Listening Out for Sangīt Encounters
Dynamics of Knowledge and Power in Hindustani Classical Instrumental Music

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Eva-Maria Alexandra van Straaten
aus Haarlem, Niederlande

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I am sitting in front of my laptop in my room in the Bay Area, California, USA, when it announces that a former disciple of deceased sarodiya Ali Akbar Khan is calling me for a Skype-chat. Besides the exchange of several emails, this is our first contact. After the connection is established, he appears on my screen. Sitting on a small carpet in his room and holding his sarod, he immediately starts to play. After about a minute he stops, puts down his instrument, and asks me, "what rāga[1] was that?" Although the phrases do sound familiar to me, I am not able to categorize these unexpectedly encountered sounds in terms of a specific rāga. Hesitating, I answer that I am not sure. In response, my interlocutor looks directly into the camera and smilingly suggests: "You'll have to work on that, then."

While his smile might seem to denote playfulness, I experienced this moment with unease. To me, the disciple's response indicated that I had failed his test of my knowledge of a music on which I was supposed to be(come) an expert. The encounter reminded me of the various strands of academic scholarship that I had explored in preparation for my research. Since at least orientalist Sir William Jones' *On the Musical Modes of the Hindus* (1875 [1792]), a range of scholars have mainly approached Hindustani classical (instrumental) music by analytically listening out for and categorizing it in terms of (the various "notes" and "melodic grammar" that make up a) rāga. In interaction with several other historical processes,[2] such approaches have led to highly normative notions and modes of listening. (Ethno)musicologists_and_musicians[3] directly connect such listening norms to specific forms of allegedly authoritative knowledge about music. Scholar and sitar player Raja, for example, suggests that "for understanding the sounds [of Hindustani 'art' music[4]], a listener needs the

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[1] I elaborate on my choice to not adhere to the academic norm of italicizing words that might be categorized as belonging to a language other than English in the sub-chapter *On Becoming Uncomfortable: Form and Response_ability* within the chapter *Methods After Method*.

[2] I examine an assortment of these processes in the chapter *Historical Fragments*.

[3] As I argue in this book, this distinction is itself highly problematic. I understand both as flexible categorizations that people utilize in their attempts to in- or exclude particular forms of musical knowledge as valuable, and therein such distinctions are themselves part of ordering attempts. I inserted the underscores to highlight their interconnectedness within dynamics of knowledge and power. For the sake of readability, I refrain from using the underscores in the rest of the book.

[4] Raja argues against the understanding of Hindustani music as "classical," instead suggesting an approach to Hindustani music as "art" music. Raja states that the notion of "classical" has its origins in ancient Greece and Rome, where it signified the "principles of order, harmony, and reason" (2012: 1). As "in the West" these attributes became increasingly valorized over time, the "quality of 'classicism' came to define any work of art which represented a 'standard', and which was almost beyond criticism" (ibid.). Pointing out that the meanings given to and connotations attached to the concept are inherently problematic "even in the West," Raja suggests without any reference to historical sources that "Western musicologists indoctrinated in this terminology imposed the term "classical onto Indian art music. By any yardstick, the adjective 'classical' is contextually irrelevant to Hindustani music. Besides, it is also scientifically imprecise. The accurate description is 'art' music. [...] The most important connotation of 'art' music is that it is a spontaneous, living, and constantly evolving expression [...] organic" (Raja 2012: 2). While I agree with the potentially problematic and (neo)colonial connotations of the notion of the classical, the concept of art within both

ability for differentiating [sic.] one note from another […] At the next level, the listener has to decipher the giant matrix of melodic contours called a raga […] he has to comprehend the melodic and rhythmic patterns" (Raja 2012: 4). As anthropologist Dard Neuman has pointed out, music theory here provides listeners with "keys and symbols and each of these indicators has a name that can be defined. The naming of a raga has become […] a key feature of listening, […] a sign of cultural erudition" (Neuman 2004: 70). In other words: recognizing rāga through selective listening acts has become a marker of one, hierarchically ordered, form of musical knowledge.

Freshly reminded of these listening norms, the encounter described above made my thoughts race. If I was not even able to identify a rāga based on phrases played by a long-term disciple of a prominent instrumentalist such as Ali Akbar Khan, how could I expect the musicians I was interacting with to take my research seriously? How could I expect other scholars of Hindustani classical music to accept my work? Their articles and books are often grounded in a combination of the abovementioned orientalist sources, music theory derived from centuries-old Sanskrit scriptures, and famously difficult-to-obtain embodied musical knowledge.[5] As these have become academically authoritative sources for knowledge about music, these publications clearly illustrate these scholars' ability to listen in the appropriate manner.

Following cultural theorist Mieke Bal's suggestion "not to learn something about, but to learn something from" (2002: 54), this and other moments of tension informed my core argument in several ways. First, it taught me that listening is a selective knowledge practice through which (tensions over) a music's aesthetic boundaries and content are established, negotiated, and/or rejected. Music is not an object, waiting in the middle to be heard by several equally valuable "per-auditives, […] particular mode[s] of listening out for certain musical parameters and elements" (van Straaten 2016a, 45). Instead, listening actively shapes that which is listened out for. Provisionally: listening performs (cf. hornscheidt 2012) Hindustani classical instrumental music. My interlocutor's comment that I had to "work on that, then" certainly made my lack of listening skills explicit, and thus had the performative force of a speech act (Austin 1962; Butler 1990, 1993, 1997, 2004; hornscheidt 2012). However, informed

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historical musicology as well as ethnomusicology carries similarly problematic connotations because it has been used legitimize particular musics as part of (musicological) canons. I elaborate on these processes in more detail below. In this book, I use the notion of the classical although I am aware of its problematic historical roots and connotations, as examined in the chapter *Historical Fragments*.

[5] The (recent) deaths of most of the master musicians with whom these scholars trained confronted me with another dilemma: how could I acquire the same level of embodied knowledge, attained through long-term training with canonical instrumentalists such as Ravi Shankar (Stephen Slawek), Ali Akbar Khan (George Ruckert, David Trasoff, Allyn Miner), Deepak Chowdhuri (Martin Clayton), and Arvind Parikh (Deepak Raja) without the presence of these masters?

by naturalized listening conventions, my interlocutor and I had transformed through the listening act. On the one hand, I became an unknowledgeable subject. That is, I had failed to listen to my interlocutor's playing in the manner that I knew he expected from a musicologist. He anticipated me to be able to listen out for the in- and exclusion of specific notes and macro-melodic contours and to be able to categorize these as characteristic for one specific rāga. My inability to do so marked me as unknowledgeable. On the other hand, by sonically demonstrating his embodied musical knowledge, my interlocutor showed himself to be a musical authority. He had, furthermore, made his terms of listening clear: the next time I heard him play I would surely listen out for melodic structures.

Finally, before we began our conversation, I was expecting to lead the discussion. However, flummoxed by this unexpected encounter, my immediate response to his suggestion that I had "to work on that, then," was a grin. A short silence followed, after which my interlocutor took the lead: "So, what did you want to know?" Embarrassed, I felt it only natural that he took charge of the exchange. Based on a set of normative listening conventions, then, a power relation had been negotiated. Michel Foucault's much-repeated argument that power and knowledge are best thought of as an "articulation of each other […] of power on knowledge and of knowledge on power" (Foucault 1980: 51), apparently includes musical knowledge and power. This brings me to the second aspect of listening this encounter taught me. Namely, musicians and scholars leverage distinct forms of selective listening as discursive tropes in their (normative discourses about) musical knowledge practices. As I illustrate in the chapter *Historical Fragments*, the ability to listen in a particular way has become historically invested with authority. Problematically, this involves representing specific forms of listening and the (power over musical) knowledge resulting from it as naturally given. However, as Said has pointed out, there "is nothing mysterious or natural about authority" (Said 2003[1978]: 19). Hence, it is crucial to explore the mechanisms involved in the representation of certain forms of musical knowledge practices as naturally given sources of musical authority.

It thus follows that listening—in this double existence as both knowledge practices and discursive tropes—is not a neutral activity nor naturally given. Instead, distinct from hearing,[6] I understand listening as culturally and historically specific modes of selective relating to complex

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[6] Within sound studies, the conceptual difference between hearing and listening has been discussed extensively. Jonathan Sterne, for example, in *The Audible Past* has argued that "Listening is a directed, learned activity: it is a definite cultural practice. Listening requires hearing but is not simply reducible to hearing" (Sterne 2003: 19). Often based on work like Barthes' distinction between hearing as "a physiological phenomenon" and listening as "a psychological act," the relationality of listening (LaBelle 2012) is emphasized through Barthes' suggestion that "listening cannot be defined only by its object or, one might say its goal" (Barthes 1985: 245).

sound events that perform "ontologies" (cf. Bohlman 1999; Mol 2002; Schwarz 2003; Law 2004; LaBelle 2016)[7] of Hindustani classical instrumental music. This inherent selectivity of listening always already implies a not listening to, and therein "fading out," (Law 2004) of other sonic nuances. Crucially, this selectivity is often not made explicit. Therein, listening is instrumental in constructions of musical order—"ordering attempts," (Law 2004: 95) if you will. I understand ordering in the double sense of the word (cf. Van Straaten 2016b). On the one hand, it refers to the structuring of aspects of complex sound events by means of a particular title (i.e. rāga) or aesthetic quality (i.e. "sweet sound"). On the other, it signals the naturalized hierarchy created through such listening acts. Because these dynamics continue to inform both musical practices and the academic work on them—to the point that these two cannot be understood as separate knowledge systems—in this book I unpack elements at stake in this double existence of listening.

I do not simply critique the power-knowledge structures these forms of listening support. Instead, I emphasize the urgency of denaturalizing both the standards of listening and the power-knowledge mechanisms of academia and gharānā they uphold. As I argue, celebratory discourses have too long negated the very real inequalities, pains, and struggles experienced in the name of, and produced as, musical knowledge practices: "most of the time I was petrified, I stop speaking. […] She told me that I would have to blindly copy whatever, whatever she taught me. Without asking questions. […] I had to sit for six–seven hours, we were not allowed to move, my whole body would be paining immensely. But that was the only way to get music from her" (anonymous interlocutor). Despite the reinforcement of such unequal power relations through musical knowledge practices, gharānā and academic discourses "frame" (cf. Bal 2002) Hindustani classical (instrumental) music in rather different terms. Its alleged roots in a centuries-old mystical-spiritual-philosophical tradition originating in the Sanskrit Vedas,[8] have framed concerts, workshops, (academic) teaching, and audio-recordings from at least the late 1950s onwards. Academic approaches represent this music as "happily divorced from conflicts over identity, belonging, and state and imperial power […;] a universal language, the least instrumental and most harmonizing of the arts" (Agnew 2008: 19). Representing musical encounters as bridging "several types of difference" (Brinner 2009: 9),

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[7] All three authors move away from a notion of ontology as metaphysical: they do not imply an a priori-existing object that can be conveniently known. Instead, they understand ontology as done in (knowledge) practice.

[8] The Sanskrit word *véda* translates as "knowledge, wisdom," and is derived from the root vid- "to know." According to Apte (1965) and Monier-Williams (2006 [1851]), this is in turn derived from the Indo-European root "ueid-," which translates as "see" or "know." In the context of the epistemological conflicts in Hindustani classical music that this book addresses (cf. Neuman 2004), this linguistic conflation of knowledge with seeing is worth pointing out because it forecloses listening and embodied knowledge as valid sources of knowledge.

such account suggest that music is worthy of academic research because of this ability to bring people together. The cover of Peter Lavezzoli's award winning *The Dawn of Indian Music in the West* (2007), for example, combines a picture of Ravi Shankar and Yehudi Menuhin playing together with the announcement that book contains "[t]he story of the musical merging of East and West" (Lavezzoli 2007). About three hundred years have passed since orientalists started to represent Indian music through comparative and highly reductive modes of (non-)listening. Almost forty years have passed since Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). Still, the assumption of an ontological distinction between (musical) East and West is convivially reproduced within this field of study. Portraying Hindustani classical instrumental music as a high art and apolitical peace-maker, scholars largely ignore its roles in conflict.

Critically questioning such contemporary resonances of what they call the *Audible Empire* (2016), Ronald Radano and Tejumola Olaniyan problematize this tendency by locating it within the colonial context of the development of (ethno)musicology as a discipline. Specialized in celebratory representations of a selection of "world traditions" both beyond and simultaneously in comparison with "the monuments of European classical art" (Radano and Olaniyan 2016: 9), ethnomusicology continues to display a "tendency not only to respect but to revere non-Western cultures" (McAllester 1979: 188). This inclination reached its high point in the 1950s in the context of ethnomusicology's struggle to establish itself as an academic discipline vis-à-vis historical musicology, whose topics and analytical methods were hegemonic at the time. Such historical musicologists understood it as their task to judge the aesthetic and academic value of music, listening out for—or better, analyzing from scores—specific forms of musical complexity as the aesthetic norm while excluding other forms of music as aesthetically and academically relevant (cf. Subotnik 1995; Dell'Antonio 2000). Such "structural listening" (Subotnik 1995), which itself has strong roots in Enlightenment ideologies and epistemologies, informed how musics were analyzed and written about far beyond the boundaries of historical musicology. As Radano and Olaniyan pointed out, "imperial conditions of European art music study and practice—repertoire as focus of analysis; value and significance determined by complexities of form—also established the character of how ethnomusicology would play out as an academic discipline" (2016: 11).

