoided in the *vilambita alapa* by means of syncopation and rubato
- texts include Sanskrit, Braja, Avadhi or a mixture of the latter two
- though some only contain the first two, most *dhrupads* have four parts:
  1. *sthayi* – containing the fundamental melody and *raga outline*
2. *antara* – focuses on the upper tonal center, *sa*, but with a continual exploration of the *raga*

3. *sancari* – a restatement of the *sthayi* with variation

4. *abhoga* – a restatement of the *antara* with variation

The author proceeds to dissect a composition based on *raga Hindola*. The introductory and pulseless *vilambita alapa* is overtaken by definite pulsation in the *madhya alapa*, where other changes occur such as various notes gaining and losing prominence in the melody, and embellishment emerges out of subtlety. Next we encounter the brisk tempo of the *druta alapa* containing an even greater density of rhythmic content, melodic variation and improvisation. In its conclusion, a slower phrase is encountered, and the song begins to move into the composition.

Examining the next section, it is marked by the text, melody and rhythm being in fixed relationship of equal importance to each other. The end of the composition is clearly indicated by a return to the first line. Once this section is delivered, variation and elaboration commence in a musical component termed *bolbanao*. Particularly demanding is the drummer’s part where he must improvise consistently with the soloist while monitoring the progression of the *tala*.

Since the author’s objective in this chapter is primarily an examination of *raga* within a context of secondary importance (*dhrupad*), he spends a great amount of verbiage on the *raga* as well as performance practice considerations. For the purpose of gaining an understanding of the form of *dhrupad*, the chapter becomes less useful as it progresses. Nevertheless, Van Der Meer gives a vivid account of the important characteristics of this genre (1980).

*Khyal*

It seems that few scholars have authored works on what should be a fairly common topic of study for this popular Hindustani genre. Brief and obtuse references abound in more than a
few works, but comprehensive treatments identifying the genre in English are apparently limited to two books available in the United States. Obtaining a copy of Wade’s book titled *Khyāl: Creativity within North India’s Classical Music Tradition* was worth the wait. A word of caution to the reader of this work: Two reviews encountered as well as references to Wade’s work by several authors reviewed previously in this chapter all sharply criticized the area of analysis.

The opening chapters set *khyāl* in its historical and social contexts. More than fifty recordings are included along with their transcriptions, though the author confesses the analysis to be mere generalizations in most cases. Nevertheless, I was able to glean a number of important distinctions that helped to bring this genre to light.

In chapter two, Wade claims there are three types of criteria that define the genre:

1. The elements of *raga*, *tala*, and *chiz*
2. Improvisational types
3. The aesthetically pleasing balance of the first two types

Apparently hundreds of *ragas* are employed, and few restrictions exist on which ones are utilized, so it boils down to artistic preference and the mood of the text in these brief compositions. Balancing the latter with the choice of *raga* is where the aesthetics of the art comes into play. Seven *talas* are documented as typical of the genre: *tilwada, jhumra, rupak, ektal, jhaptal, tintal* and on rare occasion *adacautal*. Wade introduces us to the compositional sections within *khyāl* such as *vilambita ektala* (a slow introductory section with a distinct tala, i.e. *ektala*) that is followed by a *druta tintala* (a fast developmental section with a distinct *tala*, i.e. *tintala*). It is interesting to note that Van Der Meer disagrees with Wade on her point that *druta khyāl* never occurs independently in *khyāl*, indicating it is frequently performed without a

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12 Unfortunately, the copy of the text available only had a cassette version and I no longer own a cassette player, so no commentary was possible on the fidelity of the recording.
preceding composition (1980). In this same chapter, Wade takes the reader through a number of transcribed compositions, giving us insight into the unique aspects of each chiz. In a short summary afterward, the author reveals that the chiz presents a glimpse of the improvised performance to come, emphasizing the raga first in the sthai and later stressing the tala in the antara, as well as providing the text.

Following the section on chiz, an introduction to the improvisatory character of the genre is given. Wade reveals that Khyal employs the greatest number of diverse types of improvisation out of all Hindustani vocal genres. Even its Urdu name implies, “fancy or imaginative feelings.” Six types of improvisation are discussed along with examples: alap, tan, boltan, bolbant, sargam, and nom-tom (1984).

In an older article related to Wade’s book, titled, Chiz in Khyal, additional details are forthcoming regarding the compositional features of khyal. Rhyme is found within single sentences and words are repeated to produce a particular effect as well as contributing to the rhythm of the text. The text of a chiz dictates the overall tempo of a composition, as some poetic features lend themselves to faster or slower execution. Each chiz can be distinguished by the following set of features: patterns of repetition, melodic range, phrasing proportions, and the setting of the text. Wade presents analysis of several melodic phrases and then summarizes them into a generic melodic contour. Another characteristic of the genre that is analyzed and presented is the idea that cycles in the sthai must be completed in performance. Conversely, the opposite is true in the antara sections (1973).

Martin Clayton whose larger work was reviewed earlier in the section on rhythm, meter and tala, investigates a concept of musical time in khyal in a journal article titled Time, Gesture and Attention in a Khyl Performance. The answer Clayton is after has more to do with the

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13 page 52 of Hindustani Music in the Twentieth Century
experience of metrical structures than a study of the of *khyal* genre. Nevertheless, it gives the reader unique insight into this song form from the performer’s perspective as they perceive the audience’s response, and how this influences the execution of the song, especially in relation to time. Employing Qureshi’s contextual input model, recordings were studied for the purpose of “…analyzing process without reducing it irreversibly to structure.”

The first few pages present the science behind the study, and while the theoretical grounding is challenging to absorb, Clayton’s clear communicative style is greatly appreciated. Setting aside the main objective of the study, a reader is able to extract a few technical aspects of the genre beginning with the summaries. Later on, greater detail is given regarding the exact timing of various parts of the clips. For example, 85 seconds are documented for the transition from the *alap* to *vilambit khyal* which is the transition from unmetered rhythm to metered rhythm. It took 62 seconds to deliver the full cycle of *vilambit ektal* that features the *sargam*. And in the final climactic section of the song, the *vilambit ektal* that features the *akar tans* was 48 seconds in duration. Of course, these timings represent specific compositions in isolated performance; however, the relatively short duration of the genre becomes obvious. Pitch plots and other diagrams are encountered next in the article, but again they have more to do with the primary theme of the study. On page 92, an enlightening summary of the *vilambit khyal* is presented that describes in clear, concise detail, the various components and sub-components in relation to time (2007).

*Qawwali*

Though the song form originates within an Islamic context, in the melting pot of Hindustani culture, and because of the form’s inclusion of sensual metaphor in connection with divine love, *qawwali* has enjoyed a resurgence in popularity, especially in Bollywood films. It is
also a small thing to take songs of devotion that do not specifically mention Allah and redirect them to any number of Hindu gods. Emanating from Sufi mysticism, qawwali music communicates meaning on several levels at once, but with a single message aimed at arriving at a spiritual ecstasy. In *Sufi Music of India and Pakistan: Sound, Context and Meaning in Qawwali*, Qureshi examines many of the technical aspects of qawwali including the distinctive musical features, performance context, and a technical analysis. The repertoire of several qawwali musicians is presented in a number of performance contexts. In the process of her field study, the author recorded 433 performances of 261 songs, and the book includes fully annotated transcriptions, Arabic-Farsi script, transliteration and translation of the texts. A useful chart is found on page 47 that places Hindustani music on a continuum with “*raga music*” that emphasizes the primacy of instrumental performance on one side and religious “chant” that focuses on the words on the other. In between are the “songs” which are sub-divided further into “light classical,” “popular” and “folk” categories.

An interesting aspect of the genre that the author alludes to is that the melodic concept of *raga* as a consistent feature is missing. Some compositions exhibit adherence to it, but a large number of them do not. Examples of *raga* employed in qawwali compositions include *shahana, bahar* and *bageshri*. Examining chapter two on the musical framework of qawwali, Qureshi supplies four distinguishing features that identify the genre:

1. A tonal framework with a central octave of seven scale steps, marked by tonal centers and organized into a variety of modal scale arrangements that for the basis for monophonic pitch movement

2. A rhythmic framework of musical meter organized in a variety of additive groupings marked by stress points
3. A formal organization into performance units… with tonal and metric consistency and containing reputable sections differentiated by register

4. An ensemble structure centered upon one melodic line with optional melodic and rhythmic support

Rhythmic groupings or thekas are found in symmetrical and non-symmetrical arrangements and the ones most common to qawwali are “4+4 (kaharva, qawwali katheka…), 3+3 (dadra…) and 3+4 (pashto, rupak…).” Regional style is identified by a song’s rhythmic setting. The author asserts that songs can be distinguished as having originated in Uttar Pradesh or Panjab by their “gait, or chal.”

Qureshi asserts function influences form as much as any musical framework. To back up this claim, the purpose of qawwali music is stated as, “…to serve the presentation of mystical poetry in order to arouse mystical emotion in an assembly of listeners with spiritual needs that are both diverse and changing.” A chart follows where she breaks out the various functional components and links them with the distinctive features of musical execution. For instance, one of the primary functions of the song is the presentation of the poetry; therefore this dictates that musical rhythm emanates from the poetic meter. In consideration of this, the author orients the genre closer to chant than classical Indian music (with its emphasis on instrumental accompaniment) as the formal structure follows the structure of the text. The most common poetic structure encountered is strophic; however, in the case of songs that include a refrain, a cyclic form is exhibited. Wrapping up the section on the musical form, a “roadmap” is supplied laying out the formal structure of the genre for the reader. In the chapters that follow, performance practice and transmission concepts are addressed in detail and will be covered in subsequent sections in this paper (1986).
In Ranade’s lexicon of Hindustani terms previously covered in this chapter, the *bhajan* entry opens with the root of the Hindi word, which means “to serve,” along with a short historical account and caveat. Noting the *Bhakti* devotional movement that swept through India in the eighteenth century, and the resulting “pan-Indian flowering of song,” a large number of devotional song types emerged from a variety of regions and literary traditions that came to be called *bhajans*. The author asserts that because of the regional variety, each area’s *bhajans* would need to be analyzed in order to arrive at an accurate assessment of the form. In spite of this nebulous aspect of *bhajan*, Ranade classifies it as a genre identified by common structural features.

He conveys the point that the original *ragas* and *talas* employed in the compositions by the saint-poets of the *Bhakti Movement* have been overtaken by others in contemporary use. Additionally, performances were originally solo or choral renderings in homes and temples, and now they are featured in concerts. Inherent in the lyrical content is the praise of divinity and divine attributes. Several components distinguish the form:

- **Pada** – the short lyrical stanzas
- **Biruada** – a salutation to the deity
- **Tek** – the melodic refrain, with the last syllable elongated for the purpose of improvisation (regional)
- **Jhad** – also known as *antara*, two or more melodic lines differing from the *tek* in meter
- **Tod** – a section where the melody returns to the meter of the *tek*
- **Mudra** – the composer’s signature, usually found in the last line

Wrapping up his short discussion on the genre, Ranade makes mention of six unique manifestations of *bhajan* with brief descriptions of each. Of particular interest, especially for the
topic of this paper, is that these bhajan subtypes are found in the Braj tradition. Though not delineated politically, Braj is a well-defined cultural area of Uttar Pradesh (2006).

One of the most celebrated poets among North Indian Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and Muslims is Kabir. His wide-spread influence generated a poetic genre within the Bhakti movement called Nirgun Bhakti dedicated to the worship of a formless god, that wound its way into the bhajan genre, hence the sub-genre called Nirgun Bhajan (Lorenzen 1996). A book containing a number of essays having to do with Bhakti in North India included one titled, *The Vitality of the Nirgun Bhajan: Sampling the Contemporary Tradition*, by author Edward Henry. The text investigates ten examples of this bhajan sub-genre, though it is limited to the form’s prosodic elements and few musical aspects are examined. A common thread running through the genre’s poetic themes has to do with the soul’s separation from the body at death and an implicit assumption of divine reward or punishment based on moral accomplishments while living. Translations are given in English with brief commentary following the bhajan texts. Henry says that some of the tunes are not maintained from traditional antiquity, but actually come from contemporary entertainment genres (Lorenzen 1995).

Extraordinary in its direct applicability to this paper on contextualized Christian expression is a thesis by Dircan titled, *Hindi Christian Bhajans: a Survey of Their Use by Christians and a Critique by Hindu Professionals in the Music World*. The first chapter paints a backdrop of Christian worship in India as having a large Western component with smatterings of indigenous elements, and Catholic churches having the greater success of ongoing contextualization work in arts. The only notable exception being the “accidental indigenization” of charismatic worship choruses that remind the Indian Christians of their own musical forms.

Introducing the concept of the Khrist-bhajan, the author asserts it is an excellent choice for contextualized devotional songs because it already carries appropriate connotations of
devotion and directly engaging the Divine. A few descriptions of ensemble configurations and performance practice are given, as well as the curious existence of a hymnbook published in 1898 containing sixty-four bhajans. The second chapter reviews the literature and includes subjects of contextualization with sub-topics on Protestant and Catholic effort, works covering the bhajan genre, including its place within the Bhakti Movement, association of the genre with the demonic and a biblical perspective on the same, and a pragmatic concluding discussion. A fair amount of text is devoted to diffusing arguments for the prohibition of indigenous musical forms in the Church.

Next Dircan describes where he collected recordings and conducted interviews, breaking them down along Protestant and Catholic divisions. It is interesting to note that in the ecumenical churches that once used bhajans in their services, now there are none. This is consistent with a general observation made earlier in the paper where efforts to contextualize Christian worship seems to have trailed off dramatically. This was also reflected in discoveries made when investigating Christian radio stations such as CARAVS, F.E.B.A. and T.W.R. No Christian bhajans were being aired and no new recordings were being made. Some discoveries of bhajan use in Christian worship among non-Hindi speaking groups of North India’s Hindi belt were noted, though in the Protestant church as a whole, their use is declared a failure. Dircan presents the contexts as well as individual bhajans in detail over the remainder of the chapter. Song texts, transliterations, translations, form diagrams and some musical analysis are given.

Of particular interest is a discussion on the relationship and use of the terms bhajan and kirtan. Based on the work of other scholars, Dircan concludes that kirtan is a song form that is difficult to distinguish from bhajan, and depending on where one is in India, the terms may interchange or they may not. Departing from Dircan’s work momentarily, a study by Slawek (whose work was consulted by Dircan) indicates kirtan is not a genre at all but a type of
egalitarian worship gathering – a “form of religious behavior,” perhaps akin to the *satsang*. The genre most often sung in these settings is *nam-kirtan* (1988). The cause for confusion is obvious and from reading a few other pieces on the subject, it seems impossible to sort out.

Dircan concludes chapter three by moving somewhat abruptly from an account of his data collection to descriptions and quotes from various musicians and those involved in contextualization efforts in India. The structure (or lack of it) in this section causes the reader to temporarily lose sight of the point being made. If the end of chapter three is unclear, chapter four is redemptive in that the author presents commentary by professionals well-versed in the performance of *bhajans* which serves to validate his research findings. The comments are colorful and enlightening, as is Dircan’s concluding chapter. The author is optimistic the genre can continue to be used in evangelizing Hindus and lays out the model he used for the composition of new material (2000).

**Physical Setting**

In the journal article *Jagannatha Compared: The Politics of Appropriation, Re-use and Regional Traditions in India*, the author focuses on the context of forcible reappropriation of religious architecture as a symbol of governing power, specifically the Jagannatha temple in Orissa. It includes ideas that may be relevant to the adoption of certain Hindu physical settings for the purpose of contextualization.

While the cultural influence of Islam in North India endures, the Muslim minority holds very little political power today. Still, the wounds of Muslim conquest as well as British colonization are burned in the memory of the Hindu culture’s mind, especially in the area of violating sacred space. The destruction of the temple in Jagannatha was ordered by a Muslim ruler in 1692; however, by means of a bribe, a faked decimation of the Hindu god’s idol, and the
closing of the main temple gate, the temple remained intact. Hindu priests entered the temple through a secret doorway to carry on business as usual. The authors describe a variety of power-plays involving attempted destruction, re-construction, hostile annexation, and patronization of this and other sacred places, as well as the symbols within them, in order to gain control or favor with the local populace. The messages delivered in the process of these actions run the gamut of conquest to accommodation. In the conclusion, the authors state, “The process (of re-use) is not always elegant or peaceful and the generations – of ‘losers,’ ‘winners’ and ‘post-re-use elites’ – might have very different kinds of memories of the salient events that mark any take-over. Re-use may integrate, but not without its residue of the desire for revenge, or anxiety about the inevitable resistance from the progeny of the vanquished.” (Hegewald and Mitra 2008)

In Festivals of Dhrupad in Northern India, Widdess relates that for dhrupad performers whose performance contexts prior to 1950 were the palaces and temples of provincial rulers and religious authorities, found their art in steep decline when their performance venues disappeared. Unlike the performers of other genres, acceptance in new contexts such as concert-halls, audio recordings, radio and television was an impossible chasm to cross. In these contexts performers adapted to the tastes of their audience, whose support in sufficient numbers was an economic necessity. Dhrupad ideology is antithetical to compromise and as such it was not a commercially viable proposition until the 1970’s when interest in world music, regardless of its spiritual association began to embrace this ancient music. The author goes on to describe in a fair amount of detail some of the festivals, the appearance of the stages, including the location of religious idols, as well as further commentary on dhrupad ideology (1994).

Qureshi states in chapter four of her book Sufi Music of India and Pakistan: Sound, Context, and Meaning in Qawwali that the structure of the performance includes the idea that “the assembly must be in the charge of a spiritual authority…” Occasions such as annual
religious festivals are fitting contexts and the tomb, shrine or home of a saint or other spiritual
guide are appropriate places. Public places suitable for Qawwali are shrine compounds, halls or
any open space such as field or a tent set up in the same (1986).

Performance Practice

For a vivid account of performance practice as it pertains to Hindustani art music in the
context of a specific event, Clayton’s *Time in Indian Music* has a few narratives such as this:

Performers must be introduced – often with a lengthy speech, in which the
speaker charts the lineage and lists the achievements and honours of the soloist (and to a
lesser extent, accompanists)… Musicians may be presented with garlands, which they
will accept gratefully before removing as a gesture of humility. Accompanists take the
stage, standing respectfully until the soloist makes his entrance, acknowledges the
audience’s welcome, sits and gestures to his colleagues that they should do likewise. …
Our soloist must first settle into his space – removing his watch and placing it in front of
him, placing a notebook with song texts or a case with spare strings and plectra nearby,
adjusting microphone positions – all the while trying to focus his concentration on the
*rag* to be performed and achieve the state of mind necessary for a good performance.
And then the final tuning process begins. Instruments will already have been tuned in the
course of a sound check, and perhaps retuned back stage. But their tuning will inevitably
have slipped under the heat of the stage lights, and in any case, a few minutes spent
concentrating on the sound of the *tanpura* drone enables the musicians to relax and focus
their concentration. … The soloist welcomes his listeners and tells them what he is
going to present. He may simply announce the *rag*, or *rag* and *tal*; or he may describe
the composition, perhaps suggesting its origins… We are now ready for the
performance. *Rag* performances often begin slowly…

Clayton continues with the account of this performance in his usual clear and lucid style for
another two pages, with subsequent pages dedicated to prefatory remarks where additional
insight is gleaned concerning this performance and the context for his book. The aim of this
book and a great percentage of the text are devoted to the study of time and how it manifests in
the Hindustani rhythmic system of *tala*. Yet the entirety of chapter seven is devoted to rhythmic
performance practice. In section 7.1.1 Clayton identifies three elements that are explored in a
number of ways during the performance of *raga*:
1. Exposition of the *rag*…
2. A fixed composition synthesizing *rag*, *tal*, and text or instrumental stroke patterns…
3. Improvised development…

Because classical music has improvisation as a central feature, much of the chapter focuses on how this gets carried out within performance. The author reveals that the *alap* organizational principle is not one of formula, but process, and each performer will approach this differently. Three stages are usually found where a performer gradually reveals the *raga*, explores it in full, and then accelerates to the climax. In the chapter’s next sub-section, Clayton goes into a detailed discussion of the unmetered section of the *alap* citing other researcher’s work and concluding that the existence of a pulse is largely concealed by its irregularity. Demonstrating this by way of including the annotated image of a performance waveform, the presence of a pulse is noted, however dissipated it may be, and suggests the performer has a regular pulsation in mind that he is concealing from the listener. In the next sub section on *jor*, the same conclusion is recommended where Clayton says the performer is using a concealed metrical organization.

Progressing in discussion to the metric forms found in the development of the *bandish*, or composition, the author reveals three development techniques employed in melodic improvisation: 1) articulation, 2) text usage, and 3) *raga*, and three of the same in the area of rhythm: 1) *tal*, 2) rhythmic style, and 3) *laykari* (variation technique). In the final section, a highly intelligible description of the development of episodic organization found in the *bandish* is described. Five charts accompany the text that illuminate common methods employed in general, and in a specific *dhrupad* performance (2000).

In another article by Clayton discussed earlier in the section on genre, the physical gestures of the performers is examined in great detail. One such item in *Time, Gesture and Attention in a Khyl Performance* is found on page 91:
Most significantly, (the performer) does not return to his rest position (of physical posture) when he momentarily takes a breath: it seems that his gestures are indicating the continuity of melodic flow across the inevitable boundaries that occur when he has to take a breath.

Clayton documents three categories of gestures found in the performance of *khyal*:

- **Markers** – delineate musical structure or process, and are referred to as non-depictive gestures
- **Illustrators** – are linked to vocalized melody and represent its motion, and are referred to as depictive gestures
- **Emblems** – direct others in the ensemble and are referred to as symbolic gestures

Three songs are scrutinized for every gesture as it may influence the performance. The footage from four video cameras and the audio from high fidelity, multi-track sound recordings synchronized to the video were analyzed. Photographs and charts accompany the text depicting the Clayton’s observations and conclusions (2007).

With the exception of Clayton’s article on *khyal* that focuses entirely on the topic at hand, the majority of the texts having a music-related subject matter address performance practice to some degree. In some, the topic is singled out in a dedicated chapter or sub-section. In most, the concept is sprinkled in with other concepts and the reader must go dig for it. To illustrate this, the article by Widdess *Festivals of Dhrupad in Northern India: New Contexts for an Ancient Art* delves into the near demise and resurgence of the genre. Causes for this as well as the appearance of new performance opportunities are discussed in detail. However, this observation giving us a glimpse into performance practice can be gleaned:

*Dhrupad* singers and *vina* players are believed, for example, to exercise an almost superhuman accuracy of pitch-intonation in accordance with the ancient theory of *sruti*. Their interpretation of *rag* must be faultless, and it is a serious lapse for a *dhrupad* singer to make a mistake in *tal*. …(W)hat is important is the concept that ancient music is theoretically disciplined, spiritually elevating, and performed only by the best musicians.
In modern times, with the rise of public patronage and Western-style public concerts, the musician becomes the focus of attention, and sits on a stage facing the audience in the manner of a ruler addressing his subjects. (1994)

**Attitudes and State of Mind**

A quote from the book *Ancient and Oriental Music* sets the tone of this section, giving us a taste of the Eastern worldview regarding music:

> A remarkable feature of Indian culture is its ability to integrate many different and seemingly divergent tendencies against the background of a unifying philosophical thought. From an Indian standpoint there is nothing strange in the fact that the *Samgitaratnakara* (The Ocean of Music), a treatise dating from the thirteenth century, should begin with a detailed cosmogony, gradually narrowing its scope to the human body and the stages of pregnancy from month to month, before it gets down to what we should consider the subject of music proper. To the Indian student, music is not an isolated phenomenon but one directly and inextricably linked with philosophy and religion, and of cosmic importance. (Wellesz 1999)

The ideal result from an experience of art for the Indian musician as well as the listener is the combination of emotional effect called *rasa*. If the emotions combine perfectly, then the final result should be an experience of delight, peace and pure joy called *ananda* (Ranade 2006). Van Der Meer devotes an entire chapter to the issue of *rasa* in his work *Hindustani Music in the Twentieth Century*. No less than eight emotions are immediately listed, and a handful are added later, as potential elements that must combine to form this ultimate experience. He doesn’t go into the theory in great detail, but does attempt to map a brief definition over top of the concept of *raga*, and declares this linkage is weak at best. Immediately departing from this declared objective, the author cites poetry as music’s unquestionable source of *rasa*. The psychological side of things gets quite murky with the obvious overlapping of various sentiments, consequently Van Der Meer attempts to steer his analysis back to the realm of the philosophical. The bottom line of the article comes in the form of an assumption that while *raga*’s direct psychological link to *rasa* is inconsistent, the musical experience as a whole does have the capacity to generate all
of the elements of *rasa* through its complex embodiment of visual performance and physics of sound – or atmosphere, known as *ragabhava*. Since *ragabhava* is the manifested essence of a *raga* then, when this manifests as *rasa*, the criteria is satisfied (1980).

In Chaudhury’s *The Theory of Rasa*, the claim is made that an experience of art is an excitation of emotions by generalized representations “…masquerading as particulars. They are significant neither cognitively nor conatively, for they belong to a different world.” But in terms of experiencing *rasa*, the participant must be in a self-aware state assuming an impersonal contemplative attitude (bliss), that simultaneously enjoys some generalized emotion due to an experience of art, then *rasa* is said to occur. The author goes on to validate the main points of *rasa* by invoking other philosophers such as Aristotle, Hegel, Croce and Bosanquet, and the theory of “psychical distance.” Permanent and transient emotion is discussed in this context as well. This of course is a summary and the reader would do well to digest this article in its entirety. Even to a pragmatic Western mind such as my own, Chaudhury’s explanation of this Eastern philosophy was clear enough for me to grasp (1965).

Because India’s ethnic tapestry is among the world’s most diverse, and ethnic division is made all the more ostensive by caste, addressing the indigenous worldview as it pertains to this phenomenon is worthy of attention. Woven into this fabric are attitudes toward a culture’s own music as well as musical influence from neighboring tribes, other castes, distinct cultural regions, and foreign nations. For example, the outlook of an urban cosmopolitan Christian toward the contextualized music of a villager (and vice versa) can be problematic as noted by Duncan:

Another problem area is the difference between the culture of a modern metropolitan area and that of village India. On the whole, the people in village India seem more ready to accept the use of indigenized (music) than do the people of the cities. In the villages, they have no problem; you can sing *bhajans* all night - they will be there with you. It is only in the sophisticated cities that we have a problem. They think that being Indian is not worth anything; it is pagan (1999).
A different author addresses non-Indian cultures in a short treatise called *Micromusics of the West* and this same idea of “small musical units within big music cultures” is explored further within this context. In the text, the gamut of relational attitudes toward a vast range of musical choices is examined on several levels of culture, but with a focus on the processes of the *subculture*. Slobin uses a matrix of interlocking mini-essays as an analytical system for comparative thought on the topics of *subculture*, *superculture* and *interculture*. The first term arises out of group affiliations, the second has to do with various forms of hegemony, and the third manifests from the “…interaction of parts of a society.” From the very personal “microworld” of the *subculture*, to the largest, “global cultural economy,” the author presents each level as a web of affiliations marked by disunity and in a state of continual flux. The micromusics generated by any given culture are asserted to arise from a “complex… interplay of personal choice and group activity.” (Slobin 1992)
Figure 2. Literature Summary Map

An Inquiry Into Contextualized Christian Expression in North India

Hindu Perceptions of Christianity & the West

Ethnomusicology Studies of North India

Contextualized Christian Expression

Overview
Organology

Elements of Style

Physical Setting

Attitudes & State of Mind

Genres & Song Forms

Performance Practice
Transmission

Tonal System & Melody
Rhythm Meter & Tala
Texture & Tone Color
Form & Text

Folk Songs
Dhrupad
Khyal
Qawwali
Bhajan
Concluding Remarks on Literature

With India’s rich musical history, highly developed indigenous system of musical theory, and its presence as a world music force in Western and indigenous popular music, it is not surprising that scholarly studies abound on the topic of Hindustani music and have for over one hundred years. However, when a researcher begins to narrow down the search, for instance, on writings specific to Uttar Pradesh, logic and reality dictate the discovery of fewer items. Drilling down to greater specificity such as the city of B_____, or an ethnicity such as the Chamar, the task turns up fewer and fewer items. While the greater body of literature will provide the researcher with access to a fantastic quantity, one engaged in the inquiry of contextualization for a specific area will be left wanting, and more than likely need to conduct their own studies.

Of particular interest is the thesis addressing the use of bhajans in contextualized Christian expression in Uttar Pradesh (as well as other areas), where their use is declared a failure in Protestant churches. Since Dircan’s work enjoys similar geographical and topical specificity to this study, his unexplored point begs for further study considering that just as much can be learned from failure as success.

With such a large volume of work encountered, I found it intriguing that there was an absence of an anthology of genre and song forms. No single source gave good definitions. A few of the works reviewed here had excellent summaries of key components of several genres found in Hindustani music. Some song forms are so loosely defined or defined by region, it should come as no surprise they are excluded from such generalized definitions (Saha 2011). It is unfortunate that time constraints as well as the difficulty locating texts on specific genres was encountered. There are a number of other genres significant to Hindustani music such as thumri, ghazal, tappa, tarana, dadra, kirtan and dhamar. If this literature review is any indication of
what is found in the larger volume of ethnomusicology work, a researcher can expect to find in single volumes most of what may be desired in the area of song genres.

