

Joep Bor

Three Important Essays on Hindustani Music¹

There are three essays I often return to. The first one is *On the Musical Modes of the Hindus* by the great British orientalist Sir William Jones, the second is *A Treatise on the Music of Hindoostan* by Captain N. Augustus Willard, and the third *A Short Historical Survey of the Music of Upper India* by Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande, northern India's most influential musicologist in the early twentieth century. In different ways these three essays have left an indelible mark on research into Hindustani music.

William Jones, as several scholars have pointed out, was a versatile philologist and a polymath who pioneered new fields of research and wrote on a wide range of topics, including Indian music. His publications, especially his translations of Kalidasa's play *Sakuntala* and Jayadeva's lyrical poem *Gitagovinda*, had a profound influence on scholars and philosophers in England, France and Germany, and also affected major nineteenth-century poets and novelists.² *On the Musical Modes of the Hindus* was written in 1784 and published eight years later in the third volume of *Asiatic Researches*, the widely read transactions of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.³ It was first reprinted ("verbatim from the Calcutta edition") in London in 1799, and a German translation of it appeared as early as 1802 in *Ueber die Musik der Indier*, a richly illustrated anthology of various European writings on Indian music compiled by Friedrich Hugo von Dalberg.⁴

¹ A revised version of this paper was used as part of the introduction of *The Emergence of Hindustani Music*; see Bor, Delvoye, Harvey and Nijenhuis 2006.

² See Schwab 1984.

³ In the first volume of the society's journal (1788) there appears an extract of a letter by Francis Fowke. It contains a fairly accurate description of the *bin* and also an illustration of the renowned *bin* player Jivan Shah, which was copied several times in nineteenth-century histories of music. Francis' sister Margaret was an avid collector of "Hindostannic" airs, and William Jones assisted her with the translation of the lyrics. Through the Fowkes, Jones heard Jivan Shah in Benares, and this may have inspired him to write his well-known essay. See Woodfield 2000.

⁴ Jones 1799; Dalberg 1802.

On the Musical Modes of the Hindus is of little relevance today. But two hundred years ago when virtually nothing was known about Indian music in Europe it was a landmark. It was the main source on India for scholars who began debating the origins of music in their general histories. In many of these works, even in some of the histories that appeared at the beginning of the twentieth century, William Jones is quoted as *the* authority of Indian music. While Jones glorified the greatness of India's past and had more appreciation for Sanskrit texts on music than the music itself, the importance of his work was that he made European scholars aware of the unique system of Indian ragas. Writing about modes in general he noted:

since many of them are unpleasing to the ear, others difficult in execution, and few sufficiently marked by a character of sentiment and expression, which the higher musick always requires, the genius of the *Indians* has enabled them to retain the *number* of modes, which nature seems to have indicated, and to give each of them a character of its own by a happy and beautiful contrivance.⁵

After the publication of this article music scholars in Europe could no longer deny that India's culture was deeply rooted in the past. To a certain extent it put Indian art music on an equal footing with Western classical music. It also stimulated historical research by both Indian and Western scholars, which led to the "discovery" of numerous manuscripts of musicological treatises that had been preserved in Indian palace libraries. Some of these manuscripts and several series of *ragamala* paintings collected or commissioned by Jones' friend Richard Johnson found their way to the India Office Library in London.⁶

While it is undeniable that William Jones was deeply interested in Indian music and inspired his friends to explore it, he created a one-sided picture of it as an ancient "Hindu" art. Expressing (or appropriating) the views of the Brahmin pandits he consulted, Jones thought that "although the *Sanscrit* books have preserved the theory of their musical composition, the practice of it seems almost wholly lost ...".⁷ In his opinion:

⁵ Jones 1799: 60. On p. 71 he writes: "Rága, which I translate a *mode*, properly signifies a *passion* or *affection* of the mind, each mode being intended ... to move one or another of our simple or mixed affections ...".

⁶ Falk and Archer 1981: 14-26.