This happened on several levels. First, even when orientalist scholars explicitly distinguished the music they examined from European art music, Eurocentric aesthetic norms remained the basis for analyzing and valorizing Other(ed) musics. In the context of pre- and

post-independence Hindu nationalism in India, Indian musicologists continued this covert politicization of Hindustani classical music by utilizing it in their nationalist projects. Influenced by the legitimacy given to orientalist writers, these authors each represented versions of musical knowledge and authority as the norm to suit their diverse political aims (cf. Farrell 1997; Bakhle 2005; Neuman 2004; Jones 2013; Clayton 2013). Musicians were—and are— often not willing or able to express their musical practices on the terms, and within the categories, music scholars have used for their academic pursuits. Consequently, since the eighteenth century, studies have portrayed musicians as an irrelevant source of musical knowledge (cf. Neuman 2004; Bakhle 2005). From the 1950s onwards, furthermore, ethnomusicologists who sought to prove the existence of forms of musical mastery other than the European art music canon as a counter narrative to historical musicology, produced canonizing master narratives of their gurus. While these new musical subjects and tools of canon-building can be understood as attempts to rid the discipline of colonial guilt, such master narratives continue(d) to establish their own musical hierarchies and canons because they continued to rely on European notions of musical mastery: "This volume introduces the great richness and variety of the different styles of music as taught by one of this century's greatest musicians, Ali Akbar Khan" (Ruckert 2012 [1998]: vii). These processes, finally, play into and reproduce a centuries-old tension between the celebration, and the fear of extinction, of an alleged golden age of Hindustani classical music: "Nowadays, you know, they don't know what they are doing in India. It is ridiculous how loud these concerts are. And all those sound effects they put on their instruments, you really have to leave at some point because it is just too loud. Those Indians, they are destroying their own culture" (anonymous interlocutor). This fear has, since the 1970s, led to the audio-visual documenting of every move made by master musicians, as if these are all at "some golden moment of their highest artistic achievement" (McAllester 1979: 188). It also leads to ethnomusicologists and musicians criticizing those who do not adhere to the musical norms defined as "traditional." In the process, objects such as books full of music notation, audio(visual) recordings, and embodied knowledge come to be valorized as rare musical knowledge.

In the early days of comparative and (ethno)musicology, such counter narratives were necessary to move beyond normative aesthetic and scholarly boundaries and to legitimate Hindustani classical (instrumental) music as a valid topic of academic research. However, as I illustrate in more depth in the following chapters, most studies relied on, and thereby

reproduced, the very structures of musical knowledge and power that they sought to transcend. This tendency continues today: studies[9] of Hindustani classical music still portray their object of study as academically relevant because of its—often mystified—melodic and rhythmic complexity, as described in ancient philosophical texts. Simultaneously, they often portray gharānā musicians as masters holding the secrets of this centuries old tradition. The physical and psychological abuse of shishyas[10] (including many an (ethno)musicologist) by their gurus continues to be silenced, or even idealized, in the name of art music and tradition: "With guruji it was more like, you know, trepidation, to sit in front of uh. … Just feeling scared [laughing]. Because, you are sitting in front of the, you know, this super human musician[11] that you know, you can never match, and to try to live up to his hope, as a student, and be worthy of his teaching" (ethnomusicologist and disciple of Ravi Shankar Stephen Slawek). In addition, the recent upsurge of Hindu nationalism and related acts of violence against Muslims in India builds upon the very orientalist ideologies that constructed Hindustani classical music as an ancient Indian art form.

Many of these developments are not unique to Hindustani classical music studies. Ethnomusicology, a "field of study caught up in fascination with itself" (McAllester 1979: 188), has become a master in collecting the world's perceived musical curiosities, "so varied, so variable, so interesting" (ibid.: 189). The academic music circles that from the late 1950s onwards brought musicians like Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan, and Nikhil Banerjee to the North Atlantic realm for lecture demonstrations, concert tours, and teaching can be understood in this context. In these many "gestures of inclusion," however, we can "recognize the forces of the imperial" (Radano and Olaniyan 2016: 13). Namely, in their attempts to acknowledge difference through celebratory comparison, studies reinforce(d) rather than deconstruct(ed) colonially connoted distinctions between East and West, embodied and notated musical knowledge, and tradition and modernity. Exemplary of the various musicologies' unsuccessful attempts to "assuage the trauma of three centuries of colonialism" (McAllester 1979: 180), Hindustani classical music studies "struggles to contain the historical processes at stake in its formation, but it is also relied upon" (Vasquez 2013: 8) to critique the power structures it upholds.

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[9] This is not a singular field of study. In the chapter *"Historical Fragments,"* I examine and differentiate the modes of thought and listening constituting the various branches captured with this term in more detail.
[10] Disciples who have been formally accepted as a music student by the teacher.
[11] Bold mine throughout the book. I elaborate on this aspect in the *"Methods After Method"* chapter.

Influenced by post-structural and post-colonial theory, a growing body of work since the late 1970s has questioned academia's involvement in the reproduction of such power-knowledge structures. However, a "graphic disconnect between on-the-ground [macro- and micro]political realities and lofty, academic extractions of 'art' continues to trouble" academic approaches to Hindustani classical music "into the present, identifying an enduring imperial tendency" (Radano and Olaniyan 2016: 12). Texts uncritically quote or paraphrase each other, often without reference. Thereby, they canonize a colonially informed music theory and simultaneously authorize a mode of listening for what is often reductively translated as "mode, or rāga" (Bohlman 2013: 3). This is illustrated by the many similarities between the following definitions of rāga, published almost a hundred years apart without reference:

> Rāga, from a root rañj, 'to be dyed, to glow' means 'colour'; hence colour of mind, i.e. emotion. Its European analogue will therefore be whatever gives colour to a piece of music; and since this may be according to circumstances melody, harmony, counter-point, or instrumentation, but most of all harmony, we have no real equivalent for a word which applies technically only to melody. Rāga is connected with Rakti, 'affection'. Rāga is Sanskrit, and is used in this book when the general sense is intended; […] Its usual translation is 'melody-type', or 'melody-mould', or even 'tune'. If it must be translated, perhaps 'Mood' would convey as much as is compressible into one word. Its definition is rather long, and will not mean much until the chapter on Rāga has been read:—An arbitrary series of notes characterized as far as possible as individuals, by proximity to or remoteness from the note which marks the tessitura, by a special order in which they are usually taken, by the frequency or the reverse with which they occur, by grace or the absence of it, and by relation to a tonic usually reinforced by a drone. (Fox Strangways 1914: 107)

> What is a raga? As a word, "raga" derives from the Sanksrit "ranga," which loosely means "color". More specifically, it means the feeling or moods evoked by specific combinations of notes. When certain notes are arranged in a particular order, they can affect the human psyche […] A famous Sanskrit quote is often cited: "That which tinges the mind with color is a raga." […] Technically we can say that a raga lies somewhere between a scale and a melody […] a raga always stays in one key with the support of a drone. […] there is no harmony in a raga. […] the tonic […] (Lavezzoli 2007: 19)

In scholarly publications, rāga is almost invariably explained in comparative relation to and/or in terms of European art music concepts, often referred to as "western." Musicians often mobilize a contrasting discourse, emphasizing that rāga is analytically ungraspable and underscoring the need to "get the feeling of the rāga" beyond its melodic grammar. This feeling, so musicians claim, can only be learned, understood, and listened out for through years

of musical training. Thus, they produce and profit from distinct forms of musical knowledge whose divisions are themselves embedded in, and the product of, centuries of negotiations over musical power and knowledge.

In sum, (the study of) Hindustani classical music has intricate historical roots that strongly influence both academic approaches and musical practices to the extent that the two cannot be thought of as separate knowledge practices. Colonially informed thinking and writing about, and listening to, Hindustani classical music enables and upholds the very dynamics of power and knowledge at stake in its formation. However, as is the case in ethnomusicology more broadly, despite some recent notable exceptions, the study of Hindustani classical music has remained "naïvely oblivious" not only "to its own culpability in imperial projects" but also to music's roles therein. They illustrate "a curiously unironic […] sense of virtue and righteousness" (Radano and Olaniyan 2016: 10) in the study of this "very, very old tradition" (Napier 2003) of "shastriya sangeet" or "art music" (McNeil 2004).

<u>Sangīt encounter</u>

But you know, what **he had to go through** to get to be **accepted** and **learn**. Really **difficult** that was. You can't compare him with Josh. They occupy a completely different **place** within the Maihar gharānā. (anonymous (ethno)musicologist about another ethnomusicologist)

I am **giving** them, this **knowledge**, that it took me **years** and **years** to **digest**, and think about it and synthesize and have, you know food poisoning, and get thrown in the air in Benares, and health problems for years and years and, you know. **What I went through to learn**. And I am giving them that, and you can't get them to do it, or think about it […] they **don't really understand** what they are **getting** […] and they **can't** even **tune**, you know. Like, before I had a single lesson, I tuned the sitar. (anonymous (ethno)musicologist)

Locating himself within this "very old tradition," the (ethno)musicologist casts himself as a hero, carefully mining treasures of musical knowledge through his dedication to this art.

In contrast to this narrative of researcher-as-hero, I quickly became aware during my research that any (academic) engagement with Hindustani classical instrumental music might be better described not as entering a field, but rather as entering a minefield. Without explicitly setting out to do so, I explored methods of getting to know (Law 2004: 2) through discomfort, pains in my body, fears, insecurities, insensibilities, passions, regrets, uncertainty, unpredictability, and (rejections of) (musical) intimacy and proximity. I was scolded for not

recognizing a rāga, shouted at for not being able to immediately reproduce a phrase sung to me or for not executing a bol-pattern tightly enough with my right hand during a tālim session, screamed at and then hung up on for having learned music with a particular person, and refused as a student by another teacher because I lacked (funding) money. My sitar playing, singing and listening abilities, let alone my ability to produce any knowledge worthy of a dissertation, were constantly—and often aggressively—questioned or simply dismissed. I was almost never allowed to make the audio-recordings that I wanted to use as data for my research, leaving me wondering how on earth I could prove what I learned without such academically conventional evidence. I was used as a messenger between musicians living in different cities or continents, taking messages whose complex layers I often only understood in retrospect. Consider the following excerpt from my fieldnotes:

> A musician asks me what another musician thought about his performance during a concert. Even though beforehand I have been carefully instructed by that other musician in preparation for this moment, the question still makes me tense. I am painfully aware that the answer I have been summoned to give, is ambiguous and open for various interpretations. I am afraid that in the, rather likely, case of a negative interpretation, the answer I have been ordered to deliver will backfire on me, the messenger. Therein, it might damage my already precarious relationship with the musician I have to deliver the message to. "He told me you played very well. It was very different." I respond.

While the response I was ordered to deliver might sound like a compliment, valuing a performance in terms of "sounding different," is ambiguous. Without specifying which musical elements or performance aspects the listener perceived as different, it is left to my interlocutor, who obviously knows what he played, to interpret this comment. It might be interpreted as a compliment, signifying that the musician used a unique playing technique which the listener found aesthetically pleasing. Alternatively, it might be perceived of as a way of signaling that, although his playing techniques were fine as indicated by the first part of the sentence, the notion of difference referred to the musician's rāga approach. The listener might have categorized this as deviating from his own approach, which spoiled the performance for him. While several other interpretations could be listed, what is important is that my delivering of this ambiguous message put me right in the middle of a feud between these two musicians.

I came to understand the many frictions I encountered throughout the research as indicative of a field of tension between musical knowledge and power that is thoroughly intertwined with its academic study, thus rendering objective analysis impossible. To do justice

to this complexity, in this book I adopt an emphatically "restless" (Agawu 2003; Abels 2016a, 2016b; Kramer 2016) approach. I seek to lay bare "the enabling constructs of [...modes of listening as] knowledge systems," (Agawu 2003: xvii), which include and inform what is considered legitimate musical knowledge practices within both academia and gharānā. With anthropologist Annemarie Mol, I understand knowledge not "as a matter of reference, but as one of manipulation" (Mol 2002: 5). This allows an approach that moves beyond, rather than rejecting, one mode of listening as authoritative. Instead, I examine how modes of listening, as "knowledge practices" (ibid.: 5), interact with and shape contemporary realities of Hindustani classical instrumental music. I explore empirical material presented as sangīt "encounters"[12]: (Ahmed 2000) moments of tension regarding musical nuances that, so I argue, can be analyzed as strategies of controlling, transgressing, and transforming the normative boundaries of a musical system. This follows from the conviction that naturalized aesthetic boundaries become audible only in the moment of their disruption.

The da stroke on the sitar, for example, refers to the upward movement of the fingers of the right hand to stroke the main string of the sitar (baj tar) with the playing device called a mizrab. How this stroke is executed, and the desired sound qualities resulting from such a stroke, is one of the first things a sitar student learns. How this da stroke is executed, then, might appear to be a very basic, almost irrelevant musical detail. However, the sound resulting from this stroke can be manipulated through a variety of relatively subtle right-hand movements. How these manipulations are physically executed, the aesthetic particularities of the resulting sound, and the meaning(s) given to this sound can be the source of conflict among players and listeners. The subtle difference in sound quality resulting from the choice to either attack, softly attack, or not attack the jor tar (the second playing string tuned to the lower Sa) as a part of your da stroke, for example, is listened out for as an element of the complex notion of "style." During my first lessons with two different teachers, I received contradictory orders (not suggestions) regarding the playing of this string. While my first teacher emphasized that the strings should never sound out at the same time as the baj tar—"You never touch that jor string, Eva" (anonymous interlocutor)—this playing habit was the first thing my second teacher corrected during our first meeting—"Eva, the jor string is the heart of our music. It always has to sound. It gives the Sa from which all else emerges" (anonymous interlocutor). The fact that this was the very first element that he corrected indicates the importance he attaches to it. A

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[12] I elaborate on my understanding of this notion in more detail in the subchapter *What I Talk About When I Talk About Sangīt Encounters*.

(lack of) sweetness, a (lack of) full sound, a (lack of) clarity, a (lack of) evenness of bols (stroke patterns), a (lack of) ability to play with dynamics, a (lack of) rhythmic ability and precision, a (lack of) sustain and precision of the melodic phrase: these are just some of the aspects influenced by and or interacting with that one musical detail. Listened out for, it can become one element in the aesthetic judgment of a performance, musician, riyāz, tālim, or recording. However, both these sonic nuances, as well as the tensions manipulated through their sounding out, would have emerged as irrelevant—would have been silenced—had I listened out for in academically conventional ways.