From the texts reviewed in this chapter as well as other texts that were skimmed but not presented here, it appears that previous forays into the territory of contextualization of Christianity have targeted many areas, nearly to the exclusion of music. There is an abundance of scholarly and missiological writings focused on subjects like leadership, accountability, general theology, liberation theology, syncretism, feminism, and even contextualization as a visual/architectural approach to conducting services in the church in India. Additionally, there are readily available anthropological and ethnomusicological perspectives from which to draw important distinctions, albeit, from a secular perspective. Not that musical contextualization is entirely absent, because a few works are available in the literature, especially as it concerns the Catholic church. What seems to be missing are detailed works that fill the gap concerning an understanding of contextualized Christian musical expression in specific geo-political areas of North India.

Finally, I was struck by the sharp contrasts in how Western authors articulate and think about the technical aspects of Indian music versus how, in most cases, the Hindu mind wraps the same items in a worldview that contains religious connotations. Does the explanation lie in the close association of indigenous authors’ religious beliefs with musical forms that emerged out of religious practice making it difficult, if not impossible to separate? This is something Western authors tend to do automatically without much thought. But if this is the case with Indian scholars who have been exposed to the highly compartmentalized notion of scientific thinking of the West, how much more so must it be for the average Indian listener and musician?
CHAPTER III: PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Design

Qualitative Methodology

A qualitative approach was selected so as to allow for the greatest flexibility in the methods for acquiring data. Broadly, qualitative research features the questions of how and why, while also looking at the more objective questions of what, where and when. In this social science genre, smaller detailed study samples are quite useful, rather than broader ones lacking data granularity. A qualitative approach provided insight relative only to the particular case(s) studied, and any further conjecture was treated as hypothetical requiring additional research. Creswell’s model for qualitative research design was employed and it is discussed below (2003).

Emphasis was given to the humanity of this work, as it was paramount to the Christian witness. While it was prudent to define goals and work toward achieving those results, Jesus’ second item of business (and always congruent with his first order of business – his Father’s will), was to minister to people at their point of need. If this study had been carried out at the expense of ignoring the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of informants, it would have been a failure for the Kingdom regardless of any contextualization success. Even the secular world understands this concept, and is articulated by the National Institute of Heath: “It is not considered ethical behavior to use individuals solely as a means to an end.” (Protecting Human Research Participants n.d.) Effort was made during the acquisition of study data to remain sensitive to the needs of informants, whether they were physical, emotional or spiritual.
**Knowledge Claim**

Inherent in the research were assumptions regarding how knowledge was to be acquired and what the nature of that knowledge was. Primary factors influencing a researcher’s claim to knowledge include beliefs, values, and theories (Marshall 2011).

The best fit for this contextualization project is what Creswell calls a “socially constructed knowledge claim.” The data targeted and how the researcher may lay claim to that knowledge is described as follows:

(Subjects being studied) seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. They develop subjective meanings of their experiences – meanings directed toward certain objects or things. … Often these subjective meanings are … formed through interaction with others (social constructivism) and through historical and cultural norms. … The researcher’s intent is to interpret the meanings others have about the world. Rather than starting with a theory, inquirers generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meaning. (2003)

By identifying, defining and standardizing the concepts and terms that an Indian society uses to describe various aspects of musical performance and music culture, discoveries of patterns and connections in the data became possible yielding insight into phenomenological aspects of indigenous worship. Once these connections were established and validated, useful recommendation regarding contextualization surfaced. Ethnomusicologist Bruno Nettl states,

(I)t stands to reason that we are likely to come closer to perceiving how members of (a) society hear their music (if we) … follow the way the society that produced the music analyzes or presents it. (2005)

**Strategical Format**

Several methodological strategies were considered and the *case study* approach was chosen on account of the short duration anticipated. Additionally, it seemed to be the best fit for the exploration of Hindu worship, indigenous Christian worship (contextualized or not), and the participants’ perspective on the same. The *case study* limited the inquiry to a specific number of
participants who supplied detailed information bound by a predetermined amount of time and in a limited geographical context (Creswell 2003). It allowed for a wide variety of data collection methods: general observations, specific interviews, questionnaires, existing documents, personal participation, and video/audio recordings and photographs.

*Case study* characteristics included immersion in the culture for the purpose of acquiring a holistic view of the subject. Emergent methods were employed that examined various social phenomena in as much depth and detail that the study’s duration permitted, and also helped to minimize attachment to predetermined hypotheses. Some analysis was conducted along the way in iterative waves of data collection and documentation, and additional analysis was carried out afterward.

**Researcher Bias**

Because of the subjectivity inherent in studies of this nature, reflexivity needed to be addressed. But including a brief biological sketch or a confession of bias does not make the issue of subjectivity magically vanish:

In our profession there is a lack of awareness that … the (researcher), like all human beings whatever they try to accomplish, is influenced by tradition, by his environment, and by his personality. Further, there is an irrational taboo against discussing this lack of awareness. It is astonishing that this taboo is commonly respected leaving the social scientist in naiveté about what he is doing. (Myrdal 1969)

A confession of bias is useful to mention at this juncture only to the degree it serves as a reminder to do something about it. Some ethnomusicologists have a tendency to believe that traditional contextualized worship is better than worship forms that borrow elements from another culture. This is a component of personal bias as well as an acknowledgement of what it means to be human. I am inclined to value the traditional and indigenous over the modern that typically takes the form of an eclectic mixture of cultures. Engaging in this inquiry authentically
using a *socially constructed knowledge claim* dictated that I acknowledge this bias, take inventory of it often, and make the appropriate adjustments. A frequent reorientation toward the Hindu worldview helped to minimize distortion in the collection and analysis of the data.

**Study Location and Data Types**

B_____ is a city of 1.2 million located at the convergence of two physical rivers and a mythical one – a sacred area according to Hindu tradition. This confluence of rivers, or *sangam* as it is called locally, is formed by the Ganga, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati rivers. Hindu mythology describes drops of Amrit, the elixir of immortality, accidentally spilling over from a pitcher carried by the celestial bird Garuda and landing in four locations, one being the Ganga River just outside B_____ (Narain 2010). Not only is the area sacred, but at an auspicious time of year to the Hindu, there is an annual bathing festival where worshippers numbering in the millions converge over six weeks for the *Magh Mela* (Doane - CBS News 2010). This is the smaller version of the *Kumbha Mela* which takes place in B_____ every twelve years and is reported to draw anywhere from thirty to seventy million pilgrims depending on the source consulted. This location provided a number of opportunities for data collection that were rich in Hindu spiritual expression.

Multiple types of data were sought for the study. General observations and specific details were catalogued in field notes. Pre-arranged and impromptu interviews and musical performances of individuals and groups were captured in video, audio and photography assets. Trips to Hindu festivals, temples and shrines was undertaken to acquire the same.

In sacred contexts, it was not known what, if any, data collection methods would be appropriate or permitted beyond making mental notes of sights, sounds, smells and textures that
would be documented afterward.\footnote{During the \textit{Kumbha Mela} in the city of Hardwar in 2010, tourists were denied use of their cameras by event authorities. Only people with journalist visas were given permission to photograph and videotape the event (Carter 2010).} Lastly, a journal was kept for personal insights that added insight and value to the data collected.

**Data Collection Procedures**

Data was collected from January 14, 2010 through February 28, 2010 in the area of B_____, Uttar Pradesh, India. A data collection log was kept in a spreadsheet documenting the media file name, event description, event date and what type of data was recorded. Whenever possible, photographs were made of the setting where interviews or recordings took place.

The Institutional Review Board at Liberty University granted permission to interview human subjects on October 28, 2009.\footnote{See Appendix B for a copy of the letter of approval.} Informed consent is the agreement obtained from a participant, or from an authorized representative, for such person’s participation in an activity. For interviews and other data collection, only verbal permission was obtained. Because of the religious and sensitive nature of the research as well as a measure of geo-political instability in the area, Institutional Review Board approval was obtained for this variance. Leaving a paper trail in an area that has witnessed violence between Hindus and Christians had the potential to elevate personal risk and risk to my hosts.

Both my hosts and other workers on their team helped to identify potential informants who were willing to submit to interviews. When an interpreter was needed, these people performed the translation or made arrangements to provide for one. A list of open-ended questions was prepared in advance, and given the emergent character of this qualitative study,
the questions were refined during the course of the internship.\textsuperscript{16} The list of questions was used as a beginning point for discussions with informants and as ideas or other concepts arose, they were explored with the willing participants.

As interviews and observations were acquired and insights began to unfold, it was important to keep the data acquisition channel open. Along the way in dedicated allotments of time, the data was prepared for analysis. As larger chunks of relational data were identified, detailed descriptions of people, places, events, music and music culture elements, and spiritual perspectives were combed for common threads. Three over-arching questions drove the inquiry:

1. What are the essential elements expressed through musical worship in Hinduism?
2. What Hindu or other indigenous forms of music are suitable to borrow for Christian musical worship?
3. What offenses (if any) are perceived by Hindus in the way Christianity is currently expressed through musical worship?

Though these were the primary themes, discoveries along the way suggested additional ideas, and these were allotted time for study. As additional data was acquired, it was entered, coded, analyzed and discoveries within existing and emerging themes were sought. As new questions surfaced that were not included in earlier interviews, an attempt to reconnect with those participants was made; however, that effort was unsuccessful.

Codes that defined the larger data chunks included: setting, activity, context, relationships, spiritual perspectives (i.e. eternal, God/gods, music’s role in spiritual, societal/spiritual, spiritual development, etc.), societal perspectives and perspectives on organized religion.

\textsuperscript{16} See Appendix A for a list of questions prepared for musician informants, and a different set prepared for non-musician informants.
Addressing the issue of contextualization of spiritual expression through music can be thought of in broad terms as a study in symbols. Just as language and its many symbols represent life, the various constructs of music in a religious context represent spiritual reality. One researcher found in the course of semiotic analysis of Hindu music, that there was a “…‘close resemblance between the way Indian classical music works and… languages work and… few musics are as much like language as Indian music is.’” (Nettl and Bohlman 1991) To underscore the sheer power of music as symbol, one only needs to read War Over Music: The Riots of 1926 in Bengal (Dutta 1990). If these powerful symbols present in Hindu music can be understood, their efficacy can be borrowed to produce a culturally relevant and heart-felt worship experience for the Christian.

The following procedures were followed during the internship. A potential informant was given background information regarding the data being sought and was asked if they would be willing to submit to an interview. If they were willing, they were informed that there was no compensation for the interview (if applicable), and assured that the interview was for research purposes and not for monetary gain. Additionally, they were asked if they were willing to have the interview recorded to video and/or audio. If not, a judgment call was made as to whether to continue or locate another informant. All of the above was communicated with respect and appreciation for the participant.

Both predetermined and ad hoc opportunities to observe public music performances of individuals and groups were sought where notes and recordings were made. Prior to taking notes, shooting photographs and video, or making audio recordings, permission was solicited from the appropriate party or parties.
Data Validation

A number of cross-checks were employed in order to ensure the findings would be as useful as possible. Triangulation by means of using the research data, sources from other scholars, as well as interacting with a subject expert illuminated the process. Discrepancies, distortions and uncertainties were documented and probed for the possibility of further research.

Time did not permit a great deal of a discussion of the findings with my hosts other than short debrief sessions over a meal. Nevertheless, topics such as the credibility and transferability of the data were discussed in these sessions. Upon my return from India, a scheduled debrief session with my cooperating agency was thwarted on account of inclement weather and resulting air travel difficulties. The intention was to discuss the findings with them as well. Because of these challenges, the services of a Hindustani musician in the United States were procured to aid in this process. My informant for this task was born and raised in Bihar, the North Indian state adjacent to Uttar Pradesh, speaks fluent Hindi, understands other regional dialects, studied music at the university level in B____, and earned her Master’s degree in vocal music performance. Mrs. Saha currently lives in the metropolitan area where I live, and works as a private teacher and professional performer of Hindustani music. We met on several occasions and dialoged via email to discuss the nature and validity of the findings. Lastly, the discoveries were submitted to my academic advisor for review and further consideration.

Literature and Study Design

The framework for this study was designed to address missing pieces discovered in the literature review process. The potential value of this study was high, because the greatest geographical specificity found in existing works focused on the state of Uttar Pradesh. Though these studies were conducted in the desired geographical area, they were limited to a few short
and incomplete pieces on folk music. In contrast, this study was conducted in B_____, an urban setting where modern cross-cultural influence was higher than the loci of the rural folk song studies.

The thesis on bhajans contextualized for Christian worship included research performed in Uttar Pradesh; however, it was not limited to this state, nor even North India. What is most significant from this work is the declaration that the application of indigenized musical elements is a failure in the Protestant churches (Dicran 2000). A secondary aim of my study based on the literature is to investigate possible causes of the failure, and why the Catholic church is enjoying at least partial success.

In summary, three factors emerged out of the literature review that shaped the study:

1. Limiting the study to devotional genres found in the city of B_____
2. Restricting informants to those who speak Hindi or whose dialect is common to B_____
3. Investigating successes and failures of contextualized Christian expression in music

**Project Plan**

**Timetable**

January 6 through January 13, 2010 was set aside for orientation and training with my cooperating agency in a city in Pennsylvania. I arrived in O__E_____ on January 14, 2010 and traveled to B_____ by train a few days later. Data collection in B_____ commenced on January 21, 2010. Activities aimed at producing data for the study proceeded from this date through February 26, 2010 as my return flight was scheduled to depart O__E_____ on February 27, 2010. While in B_____, my hosts’ cooperating agency held their annual conference, and because of my experience as a worship leader, I was asked to participate. Though this created
some concern, I was optimistic that the work required for this project would not be compromised by my participation in the conference.

Scope Defined

A maximum number of twenty-four participants were sought for these interviews. This was considered ambitious given the project’s brief duration. This number also complies with the limit specified in the project’s Institutional Review Board application.

Data of interest was broadly categorized in the following units: elements of style, organology, song genres, physical setting, ensemble configuration, attitudes and state of mind, movement of non-performers, performance practice and transmission. Elements of style included descriptions of: melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, tempo, tone color, tuning system and text. In the event contextualization implementation became a possibility, and connections to local musicians had been established, at least one songwriting workshop was anticipated with the intent to make recordings. These new songs were to be incorporated into existing Christian worship services. All decisions regarding the use and dissemination of newly composed or newly discovered contextualized compositions were to be reviewed by my hosts and the elders of the local church.

Finally, a feedback loop to help validate research findings and implementation of discoveries was to be utilized. Time permitting, additional interviews with those present in contextualized Christian gatherings were to be asked for their opinions regarding the experience. Insight resulting from these interviews was to be presented to my hosts and to the elders of their church. Discrepancies, distortions and uncertainties were to be documented and probed for the possibility of further research. See Figure 3 for a diagram of the Units of Analysis and Inquiry presented in this section.
Figure 3
Project Implementation

Preparation and Travel

X__ was my cooperating agency, and I had a longstanding curiosity with them ever since meeting John Collins in 2006 at Bethel University. A few years later, I discovered Collins’s R___ web site that dealt exclusively with contextualizing Christian music. Knowing an internship was required for graduation, I exchanged a number of email messages with Collins over the years with an eye towards this end. Placement was chosen by Collins as he had been working with my hosts in B____, and was aware of their desire to contextualize worship. In India, my site supervisor has a measure of musical understanding, but he had been hoping for a specialist to assist their team in ethnomusicology study. I originally contacted X__ in October of 2008 to start the application process and was accepted in September of 2009. In January of 2010, my wife and I traveled to X__’s headquarters in Pennsylvania for a week-long orientation (though she didn’t accompany me to the field). A week later, I arrived in O__E_____ around 11:00 P.M. on Friday, January 15, 2010.

Four Days in O__E_____  

Awakened at 3:00 P.M. that same day by a knock at the door, I had the privilege of meeting Helen Francis. She asked if I’d like to have breakfast and see the some of the city, which I answered in the affirmative since I hadn’t eaten in eighteen hours. Ministering in O__E_____ for years as a teacher and having an outreach to slum kids and their families, Francis began to give me a firsthand account of what it was like to work on the front lines in India. She invited me to her school so I could meet some of her students – boys who lived in the slums. Additionally, she extended an invitation to accompany her to a local church. I accepted both
invitations, as neither of us knew when I might be traveling to B_____. We parted company
around 6:00 P.M. and I returned to the apartment where I had spent the previous night.

The next day, Francis arranged for us to travel to her Hindi-speaking church. We were
greeted by many, all of whom knew Francis by first name. Shoes were left at the door and men
sat on the right and women sat on the left. The room continued to fill to capacity as the service
began and spilled into the courtyard. The size of the congregation was roughly five hundred.
Nearly all of the men wore Western clothing while most of the women wore traditional dress.
Most sat on the floor near the front, and about one-quarter sat in chairs in the back. The worship
service seemed Western in sequence, and included music that sounded Western, but were sung in
Hindi. The vocal style was ornate indicating the songs may have been written by nationals. I
was not in a place to see all of the instruments in use, but I remember seeing an acoustic guitar,
electronic keyboard, a drum kit and hearing a number of other, perhaps indigenous percussion
instruments. One special piece was performed by teenage girls and was sung in English. In
hindsight, it would have been prudent to videotape the service, take field notes, or at least ask
questions of my hosts later, but my assumption at the time was that this service had little to do
with the work I would carry out in B_____.

Later in the day, Francis took me back to the church and invited me to sing and play
guitar for the boys that she tutors, which I agreed to do. Afterward, we were treated to Hindi rap
songs the boys had written that contained the Christian message.

Francis began to share with me that her goals included contextualizing the music of a
worship meeting at her church, especially one that might attract the parents of the slum children.
She asked how I thought I might be able to assist in this task. Not wanting to decline the
opportunity outright, I said I could not do much given I would be leaving for B_____ within two
days, but I would do what I could. We spoke with the boys about traditional music and tried to
set up a time to record music their parents might sing, or perhaps conduct an interview. Several excuses were made as to why this couldn’t take place, but eventually the charismatic leader of this group of boys named Shiv volunteered to record what he could on his cell phone.

Exasperated at the prospect of obtaining my first field recordings of traditional music via the crude audio features available in a teenager’s cheap cell phone, I conceded to this data collection method assuming there may have been an element of embarrassment on account of the families’ living conditions.

The next day, we gathered with the boys and they immediately got out the guitar and started playing and singing. Afterward, Shiv told me he had recorded a few traditional songs sung by his mother. Excited at this prospect, it turned out that the traditional songs were not so traditional. Though they were songs from a 1950’s Bollywood film¹⁷, I remained eager to study them. Unfortunately, when the files were transferred from Shiv’s phone to my computer, a very robust virus came with it. The rest of my time in O__E_____ was spent ripping out the virus and restoring my computer to its previous state.

Data Collection in B_____

Arriving in B_____ by train, I was met by Peter Smith who helped with my luggage. As this was my first direct communication with my host, I was all ears as he began to share with me the history of their ministry, the Hindu perspective on Christianity, life in B_____, and goals for ethnomusicology research. Once we arrived at the school where Peter worked, I was introduced to his wife Sarah, and then I was given a short tour of the facility that doubled as their home. As I dined with Peter, Sarah and their son Jude, I got the sense that I was warmly welcomed, would

¹⁷ According to Shiv, the song was from Mother India, a 1957 Bollywood film written and directed by Mehboob Khan and starring Nargis, Sunil Dutt, Rajendra Kumar and Raj Kumar. The film is a remake of Mehboob Khan's earlier film Aurat from 1940 (Mother India 2003).
be the recipient of generous hospitality, and was in the perfect place for research such as this. Throughout this study, I would have more than a few long conversations with my hosts about matters of faith, missions, family and culture. To my delight, I learned that they were kind, helpful, insightful and perseverant; true heroes of the faith. After dinner, I retired to my room which was spacious, contained a small heater, refrigerator, two desks, a comfortable bed and a private bathroom. The comfort of the room and hospitality of my hosts were beyond all expectations.

_Magh Mela - First Impressions_

The next day, I was awakened for lunch which also afforded the opportunity to ride with Peter to the _Magh Mela_ on the back of his scooter. My first impression of the _Mela_ was that it had the vibe of a carnival more than any kind of sacred event. It was a tent city housing tens of thousands with vendors lining the roadways selling their wares and food – everything from balloons, blankets and bangles to dyes and paper parrots. Though it was an impressive spectacle, tourists and other mere observers such as us seemed to be quite few in number. As we neared the Ganga River’s edge, we saw a few thousand bathers, all engaged in a variety of activities, most of which were foreign to me. Peter told us that most devotees come in groups, sometimes as entire villages. Since the most auspicious days to bathe in the river were coming to an end, many were beginning the process of departing for their home cities, towns and villages. This was a disturbing revelation having just traveled eight-thousand miles to study the music of this festival. Still, there were thousands gathered by the banks of these rivers, and on nearly every light pole hung a loudspeaker horn blasting music and preaching from the guru tents, so optimism remained high.
Data collection consisted of videotaping and snapping photos of first impressions. After Peter and I parted company with the others, we began looking for opportunities to interview musicians. Since the Hindu spiritual world does not adhere to rigid timetables such as ours in the West, there were no printed program guides or other ways to find out who was doing what and at what time. We walked into guru tents where we heard music and often it turned out to be a recording of a previous teaching that included a musical performance. Modifying our strategy, Peter then began asking vendors what gurus had the best musicians. Armed with this insider information, we would hop on his scooter or walk large distances, sometimes across the great pontoon bridges spanning the Ganga, only to find no one there. The other reason this strategy proved futile was because street signs are rare even in permanent Indian cities, so this temporary city likewise contained few. We were depending on the memory and descriptive skill of our informants, but the sheer size of the event made it impossible to track down any of these leads. Though we were not able to connect with musicians for interviews, new information was absorbed and it was a good, small beginning toward orienting this outsider to the Hindu worldview. Over the course of the next few weeks, it would be our ears, intuition, and the Lord’s leading that would steer us, but on this particular day, we would not find what we were looking for.

My Hosts and Their Work

Because my hosts are the administrators and teachers at a small school in B_____, they could not set aside their responsibilities for very long to accommodate the requirements of this project, though I have no doubt they made significant sacrifices to do so. The next day would prove to be one of those days where they had to focus on running their business and other domestic duties. At lunch, I learned more about their relationship with a small fellowship of
believers outside of B_____. Not only did Peter and Sarah provide micro loans in an effort to help these lower caste people improve their station in life, but Peter was considered an elder whom the fellowship looked to for spiritual guidance. This too, generated its share of responsibilities.

I imagined this village to be twenty minutes outside the city, and thus in some way it was part of the culture of B_____. As I began to dimly comprehend a few components to my hosts’ ministry, questions began to percolate: Was this fellowship to receive the benefit of the ethnomusicology study, and if so, when would I have the opportunity to meet them? In a conversation with Peter a day later, where he disclosed a number of important details regarding his vision for contextualization, he declared that this enclave was to be the primary benefactor of my research. Satisfied with this disclosure of new information, I operated for the next few weeks under this assumption, though it would prove to be only partly true.

**Magh Mela – Second and Third Visits**

Upon our arrival, Peter and I wandered about the festival for some time searching for potential informants. At last we discovered a popular guru named Santosh who was conducting a *satsang* which was the type of gathering format Peter was hoping we could find. We made our way into the crowd, sat down, hoping there would be a break in the teaching and music where we could approach the guru for permission to interview his musicians.

Underneath a thatch-roofed, open-air structure decorated with brightly colored flowers, flags and orange patterned cloth sat the guru on a platform, while his entourage sat on the ground. Guests of honor were permitted to sit at the guru’s right hand while his group of musicians was stationed at his left. Everyone else took their place outside in a makeshift courtyard, sectioned off from the rest of the festival by canvas, thatch or orange patterned cloth.
Instrumentation for the ensemble consisted of a free-reed aerophone called the \textit{harmonium}, several different edge-blown aerophones called \textit{murali}, struck membranophones included the \textit{tabla} and the \textit{dholak}, and several of the singers played struck idiophones called \textit{manjiri}. The \textit{harmonium} player also sang, bringing the total number of singers to five. Each instrument and singer had a dedicated microphone. Shortly after turning on the audio recorder, we were treated to a song that began with an introductory solo performed on the \textit{murali}. Peter informed me that the mythical story being recounted by the guru included a performance on this instrument.

The guru would give a five to twenty minute discourse sans music and then either he or another vocalist would break into song, with the other musicians and singers following suit. The music sections were generally five to eight minutes in length. There were no periods of silence once the event was underway.

Audience participation was observed as follows: about ten percent clapped their hands, fewer swayed with the music, and fewer still sang along. The exception to this was a rare call and response initiated by the guru accompanied by raising of hands which the devotees copied faithfully. I spotted several elderly who fell asleep and a few cell phones rang in the pockets of the younger men who ran outside the perimeter to take calls. There seemed to be just as many men as women and there was no gender segregation. Periodically, someone approached the altar while the guru was teaching to leave food items or money as offerings.

Sitting among the Hindu devotees on the ground for the next two hours was challenging. Not only was I accustomed to sitting in a chair, but the music was aimed at us from six speaker cabinets pushing an estimated 115 dB.\footnote{Since we were in the center, some 3 to 4 meters from the speakers, we were in the “quietest” section of the area. Walking within 1 meter of the speakers resulted in a threshold of pain hearing experience, which is approximately 118 dB.} I discovered later that the guru’s sound man ran all gain
stages on the sound system as loud as they would go causing distortion and difficulty with feedback. In this audio engineer’s quickly fatiguing ears, it was utterly intolerable. Some in the audience held their hands over their ears, and others would plug their ears if they had to walk near the speaker cabinets. Earplugs were on my packing list, but regrettfully, they were left behind. Though a total of four songs were recorded, none of them were very useful for analysis on account of the level of distortion present in the sound system.

Since cameras at the festival were very rare and I saw none at this event, I was cautious at first and discreetly snapped photographs and made video recordings of the guru, his musicians and the audience. I was not certain if attendees were staring at me out of curiosity or offense. Later we spotted a national snapping photos, so Peter assured me it was permissible to continue without attempting to conceal the camera.

As the teaching went on, the sun began to set and more people squeezed into the area to attend the *satsang*. It ended without any notice, thus the guru slipped away before we could catch up with him. Peter spoke with one of the guru’s disciples about how and when we might be able to speak with guru Santosh offline. We were told to come back the next day around noon and look for the “biggest tent in India” (the guru’s hotel) a few streets over.

The next day, we assumed finding Santosh’s tent would be a simple task, yet we were unable to locate it. Returning to the tent from the previous day, we spoke with his musicians who were setting up for the afternoon’s *satsang*. Optimistic that I could get a good audio recording using a direct feed from their sound system, I was given permission to plug my audio recorder directly into the mixing console. This turned out to be only slightly better than pointing a microphone at the highly distorted loudspeakers. Additionally, permission was given to set up the video camera and almost two hours of the *satsang* were captured on both devices. Six complete songs performed by the ensemble were recorded as well as a number of chants sung by
the guru. Since the event appeared to be going on and on with no indication of when it might conclude, we decided to pack up. On the way out, Peter asked someone in guru Santosh’s entourage when we might be able to interview the musicians and if possible the guru. They said to come back at 6:00 P.M. that evening. Peter and I returned to the school, had lunch with his family and a few other workers, and then made our way back the Magh Mela.

As we arrived, a devotional ceremony centered around a fire pit was already in progress. This may have been a variation on a well-known fire ceremony called an *aarti*, but no confirmation of this was made. The guru was sitting in his usual spot, but doing nothing save for an occasionally yawn. Devotees were sitting around a fire bowl about two feet in diameter as Sanskrit was being chanted by one of the musicians. The phrases were very short and were spoken rapidly over the sound system. People were throwing clarified butter into the fire, which represented their sins, repeating this gesture over and over. At the end of the service, a tray containing a single candle was moved among the devotees by a handler, and devotees including children would run their hands quickly over the fire. Then in a brief gesture, they would pass their hands over their head and face as if to “bathe” in what was received from the fire. Peter was not sure what the significance of the latter was.

Having just begun to capture audio and video during this event, it ended abruptly and we were invited to speak with guru Santosh. Peter explained gurus consider themselves gods worthy of worship, so as a gesture of cultural respect, we removed our shoes before walking into the guru’s tent temple. We greeted one another in the traditional way, bowing slightly at the waist with hands held in a praying position near the chest and uttering the word, “*namaste.*” Peter introduced us as the guru’s piercing dark eyes periodically made contact with mine. I was described as a researcher and the guru was asked if he would be willing to submit to an
interview. He replied that he only had five minutes to spare, so we respectfully declined. Peter and Santosh exchanged business cards so an interview could be set up for another day and time.

Though the guru interview fell through, we were given permission to interview his musicians. Since their work was done for the evening, we asked them if they would be willing to be interviewed at that time. The tabla player was a very friendly, outgoing man and cheerfully agreed, as did the flautist, however the harmonium player declined.