⁷ Jones 1799: 83.

a man, who knows the *Hindus* only from *Persian* books, does not know the *Hindus*; and ... an *European*, who follows the muddy rivulets of *Muselman* writers on *India*, instead of drinking from the pure fountain of *Hindu* learning, will be in perpetual danger of misleading himself and others.⁸

In other words, Jones was prejudiced and had little sympathy for Muslim scholarship on Indian music. He rejected Abu'l Fazl's *A'in-i Akbari* (1593), the Persian translation of the *Sangitadarpana* by Ras Baras Khan, and even Mirza Khan's popular *Tuhfat al-Hind* (c.1675) which he frequently quotes.⁹ Instead he promoted the idea that "ancient" Sanskrit treatises such as Somanatha's *Ragavibodha* (1609), Damodara's *Sangitadarpana* (c.1625) and Narayanadeva's *Sangitanarayana* (c.1660) were far more reliable and authentic, although these works were written in the seventeenth century!¹⁰ Many music scholars in India and the West seem to have embraced this idea, and as a result Indo-Persian literature on music was largely ignored.

Fifty years after Jones wrote his well-known paper, *A Treatise on the Music of Hindoostan* was published in Calcutta.¹¹ The aim of this work was to elucidate to European readers both the theory and practice of Hindustani music, and to reconcile current practice with early theory. According to its author, Captain N. Augustus Willard, "books alone are insufficient for this purpose—we must endeavour to procure solutions from living professors, of whom there are several, although grossly illiterate".¹² This was a time-consuming project, and "few persons have inclination, leisure, and opportunities sufficient for an undertaking in itself so complicated, and rendered more so from the want of perspicuous definitions".¹³ In Willard's opinion, this was "the reason why even so able and eminent an Orientalist as Sir William Jones has failed".¹⁴ Indeed, he paints a far more realistic and reliable picture of Hindustani music than his British precursor. His treatise contains an excellent glossary of "the most useful musical terms" and

⁸ Ibid: 65.

⁹ See Delvoye 1994: 102-3.

¹⁰ See Farrell 1997: 23-28.

¹¹ Willard 1834.

¹² Willard 1965: 3.

¹³ Ibid: 21.

¹⁴ Ibid. On page 11 he writes: "Sir William Jones, it seems, confined his search to that phoenix, a learned Pandit, who might likewise be a musician, but, I believe such a person does not exist in Hindoostan for reasons which shall be hereafter noticed".

outstanding descriptions of the current vocal styles and musical instruments. It also lists the popular ragas and talas.

Not much is known about this author, but he was probably the son of a British musician and had an Indian mother.¹⁵ As “a skilful performer himself on several [Indian] instruments”, N.A. Willard had a thorough knowledge of the current practice and knew the musicians’ jargon.¹⁶ And as an officer in the service of the music-loving ruler of Banda, Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Bahadur, he had direct access to the master musicians who performed at the court. Instead of relying only on texts such as Mirza Khan’s *Tuhfat al-Hind*, he consulted well-known performers, both Hindu and Muslim, and the music scholar Hakim Salamat Ali Khan from Benares, himself the author of a treatise called *Mutula al-Hind*.¹⁷ In Willard’s words:

The only way by which perfection in this can be attained is by studying the original works, and consulting the best living performers, both vocal and instrumental.... Indeed, without the assistance of learned natives, the search would be entirely fruitless. The theory is so little discussed at present, that few even of the best performers have the least knowledge of any thing but the practical part, in which to their credit it must be acknowledged they excel.¹⁸

In an earlier paper I have argued that Willard may be regarded as one of the first ethnomusicologists in that he conducted “fieldwork” with musicians.¹⁹ His work is also one of the first modern studies of Hindustani music theory, “noticing as much of it as is confirmed by the practice of the present day”.²⁰ Indeed, in Willard’s view, theory that was not based on practice had no meaning.

A Treatise on the Music of Hindoostan appeared at a crucial time in the history of north Indian music. *Dhrupad* was on the decline, and *khayal*, *tappa* and *thumri* had emerged as the predominant vocal genres. The “modern” *sitar* was “very much admired ... both by professional men and amateurs”, and the novel *tabla* was “selected as the fittest counterpart with the Sarungee [*sarangi*] to the silver tones of the modern meretricious Hindoo dancing girl”,

¹⁵ Bor 1988: 58-59.

¹⁶ Anonymous 1834; see Tagore 1965: 235.

¹⁷ Willard 1965: 12. The *Mutula al-Hind* is kept in the Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library in Patna (Acc. 2935/2); personal communication, Dilrom Karomat.

¹⁸ Willard 1965: 21.

¹⁹ Bor 1988: 58-59.