Understanding anxieties over musical details as signaling the transgression of musical norms allows us to denaturalize the musical authorities at play. This involves asking questions while, and about, listening. When I listen out, which (musical) elements do I listen out for? Which parameters am I ignoring, and thereby silencing, making them unsound in both meanings of the word? Which (analytical) (listening) skills have I acquired to be able to listen out in specific ways, while I am not able to listen out for, identify, and categorize others? Why do I repeatedly listen to certain recordings and go to the concerts of particular musicians while I find it physically hard to sit through other concerts? When and why do I stop listening to a musician practicing, a performance, a teaching session, or a recording? Because it gets boring? Because I found some aspects unpleasing? Because the music is too loud or too soft? Because there are too many people talking through the performance on their smartphones? Because I don't recognize what is being played? Because a phrase, a playing technique, a timbral quality hurts my ears? Or because I have heard the same exercise, played by a beginning student, a thousand times before? What exactly bored me, hurt my ears, or I failed to recognize? And what aspects did I want to recognize and why? What does this say about my notions of valuable musical and musicological knowledge, of what sonic aspects are worthy of listening out for? Based on which, perhaps naturalized, aesthetic-and-academic norms and conventions, did my ears, my body, my mind, I, (and why do I feel the need to analytically separate between these here?) reject—stop listening to—these sounds? How do I categorize the musicians and the complex sound patterns they produce? How do these categories allow me, in turn, to construct particular forms of knowledge?[13] These questions are not necessarily meant to be answered. Nor are they merely rhetorical. Rather, they have accompanied, guided, and stimulated me to keep de-normalizing my own listening acts throughout the process of writing this book. Hence,

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[13] These questions are inspired by hornscheidt's (2012) questions regarding acts of responsible "hören" (hearing) and "zuhören" (listening).

they resonate throughout its pages in explicit and implicit form. They appear here to stimulate you, the reader, to do the same. To take on your response_ability[14] for your listening acts.

Analyzing how scholars and contemporary second-generation instrumentalists claim a belonging to the musical lineage known as Maihar gharānā, I examine (musical) tactics of negotiating the historically established knowledge-power relations that inform how they can sound out in the present. I treat as "multiple" (cf. Mol 2002) that which, within gharānā and academic knowledge practices, continues to be approached as a singular, knowable object. Such approaches condense "a dynamic spectrum" of musical "practices into a singular entity" (Vasquez 2013: 8). Contrastingly, I argue that music emerges as multiple through the process of listening out for musicians' conscious play with sonic details. This opens up alternative ways of engaging with Hindustani classical music, without the need to fixate these as a new norm for musical knowledge practices.

As a result, a reader looking for definitions, outlines of rāga grammar and rules, a historical overview, linear narratives, nicely phrased conclusions providing answers, a list of important musicians, or a general introduction to Hindustani classical instrumental music, will be disappointed. A reader who likes to absorb facts neatly structured according to academic norms, furthermore, might be less pleased with the high level of active engagement this book invites. Instead, the reader encounters fragments of different forms that are meant to mirror the pastiche of sounds, discourses, practices, and images that inform how we listen to Hindustani classical music. In the chapter *Historical Fragments*, I examine politically connoted fragmentary historical representations of Hindustani classical (instrumental) music. In the first subchapter, I delineate my understanding of sangīt encounters. In the following subchapters, I explore fragments of orientalist and nationalist writings about Hindustani classical instrumental music. I ask what modes of listening these writings utilized and (implicitly) portrayed as authoritative musical knowledge practices, and how these in turn informed musical practices and vice versa.

Based on this analysis, I argue in the chapter '*On the Double Existence of Listening*' that forms of structural listening, analogous to but distinct from Subotnik's (1995) use of the term, are present in contemporary Hindustani classical music studies. These modes of listening turn music into objects that can be known, claimed, and comfortably controlled as one's own (cf.

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[14] I elaborate on my notion of response_ability as used in parallel with horscheidt's verant_w_ortung (2012) in the chapter '*Methods After Method.*'

Bohlman 1999; Abels 2016b). This brings me to a dilemma not restricted to, but largely ignored within, music studies: our modes of listening carry strong resonances of imperialism. Hence, I contend that a "de-colonizing the ears" (cf. Solomon 2012; Lovesey 2016; Denning 2016), as recently proposed as a potential decolonizing practice, is not only impossible but also reinforces the very power structures it seeks to critique. The well-rehearsed, but ultimately empty "intellectual masturbation" (Rodríguez 2017) of portraying the academic appreciation of the "Music of the Other" (Aubert 2007) as a de-colonizing practice, is symptomatic of this post-colonial dilemma. Insisting on the impossibility of solving this dilemma (cf. Ahmed 2000), I end the third chapter by emphasizing that we nonetheless need to question the naturalized status of claims of aesthetic and academic authority. While historically informed, I "do not assume the sanctity of already well-known conceptual directions of exploration" (Radano and Olaniyan 2016: 15). Perhaps, this will enable me to resist at least some elements of the "cohesive narrative structures" (Vasquez 2013: 21) reproduced by, and at stake in, the double existence of listening.

The chapter '*Methods after Method*' starts with an elaboration on the reasoning behind the somewhat unconventional elements that comprise this book. The chapter furthermore includes a description of (choices of) methods, location, and a delineation of my topic of research and choices of informants. The strategies my interlocutors employ in their (musical) manipulations of listening are intrinsically part of the dynamics of canonization that construct their gurus as master musicians. In the chapter '*Dynamics of Canonization*,' I examine elements at work in these intricate mechanisms. I argue that these aspects have become invested with musical authority, as they have been historically "amplified" (Law 2002) as specific for Maihar gharānā (tradition) and/or Annapurna Devi, Ali Akbar Khan, or Nikhil Banerjee. It follows that the remembering of these three instrumentalists has higher stakes for those doing the remembering than for those remembered.

In the following chapter, I listen out for several nuances that are categorized and valued as "sound." Starting from several moments during which this notion was leveraged as a listening category, I illustrate how the musical details listened out for as "sound" vary, emphasizing that its sonic parameters are actively kept ambiguous. I examine the double existence of listening in relation to "sound," asking whether there might be a correlation between such discursive ambiguity and the complex roles this element plays in listening's twofold presence? I explore how sound is manipulated and performed through several

knowledge practices. Sound, through this approach, indeed emerges as multiple. Pointing to similar tensions over "note," in the chapter '*Dimensions of Note*' I examine distinct versions of this perhaps at first sight clearly delineated phenomenon. I examine which sonic elements musicians manipulate as (dimensions of) note in their performing the boundaries and content of Hindustani classical instrumental music. In '*Virtuosity between "Flirting," "Rape," and "Abstinence"*,' I build on the findings from the previous chapters to explore elements of this highly debated phenomenon of virtuosity. Examining several ways in which musicians listen out for and perform virtuosities, I explore how they navigate between these tensions over virtuosity.

In the chapter '*Concluding Remarks*,' I come back to the tensions over intricate details as negotiated through listening practices. I point out that the multiple ways in which I entered into relationships within sangīt encounters mirrors—performs—the fragmentary, selective, and relational nature of these knowledge practices. Exploring the double existence of listening, it turns out, means a messy navigating between performances of Hindustani classical instrumental music. This illustrates that the academic fantasy of, and desire for, authority over its boundaries and content is best given up completely.

"The Sun Never Sets on the Maihar gharānā"
Historical Fragments

In their quests to exchange, acquire, preserve and represent various forms of musical knowledge, musicians and scholars have been roaming between the region now known as North India and the rest of the planet since the Harappan era (c. 2500–1500 BCE) (cf. Wade 2013: 127). As recent critical studies have illustrated, from at least the seventeenth century onwards, such travels have been entangled with processes of colonization and political de-colonization, nation forming, Hinduization, caste formation, and cultural diplomacy (cf. Farrel 1997; Bakhle 2005; Neuman 2004, 2009, 2012; Lubach 2006; Jones 2013; Wade 2013). These dynamics include a "canonization of a music theory based on … rāga" intertwined with a canonization of "musician lineages, gharānās" (Bohlman 2013a: 3). Through their historical repetition, such fragments of past musical encounters have become invested with authority. It follows that historical fragments cannot be understood as passive representations of a neutral past. Instead, I think of these fragments as politically connoted building blocks that inform and manipulate contemporary listening practices and norms. To understand their potential effectiveness in the present, in this chapter I examine the traveling of such historical fragments, in particular the entangled notions of music, musical knowledge and authority, and listening that emerge from these fragments.

Used as this chapter's title, Maihar gharānā sarod player Ken Zuckerman's lighthearted joke appears innocent in character. Perhaps therefore all the more powerful, it is exemplary of how musicians leverage selected fragments of past encounters in the present. Zuckerman's wordplay references the statement "the sun never sets on the British empire,"[15] a phrase used mainly in the nineteenth century to triumphantly describe the ever-expanding British imperial power. Since its retrospective instigation and labeling as Maihar gharānā in the 1970s, this musical lineage has been canonized as (one of) the most prominent instrumental lineage(s). The teaching and performing around the world of musicians such as Zuckerman's guru, Ali Akbar Khan, have been important factors in its authorization. Instead of the British empire, so Zuckerman puns, now the Maihar gharānā has spread so far across the planet that the sun is always shining on at least one of its musicians. This might be interpreted as a case of empire playing back in, perhaps unintentional, analogy with *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and*

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[15] The phrase "the empire on which the sun never sets" was first coined to signify the expanding Spanish imperial powers in the 16th and 17th century and taken over by the British in the 19th century.

Practice in Post-Colonial Literature (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1989), a key work in post-colonial theory. Instead of the British imperial power deciding what the world listens to and on whose terms, now the Maihar gharānā has taken over the world's ears and hearts. Its musicians now control what is heard, when, and based on which aesthetics norms. One could conclude that unequal colonial power relations have been reversed, a change attributed to Maihar gharānā. A happily ever after.

However, as musicologist Gerry Farrell also points out in *Indian Music and the West* (1997), the situation is slightly more complicated. Farrell critically assesses the unceasing processes of (re)discovering "Indian music," while it "has continued to be unknown in the West" (1997: 1). To illustrate this challenge, he cites the example of Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan tuning their respective instruments during the Concert for Bangladesh in New York, USA, in 1971. This moment has been captured on audio-visual media. At the time of writing this book, a twenty-nine second clip was available on YouTube,[16] uploaded by user Quietapplause87, titled "Ravi Shankar Warm Up Concert for Bangladesh." We are presented with audiovisual footage of Shankar and Khan tuning their respective instruments, followed by their silence. The musicians look at each other and Khan gives a small twist of his head. The applause that follows starts softly but becomes louder as more people join. In response, Shankar humorously indicates a distinction between the tuning and the playing part of the performance: "Thank you. If you appreciate the tuning so much, I hope you will enjoy the playing more." Khan responds with a smile.

The question whether the audience really listened out for and categorized the tuning as an integral part of the performance is of less relevance for my argument than examining how Shankar's response constructs the audience's listening act as a mistake. Shankar's reply actively categorizes the audience as unknowledgeable about the music they encountered. This categorization was based on a response as part of their listening act. As the response was already in the past, this left the audience little room to negotiate this categorization. Furthermore, Shankar constructed himself as knowledgeable, and hence an authority, on the music he is about to play. He thus implicitly legitimated the sounds the audience was about to hear precisely because he, a musical authority, played them. In his analysis, Farrell echoes Shankar's playful reply, interpreting the clapping response as a listening mistake on the part of the audience. This listening error, so Farrell argues, is exemplary of a "misunderstanding that

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[16] Available on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bl1GszLu0Ns, last visited 22.05.2017.

already had a long and complex history … the West had been encountering, but never really knowing, Indian music for almost two centuries" (Farrell 1997: 1). The recent[17] framing of this moment on YouTube as "Ravi Shankar" doing a "warm up," which mislabels the moment's musical function and excludes the three other musicians present, seems to confirm Farrell's diagnosis twenty years after its publication.

I agree that this moment can be taken as symptomatic of some of the lingering complications of historical processes. However, Farrell's own normative interpretation highlights that musicological disciplines do not operate outside of these dynamics. His depiction illustrates a broader trend in (ethno)musicological examinations of Hindustani classical (instrumental) music. Such studies construct one mode of listening as the standard form of engaging with this music. Here, the ability to at least distinguish between tuning and performance. The members of the audience, so Farrell implies, failed to listen out for and recognize the musical parameters that would—should—have enabled them to make this distinction. He takes this lack of one form of musical knowledge as exemplary of musical imperialism, a process during which "Indian music" continues to pass "through the musical and cultural filter of the West in a number of ways" (1997: 1). This leads directly into his second problematic assumption: he takes it for granted that there is such a thing as Indian music. Not restricted to Farrell's work, this mode of thought assumes a musical original that can be known; a musical object with essential characteristics that can move through filters, perhaps partially transforming in the process. Farrell does not specify what it might mean nor how one would recognize or categorize that capacity to "really know" the multifaceted musical practices that, throughout the two centuries of musical encounters he examines, have been labeled—or better, claimed—as Indian music. However, perhaps because it remains undefined and therefore open to various interpretations, the notion of real musical knowledge does its discursive work. In the by that time well-established ethnomusicological tradition, he portrays Shankar and Khan as the ultimate authority on which aspects of their music should be listened out for.

Farrell furthermore reproduces several problematic binaries: between India and the West, between musicians and listeners, and between superficial versus real musical knowledge. His notion of a "Western" musical filter, for example, reproduces the idea of a "discursive omnipotence" (Agnew 2008: 22) of "Western" listeners within musical encounters.

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[17] The clip was uploaded in 2013.