We were invited into a tent, given chai and some spicy, crunchy noodles. A crowd of children was permitted by guru Santosh’s security to exercise their curiosity and remain for the interview. Following IRB protocol and with Peter translating, I introduced myself, formally requesting permission and began the interview. About twenty minutes into the dialog, the tabla player’s cell phone rang and he stepped out. When he returned, he disclosed to Peter that they needed to leave as the guru didn’t want to eat dinner without them. Disappointed that I didn’t get a full interview, but grateful I had at least a partial one, we snapped a parting photograph, thanked everyone and left.

*Magh Mela – Brief and Final Visit*

Three days later, Sarah informed me that their Hindi class was taking a field trip to the *Magh Mela* and I was invited to tag along. One of the teachers was our tour guide, and since she was the wife of a high-ranking military officer, our group would enjoy a military escort. It was to be a short trip geared for a generic audience, yet musical aspects of the Hindu culture not previously encountered were observed. For instance, we entered a large tent where a theatrical production dramatizing a story from Hindu mythology was about to commence. Although the instrumental configuration was similar guru Santosh’s, one of the musicians in this case was playing what they called a “banjo,” but this was not the American banjo I knew. The indigenous
name is *bulbul tarang*, a chordophone board zither having three strings. It looked as though it was built to accommodate more – missing at least another three strings. Positioned in front of the musician horizontally, similar in posture to a lap steel guitar, the right hand strummed the strings, and the left hand pressed a set of keys similar to those found on a saxophone to change the string pitch. This particular instrument also had an electronic pickup that allowed it to be amplified. Research on this instrument indicated that typically there are drone strings and melody strings. Although strings are grouped in pairs with the drone pair typically tuned in a fifth and the melodic pair(s) tuned in unison or octaves, this is where any tuning standard ends.

The ensemble instrumentation consisted of the *bulbul tarang*, a *harmonium*, a *dholak*, and *manjiri*. The *harmonium* player also sang bringing the total number of musicians to four. Each instrument and singer had a dedicated microphone except the *bulbul tarang* which had an electronic pickup.

A short musical drama about the god Ram and his wife Sita was presented with colorful and grandiose costumes. A man, possibly a eunuch, dressed as a woman sang and danced while the musicians played. I was assured later by our Indian tour guide that it was indeed a man and cross-dressing eunuchs were quite common at the *Mela*. Because the dance was considered sensual by Hindu standards, it was inappropriate in this context for a woman to dance in this way; hence these roles were played by men. When asked if it was this man’s choice to be a eunuch or whether it was a birth defect, I was told by our guide both scenarios are possible. Additionally, Hindus consider it a blessing for a boy to be born a eunuch. When probed further about why a birth defect would be considered a blessing, our guide could not, or would not, tell me.
Interlude – Conference and Technical Support

Just prior to the final trip to the *Magh Mela* summarized above, my hosts began preparing for the annual X___ conference. As a result, opportunities to return to the festival came to an end. During this time, I took a few trips into the city looking to interact with musicians; however, this proved to be futile since I was unfamiliar with the city, the language, and the culture. Out of a desire to give something back to my hosts, I occupied the time by solving a few computer and network issues.

As work progressed on the school’s computer problems, an invitation came from Shelby De Salango who was heading up the musical worship team for the conference. The team consisted of a Brazilian who sang and played guitar, a Swiss who played the keyboard and sang, and a Korean who played the *tabla*. I joined them as a second guitarist and singer, and during this lull in opportunities for data collection, we rehearsed for the conference. This was an enjoyable musical experience with a multi-cultural worship team.

In a conversation with Jack Kingston on the last night of the conference, we were noting the beauty of the full moon when he declared it was the last auspicious day at the *Magh Mela*, and many would return to their villages and urban homes tomorrow. Though I showed no outward disappointment, my enthusiasm for this project which had been running high sank at what seemed to be a lost opportunity. I was dependent upon my hosts as translators, and though I now had the confidence to go to the *Magh Mela* alone, the absence of a translator nullified that confidence. In hindsight, I should have just gone to the *Mela* solo. Surely there were many other music culture concepts to be gleaned, even if acquired through visual observation alone.
Sai Baba Temple – First Visit

With the prayer conference over, technical support work complete, no assistance coming from the University, and no indication as to when the next opportunity for data collection might be, I settled into the school’s library with a heavy heart to see what new information I could learn about my host culture. There was no shortage of books on the Hindu culture to digest and they provided much-needed perspectives for this study.

A few hours later, Sarah alerted me that Peter was ready to go to the Hindu temple he had in mind for further study. The temple was named after a deceased and popular guru whose name was Sai Baba. After a fifteen-minute scooter ride, we arrived to find the musical worship was already in session. We removed and checked in our shoes, even getting a receipt from the attendant for them. Peter wisely asked one of the armed temple guards for permission to make video recordings and take photographs. With permission granted, we made our way inside to find the room packed shoulder to shoulder. Locating a discreet spot in the back of the temple, and emboldened by experience at the Magh Mela, I began filming the ceremony. But shortly afterward, an angry-looking man stopped to bark at me in Hindi. I lowered my camera, but that wasn’t enough – he gestured to put it away. Complying in haste, my host also recommended the action. After the offended Hindu moved on, I took out my audio recorder which I held discreetly at my side and continued recording the music. As the live music concluded, and the crowd began to funnel out the side of the temple, I got brave enough to shoot photographs of artwork, statues and other shrines.

As Peter & I were leaving, we discussed what might be the best approach in locating and speaking with the musicians. As we discussed our strategy, I kept shooting photographs in the courtyard where permission had been granted earlier. As I photographed, a uniformed guard began accosting me in Hindi and Peter quickly came to my aid. The guard seemed to calm down
when Peter explained I was a researcher. It is possible the alarm was caused by the presence of my large backpack, as India has a history of Hindu temples becoming the target of militant Muslims. It is also possible the temple had a strict ban on photography and videography. In either case, we were ordered to sit in chairs while another guard was sent to speak with a higher authority. As we sat, I became alarmed that my audio-visual gear was going to be confiscated. Upon the guard’s return, we were ordered to follow him into the temple. As we made our way in the labyrinth of the temple’s basement, fear began to creep into my soul that this was not going to turn out well. I prayed quietly and fervently as we walked. As we entered the office of the temple’s managing trustees, we were ordered to introduce ourselves and describe our purpose for being there. Fear subsided as we discovered the Lord was providing us with one of the best data collection experiences to date.

After Peter introduced us and the atmosphere changed from confrontational to hospitable, we were offered *chai* and *gulab jaman*, the latter of which had probably come from the offerings of Hindu devotees to the Sai Baba idol. Peter asked if the trustees would be willing to submit to an interview and they agreed. The trustees in the room were a mother – Mrs. Mamta Prakash, her daughter – Miss Tulika Prakash and the mother’s friend whose name was missed as she joined us mid-stream. An unnamed guard and granddaughter remained with us for the duration and a full interview commenced with the session lasting over an hour. Their perspective provided insight from that of the devotee as opposed to a musician. Additionally, the trustees contacted the temple’s lead musician and arranged for us to interview him at a later date.

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19 As the food was offered to us, the thought occurred to me it was the food from which I was to abstain according to Acts 15:20. Immediately after this pause, I recalled the teaching of Paul in I Corinthians 10:27-30, and since Peter was already enjoying the delicacies offered to Sai Baba, and thus I was in no danger of causing consternation in my brother’s conscience (I Corinthians 8) I chose to partake so as to avoid offending our hosts.
**Sai Baba Temple – Second Visit**

Two days later, we were back at the temple and rather than being accosted as trespassers by an armed guard, were escorted by the same as distinguished guests to the inner sanctum of the trustees. Here we were introduced to Sanjay Mitra the musical leader at the temple. I recorded his interview in two segments. The first was a fifteen minute segment before the evening *aarti* and the second a twenty-five minute segment afterward. In the latter, I abandoned my standard questions in favor of more technical ones since Mr. Mitra was an accomplished Bollywood singer, trained classical musician, composer, and an articulate communicator.

It was here I experienced a bit of frustration with Peter as he and my informant would dialog in paragraphs that included questions I had not asked, and I would get a one sentence summary in English. Confident I would be able to get a more complete translation at a later time, I made light of it in a humorous moment, then let it go. As a fellow musician, Peter seemed to be enjoying the opportunity to dialog with someone who knew a great deal about the devotional music of the Hindu world.

Because Mr. Mitra was needed for the next *aarti* that was to begin shortly, we thanked him, tentatively set a time to meet again, and he left. Afterward, we were invited by the trustees a second time to enjoy *chai* and delicacies offered to the Sai Baba idol. Opening in English, the conversation flowed to all present in the room, but then it turned to Hindi exclusively. I was content to sip *chai* and slip into the background.

**Arts Festival**

Toward the end of my stay in B____, Shelby mentioned that she and some of the workers had gone to an arts festival while I had been in Y____. She thought it might be useful to go for the purpose of obtaining performance recordings of traditional music. On February 22,
2010, Shelby and I took a rickshaw to the arts festival which was close to the area once claimed by the *Magh Mela*. We walked past many artisans’ booths admiring sculpture, paintings, ceramics, clothing, jewelry and more. Making our way to the performance stage, it promised to be quite a production. The stage props and lighting rivaled that of many high budget American events, and unlike so many feeble and distorted sound systems at the *Mela*, this one was a fine-tuned machine. I spotted several television cameras as well as a large camera crane that were capturing the event. As Shelby and I settled into our chairs, I set up my tripod and camcorder expecting a world-class entertainment experience. What we got was something altogether different.

Most of the performers seemed to be amateur or semi-professional dancers who were accompanied by pre-recorded tracks, many of which were poorly recorded. Judging by the hiss coming from the sound system, these recordings were played on cassette tapes. There were a few marginally skilled, live musicians who attempted to do Bollywood-style devotional music, but it seemed as though we were watching an amateur competition. At last, the headlining act was on stage and it was obvious they intended to do something more traditional. Two older men were the lead singers, with the oldest playing *harmonium*. There were *dholak* and *tabla* players and another young man playing an electronic pad triggering percussion samples. The other young men were singers who also provided handclapping as percussion.

As interesting and enjoyable as this performance was to me, it obviously was a joke to the young, upper class men around me. They showed only contempt for this traditional performance. So loud and contagious was their jeering and joke-making that ten minutes into the performance, it had spread to the entire audience except for the devoted few in the front twenty rows. Since there were no seats available in that section, there was no escape from brouhaha except to leave. Saddened by what must have been a frustrating experience for these skilled,
traditional musicians, and aware of Shelby’s uneasiness with the proximity of drunken, rowdy young men, I quickly packed up my camera and we left.

Chitrakoot - Data Collection

During the first week in February, Shelby, Rachael Wycliff, Yolanda Sanches and I hired a driver to take us to a small city of Hindu religious significance about 150 km southwest of B_____. It was about a three hour drive to Chitrakoot and we arrived at sunset. Making our way to the Ram Ghat on the Mandakini River, we noticed an evening aarti was about to begin, so we removed our shoes and made our way to the river’s edge. It would have been a pleasant experience, except once again ear-splitting audio was being pushed through distorting, vintage loudspeaker horns. Because of the horrible sound, a decision was made to forego the recording of audio. At one point the electricity suddenly shut off all along the ghat and there was a wonderful moment where we could enjoy an unplugged performance. Delighted at this opportunity, I sat down in front of the performers, turned on my audio recorder, but then to my chagrin the stream of electrical current returned. Retreating to a distant position to videotape the fire ceremony, Shelby and Yolanda educated me on some of the symbolism of the event.

Afterward, as we were enjoying dinner at our hotel, we asked the waiter if he knew of any traditional singers. To our surprise, he returned with one of the hotel workers – a young man of about twenty whose name was Naresh. Confirming that he was willing to sing for us and allow me to record the performance, he announced that he would sing a Bollywood song. At my request, he sang instead a traditional devotional song to the god of knowledge, Ganesh. This is the god seen just about everywhere in artwork around Uttar Pradesh. He is depicted as having the body of a man and the head of an elephant. I was grateful that this shy young man had the courage to sing for us and was mildly concerned when he seemed to almost run away afterward.
After dinner, Shelby spoke with the hotel manager who arranged to have a sadhu come to the hotel that evening for an interview. The manager offered his office for the interview and assisted Shelby with some of the translation. The name given to me at the outset of the interview was Jugal Maharaj, but I was corrected later regarding the name that Maharaj was only a suffix denoting respect. He was quite a character who spoke primarily in Hindi, but said to me in English in an unexpected quip, “I don’t speak any English because I am a holy man.”

As I videotaped and interviewed for about forty minutes, he revealed that he played tabla and harmonium, and his ensemble included musicians playing murali, a chordophone board zither played with a bow called a sarangi, and manjiri. Before the interview was complete, he abruptly stood up, informed us that he needed to leave, but would return the following day at 7:00 A.M. with his ensemble. The interview concluded around 10:00 P.M.

Afterward, I returned my hotel room hoping to enjoy a good night of sleep, however the amplified, distorted chanting from the ghat continued throughout the night. Blessed sleep finally overtook me somewhere around 3:00 A.M.

7:00 A.M. arrived with no sign of our sadhu or the hotel’s manager. At breakfast, I was joined by Rachael, Yolanda and Shelby. We decided to visit another area holy to Hinduism until the promise of our sadhu materialized. We left a cell number with a hotel worker to give to the hotel manager in case Jugal Maharaj showed up.

Our driver took us to Ramgiri, a sacred hilltop encircled by a wide sidewalk and filled with grottos, shrines and vendors pedaling their wares to the pilgrims. We chose to go around the hilltop via bicycle rickshaw because we heard it was a five kilometer walk and it would have to be done in our socks to avoid offending the Hindus who considered it sacrilege to make the trek otherwise. Scores of darting monkeys caught my eye first. The next item of interest was the sight of Hindu devotees crawling, rolling, and otherwise scooting their way around the hilltop in
a variety of non-traditional methods of locomotion. By accomplishing the trek in some bizarre fashion rather than walking, they believe greater merit can be earned from the gods.

We stopped to listen, record and photograph a man singing and chanting out of a book while accompanying himself on harmonium. Further along on our trip around the hill, we heard a beautiful voice singing solo and stopped to find out who it might be. It turned out to be a fifteen-year old girl who was in the process of ringing bells and singing songs to wake up the gods for the other devotees who would come to pay a visit to the grotto she attended. Shelby asked her if she would sing a song while I videotaped, and she consented. Her name was Ratna, and after singing and answering a few questions, we were informed that her work had to continue and she hurried off.

Returning to the hotel, we had a casual lunch and were amused that our sadhu informant from the previous night who said he would arrive at 7:00 A.M. still had not arrived by early afternoon. About an hour later, he showed up without his musical entourage. When the hotel manager reminded him of his promise, Jugal Maharaj apologized and left to round them up. I was graciously given the largest suite in the hotel for this private concert and set up my gear while waiting on the musicians to arrive. Jugal Maharaj came back with seven other sadhus, ranging in age from forty to seventy, clad in traditional dress, and wearing face paint identifying their sect. One younger musician in his twenties also came with them, although he was not an ascetic.

Following protocol, I informed the ensemble of the intent of the session, that the recording would not be sold, and with their permission the session began. The ensemble performed what I thought were two different songs that were about ten minutes in length each. Six minutes into the recording, the electricity for the entire hotel suddenly went off for a few minutes. As this is a common occurrence in India, the ensemble kept playing. Fortunately, my
equipment batteries were well charged and nothing was lost. After the performance, I was asked if I had any questions for the group. The interview lasted about ten minutes and Jugal Maharaj fielded all of the questions.

After the interview concluded and as the musicians were leaving, most gestured to my camera so they could see and listen to the video recording just made. As they watched and listened to the performance, they seemed genuinely pleased with the recording. I asked the hotel manager how much I should compensate them and he replied with the curious figure of fifty one rupees for each musician. Not only did this seem to be a modest request ($8.70 for a personal concert by eight men – what a bargain!), but when I asked why it was fifty-one and not an even fifty, I was told fifty-one is a particularly auspicious number associated with the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet and the god Kali. Afterward, we thanked the performers and the hotel manager who arranged the events, then loaded up the taxi for the trip back to B_____.

Data Collection in C_____H____

Originally thought to be a village on the outskirts of B____, our trip to C_____H____ was a brutal, white knuckle, six hour taxi ride. 290 kilometers to the north of B______, Peter and I visited the area over a period of two nights and two days. The evening we arrived, I was able to recover from nausea and exhaustion enough to perform a brief interview at our hotel with the Chamar pastor whose name is Z_____.21 He is a gentle and gracious man who seemed genuinely excited to see Peter, as well as this researcher who was interested in the Chamar culture. Even though Z_____ has minority status as a Christian in his Hindu culture, he commands a great deal of respect among the villagers on account of his integrity and the

20 The name of the village literally means “forest fortress” An interesting name as even the older villagers don’t remember there being forests nearby. The area has a high concentration of an ethnic group called the Chamar, a Dalit sub-caste and historically referred to as “untouchables.”

21 The use of surnames among the Chamar is inconsistent. This man uses no surname to my knowledge.
miracles God has worked among this small enclave of believers. Of particular interest was a comment pastor Z_____ made saying, “The Chamar have not always practiced Hinduism, but historically have worshipped tribal goddesses and spirits.” He mentioned it was unfortunate we had not come a few days earlier as an increasingly rare drama that is quite colorful, lively and musical called Katghodai had been performed in their village.

Newborn Ceremony

The next day, all the village women gathered to honor Z_____ and his family because he and his wife had recently given birth to a baby boy. Since the pastor was in his forties, this was seen by the village as particularly auspicious, so it was a large, celebratory event. Little did I know, the women had waited over an hour in the front yard of Z_____’s father’s home for our arrival. They organized into two circular groups, with the first group singing a line in the song and the second group repeating it. During the singing, many donated food items to the family of the newborn, and sweets were distributed to the scores of children present. During this musical ceremony that exceeded an hour, I recorded audio and video. Once the ceremony concluded, conversations with a village elder (held in the roughly the same esteem as a mayor in our culture) and other conversations were recorded and partially translated by Peter.

Front Porch Concert

That evening, Z_____ arranged for a musical performance to be held on the front porch of his father’s home. As I set up my recording equipment, the musicians began to arrive. They began setting up the dreaded, 1950’s loudspeaker horn on the roof which left me perplexed as there was no electricity in C____H____. Informed that they would be running it off a car battery, I begged Peter to ask them if the performance could proceed without it. They refused the
request, and I just shook my head at the monster that American technology had unleashed. Out here in this quiet, serene village of several hundred homes, why would anyone think a sound system was necessary? Fortunately, it malfunctioned and we enjoyed a three hour, unplugged concert of Chamar folk songs. The members of this ensemble were a mixture of Christians, Hindus, and one Buddhist. The songs were mostly secular in nature, and one openly criticized the Hindu gods for doing nothing for the “untouchable” Chamar people while the high caste people enjoyed the good life. Another song told the parable of a Chamar midwife who delivered the child of a high caste Hindu woman. Later when the child had grown to adulthood, he said to the Chamar woman, “Don’t touch me.” The leader of this ensemble was a Buddhist sadhu who was called Badri Das and according to Peter, some of Buddhism’s virtues were espoused in the lyrics.

Instrumentation consisted of a *harmonium*, several *manjiri*, a *dholak*22 and a struck idiophone called the *khanjari*, the latter being a small tambourine with jangles and a skin stretched across the frame. Four out of the five musicians sang as they played their instruments. The songs were chosen and led by Badri Das and the *harmonium* player Khjanchi. As the ensemble played, many villagers came to sit in the front yard to listen. A few placed money, typically in the amount of ten rupees, on the *harmonium* as they left to return to home. At the end of a song where a donation had been given, Khjanchi or Badri Das would say something positive about the gift, its giver, or comment on how much they appreciated the gift. As the performance went on, the long day and cold night were taking their toll on Peter and me. Approaching midnight, Peter and I exchanged “the look” implying it was time to go, so we thanked the musicians, gave them an appropriate sum of money and departed for the hotel.

22 The name of the instrument as told to me by my informant was a *mridungum*, the name of a southern, or Carnatic drum. The Hindustani name for the same instrument is *dholak* and will be used here.
Sunday Service

The next day Chamar believers were gathering on the same porch as the previous night’s concert and we were invited to attend the service. There were about eighteen people including children and teens. It began with singing that was accompanied by dholak and harmonium then moved to a time of prayer where everyone was invited to pray. What seemed like a brief time of exhortation by the pastor was followed by a couple of testimonies. I found out later, this was for the benefit of two male seekers from the neighboring city, D____. Z_____ taught scripture by having the church repeat the lines orally, as most of the church cannot read or write. After this, Peter conducted the dedication ceremony of baby Amon, which was followed by communion. The service lasted into the early afternoon and I kept the audio recorder rolling for the entirety, and then shot stills and videotaped briefly toward the end. Afterward, everyone gathered in front yard to chat with the guests and family. Peter and I were invited to join the family for a late lunch, after which we departed for B_____.

Additional Goals Discovered

Nearly four weeks into my stay in India, as I spoke with Peter and Sarah about the different trips being arranged to provide opportunities for data collection, it occurred to me that the areas chosen seemed a bit scattered. The original assumption was that these destinations would have a commonality with the music culture of B_____; however, this was proving to be only partly true. To date, and in the course of the next few weeks, I acquired interviews and music recordings from:

- A Hindu source in O__E_____, 700 km northwest of B_____
- The Hindu Magh Mela festival in B_____
- The Sai Baba temple in B_____

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• An ensemble of sadhus from Chitrakoot, 150 km southwest of B_____  
• The village of C____H___ 290 km north of B_____  
• A contextualized Christian fellowship in Y_____, 165 km west of B_____  
• An arts festival held in B_____  

It seemed data collection was and would continue to be scattered over a broad area, and the original objective – which I failed to clarify with my hosts at the outset of this project, was hardly going to be realized if work continued on the same trajectory.  

When this disconnect with the original design was presented to my host on Tuesday, February 9, 2010, an energized discussion developed as Peter began to declare what was envisaged for ethnomusicological study. An assumption I made prior to arriving was that the research would be limited geographically to B_____ and contextually to a local body of believers. I had confirmed this assumption with Peter during my first week in B_____, but it met an irremediable end as he unveiled an expanded plan. Our discussion explained why trips to various locations and into a variety of contexts to collect what seemed to be disparate and disconnected data were being planned. To my host, it fit into his intentions for musical contextualization. Additionally, this larger plan was congruent with the vision, mission and goals of my cooperating agency and the team of servants laboring in B_____. To reach people for Christ in this city requires a deep understanding of the culture in order to present the Gospel in appropriate ways. How musical worship of the Living God should be expressed in the four areas outlined by Peter was a good place to begin.
The Four-Fold Plan

Rather than having a single target in their crosshairs as was assumed at the outset of this project, my host had four. Peter’s plan for the contextualization of music in Christian worship was communicated as follows:

1. **Contextualized Outreach to Non-Christians in B_____** - Envisioned as an ongoing weekly or bi-weekly *satsang* in B_____, some form of contextualized worship music is believed to be appropriate for inclusion.

2. **Contextualized Worship for Missionary Meetings in B_______** - This would be similar to number one, except the degree of intercultural elements can be higher and tolerance for inexperience in indigenous musicianship is also greater. These gatherings are ad hoc as well as calendric.

3. **Contextualized Worship for Existing Christian Fellowship in C______H_____** - For the small community of believers in the Chamar village, this component is for the purpose of encouraging and developing songwriting skill and musicianship. Extended study and cultural immersion are assumed to be essential for successful application.

4. **Contextualized Outreach Non-Christians in C_______H_____** - A *satsang* format is assumed to be an appropriate form for the Chamar village. In order to generate this, it would require extended study and cultural immersion.

Original Design Subsumed

Although my host’s plan was well suited to his objectives, the result of the collision of ideas appeared to be detrimental to this study. Because significant limitations had been assumed and I was merely a solitary researcher with a rapidly dwindling measure of time, aspirations for the project’s success were temporarily dashed. The remainder of this day of revelation was spent
mulling and praying over how the work to date and future data collection trips could be salvaged. Exhausted from the day and the thought of my project being a lost cause, I fell into a deep sleep.

I awakened the next day with what I like to call a God thought; the ones the Lord gives while sleeping. Earlier in the week, Peter and Sarah had been praying that God would reveal why He would send someone like me for such a short duration, and they came to a very similar conclusion. Instead of trying to produce a viable study in a single, well-defined area with only fifteen days remaining and a hodgepodge of data, what would be the possibility of creating a framework for Peter’s four-fold plan? By creating a master plan for research, not only could my data be plugged in and meaning extracted, but subsequent ethnomusicologists who were already scheduled to work in B_____ could begin their research with a vantage point that stands on the shoulders of studies completed prior to their arrival. Contributing researchers’ work could compliment and build a readily accessible repository of knowledge rather than remain isolated on individual laptops and notebooks. Finally, this epiphany produced a wonderfully redeeming effect for what seemed to be a lost cause in the previous day. The new development was communicated to, and ultimately endorsed by, my project advisor, faculty sponsor, hosts, and a fellow ethnomusicologist from the United States called to work in B_____ long-term.

In order to understand the recommendations made later in this paper, the previously described sequence of events must be understood: One research design was in place prior to going overseas, and a second one subsumed the original mid-way through my time on the field. The recommendations in the final chapter of this paper are an attempt to describe the latter in the greatest detail while allowing the data collected under the original assumptions to find its place within that framework.

23 Typically, X___ as a sending organization as well as the X___ India team do not accept interns for periods of less than six months.
Data Collection in Y____

One of the last opportunities for data collection came in the form of a visit to a family formerly affiliated with X____ in Y____. The city, also known as C____, is considered one of India’s sacred cities, as in ancient times it was the chief seat of Brahminical learning and civilization (Sherring 1996).

John DeVoss owns a water purification company, so I got to enjoy the best tasting water since leaving the United States. I was invited to enjoy lunch with the DV family and we talked about life, faith and evangelical work most of the afternoon. John is a white American from the Midwest and his wife Nilanjana was born a high caste Bengali, who studied Bengali folk and Indian Classical music for four years beginning at age six. They have a son in the United States going to college and another teenage son at home.

Later that afternoon, they sat on the chowki and played a few songs for me from their songbook:

1. Subha Shyam Lou
2. Parameshwar Pita Parameshwar
3. Bhajane Aaye
4. Mary’s Song (written for Christmas by Jack)
5. Deep Jale

That evening was the mid-week meeting of their fellowship. I asked if I could record video during the session, but because they responded with uneasiness, only an audio recording was made. Everyone sat on the floor except for a few older folks who chose to sit on the couch. John sang and accompanied on acoustic guitar, employing standard Western strumming rhythms, tunings and chord voicings. Nilanjana played harmonium, had a beautiful voice and seemed to have a true gift for leading worship. Compositions were sung in Hindi from the songbook
compiled by John and Nilanjana. The DeVosses couldn’t say with any certainty who wrote the songs, nor did the songbook give any composer credits. One song was clearly a translated modern chorus from the West, though I couldn’t recall the title. Because the rhythms were driven by an American guitar player, the music had a strong Western flavor, though overall the fusion element worked well. The DeVosses and the fellowship did not sing in an ornamented style for the most part, yet periodically, Nilanjana could be heard embellishing the melody beyond what the others were capable of singing. Spontaneous prayer was woven into the songs, and although there was a song set list, other songs were also suggested and played. After the musical worship, there was a time of Scripture teaching which John had prepared in advance and then carried out. When the meeting was over, folks hung around and enjoyed chai and some snacks.

When we returned to the home of John and Nilanjana, we talked more about their fellowship. It consists of mostly middle to upper caste Indians with a few low caste people from their urban setting. In the past, they have met and had services with CH and PH. One meeting that they thought was particularly successful was a Christmas satsang where the stories of Christ’s birth were told. An interesting comment Nilanjana made was that the Christian music scene is changing so fast because of Bollywood’s influence and the same from the West. Ten years ago, they would have to hunt for a handful of new Christian music cassettes and then only find a few songs worth learning. Now there is more than they can keep up with. Because of this, Nilanjana suggested that the more traditional song forms such as bhajans and formats for gatherings such as satsangs once thought to be appropriately borrowed for contextualized Christian expression may no longer be appropriate.

That evening, John took me to a ghat where a massive crowd of locals and tourists had gathered for the evening aarti. The event was highly commercialized and struck me as more of a
Vegas show than a religious ceremony. A large number of small boats were anchored just offshore that contained hundreds of spectators. The *ghat* itself was packed with as many people as there was room. A small percentage of visitors sitting on the *ghat* platform were European and American tourists who John said had probably paid a lot of money to enjoy a place of honor with the *sadhus*. Most looked to be aging hippies from the 1960’s which caused a twinge of embarrassment to ripple through my spine.