²⁰ Willard 1965: 12.

while the Pathan *rabab* - the forerunner of today's *sarod* - was "very common at Rampoor".²¹ Unsurprisingly, few music scholars in Europe were able to evaluate Willard's work. None of them was acquainted with Hindustani music, and as Captain C.R. Day put it in 1891, the reader had "to possess a considerable previous knowledge of the subject".²² But to those who knew the subject it was clear that the treatise was a major contribution. For this reason Raja S.M. Tagore reprinted it in 1875 and 1882 (together with William Jones' essay and other European writings) in his valuable anthology *Hindu Music from Various Authors*.²³

Although written in English, Willard's work belongs to the large corpus of Persian texts on Hindustani music in that it borrows material from such texts and explores both early theory and current practice. However, as Willard emphasizes in the preface, his work was not "a translation of any of the existing treatises on music, but an original work ...".²⁴ As a source of early nineteenth-century Hindustani music history I think it is as relevant as Muhammad Karam Imam Khan's *Ma'dan al-Musiqi* (c.1857).

Captain Willard thought that the music of northern India "arrived at its greatest height during the flourishing period of the native princes, just a little before the Mahomedan conquest, and its subsequent depravity and decline since then, closed the scene with the usual catastrophe".²⁵ Like Willard, Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande was of the opinion that the rise of Muslim power in northern India:

marked the date of the decline of all arts and sciences purely Hindu. The conquerors, we can easily understand, were no lovers or patrons of learning. During those unsettled times the progress of the study of

²¹ Ibid: 94-99.

²² Day 1990: xv. On page 160 he writes: "the author's meaning is in places rather vague, and apt to be misleading to those who have not studied the subject". However, Day was influenced by the work of Willard, and frequently paraphrases him.

²³ Tagore 1965.

²⁴ Willard 1965: 12.

²⁵ Ibid: 28-29. Willard also noted: "At present most native performers of this noble science are the most immoral set of men on earth, and the term is another word for all that is abominable, synonymous with that of the most abandoned and profligate exercises under the sun", and on page 120 he writes: "The progress of the theory of music once arrested, its decline was speedy; although the practice, which contributed to the entertainment of the princes and nobles, continued until the time of Mohummud Shah, after whose reign history is fact replete with dismal scenes".

the science or theory of music was bound to decline and, as a matter of fact, did decline. The practice, however, continued with more or less success until the time of Mahomed Shah, one of the successors of Aurangzeb.²⁶

But Bhatkhande seriously doubted that Hindustani music had deteriorated “by falling into the hands of the foreigners”. Although changes in taste and patronage had had a profound effect on the music, he thought that it had “gained considerably from the foreign influence”.²⁷

We can read this interesting thought in *A Short Historical Survey of the Music of Upper India*, the paper V.N. Bhatkhande read on 20 March 1916 at First All-India Music Conference which was held in the hall of the Baroda College, and attended by some of the leading court musicians and music scholars of the time.²⁸ The essay summarizes the views he had presented in earlier works, especially in the first three volumes of his *Hindustani Sangit Paddhati*. It gives an excellent overview of the musicological treatises that were available to him at the time, including Pundarikavithala’s *Sadragacandrodaya* (c.1560-70), Somanatha’s *Ragavibodha* (1609), Ahobala’s *Sangitaparijata* (c.1665), Locana Kavi’s *Ragatarangini* (c.1665) and Muhammad (or Ghulam) Reza Khan’s *Usul al-Naghmat-i Asafi*. The latter work was written in Lucknow, probably at the request of Richard Johnson.²⁹ It inspired Bhatkhande to discard the popular *raga-ragini* classification and adopt the scale of Bilaval as “the foundation scale of our modern Hindustani music”.³⁰

While Bhatkhande saw continuities in several sixteenth- to eighteenth-century works for contemporary Hindustani music, he rejected the authority of Bharata’s *Natyasastra* (c.200 AD), which “says absolutely nothing about *ragas* and *raginis*, but deals [...] with the *shrutis*, *gramas*, *murchhanas*, and

²⁶ Bhatkhande 1934: 20.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Some of the musicians mentioned in the *Report of the First All-India Music Conference* (1917) are dhrupad singer Zakiruddin Khan of Udaipur, *binkar* Musharraf Khan of Alwar, *sitar* player Imdad Khan of Indore, vocalists Kallan Khan and Ali Hussain Khan of Jaipur, *binkar* Jamaluddin Khan and vocalists Faiz Muhammad Khan and Faiyaz Khan of Baroda, vocalist Vishnu Digambar Paluskar of Bombay, and *vina* players Venkataramana Das of Vijayanagar and Vina Dhanam of Madras.