This constructs musicians and music as passive subjects of orientalism, ignoring the multiple forms and specificities of musical encounters. This furthermore ignores that the subjects involved play out various, often conflicting, interests through their listening practices. It likewise fails to recognize the "range of individual and collective interests" at play in such encounters, which are not always "necessarily directly correlated to specific identity positions like ethnicity, social class, gender, or national affiliation" (ibid.: 22). Finally, this approach ignores that musicians are "sometimes complicit in, even advocates of political projects structured by asymmetrical power relations" (ibid.: 22). Portraying the audience at the Concert for Bangladesh as unknowledgeable Western listeners, then, fails to take into account the variety of people and their (listening) aims. It reduces and fixates the audience to one identity and judges them based on that categorization.

This normative portrayal of an alleged listening mistake, in sum, illustrates that musicologists are not exempt from one of the post-colonial dilemmas.[18] Radano and Olaniyan underlined this predicament in specific relation to the epistemological structures on the sub-disciplines of musicology base their legitimacy: "Euro-western musical knowledge itself conveys imperial power and intent. It does so because its very conception and form belong to the epistemological orders and historical localities of its various emergences." (Radano and Olaniyan 2016: 7) Responding to this challenge to post-colonial[19] theory, cultural theorist Sara Ahmed proposes understanding "post-coloniality as a failed historicity: a historicity that admits of its own failure in grasping that which has been, as the impossibility of grasping the present" (Ahmed 2000: 10). Instead of constructing master narratives of how colonialism still determines and reproduces contemporary power structures, such an approach highlights the necessity of rethinking

> the complexity of the relationship between the past and present, between the histories of European colonisation and contemporary forms of globalisation. That complexity cannot be reduced by either a notion that the present has broken from the past (a narrative that assumes that decolonisation meant the end of colonialism) or that the present is simply continuous with the past (a narrative that assumes

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[18] This is a central critique of post-colonial theory. Thinkers whose work has been crucial in its emergence, such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakrabarty Spivak, have been accused of basing their critical thought on North Atlantic philosophical works. Thereby, such critiques suggest, they reproduce rather than deconstruct the epistemological norms and structures that were at work in the construction of the power structures they seek to critique. I elaborate on this dilemma and its consequences for my approach to listening in more detail in the following chapter.

[19] The notion of "post" has been critiqued for implying that colonialism is a closed-off historical period that no longer influences or has consequences in the present, it risks the assumption its legacies and the resulting inequalities and suffering have been overcome in the present (cf. Shohat 1992: 104). Talking about post-colonial in the singular, furthermore, risks a totalizing theory that universalizes the multivalent realities labeled as post-colonial.

> colonialism is a trans-historical phenomenon that is not affected by local contexts or other forms of social change). To this extend, post-coloniality allows us to investigate how colonial encounters are both determining, and yet not fully determining, of social and material existence. (Ahmed 2000: 11)

This approach inspired me to ask how selections of historical fragments are one means by which contemporary relationships of power are constructed, negotiated, and/or rejected through listening practices. It enables a detailed, specific and localized inquiry into how and in which (transformed) forms colonialism persists after political decolonization, without making general claims of historical determination. It additionally allows me to incorporate the potential culpabilities of academia in these processes. Namely, critically asking how, where, and in what ways colonially informed musical encounters (are made to) resound in the present, means acknowledging that academic modes of listening out for, and thinking and writing about music can never be separated from these problematically connoted historical fragments.

As the following subchapters illustrate, such prior musical encounters include orientalist and Indian musicological representations. Each deployed specific forms of thinking and writing about Hindustani classical (instrumental) music, which in turn informed its norms of listening and musical practice. As such, these writings illustrate that the standard a priori distinction between academic and musical knowledge practices cannot be maintained. Rather, discourse is both instrumental in, and descriptive of, mechanisms of musical knowledge and power. To come back to Farrell's example: his devaluating of the audience's listening act implies that he can hear the difference between tuning and playing. In the process, he subtly constructs his status as a scholar: he, of course, does really know Indian music. This then, illustrates that "the many gestures to 'inclusion' that inform recent historical musicological investigations … in their attempts to acknowledge difference … reinscribe and reinforce traditional … distinctions" (Radano and Olaniyan 2016: 13).

While Zuckerman's and Farrell's intentions[20] are inclusion, neither questions the epistemological orders, norms, and values upholding the mechanisms of in- and exclusion at stake. As such, both cases affirm that we "can hear empire in the familiar orders of the here and now—in epistemologies that structure and constitute our forms of knowledge acquisition" (ibid.: 13). As I argue in more depth in the following chapter, despite the emergence of critical

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[20] One of the crucial aspects of the idea of listening as performative as developed in Chapter 3, is that it allows to move beyond the question of "intention." Instead of asking about the intention of listening acts, and thus implicitly pleading for the innocence of those whose intentions were good, I ask what a listening act does. Thereby, I seek to sensitize us for our response_ability in listening acts that moves beyond the paralyzing notion of intention.

studies such as Farrell's during the past twenty years, the norms of listening have largely remained intact. Airily labeling colonialism's lingering effects a "historical 'hangover'" (Napier 2007a), (ethno)musicologists often negate its very real contemporary consequences. To counter such narratives, I argue with Radano and Olaniyan that the residue of imperial modes of thought and listening necessitates an "attention to the [historical] forces of empire that are [in part] constitutive of [contemporary] musical conceptions and productions even in their most vociferous forms of critique" (Radano and Olaniyan 2016:13). More than fifteen years after the publication of a first critical history of the musicologies' complex roles in these dynamics (cf. Radano and Bohlman 2000), an active acknowledgement of the roles remains a pressing issue. It is time to take a next critical step in our approach to knowledge practices in Hindustani classical instrumental musical. This does not require denouncing the good intentions of (ethno)musicologists such as Farrell. Nor does it mean rejecting the work done by the "music discipline and its many contributions to knowledge" (Radano and Olaniyan 2016: 12). Instead, I aim to sensitize my (readers') ears to "the depth and pervasiveness of imperial tendencies" (ibid.: 13), to the epistemological assumptions that reside within our comfortably familiar standards of listening. This chapter illustrates the depth of these tendencies and argues for the need to de-naturalize, to question the familiar. To become uncomfortable, perhaps.

After briefly exploring transformations of the concept (cf. Bal 2000) of encounter within music studies, in the following I unfold my notion of sangīt encounter, as inspired by Ahmed's notion of "strange encounter" (2000). Following this, I selectively delineate fragmented remains that, I argue, continue to resonate in contemporary knowledge practices. I examine selected primary sources paired with recent critical historiographies on the topic (Farrell 1997; Kobayashi 2003; Neuman 2004; Bakhle 2005; Lubach 2006; Bor 2006; Abels 2010; Clayton 2013; Jones 2013; Wade 2013). I do not seek to reproduce glorifying singular historical narratives, nor do I comprehensively map the many historical complexities of Hindustani classical (instrumental) music. Excluded, for example, are the shifts from geographical centers and changes in systems of musical patronage: from courts such as Maihar, to state, individual, and corporate patronage in large cities. Likewise, I do not deal with the changing role of caste, especially the increased popularity of and control over this music by middle-class Brahmins.

Histories of musical encounter have been instrumental in both creating Otherness as well as violence against these Others (cf. Bohlman 2013: 16). Crucially, the violence of encounter is not just present in acts of physical violence, but rather operates at many, sometimes implicit, levels. This includes the denial of identity, making a critical examination of musical encounters as part of dynamics of inclusion and exclusion increasingly pressing. Studies that prominently feature the concept of musical encounter, however, often use it ambiguously and uncritically. Through such recurrent and imprecise use within and between texts, the term encounter "itself can appear, at times, imperial in character, and in its incessant display and repetition, it begins to take on qualities of abstraction" (Radano and Olaniyan 2016: 1). Its overuse turns the concept into an empty signifier, thereby diminishing its critical power as a concept. Especially if paired with music, such "aligning with immaterial forms" risks bringing implicit and explicit imperial violence into a realm "which we cannot touch, feel or see" (ibid.: 1–2).

Ethnomusicologist Bonnie Wade, for example, examines historical processes interchangeably labeled as "Indian encounters" (Wade 2013: 127), "global encounters" (ibid.: 129), or "Indian musical encounters" (ibid.: 132) without specifying what she means by these terms. Historical musicologist Ruth Rosenberg uses the concept to mean both a meeting accompanied by (background) music—"Nerval's musical encounter with the Arab man at the party" (Rosenberg 2015: 72)—as well as to refer to descriptions of music: "the musical encounters that figure in their travelogues" (ibid.: 73). Ethnomusicologist Benjamin Brinner uses the notion to refer to two groups of people performing together: "[a] musical encounter between two generations" (Brinner 2009: 154). Similarly neglecting to define the concept, anthropologist Amanda Weidman asks how classical music of South India "has been produced" as an institution "in and through the colonial encounter" (Weidman 2006: 9). Historical musicologist Annegret Fauser (2005) utilizes the notion to indicate musical contact, exchange, and listening experiences. Musical encounters, such studies claim, "reflect," "shape" (Fauser 2005), "express" (Rosenberg 2015), are "exemplary" of, or enable an "understanding of" (Fauser 2005; Rosenberg 2015) macro-political processes. Providing scholars with a neatly confined and academically controllable micro-version of macro-political power structures, musical encounters can be analyzed as a lens through which larger cultural issues can be

explored. Music is thus reduced to a function of macro-political processes, its sonic nuances rendered largely irrelevant.

Conceptualizing eighteenth century musical descriptions in travelogues as musical encounters, historical musicologist Vanessa Agnew seeks to move beyond such abstract approaches. Instead, she proposes conceptualizing "music's use in the encounter in terms of the 'performative'" (2008: 86). She transposes Austin's theory of speech acts onto music, asking how "music does things and how it 'gets into action'" (ibid.: 86). While Agnew makes strong claims about the "Power of Music" (subtitle), she limits her analysis to writings about music in travelogues. These contained epistemological claims about music, which constituted an "ethnographic yardstick that categorized and hierarchically ordered people according to their musical practices.… Claims about … music … became a basis for leveraging certain kinds of music over others" (ibid.: 7). Her understanding of writings about music "as a form of encounter practice" also serves "as an ongoing challenge to the way we think about ethnomusicology … a discipline that emerged within the context of colonial encounters" (Agnew 2013: 196). This emphasis on the relational and performative aspect of (historical) writings about music is especially useful for this chapter because it allows for an understanding of these fragments as aesthetic yardsticks, that informed how Hindustani classical music came to be listened out for. However, Agnew's work is less useful for analyzing the complicated relationships between such fragments and contemporary sangīt encounters.

In *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality* (2000), Ahmed develops a notion of encounter that recognizes the complexity of these relationships. She also acknowledges the challenges posed by the naturalized status of such epistemological resonances in the present and theorizes encounter as a multilayered phenomenon. On one level, encounters are "face-to-face meetings … where at least two subjects get close enough to see and touch [and listen out for] each other" (Ahmed 2000: 7). She does not necessarily presuppose a human person, however. More generally, encounter "suggests a coming together of at least two elements" (ibid.: 7). In this mode of thinking, both orientalist Sir William Jones' writings about music as well as a musician practicing stroke patterns alone in his room in Mumbai are considered to be examples of encounter. The concept, however, does not refer to a neutral coming together, but implies an element of surprise and conflict. This allows us to ask how normative aesthetic categories become instituted, negotiated, and reproduced through encounters, as they "shift the boundaries of the familiar, of what we assume that we know"

(ibid.: 7). The tensions over musical details, as I described in this book's introduction, are indicative of exactly such shifts in the boundaries of the familiar. In this sense, I understand musical encounters as moments of tension. This tension arises exactly because sonic nuances, which have been naturalized as (knowledge about) the aesthetic boundaries and contents of Hindustani classical instrumental music, are disturbed. Those disruptive sonic details, in turn, come to be listened out for and categorized as the unfamiliar, enabling the naming of that which deviates from the standard—perhaps understood as bad music, the killing of a rāga, a horrible style, besur, or even not as music at all and therefore not worthy of our listening attention.

Crucially, as Ahmed poses, an encounter is "not a meeting between already constituted subjects who know each other; rather, the encounter is premised on the absence of a knowledge that would allow one to control the encounter" (ibid.: 8). It follows that there is no independently existing Hindustani classical instrumental music and no independently existing listener prior to encounter. Rather, they come to be produced and categorized or rejected as, for example, knowledgeable listener and valuable music through the specifics of each musical encounter. While musical knowledge is certainly involved, this is not an object already owned. Rather, it is made up of relations that are constituted, negotiated, or rejected through encounter. As such, encounters are paradoxical as they "involve both fixation, and the impossibility of fixation" (ibid.:8). This allows me to ask about the very relationship between the category of Hindustani classical instrumental music and (often overlapping categories of and between) musicians, musicologists, and listeners. What (musical) techniques are available to differentiate between and construct these boundaries? In other words: how is listening manipulated?

Face-to-face encounters, so Ahmed argues further, are mediated by that which allows them "to appear in the present" (ibid.: 7). This implies the presence of other encounters, other moments of listening, other categorizations, and other moments that mediate and influence— but do not determine—the present encounter. It acknowledges that individual encounters are always linked to past encounters and broader relationships of power. This enables me to consider the reciprocal relationships between a particular musical encounter and the general, here the historically conventionalized norms of listening. Because the particular encounter "always carries traces of those broader relationships" (ibid.: 8) sangīt encounters are not determined in the space of either the particular or the general. They are, furthermore, "not

simply in the present: each encounter reopens past encounters" (ibid.: 8). However, they "are impossible to grasp in the present" (ibid.: 9) and can hence only be partially analyzed in retrospect. An analysis of musical encounters, it follows, needs to acknowledge it can never be all-encompassing.

The notion sangīt itself is exemplary of a fragment of past encounters that is utilized as a discursive trope in the present. This Sanskrit term is usually translated as a combination of music, dance, and theatre. The concept has traveled through several orientalist and nationalist writings. Based on the assumed academic authority of written treatises such as the Nāṭya Śāstra, this notion has been instrumental in the construction of Hindustani classical music as an ancient Indian art form. Contemporary discourses on sangīt often deploy its connotations of music(ologic)al authority, thereby reproducing not only these connotations but also the power knowledge structures that allow them to appear in the present. My prominent use of this concept, then, is meant to flag my own problematic position within the post-colonial dilemma. That is, using the concept in the title and throughout the book will probably increase my readership. Perhaps it even infuses my writings with a sense of authority before a single word has been read. However, by invoking its problematic connotations to increase the reach of my critical study, I ironically build on and reproduce the power-knowledge dynamics I seek to denaturalize. (How) can I escape this post-colonial dilemma?