**Wrapping It Up in India**

The final days in B_____ flew by while a number of project-related issues were given appropriate attention. I corralled Peter to examine a few informant interviews in greater detail, got caught up on project journaling, clarified items in my field notes, edited, organized and backed up media files for safekeeping. Additionally, relational and practical items were handled during this time. I wrote thank you notes, purchased gifts for my hosts and packed my belongings. A last minute request came from the B_____ team to videotape, edit and burn a DVD that contained farewell messages to Jack and Andrea Kingston who were retiring from the field. After this, it was time for me to say goodbye to my hosts who had been so gracious and accommodating over the past five weeks, and on February 25, 2010 I boarded the train for O__E______.

**AIIS Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology**

I had one final data collection goal in mind for my time in India, and that was to visit the American Institute of Indian Studies Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology to see what I could learn about the music culture of the Chamar. After Jack Kingston arranged for a driver, I traveled about forty minutes south to an area called Gurgaon. Arriving at the facility, I
was met by a friendly man who escorted me to the director, Dr. Shubha Chaudhuri. Since she
was involved in a staff meeting, it was suggested that a visit to the audio-visual archives area
might be useful. The archives manager’s name was Umashankar and spoke in English with an
accent so thick it seemed as though he was speaking in Hindi. On the edge of informing him I
didn’t speak Hindi, there was an embarrassing moment of “enlightenment” where my ears
adjusted to comprehend most of what he was saying. A tour of the facility commenced where it
became obvious the enterprise was well financed. I would later find out the names of these such
as the Ford Foundation (AIIS Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology 2009). The
former head of UCLA’s ethnomusicology department and former president of the Society for
Ethnomusicology, the late Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy championed the cause of this facility and is
credited for its existence.

After lunch, I asked if I could have access to the recorded music of the Chamar from
other scholars’ work and Umashankar escorted me to their climate controlled media vault. Only
one anthropologist doing work on the culture of the Chamar, Dr. Laxmi Ganesh Tewari had
recordings available in this otherwise large repository. After checking out the materials, I was
shown to the listening room and skimmed the log book with some of the author’s field notes.
Listening to the compact discs, I was struck by the similarity of the material to what I recorded.
A few pieces stood out as quite different, for example, the songs that were sung during a
wedding. I was not permitted to make a copy of the recordings – only listen which was a
disappointment in light of the short time remaining. In the case of these recordings, permission
from the researcher had to be obtained separately to make copies.

With forty minutes left until the Institute closed, I was invited to the library where a
worker had pulled three small publications dealing with the Chamar. The first was a 155-page
ethnography that made scant reference to their arts. The second had to do with animal sacrifice in
the Chamar’s tribal religion and other religious practices. The third had no information of any relevance.

Since it was now time for the facility to close, I thanked Umashankar and Dr. Chaudhuri, then went looking for my driver who was nowhere to be found. Eight phone calls and hour later, I was headed back to Jack and Andrea Kingston’s home with my truant driver.

**Illness, Travel Delays, Holi Festival, and Homeward Bound**

With what I believed to be a single day remaining before my return to the United States, I began to succumb to the flu that had ravaged many of the workers and many nationals during my stay in India. Thankful to God that he preserved my health until now, I spent the remainder of my time in bed with a fever and greatly diminished strength. Dreading the long flight home on account of the illness, I discovered the air traffic controllers’ strike in France and heavy winter weather in the American northeast were still wreaking havoc with travel. On account of these two issues, my flight was rescheduled two days later. This turned out to be a blessing as my illness got worse before it got better.

The next day after dinner, the Kingstons and I talked for quite a while about their time in India and why they were retiring. An interesting cultural revelation was offered having to do with the variation in practice of Hinduism among the castes. In their experience, the upper and upper-middle castes seldom go to the temples except for something they consider ultra-important. They view the trustees of the temples as scam artists who prey on the lower, foolish castes. Many don’t believe a statue is needed for *puja*; however, they still worship the same deities. In most cases, these religious activities are carried on by the women and the men only give it lip service. This may be an important reality to contend with in the process of contextualization.
Tuesday, March 2, 2010 through Wednesday, March 3, 2010 was the rescheduled travel days. I mustered strength, gathered belongings, said goodbyes and dragged my sagging carcass onto the plane. Touching down in Detroit, a familiar sight slapped me in the face – my connecting flight to Pennsylvania had been cancelled on account of the winter weather. Fortunately, flights to the sunny South were available and an airline agent rerouted the trip to my hometown, bypassing the frozen Northeast. This route precluded the scheduled debrief session with X___ in Pennsylvania; however, there was no merit in forcing the event given the inclement weather and my physical condition.

Analysis

Human perception depends heavily on the phenomenon of contrast. We comprehend light against a backdrop of darkness, cold as the absence of heat, and we become aware of sound’s color on a canvass of silence. So the reader is better served, a few statements about what the findings are not is presented first.

The format for data collection described in the Design section of Chapter III was indicated as a case study, and this was desired for the purpose of taking this study as deep as possible in the shortest amount of time. With the information in hand at that point in time, it was chosen as the best format given the constraints of location and especially time. A desirable aspect inherent in a case study is cultural immersion for the purpose of acquiring a holistic view of the subject. I was hopeful that rather than studying aspects of Indian music and assigning these components a unitary role within the music culture of Uttar Pradesh, the concept of “music as culture” championed by Merriam could be used to apprehend the host culture through the lens of musical study (Nettl 2005). While a holistic view was coveted at the outset, it can be safely stated on the other side of the project that this objective is no longer tenable. It was naively
optimistic to think this could be achieved in six weeks. Therefore, the analysis will lean toward the musicological and away from the anthropological. With that caveat in place, I’ll begin by defining who is to benefit from this research.

**Targeted Area and Beneficiaries**

As was noted earlier, I discovered my host had four areas he hoped to impact through contextualization:

1. An outreach to Hindus in B____
2. Worship for worker meetings in B____
3. The worship of the Chamar Christian fellowship in C_____H___
4. An outreach to non-Christian Chamars in C_____H___

It is beyond the scope of this study to address all four areas in detail, though more will be said in Chapter IV that takes into account these additional goals. Since the majority of data collection was performed in, and has direct applicability to B____, and this is where the first implementation of contextualization is to occur, I have chosen to examine data directly applicable to number one. It should be noted that insight gained in the analysis for number one is germane to, and can be easily borrowed for number two; worship for worker meetings in B____. The primary reason for this being the team involved with work in the contextualized outreach of number one takes part in these gatherings. Additionally, the meetings are multicultural, and contextualized worship will be less rigid in its requirements than that of an outreach program to an indigenous population.

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24 The X____ India team consisted of long and short-term workers from Europe, South America, North America and Korea at the time I was there.
Stepping back to look at the data from the thirty-thousand foot view, the recordings and interviews from the *Magh Mela*, the Sai Baba Temple and the Arts Festival are obvious contenders for analysis in the contextualization inquiry for B____. Because I was not able to interact with the musicians at the Arts Festival to find out any information about them or their music, these performances will be excluded. It is possible that the data collected in Y____, and to a lesser degree Chitrakoot may also lend insight: Y____ because it is a large city of Hindu religious significance similar to B____, and likewise Chitrakoot has strong ties to religious Hindu mythology. Due to Chitrakoot’s comparatively small size, there may be significant differences in music culture. In the following sections, the aspects of four Hindu songs will be analyzed using the Hindustani music theory system: two songs from the *Magh Mela*, one song from the Sai Baba Temple and one song from the *sadhu* ensemble of Chitrakoot. The contextualized Christian songs from X_____ will be considered in the final chapter.

*Elements of Musical Style*

Some of the terms presented in this section describe elements found in both the Hindustani (Northern) and Carnatic (Southern) music systems though scholars identify them as two very different music systems (ITC Sangeet Research Academy 2009). Unless otherwise noted, these terms will reference only the former. Furthermore, Hindustani devotional music will be highlighted rather than the more widely known classical music tradition. On account of the latter emerging out of the former in developmental history (Capwell, *The Music of India* 2004), it may be safe to assume there are a significant number of overlapping features, although little will be said that contrasts the two categories.

Two conventions used in several texts consulted for this section will be borrowed for elucidation and it will be useful to the reader to have these articulated. The pitches of Hindustani
music are described in three octaves: low, middle and high. If a note such as the 5th degree of the scale is found in the lower octave, it will be represented as the note name with a dot under it: $Pa$. If the same note occurs in the higher octave, it will be represented with a dot above it: $Pa$. Notes with no dots indicate it occurs in the middle octave. Some notes may be altered by a semitone. If a note such as the 3rd degree of the scale has been lowered by a semitone ($komal$), the name will be represented with a line under it: $Ga$. If a note such as the 5th degree of the scale has been raised by a semitone ($teevra$), it will have a line above it: $Pa$. To clarify an issue regarding metered time, some scholars claim the $vibhag$ (the subdivision of a $tala$) is the closest element to the Western notational bar; however, examples of notation in this study will present an entire cycle or $tala$ ($avart$) as a bar.

**Tuning and Tonal Division**

From observations made during the data collection period and from the literature review, it appears the large majority of modern performances and recordings adhere to a scale anchored in some fashion to a concert A tuned roughly from 440 Hz at the lowest and 445 Hz at the highest. This is due to the presence of the $harmonium$, or a modern electronic keyboard emulating a $harmonium$ or other indigenous instrument. Where many of the older $harmoniums$ built in India and the same coming from Europe tend to approach 445 Hz, the American influence has caused the manufacture of a large number of newer instruments to conform to 440 Hz (ITC Sangeet Research Academy 2009). In every musical performance I attended having applicability to contextualization in $B____$, a $harmonium$ or keyboard provided the standard by which other instruments were tuned. In a $harmonium$-based ensemble, the two drums of the $tabla$ were verified in recordings as being tuned to an E natural and F sharp (give or take a few cents), $dholaks$ were tuned to and melodic modes centered on a G natural, an A natural and
others. Additional observations confirmed tunings were based on an equal-temperament system of pitches anchored to A 440 Hz. The *harmonium* used in ensemble of guru Santosh at the *Magh Mela* was roughly thirty cents sharp of A 440 Hz. The *harmonium* played in the ensemble of the sadhus of Chitrakoot was about twenty-five cents flat of A 440 Hz. The synthesizer played by Sanjay Mitra at the Sai Baba temple was at concert pitch.

This reality also implies, though does not exclusively dictate, the presence and use of twelve semitones in equal temperament as a tonal framework. The North Indian music system includes tonal divisions of seven called *saptaka*, divisions of twelve semitones called *swaras*, and microtonal divisions of twenty-two called *shruti*. Setting aside microtonal ornamentation found in the melodic structure for now, conformance to twelve semitones was verified as every performance applicable to this analysis included *harmoniums*. This is also confirmed in several sources on *ragas* which are at the heart of Indian music theory (Bor 2002; Danielou 1980).

Though conformity to twelve semitones is a well-established fact, it is not without its dissenters. Jairazbhoy says that various Indian scholars have criticized the *harmonium* because,

…its tempered set of twelve semitones were thought to dull the acute sense of the perception implicit in the ancient twenty-two *shruti* (microtonal) octave described by the most revered Sanskrit musical treatises (1971).

In ensembles without an equal-temperament instrument, using instead tunable stringed instruments such as the *tanpura* as a drone tuned to a perfect fifth or fourth anchored to an arbitrary tonal center, a Hindustani variety of just intonation rules the day where there is greater freedom to incorporate an increased set of octave divisions (Sharma 2006). No opportunity to observe and record such a performance was encountered during this study.

While Western notation has been borrowed to represent Indian music, a significant break occurs over the concept of representing a tonal center. Because key signature is not an
indigenous theoretical notion, pitch is discussed within a relative framework versus an absolute one. For example, when the ascending and descending aspects of melodies are referenced in an instructional context, the outline is written in Western notation as belonging to the diatonic “key” of C, or saptaka. This is only a matter of practicality and does not communicate a tonal center. Raised and lowered pitches are indicated with sharps and flats. The underlying premise is that a vocalist or instrumental soloist may perform the melody in whatever register best suits his or her voice.

Briefly revisiting melodic microtonal variation, there are a number mathematical theories that attempt to distill shruti intervals into specific ratios of pitch related to the saptaka (McIntosh 2005). This inquiry concludes in endless ambiguity, as some scholars such as Jairazbhoy and Stone insist on the existence of twenty-two intervals (1963), while others such as Danielou present a scientific case for the existence of sixty-six unique intervals (1980). North Indian music theory dealing with the phenomenon of the physics of sound, tuning strategies and tonal division runs the gamut of overlapping metaphysical, musical and scientific approaches. Western scholars attempt to reconcile these differences into scientific models, but at the end of the day there is no small amount of irreconcilable debate. Consequently, no commentary will be made on shrutis in the analysis of melodies in the next section.

**MELODY AND RAGA**

The Indian melodic system is rooted in the ancient paradigm of the raga, and is also known as rag, raag (male), ragini (female), and putra (children). Many books and even volumes can be found on the subject in North India. Western and indigenous scholars have looked at this theoretical system from a number of different angles, with each one attempting to reconcile discrepancies of ancient theory with modern practice. Differing definitions of
fundamental musical terms add to the difficulty. If there is one thing scholars seem to agree on, it is that *ragas* defy definitive analysis (Jairazbhoy 1971). Though some scholars distance themselves from *ragas* in their traditional form as a viable theoretical system (Courtney 2009), the musicians I interviewed who commented on the technical aspects of their music referred to them. Therefore, a summary of their elementary features will be presented in order that an emic framework may be employed in the analysis. As was stated earlier in this paper, rather than study Hindustani devotional melody on our terms using Western analytics, perhaps the best way to understand it is to undertake the inquiry using the host culture’s theoretical system (Nettl 2005).

The term *raga* surfaces in music literature in the *Brhaddesi* of Matanga about the 9th century. The technical concepts include scale, line of ascent and descent, transilience,25 emphasized notes and register, intonation and ornamentation (Jairazbhoy 1971). Another way of describing *raga* was articulated by Powers as, “… not a tune, nor is it a modal scale, but rather a continuum with scale and tune as its extremes.” (Bor 2002) The familiarity of *ragas* to an Indian musician is accomplished through the knowledge of songs in traditional genres. Songs typically have at least two sections. The first is called the *sthayi* where the main features of the *raga* are showcased in the middle and lower registers, and the second is called the *antara* where the upper tessitura is explored (ibid.).

Where *ragas* were traditionally defined by a number of non-musical criteria such as the time of day they were to be performed, association with deities, colors, animals, planets, seasons, gender classification, and mood, Indian musicologist Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande (1860 – 1936) organized them into a system of ten *thaats*, essentially reclassifying each *raga* in terms of the

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25 Jairazbhoy coined this term to mean notes that “leap across,” or, in other words, scales in which a note or notes are omitted.
seven degrees of its scale. This classification system is the most widely accepted method, and yet there are flaws and ambiguities that even Bhatkhande acknowledged. A number of important ragas do not fit neatly into any of the ten *thaats*. Imperfect as they are, their modal frames are defined as follows:

1. Bilaval $1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7$
2. Khamaj $1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, b_7$
3. Kafi $1, 2, b_3, 4, 5, 6, b_7$
4. Asavari $1, 2, b_3, 4, 5, b_6, b_7$
5. Bhairavi $1, b_2, b_3, 4, 5, b_6, b_7$
6. Bhairav $1, b_2, 3, 4, 5, b_6, 7$
7. Kalyan $1, 2, 3, #4, 5, 6, 7$
8. Todi $1, b_2, b_3, #4, 5, b_6, 7$
9. Purvi: $1, b_2, 3, #4, 5, b_6, 7$
10. Marva: $1, b_2, 3, #4, 5, 6, 7$ (Bor 2002)

A *raga* must contain at least five notes and no more than seven which are called *saptaka*. Each note or scale degree has a name, as well as an abbreviated name that can sung or referenced verbally. The collection of the latter is called *sargam*: *Sa*, *Re*, *Ga*, *Ma*, *Pa*, *Dha* and *Ni*. Each *thaat* has notes that may be altered as well as two whose state is immutable. The 1st degree *Sa* and the 5th degree *Pa* may not be altered. The 2nd degree *Re*, 3rd degree *Ga*, 6th degree *Dha*, and 7th degree *Ni* may be lowered one semitone and this state is referred to as *komal*. Only the 4th degree *Ma* may be raised a semitone and this state is called *teevra*. The unaltered states
combined with the altered states results in a maximum of twelve tones that are referred to as
swaras (Bor 2002).

Further defining the raga is the jati or the number of notes in ascending or descending
movements. There are three descriptors: sampooran (heptatonic), shaudava (hexatonic), and
audava (pentatonic). Since a raga may have two of any combination in its ascending and
descending lines, a total of nine jatis are required to account for all composite representations.
The first descriptor indicates the number of notes in the ascending line and the second indicates
the number in the descending line:

1. sampooran/samrpooran (heptatonic/heptatonic)
2. sampooran/shaudava (heptatonic/hexatonic)
3. sampooran/audava (heptatonic/pentatonic)
4. shaudava/sampooran. (hexatonic/heptatonic)
5. shaudava/shaudava (hexatonic/hexatonic)
6. shaudava/audava (hexatonic/pentatonic)
7. audava/sampooran (pentatonic/heptatonic)
8. audava/audava (pentatonic/pentatonic)
9. audava/shaudava (pentatonic/hexatonic) (Mahajan 2001)

In addition to the jati descriptors above, ragas also define the order in which notes of the
ascending and descending lines appear. This characteristic is known as the arohi (ascending)
and avarohi (descending). Notes are weighted in importance and have special designations as
single notes, note groups and as phrases:

• vadi – note of primary importance, often heard with the greatest frequency
• samvadi – note of secondary importance, usually heard with the second greatest frequency
  and typically found to be an interval of a fourth or fifth from the vadi
• *anuvadi* – notes that are neither *vadi* nor *samvadi*
• *vivadi* – a dissonant note and typically avoided
• *nyasa* – the note on which the melodic phrase ends or temporarily rests
• *nyasa tana* – the set of notes constructing a cadence
• *alankar* – a set of improvisatory notes that tie together the previous and subsequent modal notes, greatly contributing to the character of the *raga*
• *pakad* – a musical phrase that encapsulates the essence of the *raga*
• *shruti* – microtonal variations of the *thaat* or mode\(^{26}\)

For detailed understanding on the items listed above, the definitive source of information has traditionally been, and remains to this day – the *guru*. The majority of texts attempt to describe the features common to all *ragas*, but fall short of providing precise and sufficient detail differentiating the use of each one. Some texts such as “The Raga Guide: A survey of 74 Hindustani Ragas” and “The Ragas of Northern Indian Music” provide a melodic outline, or *pakad* from which a particular *bandish* is performed, but these outlines illuminate how a single composition utilizes a *raga*, rather than shedding light on the rules that govern their use for all compositions (Bor 2002; Danielou 1980). Scholars such as Kaufmann supply “characteristic phrases” that are intended to describe a *raga’s* generic use in his six-hundred page treatise titled, “The Ragas of North India.” (1968) According to the aforementioned scholars as well as other authors, rules and melodic outlines are subject to interpretation and the *ragas* are often expressed in loose correlation during a performance where improvisation is a key ingredient (Sharma 2006; Jairazbhoy 1971). This argument carries even more weight as it pertains to devotional music

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\(^{26}\) This concept of microtonal variation was touched on in the sub-topic on tuning and tonal division. While the existence of microtonal variation is undisputed, especially as it is applied to melodic ornamentation, the claim that *ragas* are characterized by different microtonal placement of scale degrees appears to be an item of scholarly debate (Jairazbhoy and Stone 1963) Ranade suggests the unique and exact intonation of these notes is due to the training and practice of various *gharana* (2006).
versus a classical music performance where adherence to the raga is more strict (Saha 2011). One cannot assume that the lack of a definitive resource on ragas somehow marginalizes their importance. Mahajan says, “(Ragas) are taken as living things, having in them real significance and value. It is believed that music is the medium to reach (the gods), therefore Ragas themselves are the dynamic… and principle of life-force, which show us the path of ultimate truth in life.” (2001) With difficulties noted, the foundational concepts of the raga outlined above should suffice for the purpose of the analysis in this study.

**SONG 1**

This song was recorded on the evening of January 24, 2010 at the Magh Mela and was performed by the ensemble of Guru Santosh. The ensemble was comprised of the harmonium, tabla, and murali, with the harmonium player providing the vocals. Though other performances included up to four additional vocalists, none were present for the performance of this song.

The song format can be stated as $A_1^1 B_1^1 A_2^2 B_2^2 A_3^3 B_3^3 B_4^4$. This follows the expectation in Hindustani music that a bandish should have at least two sections. Section A is the sthayi and introduces the raga in the lower tessitura. Section B is the antara and moves the melody into the upper register of the middle octave with a few notes ascending into the higher octave. Also typical of the antara are found the accelerando and melodic motif elaboration.

At the opening of the piece, the murali plays in the background while the melodic phrases of the vocalist are performed, and the instrument answers clearly in the vocal gaps. The two appear to be in a call and response relationship. In this section ($A_1^1$), three vocal phrases are nearly identical, with the murali answering each one. At the thirteenth tala (avart), or metric cycle of eight pulses, a new vocal melody is introduced ($B_1^1$), where the murali plays softly behind the much longer vocal phrases. Even longer replies come from the murali when the voice
pauses in this new section and seems to be more of a solo than a call and response. At the thirtieth tala, the song returns to the first section ($A^2$) with a different text being sung, resulting in some rhythmic variation. The number of vocal phrases in dialog with the *murali* are reduced from three to two compared with the section’s first appearance as $A^1$. Afterward, the second section is presented again at tala thirty-nine, with slight variation due in part to new text being introduced ($B^2$). Following this, and identical in duration to the first pass, the *murali* takes a solo. At tala fifty-four, the singer returns to melodic material of the first section, but this time it is performed with a significant rhythmic variation ($A^3$). At tala sixty-two the second section is heard for the third time, but with this pass, the greatest rhythmic development is heard ($B^3$). A shortened *murali* solo follows with another varied presentation of the second section ($B^4$) at tala seventy-four. The song ends with the vocalist chanting to the god to whom the song is devoted.

The *raga* from which this song was composed is a loose implementation of *Bilaval* (Saha 2011). *Raga Bilaval* draws from the *Bilaval thaat* where the tonal intervals are identical to the Ionian mode (see Figure 4). Difficulty with Bhatkhande’s *thaat* is encountered immediately as scholarly commentary differs considerably on whether the numerous flavors of *Bilaval* should be broken into many unique *ragas*, grouped according to variation, or whether the variations are adequately represented within a single *raga* (Bose 1960; Jairazbhoy 1971). For instance, in this song when Ma ($4^{th}$ degree) is sung, it is *teevra*, or flattened by a semitone. Noting the theoretical discrepancy as well as variation found in performance, Parrikar has no quarrel with *Bilaval*
represented as a single raga (2000). With seven notes ascending and seven notes descending, the raga is sampooran/sampooran.

The opening melodic phrase of Song 1 is shown below in Figure 5. In the first tala, the arohi and avarohi guidelines are followed, including the permitted teevra Ma (raised 4th degree) in the alankar of the seventh matra. This occurrence of the teevra Ma is unique in at least two ways; in subsequent repetitions of this phrase, the shuddha Ma is used\(^\text{27}\), and every other instance is found in descending melodic lines.

This same melodic material occurs three times in section A\(^1\), with a slight variation found in the third instance. In this third appearance, the komal Ga is heard for the first time where previously all occurrences of Ga were shuddha. No scholarly writings made any reference to a komal Ga in their accounts of raga Bilaval, except in Bilaval variants containing tonal material very distant from that used in this composition.

The entirety of the vocal melody of section B\(^1\), is found in Figure 6. In the thirteenth
tala, the initial melodic phrase is presented. The same melodic material is heard again initially in tala fourteen, but then an elaboration is encountered in tala fifteen, beginning at the fourth matra. Soon afterward, the teevra Ma is heard in the sixteenth tala at the first matra in a descending line. The remainder of this phrase is an embellishment on Ga. After a pause of one matra, another phrase using some of the tonal material heard previously brings the tune back to Sa in tala eighteen at the fourth matra. This last phrase occurs two more times with further melodic development as well as the accelerated tempo (druta) that is consistent with the character of the antara.

At this juncture, the basic tonal material of the song has been presented and a few more observations can be stated in regard to the relationship to raga Bilaval. Figure 7 presents the tonal inventory of Song 1. Notes indicated in blue fall outside the known parameters for raga Bilaval. The figures underneath each note indicate the number of times the note is repeated in the song. In sections A1, A2, and A3 – the sthayi, the melodic range is from the Sa to the Pa or an interval of a perfect fifth. In sections B1, B2, B3, and B4, or the antara, the range is from Dha in the lower octave to the Re of the higher octave, or a minor 11th. When taking the mode of the song into account, it is apparent that the sur or tonal center is F#, though the number of occurrences is only a fraction of some of the other important notes. This lack of frequency is countered by the observation that the majority of cadences conclude on the Sa. In addition, this
note dominates the piece in pitch duration. These last two factors make it the most likely candidate for the *nyasa*.

The *vadi*, or note of prominence in *raja Bilaval* is *Dha*, however in this case it is *Ga* (Danielou 1980) with 196 occurrences. Similarly, the *samvadi*, or note of secondary importance should be *Ga* (Ibid.), but *Pa* lays claim to that distinction with 147 occurrences. Adhering to the rules for an unalterable *Pa*, this note does not deviate whatsoever.

The rules for *nyasa tana* or cadence are as follows:

- the phrase must be *pura tana*\(^{28}\)
- beginning and ending notes must be *amsas*,\(^{29}\)
- the interval from the *upanta swara*\(^{30}\) to the *nyasa*\(^{31}\) must be no greater than two semitones, must also be dissonant to the *nyasa*, and must be consonant to the starting note (Bose 1960).

In order to comply with cadential rules Bose prescribes, rhythmic boundaries must be blurred, or perhaps there is rhythmic nuance obscured by the lack of fidelity in the recordings. Common *nyasa tanas* ending on *Sa* include the following:

1. *Pa, Ga, Pa, Ga, Ga, Re, Sa*
2. *Sa, Ga, Re, Re, Sa, Sa, Sa*

How rhythmic boundaries play into the definition of *nyasa tanas* is not given by Bose. Clayton asserts there are several cadential techniques employed in rhythmic material and in their simplest form are based on melody and text (2000). It was not possible to examine rhythmic cadential formulas in this analysis due to the lack of clarity in the recordings: what is being played on the *tabla* is rendered indistinct during vocal passages.

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28 Bose’s criteria for the perfect phrase, or *pura tana* consist of notes that are based on “unitary scales,” which in turn are built on melodic triads, and a complex set of “rules for melodic progression.” (Bose 1960)

29 “No clear statement is made anywhere regarding the conditions of a note to be treated as an *amsa*” (ibid.) Bose goes on to infer those conditions from other rules as, “…the full complement of possible *samvadî* (consonant) notes in the scale.” There are four possibilities: *Pa* (a 5\(^{th}\) above or a 4\(^{th}\) below *Sa*) and *Ga* (a major or minor 3\(^{rd}\) above or a major or minor 6\(^{th}\) below *Sa*). Implied in the first part of the cadential rule is that *Sa* is considered *amsa*.

30 A penultimate note in a cadence

31 The note on which the raga melody ends or temporarily rests in a cadence
Figure 8 is a graphic representation of the melodic contour of sections $A^2$ and $B^2$. The 
sthayi exhibits a arching and cascading shapes compared with the antara that displays arch and pendulum contours.

![Figure 8](image)

**Song 2**

This is the second song recorded on the evening of January 24, 2010 at the *Magh Mela* and was performed by the ensemble of Guru Santosh. The ensemble was comprised of the tabla and murali with the vocalist also playing the harmonium. No other vocalists were present for the performance of this song.

The song format can be stated as $a^1 A^1 B^1 C^1 A^2 B^2 C^2 A^3 B^3 C^3 A^4$. The first section is unmetered and introductory and these two ideas are similar to those found in the alap of Hindustani classical music. Unlike the alap where a vowel is typically sung, this introduction uses the first few lines of poetry. Additionally, where an alap would outline the raga used in the song, this section presents melodic material nearly identical to the metered section of $A^1$, though the concluding phrase is not sung. Section A is the sthayi and while it includes the greatest melodic range, it introduces the raga in the lower tessitura. Section B and C represent the antara as the melody explores the upper range of the song, although it is no higher than the *Pa* of the middle octave. Also indicative of the antara is the druta or accelerando. In this song, a single druta occurs when the melody returns to previously stated material in section $A^2$ during the
performance of the murali. By the time the murali completes its performance, the tempo has returned to the original pace.