²⁹ Falk and Archer 1981: 23.

³⁰ Bhatkhande 1934: 35.

jatis of the ancient Hindu Music”.³¹ And about the venerated thirteenth-century treatise *Sangitaratnakara* he said:

Although this work is looked upon to-day as the first and foremost of our authorities, it must be noted that its music is not clearly understood in any part of the country. This statement will, no doubt, sound somewhat paradoxical but the fact remains that there is not a single scholar in India, at present, who has been successful in solving the *ragas* elaborately described in *Ratnakara*. Nay! Even the question, whether *Ratnakara* is a northern or a southern authority, has yet to be satisfactorily solved.³²

In other words, Bhatkhande challenged the orthodox view that the practice and theory of Hindustani art music can directly be traced back to the ancient and medieval treatises. As was to be expected this led to heated debates at the conference.

After the publication of Bhatkhande’s works a substantial number of historical studies on Indian music appeared in the twentieth century. A surge of critical editions and English translations of important treatises makes the Sanskrit musicological tradition widely available. Today, many scholars agree with Bhatkhande that the seminal *Natyasastra* refers to a sophisticated performance tradition of theatre music that vanished more than a millennium ago. Despite the appearance of continuity which later Sanskrit writers were keen to foster, there was a break in the tradition sometime during the second half of the first millennium.³³ The ancient musical modes, forms and styles, and many of the instruments were no longer relevant to contemporary practice.

However, scholars are still wondering which aspects of medieval performance practice are alive in today’s Hindustani music, and to what extent it borrowed ideas from Persian and Central Asian music. Put in another way, what was the impact of the musical encounter that took place in Delhi and other Muslim courts in India after the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, and later the Mughal Empire? Did the court-based musical systems exist side-by-side as John Andrew Greig has suggested, or did the encounter result in a “synthesis” of Indian and Persian art music, as Madhu Trivedi

³¹ Bhatkhande 1934: 4.

³² Ibid: 14.

³³ Widdess 1995: 368.

argues in a recent paper?³⁴ Is Hindustani music indeed a hybrid or crossover as many writers take for granted today? If so, what hard evidence do we have that it assimilated Persian and Central Asian modes, genres, styles and instruments?

In order to answer such fundamental questions we should ignore what William Jones wrote more than two centuries ago about the Muslim writers on music and explore other sources in addition to the Sanskrit treatises. Yet it is only during the last four decades or so that musicologists have begun to recognize that works in Persian and Indian regional languages contain a wealth of musical detail and provide first-hand information on performers. Abdul Halim, K.C.D. Brahaspati, Shahab Sarmadee and Françoise ‘Nalini’ Delvoye have played an important role in creating this awareness. In various books and papers these scholars have demonstrated that the Muslim authors perceived and presented north Indian music in a different way from their Hindu colleagues, and that present-day Hindustani music owes much of its depth and finesse to the musicians and composers employed at the Mughal court.³⁵ Historical musical instruments and the marvellous paintings and book illustrations in which they are depicted are also essential witnesses in unravelling the complex history of north Indian music.³⁶ Thanks to these varied sources we understand that in spite of a remarkable continuity many alterations have taken place in its practice and theory.

Bibliography

Anonymous, “Willard’s Treatise on the Music of Hindustan”, *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, 25, 1834; rpt. in *Hindu Music from Various Authors*, ed. S.M. Tagore, Varanasi: Chowkhamba, 3rd edn., 1965, pp. 235-39.

Bhatkhande, V.N., *A Short Historical Survey of the Music of Upper India*, Bombay: Karkhoro Maneckji Minocher-Honjj., 1917; rpt. Bombay: B.S. Sukthankar, 1934; Baroda: Indian Musicological Society, 1987.

Bor, J., “The Rise of Ethnomusicology: Sources on Indian Music c.1780 - c.1890”, *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 20, 1988, pp. 51-73.

Bor, J. and P. Bruguère, eds., *Gloire des princes, louange des dieux: Patrimoine musical de l’Hindoustan du XIV^e au XX^e siècle*, Paris: Musée de la Musique and RMN, 2003.

³⁴ Greig 1987; Trivedi 2006.