When I write about sangīt encounters, I question historically amplified essentialist assumptions about listening to Hindustani classical (instrumental) music as a fixed, traditional art musical system. I acknowledge that I can never fully escape the problematic dynamics of its constitution. In the below, I examine fragments of several canonized texts on the topic and ask how these writings partially performed aesthetic norms. At points conflicting, at others echoing each other, these texts illustrate the complexity of the issue at hand.

Historical Fragments: Orientalism

As Bonnie Wade points out, the tracing of "Indian musical history usually falls into the pattern of accounting for it through the Brahmanic Sanskrit treatises" (Wade 2013: 125). Exchanges between "Indian music and the music of other … civilizations," furthermore, are often narrated as "an influence from East to West" (ibid.: 129). Such discourses have their roots in, and

mobilize the rhetoric of, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century orientalist writings on music. These were penned in a context in which "the West set out to possess India intellectually as well as economically" (ibid.: 129). Through such imperial projects, India was mainly known[21] as "an ancient civilization to be studied, discussed, and dissected in detail" (ibid.: 129–130). Or, in the words of orientalist Captain Augustus N. Willard, it was an "inexhaustible mine, pregnant with the most luxuriant ores of literature" (Willard 1875: 8). The "mined" musical knowledge from ancient India could—and should—be understood in direct comparison to what was thought of as the other ancient civilizations: "Greece," "Rome," and "Egypt" (ibid.: 27–37).

Such orientalist "musical renaissance" (Clayton 2007a: 71) discourses often argued for a revival of the music described in those ancient scriptures. Such descriptions were used as a yardstick for the normative measuring of the level of a nation's cultural civilization. In the case of India, orientalist writers confronted musical practices with two norms. First, they comparatively listened out for the sounds they encountered in relation to the musical theory described in the Brahmin Sanskrit treatises. Seeking to confirm those theories in musical practices, they were listening out for evidence of the greatness of India culture. Second, European art musical concepts were also applied as an aesthetic standard, resulting in a listening out for and valorizing one kind of musical complexity:

> Every nation, how rude soever, has, we see, its music, and the degree of its refinement is in proportion to the civilization of its professors. She is yet in her cradle with the rude Indians of America, or the "hideous virgins of Congo." With the natives of Hindoostan, she may be said long to have left the puerile state, though perhaps still far from that of puberty, her progress towards maturity having been checked, and her constitution ruined and thrown into decay by the overwhelming and supercilious power of the Mahomedan government; while in Europe, and especially in the luxuriant soil of Italy, she sports in all the gaiety of youthful bloom and heavenly beauty. (Willard 1875: 18).

Within this context, (mainly British) orientalists and Indian scholars wrote several texts on "Hindu Music" (Tagore 1875). Often written to educate the "European public," such texts enabled their readers a safe and comfortable "indulgence" in the subject of their interest (Tagore 1875: preface to the second edition). There was no need to actually listen.

One of the key orientalist figures in India was Sir William Jones (1746–94), who founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784 and wrote *On the Musical Modes of the Hindus* (1792).

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[21] The question of *how* it was, or rather became, known through musical encounters, is crucial for this chapter. Knowledge practices took on multiple forms, and hence I refrain from an a priori definition thereof.

This first major English-language work on Hindustani classical music was received and cited within the European scholarly context as "the authority of Indian music" (Bor 2006: 6) until at least[22] the twentieth century. Famously, Jones prioritized musical knowledge based on ancient Sanskrit texts, "the pure fountain of Hindu learning" (1875: 65), over Muslim musical practices of the time. Throughout his text, he asserts the authority of these treatises over that of the musicians he encountered: while the "Sanscrit books have preserved" this "theory of their musical composition, the practice of it seems almost wholly lost (as all the Pandits and Rajas confess)…. I had hopes of procuring the original music … from all this I collect, that the art, which flourished in India many centuries ago, has faded for want of due culture" (ibid.: 156). This illustrates a tension between, and at the same time a leveraging of, different authorities on musical knowledge within his writing. On the one hand, he argues that the "original music" had long been lost and only the "theory of their musical composition" has been recorded in the Sanskrit treatises. He simultaneously builds on and performs the authority of "Pandits and Rajas," to strengthen his argument; they also "confessed" that the "art" which "flourished in India many centuries ago," was now gone. He also ignored the large existing body of Muslim scholarship on music, which he referred to as "the muddy rivulets of Muselman writers on India" (ibid.: 65). As Farrell suggests, although "Jones was clearly aware of contemporary practice in Indian music, he denies the massive contribution of Persian culture to the development of North Indian classical music in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" (1997: 11). As I illustrate in more detail below, these "perspectives, at least to some extent, were sustained by Indian Hindu nationalists during the independence movement and would have a lasting impact on the positioning of Indian music in (Hindu) Indian history" (Jones 2013: 206). In the context of the rapidly accelerating growth of extreme Hindu nationalism in contemporary India, it is pressing to critically examine (the remnants of) such discourses.

The main topic of Jones's treatise was the "modes of the Hindoos (who seem ignorant of our complicated harmony)" (1875: 130). Such normative phrases exemplify that Jones took harmonic complexity as the musical standard. All other (descriptions of) music should be valorized based on this norm. Mode, he suggested, was principally constructed on what he described as "the longer intervals we shall call tones, and the shorter … semitones, without

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[22] Still, despite some studies critically examining his writings, many (ethno)musicologists mention his name with the utmost respect. During my undergraduate studies (2005–2009), for example, one of our teachers celebrated his vast musical knowledge and "highly nuanced" writings on Indian music.

mentioning their exact ratios" (ibid.: 130). From this theory of tones and semitones, Jones concluded that the Hindoos have eighty-four modes. Jones acknowledged

> the blessings of a mild government over the finest part of India, [which] would enable us to attain a perfect knowledge of the Oriental music, which is known and practiced in these British dominations, not by mercenary performers only, but even by Mussalmans and Hindoos of eminent rank and learning.… We may here examine the best instruments of Asia, may be masters of them, if we please, or at least may compare them with ours" (ibid.: 133).

This excerpt indicates the various relationships of power and musical knowledge at play in and, at least partially, reproduced through such writings. Music was performed as an object of knowledge that could be claimed, explored, and attained for the benefits of the curious and knowledge seeking orientalist, "if we please." The distinction between "known" and "practiced," hints at a discursive separation between musical knowledge and musical practice. This interpretation is strengthened by Jones's suggestion that even learned Musselmans and Hindoos practiced this music. The distinction implied here between forms of musical knowledge becomes increasingly explicit throughout the text. His claim that all knowledge he found in "the literature of the Hindoos … is traced to its source in the Vedas" (ibid.: 138), for example, constructs the Sanskrit Vedas as the authoritative source of musical knowledge. This idea would become prominent in colonial and post-independence discourses, as the following excerpt from Shankar's first autobiography illustrates:

> The traditions of Indian classical music are seemingly without beginning. Our musical history, which goes back approximately four thousand years, has been handed down orally from guru to shishya and recorded in Sanskrit verses that have later necessitated detailed commentaries and explanations.… Our tradition teaches us that sound is God—Nada Brahma. The highest aim of our music is to reveal the essence of the universe it reflects, and the ragas are among the means by which this essence can be apprehended. Thus, through music, we can reach God.… Deep-rooted musical tradition in India dictates the position of the most prominent notes and their relationship to both each other and to the less important notes. … In Western music, … (Shankar 1968: 15, 17–18)

That these discourses traveled beyond the context of 1960s USA into the present is illustrated by an announcement of a concert in 2016, Germany, by Shankar's daughter and sitar player Anouskha Shankar:

India is a country of bright colors, alluring smells and oriental sounds … sounds of Indian music.… The acclaimed … Anoushka Shankar guarantees a breathtaking interpretation of the sitar concerts of her father, who suggested that "the highest aim of our music is to reveal the essence of the universe it reflects." This evening promises magical moments. (2016, translation the author)[23]

His ideas thus resonating in the present, throughout his publication, Jones constructs and glorifies an ancient Hindu past by constructing dichotomies between past and present, purity and opacity, written and embodied musical knowledge, and Hindu and Muslim. He directly relates this glorified Hindu past to Sanskrit text-based theories of rāga, which he translated as "a mode" (Jones 1875: 71). He contrasted these with the musical practices he claimed to have encountered: "although the Sanscrit books have preserved the theory of their musical composition, the practice of it seems almost wholly lost" (ibid.: 83). Jones dismissed accounts by "a credible eye-witness" and "an intelligent Persian" as "exaggerated and embellished" (ibid.: 128). Instead, he suggests that "the astonishing effects" (ibid.: 128) ascribed to sound, were probably produced by sangīt—the combination of gāna, vādya, and nritya, translated as song, percussion, and dancing—as described in the Sanskrit treatises (ibid.: 129). Today, music scholars have embraced and continue to perform this distinction between music theory and practice.

True to the orientalist mode of comparison, Jones translates each of the musical concepts he encountered in the Sanksrit literature in terms familiar to the envisioned reader. Thus, the term sangīt appears in his writing as follows: "music in its largest sense, as it is now described by the Hindoos, that is, by the union of voices, instruments, and action; for such is the complex idea conveyed by the word Sangita, the simple meaning of which is no more than Symphony" (ibid.: 128–129). Such acknowledging the complexity of the notion of sangīt while simultaneously glossing it as "symphony," legitimizes Indian music as a complex art form. Rāga, in Jones's writing, underwent the same fate. Based on "Bherat's[24] definition of it" (Jones 1875: 142), he pleaded for an understanding of rāga in relation to affect. Rāga "which I translate as mode, properly signifies a passion or affection of the mind" (ibid.: 142). He furthermore claimed

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[23] http://www.beethoven-orchester.de/2015-16/en/konzerte/sonderkonzerte/bob-goes-india/, last visited 16.06.2016.
Indien ist ein Land der leuchtenden Farben, verführerischen Düfte und orientalischen Klänge! Das Beethoven Orchester Bonn lädt zu einer musikalischen Reise in eine Welt aus herzergreifender Romantik und unvergleichlichen Rhythmen ein. Viele europäische Komponisten ließen sich von der elektrisierenden Klangpracht der indischen Musik inspirieren. In einer Uraufführung erklingen die beliebtesten Filmmelodien aus der fantastischen Traumfabrik Bollywood. Zudem werden zwei Werke von John Foulds und Wim Henderickx erstmals in Deutschland aufgeführt. Die umjubelte Ausnahmekünstlerin Anoushka Shankar garantiert eine atemberaubende Interpretation des Sitar-Konzertes ihres berühmten Vaters, der einmal meinte: „Das höchste Ziel der Musik besteht darin, das Wesen des Universums zu enthüllen." Dieser Abend verspricht magische Momente!
[24] The Sanksrit Hindu poetic compilation of music, dance, and theatre known as Nāṭya Śāstra is attributed to sage Bharata Muni. It is usually dated back to between 200 BCE and 200 CE.

it depended on a mutilation of the "regular scales" and portrayed it as aided by the association of ideas (ibid.: 144) such as a season (ibid.: 145). Jones does not present the reader with details about what a rāga might entail musically. Instead, he mainly presents the reader with an overview of different scales of different rāgas based on the treatises he read. Perhaps originating feverish debates on the existence and exact measurements of srutis that continue to plague the musicologies today, he distinguishes twenty-two srutis (ibid.: 141). He also describes the notion of vadi (ibid.: 149) and ans'a, translating the latter as "the tonic" (ibid.: 149).

In sum, the reader is presented with an elaborate music theory, a rational science that should analyze tonal relations, scales, and philosophies. Jones actively rejected contemporary musical practice as a valid source of musical knowledge in favor of a musical theory based on ancient Sanskrit literature. The text contains descriptions of rāga theory, scales, tonal relations, and divisions such as sruti, while Jones emphasizes the lack of harmony in both "their" theory and practice. The texts that Jones referred to displayed what Widdess has called "'an archaizing didactic intent,' which had little relevance to contemporary practice" (Farrel 1997: 11, citing Widdess 1980: 136). Despite this lack of contemporary relevance, Jones nonetheless presented these texts as the only relevant sources on this music while disregarding knowledge gained from contemporary Muslim musicians as irrelevant. He maintains a clear distinction between "us" or "our music" and "them" or "their music." He utilizes listening mainly for the purpose of normative comparison: Jones's standard was European art music and hence he listened out for harmony, textural complexity, and specific forms of structural development. This listening expectancy was combined with ideas based on literature describing theories of tonal relations, micro-melodic nuances, and rāsa and bhāva. During his encounters with musical practices, however, he did not hear the aspects he was expecting to hear. This disjunction between his aesthetic norms and sounds he encountered, became the basis for his rejecting musical practices as aesthetically and academically valuable. This selective listening was a knowledge practice through which he constructed his notion of India in comparative relation to other (ancient) civilizations. It denies the music he only knew from writings its own logic and identity—a form of implicit violence, one might argue.

The second text I focus on here is Captain N. Augustus Willard's *A Treatise on the Music of Hindoostan* (1875 [1834]). In this treatise, Willard aimed to elucidate both the theory and practice of Hindustani music to European readers: "it is the intention to lay before them

specimens of original Rags and Raginees" (1875: 3). He also wanted to "reconcile current practice with earlier theory" (Bor 2006: 7). According to Willard, Orientalists "so able and eminent" (1875: 3) as Jones, had failed to understand this music. Namely, they solely sought to "elucidate music from rules laid down in books, a science incapable of explanation by mere words" (ibid.: 3). Willard argued that the theoretical descriptions of the science of music found in the Sanskrit treatises were merely meant for philosophers as "general directions and rules for composition" (ibid.: 2). Hence, they did not, and could never, capture or reflect the many complexities and specific aesthetics of "Hindoostanee music." Instead, he wanted to gain musical knowledge from musical practitioners, "living professors, of whom there are several, although grossly illiterate" (ibid.: 3).