In section a¹, the harmonium presents the drone while the unmetered phrases of the vocalist are performed. The murali, and to a much lesser degree the tabla, answer the vocalist in the gaps. When the vocalist concludes the phrase at the end of a¹, the pulse can be detected and the sam is felt at the first hit of the tabla’s bayan. In this section the two vocal phrases are nearly identical, with the instruments answering only the first phrase. Once the introductory section completes, the melodic material is repeated and expanded in section A¹. Similar to the previous song analyzed, the murali performs softly while the vocal melodies are stated and becomes the featured melodic presence in the vocal gaps in all A, B and C sections. In the second half of the twenty-fourth matra, new melodic material is introduced in section B¹. This vocal phrase is repeated and is comparatively short to the ones found in section A¹. One of these phrases takes just over two eight-beat matras to state. At matra thirty-two, the song introduces a third melodic idea (C¹) in the upper tessitura. Immediately afterward at mata thirty-six, section A² is presented, with only a breath by the vocalist separating the C and A sections. The repetition of these sections is carried out with little variation, except where it appears to be required by the text. The song ends with the vocalist chanting to the god to whom the song is devoted.

The notes contributing to the unique character of this tune are a komal Ni (♭7) and a teevra Ma (♯4), both of which are featured in close metrical proximity to their shuddha versions.

The ten thaats of Bhatkhande do not lend much assistance in determining the raga as none
contain both the $b^7$ and a $#4$. The raga from which this song was composed is based on a loose application of Gara (Saha 2011). See Figure 9 for the arohi and avarohi scales. This raga is drawn from the Khamaj thaat that contains only the komal Ni, therefore it does not sufficiently account for the notes found in this song as the Ma occurs teevra as often as it is heard shuddha. Apparently, Gara is a raga that is rarely used in contemporary practice (Raja n.d.); several otherwise exhaustive references consulted for this analysis did not mention it (Bose 1960; Bor 2002; Danielou 1968). The ascending and descending tonal material is shown in Figure 9 (Kaufmann 1968). With seven notes arohi and seven notes avarohi, the jati of this raga is sampooran/sampooran.

The opening melodic phrase of Song 2 is shown below in Figure 10. The introductory section of $a^1$ finishes in the eighth tala on the sam, indicated by the $x$. The first metered and complete presentation of the melody $A^1$ begins on the sixth matra of that same tala. Gara has very few performance rules except for limiting the range of the melody to the lower and middle octaves (Mahajan 2001). With a range of Ma to Ma, this section clearly abides by that rule, and with a total range of Ma to Pa, the entire song is in compliance. The shuddha Ni is to be restricted to the arohi, and the komal Ni is to be restricted to the avarohi (Kaufmann 1968). In this passage, the rule for the shuddha Ni is observed in an ascending line in the ninth tala, the
sixth matra. Likewise, the guideline for the komal Ni is followed in descending phrases. For example, in the tenth tala, the third matra, a komal Ni is sung. Following this section, nearly identical melodic material is presented with different text after a short instrumental solo is performed on the murali.

In Figure 11, the second melodic phrase from section B\(^1\) is given and the previous statement of this material is nearly identical to this. Because this section does not include any occurrences of Ni, an examination of how the Ga is handled will shed light on compliance with the guidelines for raga Gara. The shuddha Ga is to be restricted to the arohi, and the komal Ga is to be restricted to the avarohi (Ibid.). In the thirtieth tala, on matra three, a shuddha Ga in ascending line complies with the rule. In the twenty-ninth tala, on the seventh matra, a shuddha Ga is encountered in a descending line that ignores the guideline.

Figure 12 shows section C\(^1\) that features the prominent role of a teevra Ma. Scholars indicate nothing specific regarding this altered form of Ma in raga Gara, therefore an
assumption can be made that liberty has been taken with the guideline. The phrase begins on the teevra Ma, and with the exception of the alankars of the thirty-fourth tala at matra two, the melody is significantly colored by this altered state. Examining the rule for a shuddha Ga in the arohi, two occurrences demonstrate compliance: in the thirty-third tala, at matra seven, and at the same matra in tala thirty-five. A return to the first phrase of the song A² is heard in the thirty-sixth tala, at the sixth matra.

By the thirty-sixth tala, the basic tonal material of the song has been presented and a few more observations can be stated in regard to the relationship to raga Gara. Figure 13 presents the tonal inventory of Song 2. In sthayi sections A¹, A², A³ and A⁴, the melodic range is from the Ma to the Ma or an interval of an octave. In sections B¹, B² and B³ or the antara, the range is from Sa to the Pa in the middle octave, or a perfect 5th. When taking into account the mode of the song, the number of note occurrences, as well as cadential endings, it is apparent that the sur or tonal center is F#. In addition, this note dominates the piece in pitch duration. The two factors of cadential endings and note duration make it the most likely candidate for the nyasa.

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32 Raga Gara is described by several authors as a combination of the following ragas: Jhinjhoti, Pilu, and Khamaj (Kaufmann 1968; Raja n.d.). Raga Pilu permits the brief use of a teevra Ma. However, even with the inclusion of the rules for these ragas, they remain a loose prescription as “…musicians can take numerous liberties in ragas of so light a character as Gara (Kaufmann 1968).
The vadi, or note of prominence in raga Gara is Ga (Danielou 1980), however in this case it is Sa with 142 occurrences. Similarly, the samvadi, or note of secondary importance should be Ni (Ibid.), but Ga lays claim to that distinction with 139 occurrences. Common nyasa tanas ending on Sa include the following:

1. Ga, Re, Sa, Ni, Sa
2. Ga, Re, Sa, Sa
3. Ga, Re, Sa, Re, Sa

Figure 14 is a graphic illustration of the melodic contour of sections A\textsuperscript{2}, B\textsuperscript{2} and C\textsuperscript{2}. The sthayi exhibits cascading and sinewy shapes compared with the antara that displays arch and pendulum contours.

**Figure 14**

**Song 3**

This song was recorded on the afternoon of February 6, 2010 in Chitrakoot and was performed by the ensemble of Jugal Maharaj. The ensemble was comprised of nine musicians, eight of whom were sadhus. Instruments used in this performance consisted of a harmonium, a tabla, three manjiri, one dholak and one khartal. Jugal played the tabla and led the melodic calls and everyone else sang in response.

The song is a musical chant and for the majority of the song, the names of the Hindu gods Sita and Ram are repeated for the text. Variation is the key ingredient in this eleven minute song. It is accomplished through melodic embellishment and metric compression, changes in tessitura, and tempo acceleration. The format can be stated as AB. The first section incorporates
two melodic phrases and uses embellishment and tempo variation to generate musical contrast. For example, in *talas* 1 through 88, the singer explores two phrases, both of which take 2 *talas* of 8 *matras* to complete: the initial melody is presented with 8 variations and a second phrase is embellished in 7 unique ways. At *tala* 85, the singer takes the initial phrase, presents it 4 times and compresses the time so that it is performed in 8 *matras*. Rather than beginning and ending within a single *tala*, it begins in the middle of one, and ends in the middle of the subsequent *tala*. By this time, the tempo has gone from an initial 88 beats per minute to 102 bmp. Afterward at *tala* 93, the two phrases are presented again in similar fashion to the first part of the song, only continuing in the accelerated tempo. Section B begins at *tala* 105, where a new melody is heard with new text. This continues to the end of the song with tempo increasing from 109 beats per minute to 159 bmp. The song ends with the vocalist chanting in an unmetered, unaccompanied call and response fashion to the gods to whom the song is devoted.

The *raga* from which this song was composed is based on an altered version of *Chayanut* (Saha 2011). It is drawn from the *Kalyan thaat* which contains only the *teevra Ma*, therefore it does not sufficiently account for the many altered notes found in this song. For example, *Kalyan* is supposedly a hexatonic *thaat* that omits *Ni* altogether (Mahajan 2001); however, *Ni* is found five times in this performance. Additionally, the *komal Ni* is found twice, once in the lower octave and once in the middle octave, though these could be discounted as performance anomalies. The ascending and descending tonal material is shown in Figure 15 (Bor 2002). Bor disagrees with Mahajan by indicating the presence of *Ni* in the *arohi* and a graced *Ni* in the *avarohi*. A glide is prescribed between *Pa* and *Re* in the *arohi* as well as the *avarohi*. In the
glide between the Sa to the Dha, the graced Ni is permitted. With seven notes arohi and six notes avarohi, the jati of this raga is sampooran/shaudava.

A transcribed section from the opening of Song 3 is provided in Figure 16 that shows the two melodic phrases used in section A. The first phrase begins at tala 6 and the second phrase begins at tala 10. The second phrase sets up a contrasting use of the teevra Ma in the seventh matra against the shuddha version heard previously in the first phrase, as well as later in this phrase in tala 11 in matra 1. In the same tala, the Ga is komal at matra 2 and shuddha at matra 6. According to Kaufmann, the teevra Ma is to lead to Pa via appoggiatura, or otherwise be heard between two instances of Pa (1968). The first of these two rules comes the closest to being followed. If the Dha in the 6th matra in the 10th tala can be considered an inconsequential ornament, then the teevra Ma follows this guideline. Ma is prescribed as a note to be sustained (Bor 2002), and this characteristic feature of raga Chayanat can be heard at the beginning of the second phrase.

At tala 105, a new melodic motif is introduced with new text and Figure 17 presents the notation. Motion is simple and at this point, it is the metric compression of the melody as well as the ever-increasing tempo that provides the contrast.
Though many variations on the first two phrases are heard for the majority of the song, and some variation on the third motif is heard, the basic tonal material has been shown in the preceding two figures. Figure 18 presents the tonal inventory of Song 3. Notes indicated in blue fall outside the known parameters for raga Chayanat.

Section A runs the gamut of the entire melodic range from Pa of the lower octave to Dha of the higher octave, or an interval of two octaves plus a major 2\textsuperscript{nd}. Section B claims the narrowest range from Sa in the higher octave to the Re in the higher octave, or a major 2\textsuperscript{nd}. When taking into account the mode of the song, the number of note occurrences, as well as cadential endings, it is apparent that the sur or tonal center is D. In addition, this note dominates the piece in pitch duration. The two factors of cadential endings and note duration make it the most likely candidate for the nyasa.

The vadi, or note of prominence in raga Chayanat is Pa (Kaufmann 1968), however in this case it is Sa with 198 occurrences in the middle and upper octaves. The samvadi, or note of secondary importance is Re (Ibid.), with a total of 138 instances in the middle and upper octaves.

In order to locate nyasa tanas ending on Sa in any variations of the first phrase, one of the items in the formula advanced by Bose must be ignored in some cases; concluding segments do not always include a penultimate note to the nyasa that is consonant to the starting note (1960). With that caveat in place, nyasa tanas in the first phrase include the following:

1. Ma, Ga, Re, Sa
2.  *Ga, Re, Sa*

3.  *Re, Ga, Sa*

*Nyasa tanas* for the second phrase include:

1.  *Sa, Re, Ga, Sa*

2.  *Sa, Re, Ga, Re, Ga, Sa*

**Song 4**

This song was recorded on the evening of February 7, 2010 at the Sai Baba Temple and performed by the ensemble led by Sanjay Mitra. The ensemble consisted of a keyboard player who performed on a Roland GW-7 synthesizer, a percussionist who played a Roland SPD-20 electronic percussion/drum module, and Mitra who sang.

The format of this four minute song can be stated as **ABABABABA**. Even this repetitious melodic chant accommodates the expectation that a *bandish* should have at least two sections. Section **A** introduces the *raga* in the lower tessitura and section **B** moves the melody into the upper register.

Mitra opens the piece accompanied by the keyboard and sings the four lines of text three times in section **A**. The electronic percussion joins them in the second instance and continues to play until the end of the song. After three repetitions of the chant, the melody rises to a new tessitura in section **B**. The four lines are sung once, and are immediately followed by a single instance of a vocalized section **A**. This is followed by a single and instrumental instance of section **A**. In the next grouping, single repetitions of the melodic ideas are heard as follows: **A** – vocalized, **B** – vocalized, **A** – vocalized, and **A** – played on the keyboard. The final presentation of the two sections occurs without any instrumental interlude as follows:

- **A** – four lines sung twice
• **B** – four lines sung once
• **A** – four lines sung twice
• **B** – four lines sung once
• **A** – four lines sung twice
• **a** – final line of the four, sung twice

Though this song was performed in an evening *aarti*, it was composed using a variation of *raga Devgiri* (Saha 2011), which by tradition is only to be performed in the morning (Kaufmann 1968). It is drawn from the *Bilaval thaat* where the tonal intervals are identical to the Ionian mode. The ascending and descending tonal material is shown in Figure 19. The *Bilaval thaat* contains seven notes in the ascending scale and seven notes descending scale, therefore the *jati* of this *raga* is *sampooran/sampooran*. *Vikrit* exceptions to the tonal material specified by the *thaat* include the *teevra Ma* and the *komal Ni* (ibid.).

The opening melodic phrases of section **A** are shown in Figure 20. Each line of text is expressed in a melodic phrase that consumes a single tala. In each tala, scales outlined in the *arohi* and *avarohi* are followed without exception.
The second instance of section B is shown below in Figure 21. In the first occurrence, the komal Ni was encountered in the sixteenth tala at the fourth matra. Here it occurs at the same point in the melody in the thirty-second tala at the fourth matra. The rule set forth by Kaufmann is followed where, “…Dha is approached lightly from above, from the note Ni komal.” (ibid.) This guideline is violated in the thirtieth tala at matra four. Also in this tala in the first matra is the teevra Ma, which is quickly returned to a shuddha Ma in the sixth matra. This follows the raga guideline for the note to occur only as a “lightly touched” alankar (ibid.).

Iterations of the two melodic phrases A and B are performed with little variation, other than subtle differences in the choice of alankars. The tonal inventory is presented in Figure 22. None of the notes fall outside of the prescribed scale and scale variants for raga Devgiri. Prominently featured at 200 instances is the vadi Re, though this does not comply with guidelines for the raga which indicate it should be Sa or possibly Dha. Likewise, the samvadi Ga at 191 instances is also in conflict with raga Devgiri rules that state it should be Pa (ibid.). The concluding nyasa is Sa. When taking into account the mode of the song, and the consistently coincident sam, it is apparent that the sur is D. The melodic range of section A runs from Ni to Pa, and the range of section B is from Re to Ni. The
nyasa tana in section A is Sa, Re, Ga, Re, Sa, and the nyasa tana for section B is Ma, Pa, Dha, Pa, Ga.

**HARMONY**

Hindustani music is referred to as solo music, even though the “soloist” is commonly accompanied by at least a drone and a rhythmic instrument (Bor 2002). Though some scholars refer to the melodies as monophonic, a more accurate term is biphonic on account of the presence of a drone. Commonly tuned to the tonic and perfect fifth, perfect fourth, major sixth or minor sixth, drones are also tuned to a seventh for some ragas. Drone pitches are fixed and do not change in the performance of a classical music piece. In devotional music, there appears to be more leeway in the accompanying content of the drone. For instance, in songs recorded at the Magh Mela, in Chitrakoot and in the Chamar village, the harmonium provided accompaniment while exhibiting a dual role; it followed the melody in rough approximation and in places of melodic rest, a tonic and fifth or fourth was occasionally supplied.

Song 4 performed at the Sai Baba temple by Sanjay Mitra exhibited strong characteristics of Western harmonic accompaniment. The keyboard accompanying the vocalist could be heard playing chords throughout most of the song, consisting of a root, third and fifth in the following progression: I V IV V I. In another song that was not analyzed, but performed by the same ensemble, there are places where the accompanying keyboard can be detected playing chords as well. While chords are used throughout the piece, melodic runs and arpeggios are employed frequently, similar to the way the harmonium was utilized in performances at the Magh Mela.
Tempo, Meter, Rhythm – Tala

The Hindustani system of organizing musical time is called tala\textsuperscript{33}, and is a servant of the greater theoretical framework of raga (Jairazbhoy 1971). Tala is comprised of three major components used to organize succeedingly larger time units. The smallest is the matra, or beat. Vibhag is a sub-division of a cyclic section that loosely alludes to a bar or measure in Western music.\textsuperscript{34} The entire cycle is also called tala (avart) and can be thought of as a unified collection of matras or vibhags (Saxena 2008).

To communicate rhythmic details, two methods are employed: a drum stroke pattern called a theka, and a set of hand symbols. The former uses a large inventory of spoken bols to convey the drum articulations that are also written phonetically. The latter has no formal name, and there are two gestures: a clap called the tali, which is written as an integer\textsuperscript{35}, and a wave called the khali, which is written as a zero. Oral and written instruction utilizes both the verbalized bols of the theka as well as the hand gestures. Durational function is communicated by both the theka and hand gestures while the theka alone expresses accentual function. Depending on the tala, structure may be communicated using one or the other, depending on which method communicates the concept best (Clayton 2000).

The first matra of a tala is called the sam, is written as an “X,” and typically receives the strongest accent of all the beats. Laya is the term used to refer to tempo. Laykari is rhythmic variation generated on the surface of the underlying tala by use of arithmetic manipulation, grouping, phrasing and permutation (ibid.).

\textsuperscript{33} Alternate spellings consist of tal, taal and taala. The word tala is also used to name a cyclic arrangement of beats, otherwise known as the avart. Since most scholars refer to the system as well as the component within the system as tala, the word will be used here in reference to both. To avoid confusion, avart will be mentioned where clarification is required.

\textsuperscript{34} Although some scholars claim the vibhag is the closest element to the Western notational bar, examples in this study will present an entire cycle as a bar.

\textsuperscript{35} based on its incremental position within the cycle
In the rhythmic analysis of songs for this project, two challenges arise. The first has to do with acquiring a working knowledge of theka vocabulary. To accurately identify the rhythmic accents of various talas, seven left-hand, seven right hand, thirteen danya\textsuperscript{36} compound, and forty-eight danya-banya\textsuperscript{37} compound alphabet references and their respective tabla articulations must be apprehended (Saxena 2008). Without extended private instruction, the acquisition of this knowledge is beyond reach. The second has to do with the difficulties encountered while making field recordings where rhythmic elements become sonically obscured by the more prominent vocal lines. With those caveats in place, a few comments and observations are still possible.

\textit{Song 1}

A common feature of Hindustani music is an increase in \textit{laya} or tempo. This song uses the variation of tempo to embellish song sections and it occurs three times. The form of the song is $A^1 B^1 A^2 B^2 A^3 B^3 B^4$ and the initial tempo is approximately 128 beats per minute. During the transition from $A^1$ to $B^1$ the tempo increases to 140 beats per minute and remains there for duration of this new section. As the song moves from section $B^1$ to $A^2$ the tempo returns to 128 beats per minute. Similarly, when the song transitions from $A^2$ to $B^2$ the tempo accelerates to 145 beats per minute and remains there for the duration of this section. As the song moves from $B^2$ to $A^3$, again the tempo returns to 128 beats per minute. This device is employed a third time in the transition from $A^3$ to $B^3$ where the tempo increases to 140 beats per minute and remains at that roughly that pace through $B^4$ and the end of the song.

\textsuperscript{36} the higher pitched drum of the tabla
\textsuperscript{37} both drums of the tabla
The tala by which the song is measured is kaharva (Saha 2011) and is a cycle of eight matras arranged in two vibhags containing four matras each. It is represented in Figure 23 using the symbols for the hand gestures and the bol vocalizations for the theka (Clayton 2000).

The cycles of kaharva tala influence the form of the song. The first half of the opening melodic phrase is stated within this cycle with the second half stated in the subsequent one. Likewise, the murali answers the singer using two cycles of the tala. The melodic presentation in the antara isn’t as neatly arranged; nine cycles plus two matras of the tenth are required. Conformity to the same number of cycles in subsequent repetitions of the sthayi and antara is encountered. Even in the final, embellished section of B^4, the same number of cycles is used as in previous version of the antara.

The song exhibits a superimposition of elements found in the melodic and accompanying instruments in sections A^1 through B^3. The singer is using mostly eighth-notes performed with very little, if any detectable swing. Under this melodic rhythm, the tabla player is performing with a subtle swing; not nearly enough for the pattern to be represented as a triplet quarter and eighth notes, but neither can it be represented with metrically equal eighth-notes. In the opening of the song, the murali answers the vocalist the first time by using rhythms that do not exhibit any swing. In all subsequent replies, the murali rhythms follow the subtle swing of the tabla. The vocalist continues to sing straight eighth-notes against swinging accompanying rhythms in the tabla and murali until section A^3. At this point, the rhythmic performance of the singer swings hard in the first half of the two phrases. So pronounced is the swing, I chose to represent it using triplet eighth-notes in the score. In the second half of both phrases as well as for the
remainder of the song, the singer returns to straight eighth-notes, or at least a swing element that could not be reliably detected.

**Song 2**

This song uses some variation in tempo to embellish song sections and it occurs six times. The form of the song is $a^1 A^1 B^1 C^1 A^2 B^2 C^2 A^3 B^3 C^3 A^4$. The initial section ($a^1$) is either pulseless or varied to such a degree the pulse is difficult to detect. Once the pulse is detected the tempo stabilizes at 130 beats per minute. In section $A^1$, after the first metered appearance of the vocal melody and *murali* performance, the tempo slows to 120 beats per minute at the sixteenth *tala*. This slowing of tempo feels intentional, however over the next sixteen *talas*, the pulse meanders up to approximately 130 beats per minute and back to 120 beats per minute several times through section $B^1$. By the time the song approaches section $C^1$ at the thirty-second *tala*, the tempo has stabilized at 130 beats per minute and remains there for duration of this new section. As the song moves from section $C^1$ to $A^2$ the tempo accelerates quite noticeably to 140 beats per minute at the fortieth *tala* and remains there for the first presentation of the vocal and *murali* melodies. By the time the vocal melody of $A^2$ is about to repeat, the tempo has returned to 130 beats per minute at the forty-fifth *tala*. The tempo remains at that roughly that pace through $A^4$ with a retardando expressed over the final two metered *talas*, resulting in a final tempo of 105 beats per minute.

*Kaharva* is the *tala* by which the time of Song 2 is constructed (Saha 2011) and is a cycle of eight *matras* arranged in two *vibhags* containing four *matras* each. Figure 24 shows the symbols for the hand gestures and the *theka* (Clayton 2000).
Nearly all of the melodic phrases begin and end in the second vibhag of the tala, and accordingly the cycles of kaharva tala influence the form of the song. The first metered and complete melodic phrase begins on the second matra of the second vibhag of tala eight. This phrase and all variations of it begin at this location, and pause on the last matra of the first vibhag of the subsequent tala. In section A¹, the melodic phrase completes in four talas, with the sub-phrases always beginning on the sixth matra, and cadences ending on the fourth matra of the subsequent tala.

**SONG 3**

Figure 21 shows the tempo map of Song 3 over the eleven minute song duration. There are two noticeable increases in tempo in section A. The first is concurrent with a significant leap of the melodic tessitura at tala thirty. As the melody returns to the previous range, the tempo stabilizes at about 95 beats per minute. The second tempo increase to about 102 beats per minute
occurs at tala forty-six and again the melody ascends into the higher tessitura. By the end of section A, the tempo has continued to increase to about 108 beats per minute. At section B the melody compresses to consume only a single tala where before it had taken two. Despite this, the tempo does not increase until tala 105 is reached. Over the next fifteen talas, the tempo continues to increase until it tops out at about 158 beats per minute.

*Kaharva* is the tala by which the time of Song 3 is constructed (Saha 2011) and is a cycle of eight matras arranged in two vibhags containing four matras each. Melodic phrases in section A are constructed using two talas for the most part. There are three places where the phrases are condensed within a single tala. In section A, the first begins at tala 54 and concludes at 61 and the second begins in the middle of tala 82 and concludes at 92. In section B the new melody is compressed into a single vibhag, or half a cycle and continues in that form until the end of the song.

**Song 4**

The tempo remains fairly constant throughout this song at around 136 beats per minute with one exception: the beginning of the song starts at about 123 beats per minute and takes 6 talas to get up to speed. Metric construction is provided by the framework of tala Kaharva (Saha 2011) and is a cycle of eight matras arranged in two vibhags containing four matras each (Clayton 2000). Melodic phrases in section A and section B are constructed using a single tala. Melodic phrases begin on the sam and the majority of samvadi notes land on this significant pulse as well. What is a departure from the norm is for the vadi in this song to seldom coincide with the sam (ibid.).
Texture and Tone Color

Hindustani melody is monophonic and is typically performed in ensembles where an instrument supplies a drone resulting in a biphonic texture. In classical music, stringed instruments such as the *tanpura*, or occasionally an electronic substitute such as the *shruti box* supply the drone. Clayton describes drones found in classical music as “…a dense cloud of harmonics.” (2000) In each performance of devotional music recorded for this project, a *harmonium* supplied the drone, and it exhibited a dual role. During the performance of the vocal melody, the *harmonium* player followed this line in rough approximation in terms of rhythm and pitch. Only in places where there was a pause in the melodic movement did it supply what might qualify as a drone. While in India, I was compelled to investigate this relationship with the solo melody, as the tonal dissonances, rhythmic conflicts and alternating accompaniment roles were a curiosity to my Western expectations of orderly perfection. When I posed the question to indigenous informants, the question, the answer, or both was/were lost in the translation as a satisfactory answer was never obtained. In a Stateside interview with a Hindustani musician, the following explanation was given: “If the two lines were to be played in perfect unison, it would constrain the vocalist’s interpretation of the melody, and limit the beauty. The resulting texture would be too heavy and would not produce *rasa* – the desired aesthetic experience.” (Saha 2011)

The overtone-rich jangling or buzzing sound characteristic of Hindustani instruments such as the *tanpura*, *sitar* and *harmonium* is referred to as *jawari*. In the process of stringed instrument manufacture, or in preparing the instrument for performance, a thread is inserted between the strings and the bridge to create an additional layer of texture. Similar procedures are performed on percussion instruments such as the *tabla* to generate *jawari*. A set of sympathetic resonance strings are also common on instruments such as the *sitar*. While nothing specific is carried out in the construction of a *harmonium*, the ones possessing a greater degree of *jawari*
are held in higher esteem (Ranade 2006). Additionally, a nearly ubiquitous sound heard in ensembles was the presence of small, brass finger cymbals called *manjiri* that added to the full and lush instrumental texture.

Rhythmic texture varied in its density depending on the character of the music. In general, if the music was slower and quiet, the rhythmic texture was sparse. In songs or sections of songs with a greater dynamic presence and faster *laya*, instruments such as the *tabla*, *manjiri*, *dholak*, and *khartal* would play more complex rhythms resulting in a denser texture. Additionally, these instruments would be played louder, generating a greater presence of higher order harmonics that added to the density of the texture.

In contrast to the deep and rich “colors” produced by accompanying instruments, the esteemed vocal timbre is “silky smooth” and “honey sweet,” in classical and devotional genres (Martinez 2001). The quality of Sanjay Mitra’s voice at the Sai Baba temple as well as Nilanjana DeVoss’s voice in *Y_____* could easily claim these descriptors. In consideration of the sum of vocal timbres heard, a wide variety was certainly more of what I experienced. Some vocalists at the *Magh Mela* had raspy or husky voices. The voice of Jugal Maharaj from Chitrakoot was set quite forward in the head, with a constricted throat and nasal quality. Van Der Meer confirms these observations by indicating a wide range of tonal qualities can be found, especially in devotional music genres (1980).

*Form and Text*

As was noted earlier in the sub-section on tempo, rhythm and *tala*, not only is musical form influenced by rhythmic cycles, intrinsic to the character of *tala* itself is an ancient link to literature. Indian ethnomusicologist Ranade reveals, “Ancient Vedic recitation required the use of different (pitches) leading to the formation of scale… requir(ing) control of recited words on
the temporal plane… (resulting in) meter and *tala*… On this background of close association with prosody… a number *tala* terms bear the mark of genetic relationship with linguistic and literary terminology.” Additionally, the author asserts there is a component of rhythm called *bol samjhana* that “…conveys the meaning of the text through musical variation.” (2006) Though Strangways has been criticized by contemporary scholars for a lack of scientific rigor, he presents a keen observation of a relationship between form and text in this quote: “Musical time is... a development from the prosody and metres of poetry. The insistent demands of language and the idiosyncrasies of highly characteristic verse haunt the music like ‘a Presence which cannot be ignored.’ The time-relations of music are affected both by the structure of the language, and by the method of versification which ultimately derives from it.” (1914) Conversely, Clayton comments on the imperfection with which most texts are realized in a *bandish* and asserts a majority are not set in any verse meter (2000).

An important component of Hindustani music involves a direct relationship between the verbiage of the melody and underlying structural rhythms. Depending on several factors such as the genre, the *raga*, and the poetic mastery of the composer – the degree of the relationship between word boundaries and syllables, and the resulting rhythm can vary considerably. At times, no small amount of metric gymnastics is employed for the sake of structural compliance or artistic expression. Because of this Powers suggests that word boundaries are essential to rhythmic design, that syllabic length is an optional consideration, and the number of syllables is irrelevant to the controlling *tala* (2001). In Song 4, the singer manipulated the use of the consonant “m” to consume the same amount of time as a syllable. The melody is using quarter
and eighth notes, and the “m” from the word “Om” is given a full eighth note (See Figure 26). In Song 3, a similar manipulation may have been exploited in the word “Ram;” however, it is possible that the singer is using the alternate pronunciation of “Rama.” In Song 4, this metric manipulation was not always employed and seemed to occur at the discretion of the singer. In the latter case, the vocalist sang “Rama” consistently, but at the time I received the translations, it was given as “Ram.”