³⁵ See for example Halim 1962; Brahaspati 1974, 1976; Sarmadee 1978, 1996, 2003a, 2003b; Delvoye 1994, 2000.

³⁶ See Wade 1998; Bor and Bruguère 2003.

- Bor, J., F.N. Delvoye, J. Harvey and E. te Nijenhuis, eds., *The Emergence of Hindustani Music: Thirteenth to the Twentieth Centuries*, New Delhi: Manohar and Codarts Research, 2006 (forthcoming).
- Brahaspati, K.C., *Musalman Aur Bharatiya Sangit*, Delhi: Rajkamal Prakashan, 1974.
- , *Sangit Cintamani*, Hathras: Sangeet Karyalaya, 1976.
- Dalberg, F.H. von, Ueber die Musik der Indier: Eine Abhandlung des Sir William Jones, Erfurt: Beyer und Maring, 1802.
- Day, C.R., *The Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India and The Deccan*, London and New York: Novello, 1891; rpt. Delhi: B. R. Publishing Corp., 1977; Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1990.
- Delvoye, F.N., "Indo-Persian Literature on Art-Music: Some Historical and Technical Aspects", *Confluences of Cultures: French Contributions to Indo-Persian Studies*, ed. F.N. Delvoye, New Delhi: Manohar, 1994; rpt. 1995, pp. 93-130.
- , "Indo-Persian Accounts on Music Patronage in the Sultanate of Gujarat", *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture: Indian and French Studies*, eds. M. Alam, F.N. Delvoye and M. Gaborieau, New Delhi: Manohar, 2000, pp. 253-80.
- Falk, T. and M. Archer, *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London: Sotheby Parke Bernet, Delhi and Karachi: OUP, 1981.
- Farrell, G., *Indian Music and the West*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997.
- Greig, J.A., *Tarikh-i Sangita: The Foundations of North Indian Music in the Sixteenth Century*, Ph.D. diss., Los Angeles: University of California, 1987.
- Halim, A., *Essays on History of Indo-Pak Music*, Dacca: Asiatic Press, 1962.
- Jones, W., "On the Musical Modes of the Hindus", *Asiatic Researches*, 3, 1792; rpt. London, 1799, pp. 55-87; trans. as *Ueber die Musik der Indier: Eine Abhandlung des Sir William Jones*, by F.H. von Dalberg, Erfurt: Beyer und Maring, 1802; rpt. in *Hindu Music from Various Authors*, ed. S.M. Tagore, Calcutta: Babu Panchanun Mukherjea, 1875; Calcutta: I.C. Bose & Co., 1882; Varanasi: Chowkhamba, 1965, pp. 125-60; rpt. in E. Rosenthal, *The Story of Indian Music and its Instruments*, London: William Reeves, 1928; New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1970, pp. 157-204; rpt. in W. Jones and N.A. Willard, *Music of India*, Calcutta: Susila Gupta, 1962, pp. 89-112.
- Report of the First All-India Music Conference Held in Baroda, Baroda: Baroda Printing Works, 1917.
- Sarmadee, S., ed., *Ghunyat-ul-Munya: The Earliest Known Persian Work on Indian Music*, Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1978.
- , ed. and trans., *Tarjuma-i-Manakutuhala & Risala-i-Ragadarpana by Faqirullah (Nawab Saif Khan)*, New Delhi: IGNCA and Motilal Banarsidass, 1996.

-----, *Nur-Ratnakar*, vol. 1, eds. P.L. Sharma and F.N. Delvoeye, Calcutta: Sangeet Research Academy, 2003.

-----, trans., Ghunyat'u'l Munya: The Earliest Persian Work on Indian Classical Music, New Delhi: ICHR / Northern Book Centre, 2003.

Schwab, R., *La Renaissance orientale*, Paris: Editions Payot, 1950; trans. as *The Oriental Renaissance: Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East, 1680-1880*, by G. Patterson-Black and V. Reinking, New York: Columbia University Press, 1984.

Tagore, S.M., ed., *Hindu Music from Various Authors*, Calcutta: Babu Panchanun Mukherjea, 1875; Calcutta: I.C. Bose & Co., 1882; Varanasi: Chowkhamba, 1965.

Trivedi, M., "Music Patronage in the Indo-Persian Context: An Historical Overview", *The Emergence of Hindustani Music: North Indian Music from the Thirteenth to the Twentieth Century*, eds. J. Bor, F.N. Delvoeye, J. Harvey and E. te Nijenhuis, New Delhi: Manohar and Codarts Research, 2006 (forthcoming).