However, Willard still constructed an ancient Indian civilization as musically superior to contemporary practices. Moreover, its decline was due to Muslim rule: "In Hindoostan, music 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" (ibid.: 28). He furthermore maintained a distinction between the forms of knowledge gained from musical practice and those gained from and reproduced in writing, as indicated by his claim that one could get musical knowledge from "living professors" even though they were "grossly illiterate." However, contrary to Jones, Willard was inclined to "judge" the "natives" based on their own musical standards rather than those laid out by music theorists based on European classical musical standards:

> The natives are guided by their own rules of modulation, the propriety of which should of course not be judged by the rules laid down by M. Rousseau, or his commentator D'Alembert; but by those determined by the native masters, allowing the ear to be the best and most natural judge of that which has its existence merely with the view of affording pleasure to the auditory organ (ibid.: 61).

Willard here pleads for the use of the "naturally" listening ear in judgements of aesthetic value of musical practice. This gives some insight into the many complex, and at times contradictory, elements of Willard's approach. Inclined to incorporate embodied knowledge of musicians as a valid source of musical knowledge, he nevertheless suggested that this music's heyday was in the past. Thereby, he questioned some of Jones's ideas while echoing others. The basic mode of thought on which these ideas were build, however, remained intact.

Thus, while more encompassing in his use of source material, Willard still had specific and highly normative notions regarding the mode of listening necessary for aesthetic appreciation and proper understanding of this music:

> We can easily see how ignorance or incapacity might lead a person to wrong conclusions, yet we do not consider whether those persons who decry Hindoostanee music have had opportunities of hearing it to the best advantage ; whether, supposing they had, they were at the time divested of all prejudices against it, and were disposed to judge impartially ; whether they possessed the requisite capacity to comprehend its beauties. (ibid.: 23–24)

Willard here argued for the aesthetic value of the music he encountered in India. In contrast to Jones, he proposed an appreciation of "its intrinsic and real beauties" (ibid.: 26) in and on its own terms, rather than comparing this music to, and listening to it in terms of, European classical music, to "allow each its merits" (ibid.: 51). However, to understand and appreciate Hindustani music on its own terms, Willard argued, the listener needs to be informed about this music. Willard likewise mobilizes this notion of a knowledgeable listener when positing relationships between rāgas or rāginees, time of day, and season. He suggests the belief in these relationships are mainly the result of fables, but nonetheless relevant in musical practice. Namely, it "would be reckoned extremely ridiculous to call for a particular tune at an improper season. This may indeed shew the ignorance of the person who makes the request in this branch of Hindoostani music" (ibid.: 69). A listening characterized by knowledge, so Willard seems to suggest to his reader, should be valued.

While arguing for listening out on a music's own terms, a comparative tone nonetheless runs through Willard's descriptions. In his chapter "Of the Gamut" (ibid.: 39), for example, virtually everything he suggests about "Surgum" (ibid.: 39) is explained in comparative terms: "the number of tones is the same as in the modern music of Europe, but the subdivisions are more in the manner of the ancient enharmonic genus of the Greeks" (ibid.: 40). He links these "subdivisions" to aesthetic experience, arguing that prior listening experiences influence the ways listeners will perceive the music: "to a person versed in the modern music of Europe, the subdivisions of semi-tones into minuter parts will appear incomprehensible, at least inasmuch as to be productive of any melody that would be pleasing to the ear" (ibid.: 40). Thus, Willard switches between such semi-normative descriptions and normative prescriptions of listening, the latter in the explicit service of comparison. While acknowledging that "musicians of

Hindoostan never appear to have had any determined pitch by which their instruments were regulated" (ibid.: 41), for the sake of those who want to compare, Willard suggests a regulation of the tuning system: "it seems to me more systematic that some such definitions are to be made" (ibid.: 41). This prioritization of comparison over practice by suggesting such a modification echoes Jones's earlier approach.

One musical element that Willard described in some detail is "their authentic" or "oriental melody," the "general term" for which "in Hindoostan is Rag or Raginee" (ibid.: 60–62). Elsewhere he translates rāginis as "tunes" while noting that they cannot be understood in exactly the same manner as tunes "amongst us" (ibid.: 63–70). However, he examines this aspect only after having established the complexity of music based on harmony (ibid.: 54–59) in comparison to music based on melody. The only harmony that "Hindoostanee music generally admits of, and indeed requires, if it can be called harmony, is a continuation of its key note, in which respect it resembles very much the Scotch pastorals" (ibid.: 54). Such comparative descriptions hierarchically order Hindustani music below European art music on an aesthetic scale. This oriental melody itself, we learn, in its limited number "is said to have been composed by professors universally acknowledged to have possessed not only real merit, but also the original genius of composition, beyond the precincts of whose authority it would be criminal to trespass" (ibid.: 61). Similar to Jones's text, then, this illustrates a tension between different forms and sources of authority deployed to authenticate both the music as well as Willard's writings. The notions of composition and genius, concepts themselves borrowed from European art music, are here invoked to construct the legendary status of canonical figures like Tansen (ibid.: 26). Willard in turn uses this status, to authenticate the rāgas and rāginis as valuable music, using the logics of European art music in his claims regarding the musical significance of Hindoostanee music.

Disagreeing with Jones's notion of rāga as musical mode, Willard proposes T'hat to come "nearest to what with us is implied by a mode" (ibid.: 65). To each of these T'hat's, he suggests, "two or more Rags or Raginees are appropriated" (ibid.: 64). Willard approaches rāgas through thirteen pages of descriptions of their depictions in rāgamālā paintings. His eleven-page-long descriptions of (mainly the respective failures in) instrument-building methods and materials ignore the sounds these instruments make. The description of the different vocal styles fills six pages. This division in page numbers creates a hierarchy: rāgamālās as most important knowledge source on that crucial musical element of rāga. And the sonic is presented as less

important than the visual. As I argue in the next chapter, this hierarchy resonates with the focus of contemporary Hindustani classical music studies on rāga theory and analysis. Similarly, musical instruments are still mainly described in terms of their materiality, leaving questions of timbre and its relations to aesthetics almost completely unaddressed.

While Willard's writings are thus more nuanced than Jones's, he largely reproduces Jones's epistemological assumptions and norms. Distinctions between forms of musical knowledge (written and embodied, theory and practice) remain intact, musical concepts are translated in terms of and compared to European art musical concepts, which thus remained the model for listening practices. While arguing for inclusion of Muslim musical practices, Willard still relies on the authority of the written Sanskrit word. Although adopting a critical undertone, he portrays music as an object of knowledge that can be owned through various knowledge practices. Listening is not necessarily one of them.

Although perhaps the most analyzed in recent historiographies on Hindustani classical music and orientalism, these texts were not the only publications written during the British imperial period. Most of these orientalist publications distinguish between musical theory (or music as a science) and musical practice and characterize the music as an ancient Hindu art form that lacks harmonic complexity and has hence not yet developed to its full potential:

> The works that remain on the subject have been examined by competent oriental scholars, who have discovered that music as a science held a high place among ancient Hindus, and became the subject of learned, though pedantic, treatises on doctrines of sounds, variations of scales accord of musical instruments, divisions of modes, singing, and instrumentation; but nowhere does it appear that the laws of harmony had ever been discovered or invented; and, as a consequence, all Indian music is wanting this most essential particular. This, and the pedantic divisions into modes, so jealously guarded from infringement, have prevented Hindu music and its science from that improvement and extension which have been attained elsewhere. (French 1875: 266–267)

Most of these texts were written in dialogue with other orientalist manuscripts and Sanskrit treatises rather than through listening to musical practice. Repeating and reinforcing each other, these ideas "also lingered as a historical discourse in Indian writing in the twentieth century.… The glorification of the Brahmanic tradition resulted in an often-repeated, uncritical historical summary" (Wade 2013: 146). As Neuman (2004), Bakhle (2005), Clayton (2013), and Jones (2013) have illustrated, Wade's unspecific grouping together of texts as "Indian writing," might benefit from some nuance. Namely, its goals and ideological underpinnings were varied

and the notions of listening they took for granted were context specific. This brings me to an examination of several influences of Indian scholars on musical thought and practice in the wake of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Indian nationalisms.

Historical Fragments: Nationalisms

The writings of several scholars are regarded as central to pre-independence historical transformations in Hindustani classical music (Nayar 1989; Farrell 1997; Trasoff 1999; Neuman 2004; Bakhle 2005; Jones 2013), including those of Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande (1860–1936) and Sourindro Mohun Tagore (1840–1914). Historiographic work has already been published on the lives and (musical) loves of these musicologists, often in specific relation to questions of colonial mimicry, de-colonization, and nationalism. As Trasoff has argued, much "of the work of nationalist-oriented musicologists such as Bhatkhande and Tagore can be viewed as motivated, in part, by a desire to achieve … legitimation" (1999: 107) of Hindustani classical music as a national art form. However, in pre-independence India, a "reorganization of musical knowledge along European lines" (ibid.) was one strategy to achieve this goal. Rather than reproducing such historiographies here, I restrict myself to exploring how selected writings of these authors constructed specific versions of Hindustani classical music as musically and musicologically valuable to suit these authors' political goals. In particular, I examine how listening figured in these dynamics.

S.M. Tagore contributed extensively to "music education in his home city Calcutta during the late nineteenth century and also to the global distribution of information about North Indian music" (Flora 2004: 289). He published a large body of essays and treatises on "Hindu music" in Bengali[25] and established several music schools in the late nineteenth century. These schools "would lend pedagogical integrity and coherence to the tradition as well as elevate the social status of musicians" (Capwell 2010: 288). Through these entangled attempts to educate the Bengali and British intellectual elites about "Hindu music," Tagore became an important figure in the "late nineteenth century Bengal renaissance" (Flora 2004: 289). Adopting a "colonial model of instruction" (Capwell 2000: 432) in such music schools, Tagore sought to

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[25] As I do not speak or read Bengali, it was not possible for me to examine these primary sources in detail myself. Hence, I base my argument regarding Tagore's work on secondary sources.

prove to the British crown as well as to Bengali intellectual elites that India's "native music" was an advanced and scientific art form (cf. ibid.: 432). However, to prove its inherent aesthetic qualities, Tagore had to use the pedagogical concepts, "methods and attitudes of the colonizers" (ibid.: 432). Echoing the orientalist notion that music belonged to the realm of science rather than performing arts, Tagore characterized music as rational and based on writing. He wanted to move music into the public sphere by educating the Bengali elites in his music schools. The "performing and teaching ustad" were viewed "as anathema to this project, as incommensurable to modernity and therefore as significant only as a native informant. In Tagore's music school, it was inconceivable to enlist the ustads … as possible teachers" (Neuman 2004: 338). In practice, however, Tagore's music schools "did enlist the ustad for pedagogical purposes" (ibid.: 338). This tension between written and embodied knowledge reproduces abovementioned anxieties over assorted forms of knowledge.

By publishing in English, Tagore also became an active figure in the distribution of knowledge about his version of Hindustani classical music across the boundaries of India. His writings were far from objective, building on orientalist modes of thought to project "proof of the greatness of Indian civilization to the West" (Jones 2013: 206). Tagore mobilized musical categories and modes of thought that echoed the work of, among others, Willard and Jones; a "tool of self-agency" (Capwell 2010: 285) that, however, legitimated these highly problematic approaches as truthful representations of Hindustani classical music. Tagore's publication *Six Ragas and Thirty-Six Raginis of the Hindus* (1887) for the British empress Victoria exemplifies this performative aspect of his work.

The publication consists of a collection of rāgamālā lithographs, each accompanied by a tune, printed in "western notation" and Sanskrit verses, written by Tagore in praise of the empress (Capwell 2002: 197). Combining such staff notation with Sanskrit, the collection "was designed in large part with the aim of displaying a rich, systematic, and complex classical tradition" (Jones 2013: 206). The publication is consistent with Willard's writings in several aspects. The number of rāgas and rāginis these authors count is the same, and the text reductively describes Hindustani classical music in terms of its visual representation in rāgamālās. Furthermore, Tagore utilizes the by then well-established popularity of staff notated Hindustani airs (cf. Jones 1875; French 1875; Farrell 1997: 31). The publication's title, furthermore, fitted neatly with and echoed orientalist treatises such as *Music of the Hindus* (Nathan 1875), *Musical Scales of the Hindus* (Paterson 1875), *the Hindu divisions of the octave*

(Bosanquet 1875), *the Hindu scale* (Engel 1875), or *The Hindu Theory of Music* (Rice 1875). As such, Tagore's representation, like the many orientalist studies before him, "deliberately obfuscated the presence of Muslim musicians and Islamic musical influence" (Capwell 2002: 219) on Hindustani musical practices and its histories.

Ignoring the large variety of musicking practices in nineteenth-century British India, Tagore's publication actively purified, historicized, and Hinduized visual representations of a limited range of musical elements as Hindustani music for the British public. Like earlier orientalist publications, it prioritized those aspects of Hindustani music that were consistent with Sanskrit texts over its many other sonic elements. It deemed certain musical elements worthy of description and representation. By making choices about which elements to represent, and which to leave out, without making those choices explicit, such texts powerfully naturalize a musical hierarchy: of course we talk about rāga, and describe rāga in terms of melody and as represented in the Rāgamālā paintings; of course we represent a Hindustani air in staff notation.