Translations and one transliteration were performed by Mrs. Madhumita Saha and given to me during an interview on February 13, 2011. They appear below and three include her opinion on the rasa, or sentiment of each song.

**SONG 1**

*Young and old are running, leaving the doors open.*
*Ladies are leaving their house, forgetting to wear a blouse,*
*To meet with Bihari who is playing bansuri.*
*This way, Lord Krishna made his devotees to walk on the streets of Brindavan!*  
*With Lord, gopis are dancing using beats of claps,*
*While Lord is playing the melodious notes.*
*Everybody is enjoying the music of the flute.*
*I will send Radha to the beautiful lake and garden,*
*Where the divine melody is coming from!*

This song was performed by the ensemble of guru Santosh at the *Magh Mela*. “The lyrics of this *bhajan* were sung in Braj. The poet is trying to show the relationship between the devotee and god. When a devotee feels the presence of god, he forgets the materialistic world. He also forgets about society and daily rituals. The only thing he will be thinking about is god

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38 Krishna  
39 flute  
40 A town where Krishna spent his childhood, also known as Vrindavana  
41 milkmaids  
42 The milkmaid who became the most beloved consort and constant companion of Krishna when he lived among the cowherds of Vrindavana. In the bhakti movement, Radha symbolizes the human soul and Krishna the divine.
and his presence. The dancing part indicates that when there is a presence of god in our lives, we will be dancing with eternal joy.” (Saha 2011)

**SONG 2**

Krishna played the flute and I lost my sleep.
Radha is looking for Krishna on the streets of Kunj.  
Why do you play hide and seek, oh Lord, when Radha is yearning for you?
She wishes to become your flute,
So you will hold her with your arms and play with your lips!
My eyes are fixed on the streets for your arrival.
I remember that rasa when anklets used to dance to the beat of the mridanga.  
I see you embedded in every gopi and Govinda and also all the universe.
Every second seems to be difficult without you.
We can’t live without you, oh Krishna!
Yamuna River is drying up,
And the cows are also missing you, looking for you everywhere.

This piece was performed by the ensemble of guru Santosh at the Magh Mela. “The words of this bhajan are sung in Hindi. The devotee is trying to explain what happens when there is no god within us. He misses god in every aspect of life. He feels that there is no life without god! He feels his presence in the whole universe and wonders why god is not part of his life. He compares his life to the drying up of a river. He feels that his life is drained out without the presence of god.” (Ibid.)

**SONG 3**

Sita Ram, Sita Ram, Sita Ram, Sita Ram.

This piece was performed by the ensemble of Jugal Maharaj and was recorded during a private concert in Chitrakoot. The text is simply a repetition of the names of Sita and Ram (Saha

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43 An ancient village and area that is now part of Vrindavana  
44 two-head drum  
45 a name referring to Krishna in his youth as a cowherd.
2011); the latter being the Hindu god that represents the perfect man and the former being his wife who embodies the perfect woman (Strickland 1931). Later on in the song in the improvisational section, other words, including the name of at least one other god, are sung. The informant consulted for this text did not mention any names beyond Sita and Ram, but another name I was able to detect was Hanuman. Other singers in the ensemble also contributed exclamations of “Oh!” and “Hey!” in places of increased intensity. When asked after the performance about the sentiment of this song, I was told that it is a song of praise; a song to lift up the names of the gods.

**Song 4**

*Om Sai namoon nama*
*Shri Sai namoon nama*
*Jaya jaya Sai namoon nama*
*Sātya Guru Sai namoon nama*

This song was recorded at the Sai Baba Temple in B____ and the ensemble was led by Sanjay Mitra. Sai Baba is a popular guru throughout India. The four transliterated lines above are sung in back-to-back succession for over four minutes. I was told by Mrs. Saha that the lyrics essentially chant the name of Sai Baba in various ways of expressing devotion to the guru. The chant consists of four lines, each containing the name of the guru and the words transliterated above as, “namoon nama.” Mrs. Saha explained that in Hindustani culture, it is customary to touch the feet of a guru or elder as a greeting and sign of respect. This act of devotion is called *pranaam* and the word is also used to describe worship of Hindu gods. The words “namoon nama” reflect the Hindu expression of *pranaam*. The sacred word, “*om*” is found in the first line and is associated with idea of a supreme deity. Appearing in line two, *shri* is used with the guru’s personal name and implies reverential respect. *Jaya* is used with Sai
Baba’s name on the third line and it carries the meaning of success or victory. The term “
Satya Guru” means true teacher (Saha 2011).

**SONG 5**

This composition was recorded during a performance at the Sai Baba Temple in B____
and the ensemble was led by Sanjay Mitra. Though the musical analysis was not given earlier,
the translation of this text is included on account of its similarity to the sentiment of many
contemporary Christian worship songs. “In this poem sung in Hindi, the devotee shows ultimate
humbleness and faith towards god. He believes god is the only savior of his life. He thinks he is
very ignorant and powerless without god. So he seeks the divine light to enlighten his life.”
(Ibid.)

I am your devotee oh Lord, please bless me.
I have come to your feet, please give me shelter.
When everybody closed their door, I came to your door.
I don’t understand anything other than you.
I am your devotee, please bless me.
I don’t know how to pray, nor do I have any power.
You are my only hope.
Please enlighten my life with your divine light!

**RASA**

Finally, a brief discussion of *rasa theory*, the Hindustani concept of an experience of art
should be entertained. *Rasa’s* literal meaning is “taste” or “savor” and is an aesthetic framework
used to describe the essence of poetry. One of the most important scholars of Indian aesthetics
from the tenth century⁴⁶ said this: “There is no poetry without *rasa.*” (Chaudhury 1965) There
are states of being required for *rasa* to occur in an audience. Among them are a contented mind

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⁴⁶ Abhinavagupta in his work titled, *Dhanydloka Locana*
and an educated appreciation for the art form experienced (Ranade 2006). "Rasa is realized when an emotion is awakened in the mind in such a manner that it has none of its usual (appetitive connotations) and is experienced in an impersonal, contemplative mood." (Martinez 2001) Masterfully composed and performed music imparts a particular kind of rasa and there are several factors that must coalesce during the performance for it to occur in both the audience and the performer.

The concept of rasa for the purpose of contextualization is important to note for the following reason. North Indian culture acknowledges the existence of a discerning, educated audience that perceives art through cultural "taste buds" that expect a measure of perfection. Though worship of the Living God transcends a purely aesthetic experience, and mature believers may have the capacity to set aside cultural expectations, it is reasonable to expect newcomers to the faith won’t possess that same flexibility.

When investigating the significance of poetry in its musical context, the importance of looking beyond the text to the cultural symbols that are present in both the musical form and the text are critical to our understanding the idiom. For example, the text of a song may appear to contain a sorrowful lament, however the manner of its performance may reveal sarcasm. Wadley writes, “...(lyrical) meaning derives as much from context as from the denotations of lexical items (2005).

Transmission

The historical method of music instruction for both the folk arts as well as classical music has been systems of apprenticeship where knowledge is transferred orally. These preceptor-disciple traditions called guru-shishya parampara date back centuries into India’s musical history. Since the end of the nineteenth century, government sponsored and private schools have
appeared that make use of both the oral preceptor-disciple model as well as more modern methods for instruction made popular in the West. Equally divided between a past where the prior model is employed and the future where more efficient means of instruction are used, no single method dominates the landscape (Alter 1999). Regardless of whether the learner is situated in a school or in a private setting with a guru, an East versus West mindset may be observed in the area of written music: where Western music education is mostly focused on how to properly execute the score, Indian music is orally transmitted with notation providing a tool to broaden a student’s musical perspective (Van Der Meer 2005).

Dating to the mid to late twentieth century, a social organization linking musicians by apprenticeship, adherence to a musical style and ideology emerged called a gharana. Growing out of the concept of the guru-shishya-parampara, it typically refers to the place where the musical ideology originated (ITC Sangeet Research Academy 2009).

Some hold to the opinion that the gharana system has a negative impact on the standard of musicianship. As the professional imperative for musicians to have as broad a background as possible in their chosen instrument rose to importance, the secretive nature of the gharana system coupled with their tendency to specialize in only one technique was inconsistent with modern pedagogic and professional requirements. For this reason, many modern music colleges in Northern India abandoned this model (Courtney, Music of India 2010).

During interviews for this project at the Magh Mela and at the Sai Baba temple, the three musicians who answered the question of how they learned their craft indicated they had studied with a guru. This was also the case with Nilanjana DeVoss from Y_____ and Jugal Maharaj from Chitrakoot. During the interview with guru Santosh’s musicians, it was mentioned that because of the societal pressure to learn a skill that would result in a good job, many young people no longer consider the prospect of studying under a guru a viable option.
Not far from Peter and Sarah’s school was a Hindustani classical music and dance school called *Prayag Sangeet Samiti*. Yolanda took me to here in hopes we might be introduced to some of the instructors, but we were not permitted that luxury. The school was a large facility, complete with an indoor performance theater and outdoor amphitheater. It was built in 1926 and run by the British until the nation gained its independence. We met the school’s director and he assigned one of his underlings to give us a tour. Though we saw little more than performance halls and classrooms, it was clear that schools using this instructional model are a viable option in B____. What isn’t known is whether the quality of instruction is worthy of the investment of time and money, or how the cultural stigma of attending one school over another is viewed by nationals of various social strata. While interviewing Jugal Maharaj, the *sadhu* from Chitrakoot, I discovered that his musical training was obtained while attending Banaras Hindu University. To this man whose life revolved around a very traditional expression of the Hindu religion, it is noteworthy that his musical training was not acquired through the traditional means of a *gharana*. The other *sadhus* who performed with Jugal learned music simply by playing at the *ashram*, which was part of the expectation of those who stayed there.

**Movement**

*Capwell* writes that while attending a conference in Calcutta, he communicated his surprise to a national that dancing was featured at what had been billed as a music festival. The Indian answered, “Music means not just the melody and rhythm of instrument and voice, but also the embodiment of rhythm in dance and the dramatic expression of story and mood through dance and song…” (2004) The dance Capwell witnessed is called *Kathak*. It is a form of North Indian classical dance and evolved out of the ancient practice of storytelling, and therefore
contains elements of costume, mime, facial expression and other gesticulation to convey the significance of the musical message (ibid.).

At the *Magh Mela*, in one of the *guru* tents I visited, a dancer helped tell the story of one of the Hindu epics having to do with Ram and Sita. Initially, this performer sang while doing a graceful hand dance. This dancer was dressed as a woman and I was later told by our guide that “she” was a male eunuch. During an instrumental section of the song, the performer continued to dance with his hands while twirling, shaking his shoulders and hips, doing head bobs, grabbing his dress to make it move, as well as a number of dance steps that were obscured by his long dress. According to my informant, this dance would have been inappropriate for a woman to perform, especially in a devotional context. Several solo dancers were seen at the Arts Festival in B_____, but this venue was a performance showcase rather than a devotional context. Other than these two events, no other dances were observed.

From these limited observations, it appears that dance, like music, is considered a “solo” performing art. Incorporating dance in the storytelling of biblical truth is an idea worth exploring further, especially in rural contexts where literacy is scarce.

Since musicians sat cross-legged on the ground or floor, movement was limited to that which could be accomplished above the waist. Movement on the part of the musicians and the singers in devotional contexts was minimal. The most animated musician was the *tabla* player at the *Magh Mela* in *guru* Santosh’s ensemble. He could be seen bobbing with his head and shoulders in time, and shaking his head from side to side. Some of the singers would raise one or both of their hands with palms facing upward. The musician playing the *murali* could be seen on rare occasions swaying very gently. Periodically, Santosh would bring his hands together in a praying motion, shake a clenched fist, point a finger upward, and perform sweeping gestures.
with his hands as he taught. A few times during musical performances where he sang, he would take flowers, pull all the petals off, and throw them toward the audience.

During musical performances, most devotees would sit completely still, but a few could be seen swaying, doing head bobs in time, and clapping as they sang. Some seemed to be merely keeping time with the musical pulse, but others whose hands were moving in more complex patterns may have been clapping to the *tala*.

A variety of movement was noted during musical performances associated with an altar in front of the *guru*. Periodically someone in the audience would stand up from sitting cross-legged, come to the altar, bring hands together in a praying gesture, bow the head and bend slightly at the waist. This is the traditional greeting and parting gesture and is typically accompanied by exchanging the word, “namaste.” On rare occasions, a devotee would kneel at the altar, and upon rising, take the right hand and touch the left side of the chest, and then touch the forehead. After leaving a gift of money on the altar, one man took his right hand, touched his forehead and then touched the left side of his chest. After leaving a gift of food and money on the altar, one woman bowed at the waist, took a corner of her shawl and touched it to the platform where the *guru* was sitting. Another woman after doing the same, touched her forehead to the knee of the *guru*. After depositing food at the altar, one man placed a flower necklace around the neck of the *guru*. He then reached over the altar, touched the hands of the *guru* with both his hands, and then then touched both hands to his chest. Children were free to come and go as the audience did not seem to be distracted by their presence or absence. One child who came to the altar with his parents greeted Santosh. The *guru* cupped the boy’s cheek and then gently brushed the side of the boy’s face. It was the only time I saw the *guru* smile.

During other musical performances, some men, possibly priests were designated to conduct rituals before Hindu idols and they would wave offerings of food or fire before the
statues. In one case, the priest waved the plate in front of actors who were dressed as gods. At
evening aarti ceremonies, a simple plate of fire, or the fire tree would be circulated by a priest to
the devotees. They would cup their hands over the fire briefly and then touch their forehead, or
rub their hands over the top of their head. This is believed to bring a blessing from the god to
whom the aarti is devoted (Dwivedi 2006).

In another musical context at the Sai Baba temple, the musicians were at times in motion
and at other times utterly still as they performed; the only exception being what was necessary to
sing or play their instrument. When the trustees of the temple were asked about this, they
indicated that movement in relation to the music was entirely spontaneous. Though it was not
witnessed, my informant said dancing to the devotional music was at times observed. Movement
that I noted among devotees included clapping their hands or holding them in a praying gesture
as they sang. On occasion they would bow at the waist, or bring their hands into a praying
position. Upon exiting the temple, food items that were brought were cast into a fireplace where
it was burned. Outside, a few people were seen touching their praying hands to their forehead,
bringing them down to their chest, touching their forehead with their right hand, and then
touching the left side of their chest with their right hand. Others would light incense and wave it
in the air before placing it at the base of a tree, or ring a bell that hung from that same tree to
wake up the god(s).

In Chitrakoot at the evening aarti ceremony at the Ram Ghat, devotees were purchasing
small, hand-sized boats made of leaves containing candles. The candles were lit and the leaf
boats were placed in the river as prayers were offered to an unknown god or cause. Later,
devotees crowded around the fire tree to light the many small torches. Once the tree was lit, and
the music stopped, bells were rung as the fire tree was waved in the air by a priest. Devotees
clapped in time to the clanging of the bells. Afterward, the fire tree was given to some of the
devotees to wave before the god(s). Once the waving segment was complete and the bell ringing ceased, the fire tree was circulated among the devotees where they cupped their hands over the fire and then touched their foreheads or ran their hands over the top of their heads.

Genre

In the interview with Mrs. Saha, Songs 1 and 2 as well as three other songs recorded in B_____ were identified as bhajans (2011). The root of the Hindi word means “to serve” and the gods to whom the songs were devoted were usually evident in some way during the ceremonies. Guru Santosh taught and told stories that centered on the god Krishna. In other settings at the Magh Mela, and in Chitrakoot, Ram was the god being “served” in the devotional songs. At the Sai Baba temple, all adoration was given to the namesake of the temple.

On account of the large number of song types and regional variety found in bhajans (Ranade 2006), distinguishing the genre apparently is a challenge. When I asked several informants to describe the features that identified a bhajan, they seemed to either not understand the question, or they were at a loss to come up with an appropriate answer.

Songs 3 and 4 were identified as lyrical chants (Saha 2011). Though not as common as the bhajan, this genre was found to be in use in a traditional context in Chitrakoot as well as a more contemporary devotional context at the Sai Baba temple. During the aarti ceremony at this temple, a song form also called by the name aarti was used.

Physical Setting

In an interview with the trustees of the Sai Baba temple in B_____, I was told the most important aspect of the place of worship was the idol, and secondarily the overall beauty of the building. In this case, a statue of Sai Baba that was perhaps twice the size of a normal man
dominated the interior of this modern-day temple. Its color was pure white and was seated on a chair that was also pure white. A large decorated conical object that looked like a lamp shade was suspended above the idol. The statue and chair were on a small brown platform that was approximately 5’ x 5’. This platform was on a raised, seven-sided stage and was topped with white marble. The walls surrounding this area up to about 10’ were decorated with brown and orange designs. Above this, the walls were decorated with intricate tile mosaic. A maroon curtain tied off near the bottom framed this area.

While interviewing Jugal Maharaj, a number of settings were indicated as places where he performs music: private homes, ashrams, temples, open spaces, and festivals. He seemed to place very little importance on the location for devotional music, with noted exceptions such as the Kumbha Mela and holy places noted in Sanskrit scripture.

At the Magh Mela, each guru had a “guru tent” where ceremonies were conducted. Guru Santosh conducted his satsangs and aartis in a thatch-roofed hut. The dimensions were approximately 30’ x 30’ and bright orange curtains with intricate designs were suspended on two sides. On all four sides was a 3’ fence made of bamboo rods with a 4’ opening in the back to allow devotees to enter. Inside was an elevated platform where the guru sat with an altar in front. To one side was the area where the musicians performed that included a raised platform for the singers. On the other side of the altar were cushions and smaller platforms for what seemed to be places of honor for special visitors. On the ground were placed brightly colored blankets and rugs that were decorated with fresh flowers and dyed powders. Small triangular flags of orange and red were suspended on 4’ tall bamboo poles outside the hut as well as inside, especially around the platform of the guru. Devotees sat outside the hut on the straw-covered ground.
**Ensemble**

At the Sai Baba temple, the ensemble consisted of a singer, a keyboard player who played a Roland GW-7 and a percussionist who played an electronic drum/percussion module. Though the module was referred to as an “octapad,” it was not the Roland device by that name but a similar Roland unit – the SPD-20. During an interview with the trustees, they claimed that the ensemble most often consisted of *tabla*, guitar, keyboard and a singer. Other traditional instruments such as the *harmonium*, *dholak*, and *manjiri* are available near the musicians in case someone prefers to play them. They noted that the temple is open even when no official ceremony is being performed. The traditional instruments remain available during this time in the event a devotee desires to play or sing to the idol. Where musicians at the *Magh Mela* indicated there were optimum numbers of performers, such as singers in multiples of two, at this temple there was no such expectation.

The ensemble of *sadhus* that performed in Chitrakoot consisted of a *tabla*, *harmonium*, three *manjiri*, one *dholak* and one *khartal*. During the interview that took place the day before, I was told that other instruments that are sometimes used include the flute and violin. Unlike some of the other ensembles, every one of the eight performers sang in addition to playing an instrument. Jugal said that he favors the presence of at least five instruments and a minimum of two singers. In terms of expectations for the number and configuration of his ensemble, he has more freedom as a *sadhu* to show up with whomever he chooses, verses a classical music performer whose ensemble must adhere to specific rules.

**Performance Practice**

At the Sai Baba temple, the trustees indicated that a typical musical performance will run two to three hours. Shorter and longer durations depend upon the nature of a particular
ceremony. None of the musicians were observed to use any form of notated music or text to aid in their recall, and this was confirmed during the interview with the temple trustees. Musicians in North India typically perform from memory (Capwell 2004). Only twice did I observe written material being consulted; guru Santosh’s harmonium player had a small book of words he used while singing, and an unknown solo harmonium player in Chitrakoot sang out of a large book. In aarti ceremonies that are conducted four times a day in the Sai Baba temple, the songs are not brought to a close, but transition seamlessly from one song to the next for over thirty minutes. Song choices are made by the ensemble leader, but they tend to reflect the type of songs that Sai Baba performs. Currently, the ensemble leader is Sanjay Mitra and he has his favorite corpus of music. But if another leader comes as a substitute, that leader typically chooses a set of different songs. The temple does not dictate to the performers what music will be played.

Attitudes and State of Mind

In the interview with the two musicians from the ensemble of guru Santosh at the Magh Mela, Mr. Panday indicated that when all the essential ingredients come together in music, an experiential and sympathetic connection with the gods is produced through the goddess Saraswati. The components he identified as critical to this connection were the location (e.g. the sangam47), the texts of the music (e.g. the Sama Veda48), the instruments (e.g. tabla, harmonium and murali), the appropriate number of singers (i.e. at least two and usually four), and the correct application of the raga. For the tabla player, the performance of appropriate rhythms generates feelings as though the goddess Saraswati is standing next to him, allowing him to go deeper into the experience of the emotion. Not all musicians have the capacity to do this. The skilled

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47 The sacred convergence of the rivers in B____
48 One of the four sacred Sanskrit texts in Hinduism, containing many hymns to be sung by a priest (Kishore 2003)
musician has a mystical relationship with the patron goddess Saraswati allowing for a deeper level of worship. She is the one who facilitates the musician’s ability to remain focused on the devotional aspect of his performance. This undivided attention pleases the gods, moves them with compassion, and consequently the power of the music can “melt the stony heart of any human being.”

In the final question to my informants before guru Santosh phoned to request their presence, a revelation concerning the purpose and teaching of the satsang in which they were providing the music was given. Santosh was apparently teaching out of the Bhagavad Gita which Mr. Panday said teaches of the art of dying – how to handle death. At least the story that Santosh had been teaching over the past few days centered on this idea, on preparing for death at the end of life.

While interviewing the trustees for the Sai Baba temple, I asked them about the importance of their physical surroundings. Clearly, a great deal of money had been spent on this modern-day temple. They indicated that the beauty of the Sai Baba’s idol and the overall beauty of the temple were very important. The priests who ministered in front of the temple were also to be sharply dressed. The beauty and quality of the music played was also of critical importance. When commenting on the beauty of the ceremony, they pointed out that the quality of the words played a key role. One of the younger trustees commented that unless something of a religious nature is seen, a person will not believe it, or feel anything. She even referred to the necessity of Jesus Christ having to take on human form for the sake of delivering his message to humanity. Hence, it is important to have the idol of Sai Baba to remind people of his message. Motivating factors for worship on the part of the devotees is protection from evil, an escape from the materialism of the modern world and an enjoyment of peace of mind. Additionally, the trustees revealed that there are many musicians who can play an instrument well, or have a
beautiful voice. But it is rare to find musicians and especially singers who convey the message of the heart.

When interviewing Jugal Maharaj in Chitrakoot, the sadhu explained that people are continually asking him the question, “Where is God?” His answer to them is from the ancient Sanskrit writings explaining that God exists where people are praying to him. When discussing the genre of bhajan, Jugal declared that a bhajan is prayer, and prayer is bhajan. Because anything connected to prayer is connected to God, he even went so far as to say the words satsang and bhajan were interchangeable. Jugal said the main reason for performing music is to find peace, and it is the primary way to find God. But in order to find peace through music, and also find God through music, the music must be performed and the songs sung with honesty and integrity.
CHAPTER IV: SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Commentary on Elements of Musical Style

The following observations from the analysis should serve as legitimate starting points for subsequent research performed in B____. On account of the presence of the harmonium and electronic keyboard, the tuning reference of A440 Hz can be expected to prevail. Also due to presence of these instruments, tonal division is standardized at twelve semitones. The wild card is the concept of microtonal variation and their character should be the topic of further study. Since scholars disagree sharply on their precise definition, important questions to address include whether shruti intervals become standardized by way of a guru, or perhaps a gharana, and how readily their presence or absence is noticed by non-musicians in a performance context.

The idea that raga are the fundamental underpinning of Hindustani melody is firmly entrenched in the indigenous mind. Though strict adherence to the rules is made lax by way of the devotional genre, a clear understanding of how much liberty can be taken is missing. In my analysis, the time of day specified for the raga employed was completely ignored in every case. The most important question concerns the quantitative rules for the raga. Several sources consulted for the analysis were Western authors who cited indigenous works, but they seemed to present an incomplete picture of each raga, despite hundreds of pages of elucidation. The success of songwriting efforts may very well depend on locating the missing pieces and acquiring an emic perspective. Raga most commonly employed in devotional music compositions need to be discovered and documented. Additionally, the long history of supernatural association of Hindu deities with specific raga demands the development of additional research questions to probe this area.
The traditional approach to harmony in Hindustani music is biphonic on account of the presence of a drone. Guidelines for tunings depend on the raga, but typically consist of the tonic and one of the following intervals: perfect fifth, perfect fourth, major/minor sixth, and in rare cases a seventh. In the majority of music I recorded, the harmonium or electronic keyboard did not supply a simple drone. Instead, a parallel supporting melody very similar to the primary melody was performed in the same octave. This could be considered a flavor of heterophony, though scholars do not describe Hindustani music with this term. Only in places of melodic rest would the harmonium or keyboard land on an interval producing a drone-effect. Since research does not mention this relationship between the vocalized melody and the instrumental version of the same, additional study is recommended to determine acceptable performance parameters. In pieces recorded at the Sai Baba temple, the use of Western harmonic accompaniment was detected. The chant utilized this form accompaniment throughout the entire piece, but other songs employed a combination of chords and the previously described biphonic approach.

The Hindustani system of organizing musical events in time is called tala. It is also the term used for the fundamental cycle of rhythmic time employed in a composition. For ethnomusicologists trained in Western music theory, the leap is considerable from the language of time signatures and rhythmic notation, to the concept of cycles varied by improvisation. Communicating these concepts consists of hand gestures and a vocabulary of mnemonics called theka. The former can be learned in minutes, the latter requires extended study. Kaharva was the tala employed in all of the compositions analyzed and is one of the most widely used in devotional music (Saha 2011). The use of rhythmic variation within the tala as well as tempo acceleration and deceleration were tools frequently devoted to the cause of musical contrast. Just as a composer or performer in the West is literate in the notational language of rhythm, the same is required of anyone involved in the production of contextualized Christian music – one must
learn this unique and indigenous means of communicating musical time. Regardless of the preferred instrument of the composer or performer, the primary difference between West and East in this task is that a modicum of competency is required on the *tabla* or *mridang*.

Texture is made dense by the presence of a variety of cherished tonal characteristics and compositional devices. The favored instrumental timbre is one rich in overtones; a fact underscored by the presence of secondary resonator strings and other devices driven by the primary tone-generating mechanisms. Conversely, the timbre esteemed for vocalists is one that is pure in essence. However, in the performances I recorded, a variety of tonal characteristics were observed. Only the voice of Sanjay Mitra at the Sai Baba temple could be said to have the coveted pure or “sweet” vocal timbre (Martinez 2001). The favored compositional device for creating textural density is improvisation. *Tabla* players employ a number of techniques called *laykari* that take a basic pattern and develop it throughout a song using mathematical manipulation, grouping, phrasing and permutation (Clayton 2000). Acceleration and deceleration of tempo is an important and commonly utilized tool. Singers improvise through the use of ornaments called *alankars* and microtonal variation of pitch called *shrutis*.

The relationship of form and text is the greatest unknown and will require more than mere literacy of Hindi or other regional dialect to provide insight for further study. Scholars assert factors such as the genre, *raga*, and the poetic mastery of the composer all affect the degree of the relationship between word boundaries, syllables and the resulting form. Further study is required to produce an understanding of these relationships. The concept of *rasa* grew out of poetry and expanded as an expectation for musical performances as well. Perhaps no other area deserves more attention than the lyrical component of contextualized music; not merely for the sake of artistic excellence as demanded by the indigenous concept of *rasa*, but
also in the critically important task of communicating the gospel message through culturally appropriate linguistic symbols.

Scientific methods employed in this analysis of Hindustani musical elements provide accuracy within a millisecond and a fraction of a Hertz. In spite of this, the reverse engineering is not complete and requires the acquisition of an understanding of its additive categories. How the various structural elements are assembled to produce music that is embraced by the culture can only be accomplished with the guidance of a skilled tradition-bearer. This process may also enhanced by simultaneously carrying out the independent analysis of a larger corpus.

Commentary on Other Aspects of Devotional Music

Each musician interviewed had a different account of how they acquired an understanding of the music of their culture. Early childhood accounts include exposure to religious music in ceremonial and life-stage contexts. Later, some studied in the traditional context of the guru-shishya parampara, other studied for a short time at a gharana, and others still, studied at schools or universities. Some were made to do so at the behest of parents, and others chose to study to the chagrin of their family members. Both traditional methods and modern means are equally valid, though scholars and my informants indicate a greater depth of understanding is acquired in a traditional context. The presence of Western music and the fusion of East and West in the music of Bollywood cannot be ignored. Sanjay Mitra who led the ensemble at the popular Sai Baba temple in B_____ is a former Bollywood composer, musician and singer. Even in the dusty recesses of small villages, Bollywood music is heard in cafes and on boom boxes. Shops that sell compact discs and cassettes can be found just about anywhere. Most of the music sold in these shops consists of music known through Bollywood movies; however, some devotional music is available.
Subtle movement among musicians, devotees and spiritual leaders was a common observation. Among musicians and singers, swaying, head movement, hand gestures and clapping were noted. Devotees exhibited the same movements sans hand gestures and they were somewhat less animated. At the Sai Baba temple where there were set times for specific services such as an aarti, devotees were observed to funnel in and stand for the duration of the ceremony. There was no division of men and women, though the large majority was men. At the Magh Mela, devotees would trickle in and out and sit cross-legged on the ground.