Wade, B.C., *Imaging Sound: An Ethnomusicological Study of Music, Art, and Culture in Mughal India*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Widdess, R., *The Ragas of Early Indian Music: Modes, Melodies and Musical Notations from the Gupta Period to c.1250*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.

Willard, N.A., *A Treatise on the Music of Hindoostan: Comprising a Detail of the Ancient Theory and Modern Practice*, Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1834; rpt. in *Hindu Music from Various Authors*, ed. S.M. Tagore, Calcutta: Babu Panchanun Mukherjea, 1875; Calcutta: I.C. Bose & Co., 1882; Varanasi: Chowkhamba, 1965, pp. i-ix, 1-122; rpt. in W. Jones and N.A. Willard, *Music of India*, Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1962, pp. 1-87.

Woodfield, I., *Music of the Raj: A Social and Economic History of Music in late Eighteenth-Century Anglo-Indian Society*, Oxford: OUP, 2000.

Discussion

AP - Have the Indo-Persian interactions enriched the performing traditions of Indian music?

JB - Absolutely. As Pandit Bhatkhande has pointed out, the Indo-Persian interactions have enriched Indian music in many ways. Many vocal and instrumental genres as well as instruments including the *sitar* came from Persia. *Sitar* was perhaps introduced by 1700 A.D., around 1800, it was an Indian instrument with typical *jawari* bridge and frets on which ornamentation like *mind* could be executed. This is how musical systems existed side-by-side influencing each other. However, we often hear that

Hindustani music is a crossover between the indigenous music and the Persian-Central Asian music.

AP - Would you say that the South Indian system has not benefited from these interactions?

JB - This is the other common thought that the South Indian system has remained unaffected. In that sense, many people believe that the South Indian music is more authentic. Although I have not studied the subject, I have great doubts about the validity of this point. The *Vina* in this tradition is a 17th century instrument. Although *mridangam* is an ancient instrument, violin was introduced only in the 18th century. The three great composers also belonged to much later period. It is clear that so many changes have taken place in this system as well. It is necessary for things to keep on changing. Otherwise, the music will be dead.

ND - You mentioned that you learnt from a Hindu as well as a Muslim guru, and as accompanying artistes, their approach to music was quite different. Can you elaborate on that with respect to their religious attribute?

JB - The difference was not so much in the accompaniment but musically I find that the artistes like Bundu Khan had a relation to the musical traditions of Sindh and Baluchistan. It's an ecstatic music. There is no pause. When I was making this statement, I had the feeling that I am saying something risky without having proper evidence, but I am sure if someone were to analyze these traditions, they will arrive at similar conclusions. I was also hinting at the difference in their approach to living, teaching and learning.

AP - You have indeed made a very dangerous statement, particularly in the present context when performers of today are talking about a "Hindu *svar*" and a "Muslim *svar*", one being "pure" and the other "impure". We have to be very careful in making such statements. Perhaps with systematic music analysis, we will be in a position to point out the difference between these approaches. How relevant is it to examine the social and political contexts in which William Jones, Willard or Bhatkhande wrote on music? Can you study their writings in a vacuum or do you connect that to the respective environment? By saying that our tradition is 5000 years old and attempting to Sanskritize the tradition is a part of political discourse too.

JB - You are right, these authors should be studied in their own cultural context and time. I have not doubted that but in the paper that Bhatkhande read in 1916, he was quite insulting to the professional musicians. Of course,

it was a different time and there was a whole movement to create a national awareness about music. I know it is dangerous to talk about Hindu and Muslim, but I don't say this to create any conflict, on the contrary. Somehow, I feel that in the world of scholarship, these were two separate worlds. This I experienced when I studied with Dr. Premlata Sharma and Prof. Shahab Sarmadee. It is amazing that despite being in the same country, and sharing the same passion and knowledge about music, they had neither met nor known about each other until 1984.

SC - I want to draw attention to the recorded material available on this subject. The Gramophone Recording Company made recordings from 1899 onwards and covered Iran as well. Mr. Michael Kinnear has brought out a catalogue entitled, Gramophone Company's Persian Recordings from 1899-1934. Like the efforts made in India to revive some old recordings, we may perhaps find out whether similar efforts have been made in Iran. We can then use these recordings to analyze and compare the two traditions.