Another English-language publication that illustrates the fragmentary reproduction of specific modes of relating to—listening out for, thinking, and writing about—Hindustani classical music is Tagore's *Hindu Music* (1875). This article responds to a debate sparked by a letter published in the Hindoo Patriot on 15th September 1873 that critiqued botanist C.B. Clarke's report on *Hindu Music* (1873). After observing this "war of words" (1875: 339) with interest, Tagore deemed it necessary to, "with propriety, say a few words in reply to the author of the report.… We are sorry to perceive, that he [Clarke] still persists in his original misconceptions of the real character of Hindu Music" (ibid.: 339). Accusing Clarke's work of "mathematicism" (ibid.: 339ff), Tagore argues that by "learning music the student requires, above all things, an educated ear capable of detecting and feeling the sense of all tonal combinations" (ibid.: 340). An attempt to explain music through acoustic theories, "instead of contributing to the exposition and development of music, does much to mystify and obscure it.… The great Aristoxiuas [sic] takes the same view" (ibid.: 340–342). These two excerpts illustrate the remnants of several orientalist fragments in Tagore's writing: First, a tension between different forms of and approaches to the gaining of musical knowledge. Tagore negatively compares mathematical approaches with learning music. The latter includes training the ear to "feel" tonal combinations instead of calculating them. Second, his argument against mathematical approaches mobilizes the authority of a Greek philosopher and other "eminent

European professors of music" (ibid.: 340) to legitimize what he considers the correct mode of listening (here, "feeling" tonal combinations).

Another form of knowledge (acquisition) that Tagore mentions in his letter echoes the orientalist preference for Sanskrit treatises as sources of musical knowledge. He sarcastically suggests that we "admire Mr. Clarke's boldness in venturing upon a discussion on the merits of Hindu Music with, as it appears, scarcely any knowledge of its elementary principles" (ibid.: 343). Tagore blames Clarke and his "native guide's" (ibid.) lack of knowledge of the Sanskrit language for this

> ignorance of the simplest things in our musical system, such as the term Rága and the number of Rágas in use, of the construction of the Sitara and its capacity, through it is the simplest and the most popular of Hindu musical instruments. He attacks the Srooties which he does not evidently understand, though they form the very base-work of the musical system of the Hindus (ibid.: 343).

This suggestion, then, produces the Sanskrit treatises as the source of authorized musical knowledge. The sruties, here appearing in a claim that rejects Clarke's apparent critical stance towards them, are presented as essential elements of "the musical system of the Hindus," again surfacing as flashpoints over musical authority and knowledge.

Furthermore, the importance of knowing the number of rāgas in use, as debated throughout these texts, is indicative of what might best be described as a quantification of rāga. Such suggestions assume that it is more important to be able to count the rāgas and know their names than to understand the musical practices they refer to.[26] In his critique of Clarke, Tagore discusses his understandings of rāga by quoting several European scholars, amongst them Willard. Tagore suggests that the "idea which the word Rága conveys has not its counterpart in English" (ibid.: 345). To "form a correct idea of the term" (ibid.: 345), he refers Clarke to several Sanskrit treatises. While Tagore does acknowledge the existence of "eminent Hindu and Mohamedan musicians of the day, who endorse our view of the question under discussion" (ibid.: 387), he rejects their embodied, non-theoretical knowledge as a valid source of authority. By contrast, their signatures, as found attached to Tagore's letter, are presented as proof that

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[26] Today, musicians utilize this process in both positive and negative ways. While a musician might be negatively valued by the following suggestion, "He says he knows over a hundred rāgas, but he doesn't have any in-depth knowledge of any of them." (anonymous interlocutor), the quantity of rāga knowledge might in the same breath be used as a positive indicator: "Khansahab knew over three hundred rāgas, what a musician he was." (anonymous interlocutor).

they endorse his argument. Tagore thus navigated between several forms of knowledge and authority that he himself characterized as contradictory.

Rather than going into detail about the discussion laid out by Tagore, it suffices to say that, like several orientalists before him, Tagore erased the influence of Muslim musicians from the "real character of Hindu Music" (ibid.: 339). His descriptions of musical elements relevant for the music of the "Hindus," include aforementioned discussion on srutis, the number, definition, and the categorization of rāga in terms of musical theoretical ideas about notes and interval relations such as quarter notes. The closing phrase of Tagore's essay, crucially, relates this version of music to India as a nation: "If this paper satisfies Mr. Clarke that in advocating the national system we are simply following reason, truth, and history, we will consider ourselves amply repaid" (ibid.: 387). In one sweeping declaration, Tagore not only historicizes but also naturalizes his notion of "Hindu music" as "national" music. Tagore's writing thus constructs a direct relationship between historicized ideologies of ancient Hinduism, a musical system (of notation), musical thought, reason, and India as a nation. As Neuman has pointed out, this "enacted that first step in distancing the ustad from the narrative field of discussion.… For as much as Tagore proclaimed his 'prefer[ence for] *our national system of notation*' such a system did not really exist, the written medium being largely irrelevant to the Hindustani musician and his music" (Neuman 2004: 337, insertion and italics Neuman's).

Recent studies have begun to critically address the (consequences of this) erasure of Muslim musicians from what is commonly narrated as the history of Hindustani classical music (Qureshi 1997; 2000; Schofield 2010; Bor et al. 2013; Orsini and Schofield 2015). Such work is especially relevant because this Indianization and "Hinduization of Hindustani music continues to shape popular discourse about it" (Jones 2013: 206). Paradoxically, anecdotes suggest that during this same time-period, multi-instrumentalist Allauddin Khan converted from Hindu to Muslim to be accepted as a student by Wazir Khan. This beenkar and scholar was also one of the teachers of musicologist Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande,[27] another figure now canonized for his crucial role in this music's (secular) nationalization in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Historian Janaki Bakhle has examined music's complicated roles in the political agenda of musicologist V.N. Bhatkhande. Examining historical transformations in the ways in which this music was perceived, she argues that Bhatkhande was instrumental in the classicization of

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[27] As his work is mainly published in Marathi and Hindi, I rely mainly on secondary sources for my interpretation of his work.

Hindustani music. For him, she suggests, "music was the hope for a new modern, national, and academic art that would stay away from religion" (2005: 7). As Bhatkhande put it:

> We live now in an age of science and technology. There is no place for such notions [theory] unless proved by practical demonstrations today.… Should the state of musicology be so poor even in North India where the Art has had a glorious history? I have given vent to these musings, appalled by this poverty of correct knowledge and information. North India, the home of the great super masters of music, has guarded very little knowledge of it today.… Today no trace of any written record of their services in the cause of music is available. Their very descendants know little and can read less.… According to the general practice of music in those days, musicians like Tansen and others were practical musicians of a very high order, but they were not required to study the texts in Sanskrit. We should make a thorough research and investigate objectively these legendary stories concerning music of those days. (Bhatkhande, quoted in: Nayar 1989: 96)

As above excerpt illustrates, Bhatkhande argued for a rational, secular, and modern approach to music. Like previous orientalists, he finds the issue of the music's alleged decay extremely pressing:

> Poor music. I really do not know what sins music has committed. No protector comes forward to champion its cause. Nobody appreciates its great utility. People will certainly have to repent one day. The next decade will certainly kill most leading artists and scholars and by the time people wake up there will be only fifth class musicians left to please them. (Bhatkhande 1966 [1922], quoted in Bakhle 2005: 96–97)

Here, he reiterates discourses on the fear of this music's extinction to legitimate his project of recovery. Like Willard, while arguing for musical practice as a basis for musical knowledge, he did not conceive of embodied knowledge as legitimate; musicians were mere sources, based on which he could produce valid, written, knowledge. This would in turn enable a musical renaissance, which, so Bhatkhande proposed, "hinged on what Indian music lacked—namely, a connected history, a systematic and orderly pedagogy, and respectability" (Bakhle 2005: 7). In short, there was no such thing as a written musical archive. Musical knowledge "in possession of the musicians was not textual but based on family memory. Gharana musicians, many of whom were poor and uneducated, came under attack not only for their so-called unsystematic pedagogy, but also for holding hostage, through their secrecy, music's national future" (Bakhle

2005: 7–8). Although taking different form and relating to different ideologies, such statements already hint at the lingering presence of the epistemic conflict explored above.

Believing that music and religion should be separated, Bhatkhande pled for an approach to music as "modern, scholastic, and secular" (2005: 98). He rejected the Vedas as the ultimate authority on musical knowledge and was skeptical of the authority attributed to Sanskrit texts. However, he did have an "obsession with textual authority" that was motivated by what Bakhle calls a "modernist pursuit: the search for proof, demonstrability, documentation, history, and order" (ibid. 99). He instead used seventeenth-century South Indian texts as a basis for reforming the "incorrect" musical practices of the times:

> Music changed its form at the advent of the Muslim rule. We are now two centuries ahead of that period. By studying the texts we can restore some ragas which are now obsolete. We can correct the method of singing some melodies which are at present incorrectly sung. One can note the principle changes in the name of the ragas, thaats, and gamaks. The substratum of our music is undoubtedly the music of the past. Therefore, a study of the past is essential. (Bhatkhande, quoted in: Nayar 1989: 107)

While his goals were not primarily nationalist in character, like Tagore he did seek to create a national music which had to be "institutionalized, centralized, and standardized" (Bakhle 2005: 98) to educate the masses. For such a structured institutionalization to work, music as propagated by Bhatkhande, "needed a demonstrable and linked history, one with a text or a few key texts that explained foundational rules, theories and performance practices" (ibid.: 98). He took such systematic studying and classifying music of the past, as a "base for systematizing the present-day music" (Nayar 1989: 109). While basing himself on texts, he also argued that his rational and systematic theory of current rāgas, which he wanted to establish as the backbone of practice, was formulated "as he learned, listened to and analysed them" (Nayar 1989: 139). These processes involved less actual listening than one might expect from Nayar's celebratory account.

As most musicians were neither able to write nor versed in Sanskrit texts, they could not produce written evidence of musical rules, structures, and theories. Hence, Bhatkhande regarded the gharānā system as backwards and standing in the way of musical progress. To challenge the authority of gharānā musicians, he traveled around the country and documented a comprehensive music history by notating of thousands of compositions by "native informants" that he randomly encountered. In addition, he interrogated these musicians,

maneuvering his interviewee into a situation where the only possible response to a technical question was to confess ignorance:… "So, you don't understand Sanskrit, cannot sing any of the ragas in the granthas you claim to have read, and have not understood the granthas themselves?" Bhatkhande then corrected his interviewee, set his knowledge of Sanskrit straight, and even offered to sing parts of the music that were written about in the Sangit Ratnakara, the text about which he had just received the confession of ignorance from his browbeaten subject. (Bakhle 2005: 103)

Characterizing their musical knowledge as backward, he simultaneously portrayed musicians as "providing raw data for the musicologist.… 'Master pieces of our old composers in the possession of our' ustads" (Neuman 2004: 343, quoting Bhatkhande). He was also "less interested in the actual performance of music than in the theory that underpinned the education of the musician" (Bakhle 2005: 102). Bhatkhande's method of research, then, involved collecting through transcribing, but these transcriptions were based on knowledge gained from texts that he tricked musicians into confirming as correct. While thus highly selective, he portrayed these notations as a neutral, authoritative representations of musical knowledge. In this form, they served as the prescriptive basis for the envisioned education of the masses in his music institutes.

While the guru-shishya parampārā often actively withheld categorical knowledge from students in favor of an embodied learning through listening and feeling (cf. Neuman 2004), Bhatkhande presented a contrasting method of musical education. The sonic was dismissed in favor of notation, a musical object that enabled a visualization of musical structure:

To keep a record of the existing music in notation is the only method of handing down our real heritage to the next generation. The only authentic and fool-proof method of learning a composition or the development of a raga is possible through the medium of notation. It helps a learner to have a clear-cut idea of the movement of a raga as he can visualize the whole movement in the note names like a picture. The basis of real training should be to enable a pupil to recognize notation and develop in him the ability to translate it into voice. Dependence on the oral system of training means the invariable distortion of note formation and languages which can be prevented by learning through notation. (Bhatkhande, paraphrased in Nayar 1989: 286)

In this excerpt, several discursive tropes are used to indicate what Hindustani classical music should be and how it should be learned. The notion of "real heritage" appears in direct relation to the musical parameters of "development of rāga" and "composition.," characterized as

essential elements of this music that should be captured through the "medium of notation" to guarantee an "authentic and fool-proof method of learning." Bhatkhande constructs rāga as a specific movement of notes that one can learn by visualizing its "note names," preferably as he has notated them. He contrasts notation as the only authoritative means of musical transmission against the perceived deficiencies of the guru-shishya parampārā, specifically because these "distort … note formation." These juxtapositions of forms of musical knowledge acquisition are found throughout his writings, including his letters and papers delivered at All India Music Conferences.[28]

None of his overarching claims and aims, however, took hold. Instead, sixty years after Bhatkhande's death, Hindustani classical instrumental musical knowledge practices, are "suffused with sacrality, held up by the notion of the ancient guru-shishya parampara. The Vedas and the Natyashastra are routinely assumed to hold the secrets of Indian music's performative origins" (Bakhle 2005: 99–100). Even though Bhatkhande was not successful in transforming Hindustani classical music into a purely secular music for the masses, his work on the thāt system and on rāga categorization and quantification have assumed a canonical status within contemporary musical knowledge practices. Prominent musicologist Jairazbhoy, for example, states that:

> Much of the melodic data for this book is taken from the notations provided by the eminent scholar, Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande in his two major works … with occasional reference made to notations from earlier treatises.… These are supplemented by the analysis of numerous performances of North Indian classical music by some of its leading exponents. (Jairazbhoy 2011 (1971): 6)

In a similar fashion, Bagchee's *Nād: Understanding Rāga Music* (1998) is based completely on written sources: "The important books consulted have been listed.… For a basic understanding, I relied largely on Pandit Bhatkhande's various works" (Bagchee 1998: 9). These examples illustrate the uncritical reproduction of Bhatkhande's thoughts within several highly acclaimed works.

Neuman has illustrated how the mode of thought constructed in Bhatkhande's texts resulted in a mode of listening among both musicologists and music critics, where "theory serves as a double-pronged tool of supervision and humiliation" (2004: 92) of the musician.