Two song forms were confirmed by my stateside informant; bhajan and chant. The former was identified by scholars as an inclusive concept under which a wide variety devotional songs are classified. Just what the distinguishing features of this genre are and whether a definitive authority on the form can be located in B_____ are questions for further research. It will be important to work with a reputable and local informant as the components of the genre vary by region. The B_____ University has a music department as well as a folk-life department, and these may be good starting points for the inquiry. Both genres were used in a contemporary, Westernized and devotional context at the Sai Baba temple. Both were also heard at the Magh Mela in a traditional devotional context. The universal appeal is apparent, yet with the great number of other genres available, perhaps there are others that can be borrowed for Christian worship and is a question for further study.

Physical settings where devotional music performances were observed took place in five places: temples, shrines, festivals, river ghats, private homes and a hotel room. The latter was a private concert arranged for the benefit of this study. The informant in this context indicated he conducts religious and musical ceremonies in the following settings: private homes, ashrams, temples, open spaces, and festivals. There were two contextualized Christian meetings I attended and they were conducted in private homes. One home was located in an upper middle-
class neighborhood in Y_____. The second home was a small, brick and mud, thatch-roofed building in the village called C____H___. Many temples could be seen in various places in B_____. Their external beauty is apparent, but the inside of the Sai Baba temple greatly exceeded its exterior beauty. Against the backdrop of the whitewashed building structure, white marble floors and intricate mosaics on the walls contributed to the beauty of the main room. Hindu idols, paintings and shrines devoted to Sai Baba and other gods were found throughout the building. In Chitrakoot and Y_____ , evening aartis were conducted beside their respective rivers on the ghat. Platforms had been built for the musicians and priests that were decorated with brightly colored blankets and linens.

Traditional ensemble configurations were standardized by the presence of a tabla, harmonium and manjiri in every setting where Hindu religious music was performed. Variables consisted of the dholak, khartal, bulbul tarang, and murali. In two contextualized Christian gatherings, a Western acoustic guitar was played. In most cases, a group of dedicated vocalists sang, and numbered from two to eight. A single vocalist was featured in a few cases and this person was typically the harmonium player. At the Sai Baba temple, a more contemporary ensemble consisting of electronic instruments was observed. An electronic keyboard and a drum/percussion module were employed while a single vocalist performed.

Devotional music performances seem to commence without much fanfare or any announcement for that matter. Tabla and/or dholak players tune to the harmonium, the microphones are checked for operability and the performance begins. Musicians perform compositions largely from memory. Only in a few contexts did I observe singers referencing books or small notepads that contained the texts of the songs. In every public setting, the

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49 This is the name my informant gave the instrument – a transverse flute. Others in B____ as well as scholars call the instrument a bansuri. It also goes by the name venu.
presence of a sound system was inescapable, even where it was not a requirement in order to be adequately heard. Except for the Sai Baba temple, sound systems were operated with little skill and this was a detriment rather than a benefit to the musical experience. Given the cultural expectation of *rasa*, it will be advantageous for larger contextualized Christian gatherings where a sound system is required to rise above this technical mediocrity.

For the Hindu, the idea of devotion was noted to be the pinnacle of religious experience in this study and in the works of other scholars. Where the Western mind tends to gravitate toward the cerebral, the Indian soul is drawn to the experience of devotion. The inclusivity of the Hindu worldview is problematic in that it willingly adopts a few tenants of Christianity, generating a dangerous syncretism at the expense of truth. Historically, the Church has unknowingly (and possibly knowingly) preached a false, idolatrous health and prosperity gospel that appeals to the lower caste peoples as a means of elevating their social status. When they convert to this form of Christianity, it changes their social status, but not their eternal one. Workers involved in contextualizing music for Christian worship should be aware of this phenomenon and strive to eliminate it.

**Future Exploration**

Though time did not permit the analysis of the repertoire of John and Nilanjana DeVoss, it bears mentioning that this area of Uttar Pradesh is not without contextualized Christian worship music, and theirs would be worthy of consideration. According to DeVosses, the volume of high quality, contextualized Christian songwriting has increased to such a degree that they claim it is impossible to keep up with. At least one researcher indicated that *bhajans* were more commonly employed in the past, and this phenomenon ought to be looked at with an eye toward discovering what the current trend is and why it is happening (Dicran 2000). Revisiting
the idea of Slobin’s micromusics (1992), it may be prudent to discover whether the recent trend communicated by DeVosses sufficiently addresses the people groups desiring to express their Christian faith through song in B_____. With the great quantity, proliferation and popularity of Bollywood film songs, it may also be worthwhile to investigate whether these compositions can be repurposed in Christian worship.

**Strategy the Four-Fold Plan**

The analysis in this inquiry has but scratched the surface of how Christians might express their faith through music given the multivalence of societal, historical and religious components present in Uttar Pradesh. Additionally, the late discovery of multiple objectives contributes to the complexity of the study. The original intent was to conduct research in a single, well-defined locus and context for the purpose of evaluating the potential benefit of an indigenous approach to worship music in B_____. Midway through the project, three additional goals were revealed that added a second cultural region, necessitating a revision of the objectives. In order to accommodate all four goals of my hosts, four distinct studies in two geographical areas were required. At this juncture, it is worth revisiting the four-fold plan outlined by my host:

1. **Contextualized Outreach to Non-Christians in B_____**
2. **Contextualized Worship for Missionary Meetings in B_____**
3. **Contextualized Worship for Existing Christian Fellowship in C____H_____**
4. **Contextualized Outreach to Non-Christians in C____H_____**

While data collection was conducted in both geographical areas, the analysis undertaken in Chapter III and the summary presented in this chapter thus far is limited to that of an initial step toward the first of the four studies. Though number two requires an investigation of its own, observations made in my study and any subsequent studies of the same can be leveraged for that
purpose. Video and audio recordings made while in C____H___ can be made available to the researcher who is called to work in this area.

**Sequence of Studies**

Out of these four goals arises the need to define the scope and sequence for multiple ethnomusicology studies. Since the sequence is simpler to extract and articulate from the information gathered while in India, this will be addressed first. Initially, two research incursions are to be mapped out as thorough, area and context-specific studies; one in B_____ and the other 290 km to the north in the Chamar village of C____H___. The remaining pair of studies can leverage knowledge and experience gained from the first two.

Because my host resides in the city of B_____ and the opportunity to plant a new faith-based community is ripe, an inquiry into what this would look like for this urban area is thought to be the best context for the first study. It would be geared toward acquiring insight for the first item in my host’s four-fold plan – Contextualized Outreach to Non-Christians in B_____. In the process of this study, application of insight gained here can be leveraged for number two in the four-fold plan – Contextualized Worship for Missionary Meetings in B_____.

It is logical to assume that studies for number one and number two can be carried out concurrently as discoveries made in number one can be borrowed for number two. It may also be a matter of conducting a single study with two different applications.

The third study would be conducted in the rural area in and around the small Chamar village called C____H___, 290 km north of B_____. Here, it is logical to begin with number three in the four-fold plan – Contextualized Worship for Existing Christian Fellowship in C____H___. This study would be an inquiry into expanding the body of indigenous worship music by acquisition and facilitating the composition of new songs, and looking at the possibility
of elevating the performance skills of this small Christian fellowship. While this endeavor could possibly be carried out by a single or several short-term worker(s), it is better suited for a long-term commitment for the following reason: this endeavor could also serve as the springboard to cultural immersion and enculturation for the purpose of designing a study around number four of the four-fold plan – Contextualized Outreach to Non-Christians in C____H___. The fourth study would also be conducted among the Chamar in the rural area surrounding C____H___. Because this last component requires the effort and commitment of a long-term ethnomusicologist, this endeavor would have to be delayed until the Lord called one to this area.

Scope of B_____ Studies

Addressing the Contextualized Outreach to Non-Christians in B_____ first, the scope of the study(ies) would consist of three objectives:

1. Audio and video recordings with field notes of tradition bearer interviews and performances are to be produced.

2. From these interviews, recordings, and field notes, and with the help of Peter and Sarah, other Christian workers, nationals, cultural informants and ethnomusicologists, suitable forms of contextualized music and movement for Christian worship are to be defined.

3. Implementation of contextualization discoveries are to be folded into the larger design for the public satsang envisioned, and may be incorporated into the Contextualized Worship for Missionary Meetings in B_____ as well. Songwriting workshops, recording sessions and published/disseminated media and should also be considered as secondary objectives.
First Chamar Study – Scope Defined

Once an ethnomusicologist has been identified to work long-term in C____H___, recommendations in this paper can be used as a starting point. Because these studies have the potential to contain a significant number of unknown elements, a flexible approach should be generously exercised until well-defined goals and objectives are defined.

In the first study that addresses Contextualized Worship for Existing Christian Fellowship in C____H___, the extent of activities can be defined as follows:

1. Audio and video recordings with field notes of tradition bearer interviews and performances are to be produced.

2. From these interviews, recordings, and field notes, and with the help of the church elders, cultural elements used in worship that are unique to the Chamar are to be identified. Cultural elements of neighboring people groups, as well as appropriate Western elements should also be determined.

3. As discoveries are made, recommendations for contextualization can be discussed with the church elders. They may include musician training, songwriting workshops, recording sessions, and published/disseminated media. Christian worship services may be altered to incorporate these findings and developments.

4. Within this process and as the ethnomusicologist becomes familiar with navigating the culture and the language, insight into how to best proceed with the second Chamar study can be acquired.

Second Chamar Study – Scope Defined

For the fourth and final study that addresses Contextualized Outreach to Non-Christians in C____H___, a few important items need to be mentioned first. Though Peter and Sarah live
quite a distance from C____H____, their guidance is sought in matters that pertain to the fellowship and community. The small enclave of Chamar Christians was adopted by Peter and Sarah after a worker from another cooperating agency caused a considerable amount of consternation, and a subsequent split in the fellowship. If a church-planting team is assembled for the purpose of reaching the Chamar for Christ in C____H____, the pre-existing and tangled history may or may not affect the strategy of the ethnomusicologist. On the other hand, if the ethnomusicologist single-handedly spearheads this project, this issue almost certainly will come up for consideration.

For this goal to be realized, a suitable location needs to be acquired, but no commercial buildings are readily available for rent or purchase in C____H____. Anticipating this as well as other villager needs, Peter and Sarah purchased land with the intention of erecting a small community center. Unfortunately, after this land was acquired, electrical power lines were run through the property that thwarts the construction of a building. This was a cost-cutting and illegal action carried out by a contractor working for the Indian government. Because of difficulties and inefficiency in the legal system of Uttar Pradesh, it may take years for this to come to trial, and even if it does, there is no guarantee justice will prevail. This issue would need to be resolved one way or the other prior to or at the outset of this study.

Once a building is built or acquired and it is properly equipped, what is envisioned is for it to become a hub of activity for the community. It is up to the local indigenous church, the evangelism team (if one exists) and the ethnomusicologist to hold musical events there. These would generate opportunities for study where audio and video recordings can be made of performances and tradition-bearer interviews. What a public Christian satsang might look like will be discovered as data is analyzed from these recordings and interviews. As the data is compiled and discoveries are made, recommendations for a contextualized worship service can
be discussed with the church elders and team. Then it is up to those involved to facilitate the meetings.

Case studies are an appropriate research format for this study; however, less is understood about this community, its ties to ancient traditions are still quite strong, and the duration for the study will almost certainly be long-term, therefore the collection of case studies could accumulate in number and depth to become an ethnography. With the intention of generating a holistic understanding of the Chamar culture through the study of the music, the researcher should continually adapt the study in response to corrections in understanding of the host culture. (Creswell 2003).

System of Assessment for B_____ and C____H___ Studies

Similar to the original design, a feedback loop is to be inserted to measure the success of both B_____ studies as well as the Chamar studies. Paramount to determining the value of the proposed research, three processes are defined as a means for evaluation:

1. A process to determine whether a true understanding has been discovered of what is needed for successful contextualization
2. A process to determine whether the implementation of those discoveries is successful
3. A process to determine whether the contextualization produced generates a more effective ministry

Delimitations of the B_____ Studies

The first two studies are confined to the area in and around the city of B_____. Because the urban area draws a variety of people groups from the surrounding countryside, Hindi may not be the primary language of some subjects, but oral literacy in this language should be a criteria
for selection. Candidates for interviews are to be musicians and gurus from the Magh Mela, other festivals, Hindu temples, monasteries, private gatherings, and schools of music and dance within the city of B____. Additional recordings and notes are to be made of other stakeholders’ perspectives on issues related to music and contextualization. This may include existing contextualized Christian fellowships and other churches that employ a Westernized liturgy. As long as the informants speak Hindi, are from the state of Uttar Pradesh, and their music is Hindustani in essence, their perspective may be considered.

Delimitations of the Chamar Studies

The second two studies are to be conducted in the area of C____H___. The lingua franca of this area is Hindi; however, a total of sixty one ethnic dialects are spoken among the Chamar (Joshua Project 2009). Candidates for interviews are to be musicians and gurus from Hindu and Buddhist temples, monasteries, private gatherings, and schools of music and dance from the surrounding area. Additional recordings and notes are to be made of other stakeholders’ perspectives on issues related to music and contextualization. This may include existing contextualized Christian fellowships and other churches that employ a Westernized liturgy. As long as the informants speak Hindi or a regional dialect, are from the area surrounding C____H___, and their music is Hindustani in essence, their perspective may be considered.

Data Collection – C____H____

In C____H____ lives a small enclave of Jesus’ disciples. I was told by the pastor that C____H____’s population is roughly four thousand, although its size precludes it from being featured on local maps. Neither can it be found on Google Maps.
Unlike many Indian Christian fellowships that cloister themselves behind closed doors, or even compounds, the C____H___ believers meet on Sundays and at other regularly scheduled times on the front porch of the home of RS. Pastor Z_____ lives with his family in a nearby town and RS is his father. The home of RS was the central location for the two days I spent gathering recordings and interviews. For subsequent research, this is also expected to be the case as the first study focuses on the music of this small church.

As was the case with my study, multiple types of data are to be collected. General observations and specific details will be catalogued in field notes. Pre-arranged and impromptu interviews and musical performances during church meetings, life-cycle and other significant village events will be captured in video, audio and photography assets. It may also be useful to take trips to Chamar and regional ethnic Hindu festivals, temples and shrines to establish comparisons. Local flyers, newspapers, radio, and possibly films can be used as potential data sources. At the American Institute of Indian Studies Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology in O__ E____, the work of Dr. Laxmi Ganesh Tewari on the Chamar would be an excellent resource.

Similar to B____, it is not known what data collection methods may be appropriate initially, or as time progresses and relationships develop. Though I recorded audio for the church service, my camera remained in its case.

Oversight

It cannot be emphasized strongly enough that without qualified leadership - someone to coordinate and champion the cause of ethnomusicology research in the areas of B____ and C____H___, this work may never produce anything that furthers the goals of the four-fold plan. Short-term ethnomusicologists must hit the ground running with a clearly identified goal. Long-
term ethnomusicologists must remain focused on well-defined projects and objectives. The work of both must be coordinated, collated, analyzed, shared and then those implementing appropriate action must be held accountable for producing specific results. Feedback loops that determine the value of contextualization efforts, and help define any additional research must not be omitted from the process.

I believe one of the most critical aspects of this oversight will be the management of standardized questionnaires. Though this component of the work will be in continual revision due to the emergent nature of the studies, working to limit the variation from one researcher to the next should produce greater precision in the findings.

This project will be enhanced greatly by the use of computers. I highly recommend that whoever oversees this project set up a central computerized repository for the compilation of data acquired for study. Digital audio and video recordings as well as photographs, questionnaires and field notes should be made available to researchers performing local studies. At the time of this writing, the best software for the purpose of conducting qualitative studies is HyperRESEARCH. It is cross-platform, stable and handles many of the standard media file formats. What is more, queries can be performed on the data that quickly answer questions that could otherwise take many hours.

Candidates for this position should be those who have a clear and confirmed calling to this area of ministry as well as the geographical area. Ideally, these would be nationals with at least a master’s degree in ethnomusicology. Another option is to choose a faith-filled outsider with the same level of education who is committed to long-term enculturation.
Concluding Thoughts

The opening volley of Chapter II documents the centuries-long resistance to Christianity in India. According to more than a few authors, it is reasonable to conclude that one of the objections to Christianity is the perception that Western hegemony permeates the religion, giving rise to objection and resistance. A significant component of Westernized Christianity is how it is expressed in musical worship. Substituting a more indigenous flavor of music as well as other liturgical and art forms may serve to remove significant barriers and aid in the reception of the Gospel in B_____.

Additionally, the phenomenon of globalization has the effect of undermining belief in any sort of exclusive truth, especially the narrow road of Christianity. This plays into the inclusive Hindu worldview, allowing for the distorted perspective where all 'truth' is seen as simultaneously universal and relative. Consequently, these factors degrade the metanarrative of the Judeo-Christian revelation to illegitimate status. It is essential that efforts to communicate the message of Christ through music take this into account and apprehend appropriate forms while embracing the emerging global society, but not compromise on truth in the process. The intent of the completed research, and that recommended for further study, is to discover as much as possible about this reality within the context of musical expression. At best, my hope is that the churches in B_____ and C____H____ will enjoy the perspective of a social scientist on the issue that will give them understanding and direction for the purpose of effective evangelism. At the least, it is hoped that this study will, in some small way, foster better understanding between Christian and Hindu cultures in B_____.
APPENDIX A – Research Questionnaires

Ethnomusicology Research
Devotional Music Questionnaire

Research Questions/Sub-questions for **MUSICIANS** (Hindi and Christian)

*Intro & Disclaimer*: “I’m conducting research on devotional music and this session will take about 1 hour. This research is for the purpose of promoting understanding between Eastern and Western cultures, it is for academic purposes, and there is no financial compensation for participating. Photographs, video and audio recordings made during the interview will not be sold. International law states I must obtain permission from those I interview, so if you are willing to participate, including having your responses recorded, please state your name and city of residence.”

**SETTING/CONTEXT**
- comment on importance of location/building/other surroundings? why?
- holy days/other auspicious time?

**INSTRUMENTS, SINGERS & ENSEMBLES**
- **instruments:**
  - what instruments are used?
  - what aspects of a __________ make it a good instrument (repeat for each inst)?
  - who makes your (their) instrument?
  - how did you (they) learn to play the __________ (transmission)?
  - are any instruments good to have, but not available?
- **singers:**
  - what makes a good singer?
  - how are singers chosen?
  - how did you (they) learn to be a devotional singer (transmission)?
- **performance ensemble/solo:**
  - number of vocalists?
  - reason for this number?
  - instrumentation and number?
  - reason for specific configuration (e.g. doubling of vocals, but not inst)?
  - how did you learn about these aspects of devotional music?

**PERFORMANCE PRACTICE**
- prior to music event, any instrument preparations?
- when do musicians take their place to play?/when do they leave?
- duration:
  - length of musical event?
  - reason(s) for longer/shorter durations?
- Is there movement by musicians other than required to produce sound?
- Is musical notation or are other written notes used, e.g. words to songs?
• Is this memorized or brought to the performance?
• How much of your performance is improvised?
• How much of your performance conforms to the raga?
• How did you learn about these aspects of performance (transmission)?

SONG GENRE/FORM
• what are your favorite song genres/forms to play (e.g. bhajan, kirtan, thumri)?
• reason for selection?
• what are characteristics of each song type?
  • describe melody
    - instrumental
    - vocal
    - other distinguishing characteristics
  • describe harmony
    - instrumental
    - vocal
    - other distinguishing characteristics
  • describe rhythms
    - instrumental
    - vocal
    - other distinguishing characteristics
  • range of song type duration
• how are songs written?
• composer name(s)?
  • when were songs written?
  • any songs being written currently?
  • reason selected/what makes a song good?
• theme of words:
• how did you first encounter this music (transmission)?
• how are songs learned (transmission)?
• how many songs do you have memorized (transmission)?
• are there recordings/notation of this music or words (transmission)?

MOVEMENT
• is there dancing by musicians or devotees?
• is there any other movement by listeners/worshippers directly influenced by music?

STATE OF MIND/ATTITUDES
• describe what happens in a devotional musical event:
  • process:
  • emotions:
  • body sensations:
  • mental state:
  • god/gods are worshipped:
motivation/why is it important/for what purpose (to obtain favor, prevent evil, other)?
- reasons for good/bad experience(s):
- any other aspects (ask them to comment on someone else’s [indirect acquisition])?
- What is the effect of this experience?
  - mentally?
  - physically?
  - spiritually?
  - (specifically, darshan the presence of the divine, audience with the deity may be worth considering. Do these factors underlie musical repetition, rhythms and non-musical components of the performance?)
  - Does the music facilitate altered states of consciousness / religious ecstasy?

ROLES
- Are there any restrictions as to the roles of various people in Hindu music (e.g. gender, ethnicity, family association or other reputation [criminal past?], birth defect or other handicap, etc.)?
- Are there any prescribed roles that elevate various people in Hindu music (e.g. gurus, musicians, elders, financial contributors, etc.)?
- Restricted/Marginalized people – how can they be included without compromising the perception of worship/the music?

EAST and WEST, SECULAR & SACRED
- When you experience the secular music of the west (European and American)…
  - what one thing strikes you as completely different from the music of your home culture?
  - describe how you respond to this element when you hear/see it?
- When you experience the sacred music of the west (European and American)…
  - what one thing strikes you as completely different from the music of Hinduism?
  - describe how you respond to this element when you hear/see it?

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Research Questions and Sub-questions for **DEVOTEES/NON-MUSICIANS**
(Hindi and Christian)

*Intro & Disclaimer:* “I’m conducting research on devotional music and this session will take about 1 hour. This research is for the purpose of promoting understanding between Eastern and Western cultures, it is for academic purposes, and there is no financial compensation for participating. Photographs, video and audio recordings made during the interview will not be sold. International law states I must obtain permission from those I interview, so if you are willing to participate, including having your responses recorded, please state your name and city of residence.”
SETTING/CONTEXT - When you attend satsang or other devotional gathering, tell me what is important about the:

- location/building/other surroundings? why?
- holy days/other auspicious time?
- who is present?
- how do people learn about these settings/contexts (transmission)?
- anything else?

INSTRUMENTS, SINGERS & ENSEMBLES

- **instruments:**
  - what instruments are used?
  - are any instruments good to have, but not here tonight? why?

- **singers:**
  - what do you hear in a person’s voice that makes them a good singer?
  - have you ever heard any singers that weren’t so good?

- **performance ensemble/solo:**
  - number of singers?
  - why do you like to hear this many?
  - instruments and number?
  - why do you like this arrangement?

PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

- prior to music event, are you aware of any instrument preparations the musicians make?
- prior to music event, are you aware of any personal preparation the musicians make?
- when do musicians take their place to play?/when do they leave?
- duration:
  - length of musical event?
  - reason(s) for longer/shorter durations?
  - what effect is produced by music event?
  - length of music event’s effect after music stops?
  - reasons for longer/shorter durations?
- is there movement by musicians other than required to produce sound?
- do you see any musical notation or are other written notes used, e.g. words to songs?

SONG GENRES/FORMS

- do you know any of the song genres (e.g. bhajan, kirtan):
- what are characteristics of each song type?
  - describe melody
    - instrumental
    - vocal
    - other distinguishing characteristics
  - describe harmony – when more than one note is sung at a time
    - instrumental
    - vocal
    - other distinguishing characteristics
  - describe rhythms
- instrumental
- vocal
- other distinguishing characteristics
  - range of song type duration

- reason for song type selection?
- composer name(s)?
  - when were songs written?
  - any songs being written currently?
  - reason selected/what makes a song good?
- theme of words:
- how did you first encounter this music (transmission)?
- are there recordings/notation of this music or words (transmission)?

MOVEMENT
- is there dancing by musicians or devotees?
- is there any other movement by listeners/worshippers as a result of the music?

STATE OF MIND/ATTITUDES
- describe what happens in a “good” experience through a musical event:
  - process:
  - emotions:
  - body sensations:
  - mental state:
  - god/gods are worshipped:
  - motivation/why is it important/for what purpose (to obtain favor, prevent evil, other)?
  - reasons for good/bad experience(s):
  - any other aspects (ask them to comment on someone else’s [indirect acquisition])?
- What is the effect of this experience?
  - mentally?
  - physically?
  - spiritually?

ROLES
- Are there any restrictions as to the roles of various people in Hindu music (e.g. gender, ethnicity, family association or other reputation [criminal past?], birth defect or other handicap, etc.)?
- Are there any prescribed roles that elevate various people in Hindu music (e.g. gurus, musicians, elders, financial contributors, etc.)?
- Restricted/Marginalized people – how can they be included without compromising the perception of worship/the music?

EAST and WEST, SECULAR & SACRED
- When you experience the secular music of the west (European and American)…
• what one thing strikes you as completely different from the music of your home culture?
• describe how you respond to this element when you hear/see it?

• When you experience the sacred music of the west (European and American)…
  • what one thing strikes you as completely different from the music of Hinduism?
  • describe how you respond to this element when you hear/see it?
APPENDIX B – IRB Approval

IRB Approval 754.092409

Contextualized Christian Expression in India: Addressing the Barriers of Western Constructs to Hindu Seekers of Christ

Dear [Name],

We are pleased to inform you that your above study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must resubmit the study to the IRB. See the IRB website for appropriate forms in these cases.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.
IRB Chair, Liberty University
Center for Counseling and Family Studies
Liberty University
1971 University Boulevard
Lynchburg, VA 24502-2269
(434) 592-4054
Fax: (434) 522-0477
APPENDIX C – Audio-Visual Equipment List

- Sony HDR-XR 500v – an HD video camera that records to an internal hard drive, and doubles nicely on still photography
- Sony PCM-D50 – a portable, stereo audio recorder that records to flash memory
- 2 tripods – one for the camera and one for the audio recorder
- Azden FMX-32 – a battery powered audio mixer
- 2 headphone sets
- Sony UWP-V1 Wireless Lavalier Microphone system (2 units)
- Dell XPS M1330 laptop computer, running the following software:
  - Adobe Premiere and Sony’s PMB Suite (video review/editing)
  - Adobe Photoshop (photo image review/editing)
  - Steinberg Cubase (music transcription/notation)
  - Sony Sound Forge (audio review/editing)
- 1 TB external disk drive for video, photo and audio asset storage
- hiker’s backpack to carry A/V items
- various cables, audio connector adapters, batteries, gaffer’s tape and a multi-tool
- ear-plugs/ear protection\(^{50}\)

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\(^{50}\) These were considered for inclusion and, unfortunately, left behind. I regretted this mishap, as the music at the outdoor festivals was amplified and in several cases exceeded 115 dB. Additionally the fidelity of the amplified sound was distorted, making the experience even more uncomfortable. Ear protection is highly recommended for anyone anticipating the observation of a devotional festival that includes music.
Song No. 2 - Vocal Melody

Guru Santosh Ensemble
Transcription of Magh Mela
Performance of January 24, 2010

Page 1
GLOSSARY

Musical Terms

**aarti:** a religious ritual of worship, a form of puja, in which light from wicks soaked in ghee (purified butter) or camphor is offered to one or more deities. Aartis also refer to the songs sung in praise of the deity, when offering of lamps is being offered.

**alankar:** melodic ornaments or adornments that embellish or enhance the beauty of a genre. Alankars in common use today comprise Meend (varieties of glides linking two or more notes), Kan (grace note), Sparsh and Krintan (both dealing with grace notes - especially as applied in plucked stringed instruments), Andolan (a slow oscillation between adjacent notes and shrutis), Gamak (heavy forceful oscillations between adjacent and distant notes), Kampit (an oscillation or a vibrato on a single note), Gitkari or Khatka (cluster of notes embellishing a single note), Zamzama (addition of notes, with sharp gamaks) and Murki (a swift and subtle taan-like movement).

**antara:** second section of a composition, usually emphasizing the upper octave

**anuvadi:** notes that are neither vadi nor samvadi

**arohi:** the order in which notes of the ascending line appear in a raga

**avarohi:** the order in which notes of the descending lines appear in a raga

**avart:** (see tala – #2.)

**chalan:** a melodic outline, more complex than a pakad, that summarizes the development of a raga

**bandish:** a.k.a. *chiz*, a fixed composition, usually in 2 parts - essentially a song, but usually the basis for a song that will contain improvisation.

**bhajan:** a devotional song (Hawley, 1984, p. 245) with few lyrics (Santiago, 1999), addressed directly to God (Dev, 1999). The bhajan has a special place in Indian society. There is no set form for the music. Most bhajans were written between the 14th through 17th centuries. They are simple songs sung in the praise of Hindu gods. The name of the deity surpasses the level of symbol. The vibrations of its utterance are considered to be one form of the absolute (Slawek, 1986, p.111). Complex spiritual truths are portrayed in the simple language of the farmers, merchants, and other common people. Bhajan is an important part of a Hindu revivalist movement which swept through India during the Mogul period; this movement was known as the Bhakti movement. The crux of this movement was simple; spiritual salvation was attainable to anyone who had a pure and selfless love of God. This salvation was not predicated upon formalized yagnas, pujas, knowledge of Sanskrit, or any of the characteristics of the older forms of Hinduism. This was a spiritual empowerment of the masses.

Bhajan is difficult to describe musically because it is not defined by any musical
characteristics; it is defined by a sense of devotion (bhakti). Bhajans cover a broad spectrum of musical styles/forms from the simple musical chant (dhun) to highly developed versions comparable to thumri. The structure of bhajan can be very conventional. Many contain a single sthai and numerous antara. The last antara has special significance because it contains the nom de plume of the author.

C.H. Dicran coined the term, Krist-bhajan, which is simply the bhajan repurposed for worship of the Living God.

Carnatic (alternate spelling, Karnatak): a system of music associated with the southern part of India, with its area roughly confined to the four states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. It is one of two main sub-genres of Indian classical music that evolved from ancient Hindu traditions; the other sub-genre being Hindustani music, which emerged as a distinct form due to Persian and Islamic influences in North India.

chiz: a.k.a. bandish, a fixed composition, usually in 2 parts - essentially a song, but usually the basis for a song that will contain improvisation.

dhrupad: is a vocal genre in Hindustani classical music, said to be the oldest still in use in that musical tradition. The term may denote both the verse form of the poetry and the style in which it is sung. Thematic matter ranges from the spiritual to royal panegyrics, musicology and romance. Dhrupad today is performed by a solo singer or a small number of singers in unison to the beat of the pakhavaj or mridang rather than the tabla. The vocalist is usually accompanied by two tanpuras Traditionally the only other instrument used was the Rudra Veena. Like all Indian classical music, dhrupad is modal and monophonic, with a single melodic line and no chord progression. The text is preceded by a wholly improvised section, the alap. It is sung using a set of syllables, popularly thought to be derived from a mantra, in a recurrent, set pattern. Dhrupad styles have long elaborate alaps, their slow and deliberate melodic development gradually bringing an accelerating rhythmic pulse. In most styles of dhrupad singing it can easily last an hour, broadly subdivided into the alap proper (unmetered), the jor (with steady rhythm) and the jhala (accelerating strumming) or nomtom, when syllables are sung at a very rapid pace. Then the composition is sung to the rhythmic accompaniment: the four lines, in serial order, are termed sthayi, antara, sanchari and aabhog. Compositions exist in the meters (tala) tivra (7 beats), sul (10 beats) and chau (12 beats) - a composition set to the 10-beat jhap tala is called a sadra while one set to the 14-beat dhamar is called a dhamar. The latter is seen as a lighter musical form, associated with the Holi spring festival. Alongside concert performance the practice of singing dhrupad in temples continues, though only a small number of recordings have been made. It bears little resemblance to concert dhrupad: there is very little or no alap; percussion such as bells and finger cymbals, not used in the classical setting, are used here, and the drum used is a smaller, older variant called mrdang, quite similar to the mridangam. There are said to be four broad stylistic variants (vanis or banis) of classical dhrupad – the Gauri (Gohar), Khandar, Nauhar, and Dagar, tentatively linked to five singing styles (geetis) known from the 7th Century: Shuddha, Bhinna, Gauri, Vegswara, and Sadharani. But more importantly, there are a number of dhrupad gharanas: "houses", or family styles.

druta: a description of tempo – twice as fast as a composition’s medium tempo
**drut laya**: fast - ranging from Allegro to Prestissimo. *Drut laya* may be either medium-slow, but still twice as fast as a composition’s medium tempo (*maddhya drut*), fast (*drut*) or very fast (*ati drut*).

**gamaka**: micro-tonal ornamentations of a melody, more commonly referred to as *shruti*.

**geet**: the Hindi word used to describe a song which roughly follows the Western hymn form in its lyrical style, that is, having many long verses and usually speaking about God rather than directly to God. A *geet* may also include testimonial songs that speak of the devotee’s sorrow for his or her sins, past life, and present struggles. C.H. Dicran say of the *geet*, however, "...is far too intertwined with the Western hymn."

**ghazal**: is a type of lyric in the Urdu language that was developed in India during the time of the Mughal emperors but made popular through the Hindi film industry in this century. Ghazals deal largely with the subject of love, but like much poetry of the Middle East, the “beloved” may be understood in a spiritual sense to be a divine being. The church has experimented with this form in worship, and most hymnbooks have a section of Christian ghazals. The language used is the flowery, poetic Urdu; the lyrics, often philosophical and pensive, and the musical style are usually slow. The ghazal form is as ideal for testimonial songs. Genre is influenced by Sufi mystics and many melodies are based on North Indian ragas.

**Hindustani**: the North Indian style of music (typically classical, but also folk music), originating in the Vedic period, evolving from the 12th century AD, in what is now northern India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, Nepal and Afghanistan. The terms North Indian Classical Music and Shāstriya Sangeet are also occasionally used interchangeably. The Hindustani music system uses different musical forms like the dhrupad, khyal, thumri, dadra, tarana and so on. Of these, the important ones are dhrupad, khyal and thumri. While the dhrupad is the oldest and most strict form in terms of grammar and format, the khyal permits more liberty. The thumri is the most flexible compared to the other two.

**kajari**: a genre of Hindustani classical music singing, popular in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. It is often used to describe the longing of a maiden for her lover as the black monsoon clouds come hanging in the summer skies, and the style is notably sung during the rainy season.

**khyal**: a genre of singing in North India. It is a flexible form, and provides greater scope for improvisation, is modal, with a single melodic line and no harmonic parts. Khyal bases itself on a repertoire of short songs (two to eight lines); a khyal song is called a bandish. Every singer generally renders the same bandish differently, with only the text and the raga remaining the same. The bandish is divided into two parts — the sthayi (or asthayi) and the antara. The sthayi often uses notes from the lower octave and the lower half of the middle octave, while the antara ascends to the tonic of the upper octave and beyond before descending and linking back to the sthayi. The singer uses the composition as raw material for improvisation, accompanied by a harmonium or bowed string instrument such as the sarangi or violin playing off the singer’s melody line, a set of two hand drums (the tabla), and a drone in the background. A typical khyal performance uses two songs — the bada khyal or great khyal, in slow tempo (vilambit laya), comprises most of the performance, while the chhota khyal (small khyal), in fast tempo (drut laya), is used as a finale and is usually in the same raga but a different taal. The songs are
sometimes preceded by improvised alap to sketch the basic raga structure without drum accompaniment; alap is given much less room in khyal than in dhrupad. As the songs are short, and performances long (half an hour or more), the lyrics lose some of their importance. Improvisation is added to the songs in a number of ways: for example improvising new ref:


**kirtan**: song form containing call and response. Also may refer to gatherings where such songs and other devotional songs are sung.

**komal**: a pitch that is lowered from its *shuddha* or unaltered state - may be applied to the 2nd (*re*), 3rd (*ga*), 6th (*dha*), and 7th (*ni*) degrees of the *thaat* of a particular *raga*.

**laya**: tempo, and/or the aesthetic pace of melodic flow

**matra**: pulse or beat within a *tala*.

**nyasa**: the note on which the melodic phrase ends or temporarily rests, usually indicated by its relatively long duration.

**nyasa tana**: phrase or song cadence

**pakad**: a musical phrase that encapsulates the essence of the raga

**powada**: song form (ref C.H. Dircan p.178)

**raga**: ([also spelled as *raag* and *rag*] Sanskrit rāga, literally... color, tone). Nazir Jairazbhoy, chairman of UCLA's department of ethnomusicology, characterized ragas as separated by scale, line of ascent/descent, transilience (meaning "leaping across" - scales in which a note/notes are omitted), emphasized notes and register, and intonation/ornamentation. The Raga Guide/Nimbus Records: "ragas have a particular scale and specific melodic movements... Harold S. Powers: 'A raga is not a tune, nor is it a modal scale, but rather a continuum with scale and tune as its extremes.' Thus a raga is far more precise and much richer than a scale or mode, and much less fixed than a particular tune. A raga usually includes quite a large number of traditional songs, composed in different genres by the great musicians of the past. But ragas also allow the present-day composer to create new songs, and to generate an almost infinite variety of melodic sequences. Broadly speaking then, a raga can be regarded as a tonal framework for composition and improvisation.

As well as the fixed scale, there are features particular to each raga such as the order and hierarchy of its tones, their manner of intonation and ornamentation, their relative strength and duration, and specific approach. Where ragas have identical scales, they are differentiated by virtue of these musical characteristics.
Ragas are not static. Some can be traced back to ancient or medieval times; others originated (or were rediscovered or reinvented) only a few centuries or even a few decades ago. Virtually all ragas, however, have undergone transformations over the centuries, and many of them have fallen into disuse. Most importantly, a raga must evoke a particular emotion or create a certain mood, color the mind, bring delight, move the listener and stimulate an emotional response."

The modal structure is called *thaat* in North Indian music. There is also the *jati*. Jati is the number of notes used in the raga. There must also be the ascending and descending structure. This is called *arohana /avarohana*. The notes don't have the same significance as some are important and others less so. The important notes are called *vadi* and *samavadi*. There are often characteristic movements to the raga. This element is called either *pakad* or *swarup*.

Some other less important features such as the time of the day to be played and families of male and female ragas (*raga, ragini, putra raga*, etc.) are also incorporated. There is a tendency to downgrade the importance of these latter aspects due to their unscientific nature.

In north India, the ragas have been categorized into 10 thaats or parent modes/scales (by Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande, 1860-1936). Ragas in the Hindustani system follow the 'law of consonances' established by Bharata in his Natyashastra, which does not tolerate deviation. (ref: Bor 1999; Ranade 2006, Courtney 2009)

**samvadi**: note of secondary importance, usually heard with the second greatest frequency and typically found to be an interval of a fourth or fifth from the vadi

**saptak**: an octave

**saptaka** (*see also thaat*): collection of seven notes, spoken/sung/referenced as *Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni* (*see also sargam*).

**sargam**: singing the *swaras* instead of the words of a composition. In Hindustani music, each pitch has a name: *shadja, rishabh, gandhar, madhyam, pancham, dhaivat* and *nishad*. When sung or referred to verbally, they become *Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha*, and *Ni*. This is also done in the domain of rhythm where various pulses exhibiting specific characteristics have unique names.

**shloka**: is a category of verse line developed from the Vedic Anustubh. It is the basis for Indian Epic verse, and may be considered the Indian verse form par excellence, occurring, as it does, far more frequently than any other meter in classical Sanskrit poetry (Macdonell, Arthur A., *A Sanskrit Grammar for Students*, Appendix II, p. 232(Oxford University Press, 3rd edition, 1927).

**shruti**: refers to a theoretical maximum of 22 microtonal notes possible in an octave.

**shuddha** – refers to a note or set of notes that are unaltered, e.g. *shuddha swara* of *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni*. This is essential raga *Bilaval* or in the Western sense, a major scale. (see the altered version terms of *teevra* and *komal*)

**sthayi**: first section of a composition.
sur: may refer to the tonal center (shadja) of the saptaka, or possibly the drone accompaniment (ref: Ranade 2006)

swaras: the term in modern practice typically refers to twelve, 100 cent semitones (ref Ranade 2006)

tala, a.k.a. taala, taal, tal (see also theka):
1. The system of rhythm in Indian music that includes concepts of tempo (laya), beat/pulse and its subdivisions (matra), duration (vibhag = measure), emphasized pulse (tali), non-emphasized pulse (khali) and set, identifiable, non-cyclic rhythmic patterns (theka) serving as models.
2. A cyclic arrangement of beats (matra), starting with a stress point called the sam and ending with a release point called the khali. The term avart can be used synonymously.

teevra (a.k.a. tivra): a pitch that is raised from its shuddha or unaltered state, typically limited to the 4th degree of madhyam (ma) and not applied to other degrees of the thaat.

thaat: collection of seven tones referencing the maximum number of modal notes in a raga, arranged sequentially. (see also saptaka)

theka: a set of diagnostic rhythmic patterns (non-cyclic) that define a tala (a cycle of beats)

thumri: song form considered as light classical as melodies do not strictly adhere to the raga structure and are based on less-weighty or mixed ragas. This form exists in both vocal and instrumental, providing light fare, and is frequently employed for concluding music concerts. The text of thumris are composed mainly in Braj Bhasha (an old Indian language) and the themes are predominantly romantic, particularly focusing on the separation of lovers and the pranks of Lord Krishna as a playful lover. These texts are invariably in the female voice. Thumris are usually composed only in certain ragas which belong to a group of ragas that are closely associated with folk music and also employs taals similar to those of folk rhythms. The structure of thumri consists of a Sthayi and Antara, and in some cases the Mukhda, i.e., the portion of the first line concluding on the Sam - the most important part of the composition. (also see ref C.H. Dircan p.178)

upanta swara: penultimate note of a cadence

vadi: note of primary importance, often heard with the greatest frequency

vikrit: refers to an altered note or note - essentially a note that is teevra or komal.

vilambit/vilabita/vilambit laya: an introductory slow tempo (laya), between 10 and 40 beats per minute

vivadi: a dissonant note and typically avoided
Musical Instruments

The Raga Guide (Bor 1999)
http://chandrakantha.com/
http://www.edmontonragamala.ab.ca/

bansuri & venu (flutes): Common Indian flutes typically made of bamboo or reed. There are two varieties; transverse and fipple. The transverse variety is nothing more than a length of bamboo with holes cut into it. This is the preferred flute for classical music because the embouchure gives added flexibility and control. The fipple variety is found in the folk and filmi styles. This is usually considered to be just a toy because the absence of any embouchure limits the flexibility of the instrument. The flute may be called many things in India: bansi, bansuri, murali, venu and many more. There are two main types; bansuri and venu. The bansuri is used in the North Indian system. It typically has six holes, however there has been a tendency in recent years to use seven holes for added flexibility and correctness of pitch in the higher registers. It was previously associated only with folk music, but today it is found in Hindustani classical, filmi, and numerous other genre. Venu is the South Indian flute and is used in the Carnatic system. It typically has eight holes. The venu is very popular in all south Indian styles. The bansuri is not just a musical instrument, because it has a great cultural and religious significance among Hindus. It is an instrument associated with Lord Krishna. Numerous common names reflect these epitaphs of Krishna. Common examples are: Venugopal, Bansilal, Murali, Muralidhar, etc. Furthermore, in traditional Indian metaphysics, it is noted how remarkable it is the way the life force (pran, or literally "breath") is converted into a musical resonance (sur).

bin (aka rudra vina): The bin is one of the oldest instruments in Indian music. Technically a stick zither, it consists of a fingerboard with two large gourd resonators at either end. The bin usually has four main playing strings, and two or three "chikari" strings used as rhythmic drones. It is used primarily in performance of Dhrupad, and as such is rather rare.

bulbul tarang (banjo): a common instrument in India, the name bulbul tarang literally translates to "waves of nightingales". It is made of a number of strings passing over what resembles a finger board. However, instead of directly fingering the keys, they are pressed with a series of keys like a piano. Sometimes the keys are similar to a piano keyboard, but more often they resemble typewriter keys. The instrument is common for folk musicians and children because of its very low price. It is an Indian version of the Japanese taisho koto. There is reason to believe that the taisho koto is a technical extension of the various pianolins, pianettes, and hurdy gurdies, that were popular in the 19th century in Japan.

chikara: a simple spike fiddle played with a bow in a fashion somewhat like a sarangi or saringda. There is also a smaller version known as chikari. The term Chikara is somewhat ambiguous; it is often applied to a variety of unrelated folk fiddles of northern India. In some cases it is a resonator which is penetrated by a spike and in other cases it is a thin, spike-like sarangi.
chimta: idiophone consisting of a pair of large tongs with jingles attached to both of the sides

dholak: a popular folk drum of northern India. It is barrel shaped with a simple membrane on the right hand side; basically it is just a smaller version of the dhol. The left hand is also a single membrane with a special application on the inner surface. This application is a mixture of tar, clay and sand (dholak masala) which lowers the pitch and provides a well-defined tone. There are two ways of tightening the dholak. Sometimes they are laced with rope, in which case, a series of metal rings are pulled to tighten the instrument. Sometimes metal turnbuckles are employed. It is said that this instrument used to occupy a position of considerable prestige. Today it is merely relegated to filmi and folk music.

dilruba: a cross between the sitar and sarangi, extremely close to the esraj and the mayuri vina. The difference is to be found in the shape of the resonators and the manner in which the sympathetic strings attach. The neck has approximately 18 strings. Like the sitar, almost all of the playing is performed upon only one string. There are a number of metallic frets, some of which will be moved according to the requirements of the rag. It has a series of sympathetic strings which are tuned to the notes of the rag. The dilruba is popular in north-west India. It is found in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra.

harmonium: The harmonium is also known as peti or baja. This instrument is not a native Indian instrument. It is a European instrument which was imported in the 19th century. It is a reed organ with hand pumped bellows. Although it is a relatively recent introduction, it has spread throughout the subcontinent. Today, it is used in virtually every musical genre except the south Indian classical. Although this is a European invention, it has evolved into a truly bi-cultural instrument. The keyboard is European, but it has a number of drone reeds which are particularly Indian. European models came in both hand pumped and foot pumped models. The foot pumped models disappeared in India many years ago. This is because the foot pedals required one to sit in a chair; something which is unusual for an Indian musician. Also the only advantage of the foot model was that it freed both hands so that both melody and chords could be played. Indian music has no chords, so this was no advantage. Although the hand pumped models required one hand to pump they were more portable and comfortable when played on the floor.

kamanche: a folk fiddle of Rajasthan (west of Uttar Pradesh). It is similar to the sarangi and saringda, in that it is a bowed instrument with a bridge set upon a taught membrane.

khanjari: Small sized frame drum struck with hands found in northern villages and may have jingles.

khartal (kartal, or khartaal) is an ancient instrument mainly used in devotional songs. It has derived its name from Hindi words ‘kara’ means hand and ‘tala’ means clapping. This wooden clapper is a Ghana Vadya which has discs or plates that produce a clinking sound when clapped together. It falls under the class of idiophones of self-sounding instruments that combine properties of vibrator and resonator. A pair of wooden castanets with little bells attached to them was the earliest form of the khartal. The modern day Kartal comprises two similar shaped wooden pieces that are approximately eight to twelve inches long and two to three inches wide. Small metal jingles or pieces are mounted to the wooden frames that produce rhythmic sound
when struck together. One of the pieces has a space for the thumb and the other to hold four fingers. To play the kartal thumb is attached to ring or main hole and remaining four fingers hold the other parts.

**manjira:** a pair of small hand cymbals. It is used in various religious ceremonies of India, especially bhajans—devotional songs dedicated to an Indian god or goddess. The manjira can also consist of a wooden frame with two long straight handles that connect to each other with two short wooden handles; the open space between the long handles has a wooden separator that separates two rows of three (total of six) brass jingles. Manjira is known by many names. It is also called *jhanj, tala, mondira,* (small size) kafi (large size), or a host of other names. It is a ubiquitous component of dance music and *bhajans.* It is a very ancient instrument; examples may be seen on temple walls going back to the earliest of times. They are usually made of brass.

**mridanga:** two-headed drum similar to the *dholak*

**mohan veena:** an adaptation of the Western acoustic guitar by Brij Bhushan Kabra who introduced this western instrument to North Indian classical music in the sixties and seventies. Later, a well-known musician, Vishwa Mohan Bhatt not only made it popular in India but also established it on the on the international platform. In order to bring it nearer to other Indian classical instruments, Kabra added three drone and two chikari strings. Bhatt started his experiments of addition and modification in the early seventies, retaining the basic structure, but changing the sound – so that it became altogether a new instrument. Bhatt developed his own playing style, mixing the techniques of the sitar, sarod and veena and re-christened his instrument as the Mohan Veena. The Mohan Veena consists of 3 melodic strings, 5 drone strings and a further 12 sympathetic strings and its tuning varies according to the particular raga being played.

**pena:** (a.k.a. bana, bena, or tingtelia) is a bowed lute found in North East India and Bangladesh. It is used in folk music as well as the accompaniment of the Manipuri dance styles. It is part of a culture of bowed instruments which extends throughout north India. As such, the pena is remarkably similar to the ravanhatta found in Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Rajasthan, and the ubo found in Manipur and Nagaland, or the kenda found among the Munda (Mundari) of Northern India and Bangladesh. In Manipur, it is usually known as pena, but the Nagas often refer to this as tingtalia. In Manipur, the pena has a rich tradition. At one time, this instrument was played in royal courts and was considered part of the "high culture" of the region. Today, it is usually associated with folk music and the traditional Manipuri dance. It is still occasionally used for funerals and weddings. The instrument consists of two basic parts. There is the body of the instrument and there is the bow. The main body of the instrument is made by taking a length of bamboo and passing it through a half coconut shell. This forms the neck of the instrument roughly 10-11 inches in length and roughly 1 to 1.25 inches in diameter. It is trimmed at the base and then passes through two holes cut in the half coconut shell. The largest opening is covered with some type of skin or membrane. There is also a tuning peg used to control the tension on the string. It is interesting to note that the number of performers of this instrument have been declining.

**rabab:** an ancient instrument found primarily in Afghanistan but in India is common in Kashmir. It is a hollowed-out body of wood with a membrane stretched over the opening. Combinations
of gut (or nylon) and metal strings pass over a bridge which rests on a taught membrane.

**santur:** an instrument indigenous to Kashmir, but nowadays played throughout the North. It is a hammered dulcimer which is struck with light wooden mallets. The number of strings may be as few as 24 or more than 100. Typical sizes tend to be around 80. It has a vibrant tone and has become very popular in the last 20 years. One must not confuse the Indian santur with the Persian santur (also santoor). The Indian santur is box-like while the Persian version is much wider.

**saringda:** a bowed folk fiddle of the sarangi class. It is found in Northern India, Pakistan, and Nepal. There is actually no consensus as to whether this instrument deserves to be considered a separate instrument, or just another variation upon the sarangi. For those who are disposed to consider saringda to be a separate instrument, it is differentiated from the sarangi by its shape. The base of the saringda is rounded or pointed where the base of the sarangi is square. Furthermore, the neck has a different shape.

**saringi:** is squat and box-like, carved from a single piece of hardwood (usually Indian Cedar), with three gut melody strings (tuned do-so-do) and a baffling array of up to 40 metal tarab (sympathetic strings). The body has a goatskin face on which rests an elephant-shaped bridge of ivory or bone. The sarangi is held vertically, neck uppermost, and the strings are stopped not with the fingertips but with the backs of the nails. A characteristic feature of sarangi playing is the very smooth meend (glissandos) and gamakas (oscillations around the note). Talcum powder is used on the palms of the hands to facilitate easy sliding on the neck. The heavy bow is held with an underhand grip, the first and second fingers placed between the hair and the stick.

**sarod:** an instrument derived from the rabab, is a result of the Mogal influence in N. India, and is considered more of a classical instrument than a traditional one. It is not an ancient instrument, probably no more than 150 to 200 years. It is essentially a bass rabab. It has a metal fingerboard with no frets. The bridge rests on a taut membrane which covers the resonator. The sarod has numerous strings, some of which are drone, some are played, and some are sympathetic. The approach to tuning is somewhat similar to other stringed instruments. It is played with a pick made of coconut shell.

**shehnai:** a double-reed wind instrument (like an oboe). Traditionally it was used mostly for outdoor celebrations, and for temple music. More recently it has been used as a concert instrument as well.

**surpeti:** Also called swar pethi, swar peti, swarpeti, surpeti, sur peti, sruti box, or shruti box, is an Indian drone instrument, similar to the harmonium, but having no keys. It is a small box whose only function is to provide the drone. There are two, basic forms, one is manual and the other is electronic. The manual surpeti is similar to the harmonium. It is a small free reed organ. It is pumped by some small bellows with the hand. In the last few decades, the electronic versions have become very popular. The electronic ones have evolved considerably over the last few years. Original versions were simple analogue devices that tended to drift and were unreliable. However, advances in digital technology have brought them to a very high level of reliability. Today, it is even common for them to give the sounds and character of the tambura. Such versions are even commonly referred to as "electronic tamburas".
**tabla:** a popular Indian percussion instrument used in the classical, popular and devotional music of the Indian subcontinent and in Hindustani classical music. The instrument consists of a pair of hand drums of contrasting sizes and timbres. The lower drum is called the *bayan* or *duggi* and the higher drum is called the *dayan, daya*, or simply *tabla*. The term *tabla* is derived from an Arabic word, *tabl*, which simply means "drum."

**tanpura:** a drone instrument resembling a sitar except it has no frets. It has four strings: 2 tuned a tonic in 8ves and a 5th in 8ves. The word "tanpura" (tanpoora) is common in the north, but in south India it is called "tambura", "thamboora", "thambura", or "tamboora". The tanpura is known for its very rich sound. There are three main styles; the Miraj style, the Tanjore style and the small instrumental version sometimes called tamburi. The Miraj style is the typical north Indian tanpura (tambura). This is the favourite of Hindustani musicians. It typically is between 3 to 5 feet in length. It is characterized by a pear shaped, well rounded tabali (resonator face) and non-tapering neck. It usually has a resonator made of a gourd, but resonators are also made of wood.

**ustad:** a master of the music and performance technique usually belonging to a particular gharana, or school.
Cultural and Hindu Religion Terms

**aarti** = a religious ritual of worship, a form of puja, in which light from wicks soaked in ghee (purified butter) or camphor is offered to one or more deities. Aartis also refer to the songs sung in praise of the deity, when offering of lamps is being offered.

**akhara/akharas** = religious school/schools of which there are 13 major institutions, but the most prominent at bathing festivals are the Juna and Niranjani

**ashram**: Sanskrit Āsrama, from Srama religious exercise. 1: a secluded dwelling of a Hindu sage; also: the group of disciples instructed there. 2: a religious retreat

**bhakti** - devotion to God

**gharana**: In Hindustani music, a gharana is a system of social organization linking musicians or dancers by lineage and/or apprenticeship, and by adherence to a particular musical style. A gharana also indicates a comprehensive musicological ideology. The word gharana comes from the Hindi word 'ghar', which means 'family' or 'house' and it implies the house of the teacher. It was linked to the very ancient concept of the Guru-Shishya-Parampara (lineage of teacher/disciple). It typically refers to the place where the musical ideology originated; for example, some of the gharanas well known for singing khyals are: Agra, Gwalior, Indore, Jaipur, Kirana, and Patiala.

**gulab jaman** = donut holes soaked in syrup, often offered to Hindu gods

**guru** - teacher

**guru-shishya parampara**: preceptor-disciple tradition. Also known as a gurukul or gurukul system. A guru is regarded as the metaphysical father of his disciple and is ranked higher than biological parents. The gurukul (guru's dynasty or family) system dates back to the Vedic period. In the gurukul system of education, a pupil or shishya, after his initiation (sacred thread ceremony), lived in the house of his guru, or teacher, and studied the Vedas and other subjects under his guidance, for a period of 12 years. Gurus were expected to teach everything they knew to the disciple. The institution was accessible only to the upper classes. The gurukuls were well supported by kings who considered it their duty to make them financially viable.

**mandir** – temple

**naam jap** – naam implies the name of (a) god(s), and jap means recitation. It is a Hindu practice of reciting the name of a god or gods, believed to quiet the mind and purify the soul.

**om** - Hindu syllable which symbolizes the essence of the universe

**pandal** - enclosed tentlike structures constructed and used for extended time periods on special occasions. They can be used for gatherings of devotees, idols or both.
**pujah** - a religious ritual performed as an offering to various deities, distinguished persons, or special guests. It is done on a variety of occasions and settings, from daily puja done in the home, to temple ceremonies and large festivals, or to begin a new venture. Puja is modeled on the idea of giving a gift or offering to a deity or important person and receiving their blessing.

**pujari** – temple priest

**sadhu/sadhus** = Hindu holy man/men, usually ascetics

**sangam** - confluence of rivers, (also, union of 2 hearts). At Allahabad, it is the confluence of the physical waters of the Ganga, the Yamuna and mythical Saraswati river (which is said to have gone underground and cannot be seen). The sangam of the Ganga and Yamuna proceeds towards Varanasi and is said to include the waters of invisible Saraswati. Hence the stream beyond the sangam is also called TRIVENI (confluence of the three). When folks say they are going to the sangam during one of the Melas, they mean they are going to the Mela which is held at the sangam/confluence of the rivers.

**sangeet** - sung together, or singing with instrumental accompaniment.

**satsang**: (Sanskrit sat = true, sanga = company) is in Indian philosophy (1) the company of the "highest truth," (2) the company of a guru, or (3) company with an assembly of persons who listen to, talk about, and assimilate the truth. This typically involves listening to or reading scriptures, reflecting on, discussing and assimilating their meaning, meditating on the source of these words, and bringing their meaning into one's daily life.

**shakti** - power of God

**shishya** - student

**shruti** - directly revealed truth

**smriti** – remembered truth
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