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[28] Cf. Neuman 2004; Bakhle 2005; Trasoff 1999: 141–157 for more information on these conferences and their role in the formation of Hindustani classical music in the early twentieth-century pre-independence India.

Neuman traces several shifts in authority, arguing that structural approaches such as Bhatkhande's lie at the roots of an "epistemic formula which then becomes the template through which to mediate and listen to performance" (ibid.: 71). Quoting Bhatkhande's suggestion that "The fact is that knowledge of 'sa re ga ma' leads to the knowledge of Raga" (V.N. Bhatkhande, *Kramik Pustak Mallika Part I, Hathras: Sangeet Karyalaya*, 1999: 12), Neuman argues that under the influence of such texts, the process of knowing, in post-independence India, increasingly occurred "through the assimilation of note-names.… According to the modern musicologist episteme, one needed to identify what was being played by name in order to critically listen, to hear with knowledge" (Neuman 2004: 76). The "particular ways of writing about music," he continues, are "similarly structured to the cultivated mode of listening to music" (ibid.: 77). Listening out for the in- and exclusion of notes, note orders, and phrases in terms of notes allowed a categorization of complex musical events in terms of rāga. Rāga thus increasingly became listened out for in terms of note successions, which "helped the learner to have a quick grasp and sound base of its rules and historical evolution" (Nayar 1989: 174). This quick and easy consumption of music was made possible through such studying of (necessarily reductive) notation and categorized musical elements.

Neuman contrasts such modes of listening as a type of knowledge practice with that of musicians, for whom such categorical knowledge was largely irrelevant. This is exemplified in the way musicologists and music critics often forced musicians to give a rāga name before a performance. When their playing differed from the structural-theory-based expectations of these self-appointed connoisseurs, the latter categorized the performance as "wrong" (Neuman 2004: 73). Neuman argues that this marks an "epistemic conflict in modalities of listening" (ibid.: 82) and pleads for an alternative—musician based—epistemology of Hindustani classical music. While this was certainly a necessary move beyond the mode of listening so long repeated by musicology, his approach give authority to musicians to determine how one should listen. While the protagonists differ, casting musician's as heroes reproduces the structures of power it seeks to critique. This alone indicates that the epistemic conflict over listening modalities, as Neuman diagnosed it, is anything but resolved today.

Taking my cue from Ahmed's understanding of the post-colonial as a failed historicity, I have argued that it is necessary to ask how, where, and in what ways colonially informed musical encounters (are made to) resound in the present. Which larger power structures do such resonances uphold? Which master narratives do they reproduce? Whose and which sonic nuances are silenced? To be able to flesh out contemporary remnants of imperialism in the sangīt encounters analyzed in the following chapters, I have examined several canonized historical sources on Hindustani classical music as sangīt encounters. I understand these texts to construct standards of (contemporary) musical knowledge practice and aesthetic values. In complex interaction with musical practices, these writings functioned as aesthetic yardsticks, influencing how music was thought about, (not) listened out for, and judged in the process.

The goals of each of the examined texts were distinct. Their arguments at times both conflicted and agreed. Several tropes and flashpoints can be analyzed. Orientalists like Jones and Willard mainly wanted to educate the British readership about the music of Hindustan as a part of their project to prove the greatness of (a now decayed) Indian civilization. While Bhatkhande argued for a secular national music, the other three authors portrayed it as inherently Hindu and Indian, thus actively writing Muslim musicians out of this music's history. Written (ancient) Sanskrit treatises and/or seventeenth-century South Indian texts were juxtaposed with embodied musical knowledge. As musicians often lacked the theoretical knowledge academics sought to confirm, they were reduced to either mere evidence of the decay of musical practice or source material from whom raw data could be mined. Actual listening to their music was irrelevant because it could not provide these scholars the structural data they regarded as musical knowledge. While authors differed in the value they attached to each of these forms of musical knowledge, all hierarchized written representations over the sonic. They portrayed music as a domain of the rational, which needed to be analyzed, compared, structured, notated, and standardized—all for the easy consumption of either the readers at home or the students at their music institutes. Orientalist writings, furthermore, use European art music concepts and aesthetic values as the standard by which to judge Hindustani music. While Bhatkhande and Tagore sought to prove the aesthetic value of this music as a (classical) art form, to both the Indian elites and the British Crown, they simultaneously capitalized on colonial discourses and modes of representation. Capturing compositions

through notation and listening out for rāga grammar in terms of notes, in sum, became a mode of knowledge production through which scholars "could stake a claim in musical authority" (Neuman 2004: 383). Such texts, in sum, each constructed one particular version of Hindustani classical music as alternatively aesthetically and/or academically relevant. In the following chapters, I examine how these various tropes and epistemological flashpoints figure in contemporary knowledge practices.

The question of which sonic elements to listen out for plays crucial roles in dynamics of learning, valorizing, and distinguishing Hindustani classical instrumental music for second generation Senia Maihar gharānā disciples, as the following interview excerpt illustrates:

> Because I had learned, more my father's style, which was more heavily influenced by Ravi Shankar. Which is a lot of, uh. I mean, his forte, one of his fortes, you could say, was, krinton, cut. [sound example 3.1] You know, he goes and that thing, all these kind of stroke [sound example 3.1]. While Khansaheb had this, you know, whole, you know, beautiful types of ornamentation that I had never heard you know. [sound example 3.1] All these things that, that you don't even necessarily typically do on sitar, and then, even, you know, simple ornaments, like [sound example 3.1] all those stuff. When I first heard it, I was like, what is that? You know it took me, the first time I heard that, I heard that ornament, that, I remember it too, it was in like, Kafi, [sound example 3.1] a simple ornament [sound example 3.1]. I took the recording and I slowed it down on my computer and I listened to it over and over and over. It took me that much work just to dissect what was happening. So, all these kinds of details, I had no idea about. You know, it just completely exploded my world.
> (anonymous disciple of Ali Akbar Khan)

My interlocutor is a relatively young[29] musician. He learned with his father, a disciple of Ravi Shankar, before studying at the Ali Akbar College of Music in San Rafael during the final years of Khan's life. From the time of Khan's death in 2009, the disciple began using a recording of a specific interpretation of a rāga as performed in concert by Khan as a learning device. Because Khan's death resulted in the absence of his embodied musical knowledge, this recording now serves as an alternative source of musical knowledge containing the details that "exploded" the disciple's world. Despite the fact that Ali Akbar Khan and Ravi Shankar belong to the same gharānā and had learned from the same guru, Allauddin Khan, these nuances that exploded his world were crucially different from the details he had learned to listen out for while studying

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[29] Thirty at the time of the interview in 2014. The matter of age is a source of debate within Hindustani classical music, as it is related to and used in claims of (lack of) musical knowledge and authority. Many elder musicians, musicologists, and self-appointed connoisseurs claim that a player cannot be taken serious as a musician before he has turned forty or even fifty. Crucially these claims are not necessarily backed up by listening experiences, but rather based on the ideology that musical maturity takes dedication and time. Musicians such as the above-quoted interlocutor, who have not yet reached this age connected to musical maturity, often state that such suggestions are simply attempts by senior musicians to keep their musical power. An in-depth examination of the factor of age in dynamics of (de)valorization of musicians is outside of the scope of this book.

with his father. Through listening, these aspects became his aesthetic yardstick, based on which he valorizes both his own as well as other's playing. Instead of describing these specifics to me in words, he repeatedly chose to perform them on his sitar.

Several aspects of listening play a role in this encounter. First, the disciple claims he could recognize the beauty of Khan's music without the need to analytically listen and pinpoint what was going on musically. This implies that one does not necessarily need specific musical knowledge to be able to listen out for and recognize Khan's musical genius. However, this mode of listening alone was not sufficient for the disciple to discern the details responsible for the beauty of Khan's playing. Instead, aided by technology, he repeatedly listened to a slowed-down recording of a live performance of Khan playing rāga Kafi to train his ears to be able "to dissect what was happening". His own playing, he furthermore implies, could only attain this quality through a long-term process of learning to listen out for the "feeling" of this rāga. This notion of feeling is popular among musicians, often described as something that one cannot put into words or logically explain, as in the following interview excerpt:

> Yeah, it's supposed to, there is a feeling behind it, and I am not getting that right, and in, it's not. It's neither of these rāgas, so, another kind of feeling, that is supposed to come. He [Ali Akbar Khan] always talked about feeling, and mood, and, kind of like, the unseeable, kind of things, he would talk about, or unexplainable kind of things.… Some things are like, not very explainable, you have to just feel it, especially like, how do you play this note, how do you play this ornament, how do show this kind of phrase. Uhm, there is a feeling behind it, and that's it, you have to, you can't, you can show, but you can't, really explain to a certain extent. It has to, has to come, it has to come, you have to hear it, you have to internalize it.… So, you really have to truly hear it, I feel, and not only hear things to a certain degree. They don't hear, they are missing so much of what is going on.… You have to hear, very, really have to hear it, truly hear it. And then. And you can develop even that. When, even if you hear, something that's, much more than another person or the subtle subtlety or the level of detail or, the feeling, the unexplained essence or feeling of something.
> (anonymous interlocutor, disciple of Ali Akbar Khan)

Such listening out for a feeling, Khan's disciple seems to suggest, is not only a matter of the ears or the mind; it is haptic, perhaps tactile. And only those able to "truly hear it," are able to listen out for and reproduce these details in their own practice and performance. Thus, he simultaneously portrays such listening out for (the details that create) this "feeling" as an ability that one possesses naturally but also as a quality that has to be learned. Namely, an unknowledgeable listener might be able to recognize the beauty of the music, but the ability to

listen out for the details that actually create that beauty must be developed with effort and over time. The great master Ali Akbar Khan said so himself: sonic nuances remain ungraspable in words; they must be listened out for and can only be demonstrated through the music itself.

In their leveraging of several multilayered forms of listening, the above examples bear markers of the colonially informed "epistemic conflict in modalities of listening" (Neuman 2004: 82) sketched out in the previous chapter. These forms of listening are operative in several distinct and at times seemingly contradictory ways. In this chapter, I argue that within the knowledge practices of contemporary Hindustani classical instrumental music, listening is at work on two intersecting levels. I refer to this complexity as a double existence of listening. First, discerning forms of listening are knowledge practices through which (tensions over) aesthetic boundaries and content are established, negotiated, crossed, and/or rejected. Second, musicians and musicologists mobilize forms of selective listening as tropes in their (normative discourses about) musical knowledge practices. That is, as illustrated in the prior chapter, the ability to listen in a particular way has historically become invested with musical authority. In the process, it has become a means of negotiations of power, as the below interview excerpt illustrates:

Interlocutor:	You know, his, his music stands alone, his music stands alone. His music stands in a place, where in any given period of several centuries, there are only one or two people, who stand in such a place.
Eva-Maria:	And can you say a little bit more about, why, why that is the case for you?
Interlocutor:	Uh, I can only uh, uh, I, I really can hardly do more than, repeat, uh, what the Buddha is supposed to have said before his sermons: "Those who have ears, let them hear."
Eva-Maria:	Hm, yeah, so just listen and, hm, yeah.
Interlocutor:	And, you know, yeah, it's more, it's like, if you, if you can hear it, listen to it, because it is there, and certainly a lot of people do hear it. I mean, you know, as I am sure you have seen, there is people like Yehudi Menuhin, you know, coming from his side of the world, saying, you know, "Khansaheb is the greatest musician in the world". So, so that's, that's what struck me, it's just like: oh my god, listen to this.

Khan's long-term USA-based disciple here simultaneously discursively utilizes listening to valorize Hindustani instrumental music and demonstrates how listening functions as a knowledge practice. Quoting the Buddha, the disciple suggests that one should simply listen to Khan's music, to "hear" what "is there" in the music. This portrays music as an aesthetic object that stands alone, its beauty inherent in its musical structure. The disciple cites the fact that

Menuhin recognized the musical genius of Khan as proof for this statement—if a musical authority like Menuhin can hear it, it must be true. Listening is portrayed as an inherent capacity, conveniently removing the need to further prove Khan's genius—just listen and you will understand. And if you don't, this has nothing to do with Khan's music; it is because you lack the skills to listen in the right way. It is possible to gain knowledge about the exceptional qualities of Khan's music through listening, but only with able ears.

The double existence of listening is not restricted to musical practice. (Ethno)musicological writings about Hindustani classical music also play constitutive roles in this field of tension. At times, academic and musical legitimacy are (partially) at conflict with each other; at others, they resonate. Scholars ascribe academic authority to "an initiated listener who is conversant with the [abstracted] concepts, material, technique and end structures" (Atre 2004: 1) of Hindustani classical (instrumental) music. Embodied musical knowledge gained through in-depth learning with canonized instrumentalists can also underpin claims to academic authority. Here, however, the ability to listen out for the nuances that constitute the feeling of a rāga is used as a building block for such scholarly legitimacy. Others simply ignore such forms of listening. Thereby, they not only render such details as academically and aesthetically irrelevant, but they also problematically ignore the multilayered tensions that I argue are negotiated through and in the name of these modes of listening. Namely, to "fade out and to ignore is the strongest force that keeps structures of power and dominance in place" (Hauke 2015: 192, my translation). When the possibility of listening in distinct ways is acknowledged, one form is usually portrayed as academically and/or aesthetically valuable. Scholars working within the field of Hindustani classical music studies, in sum, persistently avoid listening out beyond their structural parameters. Instead, they usually summarize "the concepts embodied in previous [often centuries old] literature, and then proceeded to mold existing musical practices into these concepts" (Slawek 2000 [1987]: 4). The at times bewildering "crossfire" (Raja 2015: 17) between musicians and musicologists over musical details are usually ignored in favor of a celebration of its complexity as an art form. A "rational viewpoint on the subject of rāga authenticity" (Raja 2015: 17), which can be analyzed in a performance by listening out for its structural melodic and aesthetic grammar (Raja 2015: 1–16), provides the musicologist with a framework to test a piece's aesthetic value.

This musicological desire to turn music into a knowable object and, following Bohlman (1999), thereby claim it as one's own is expressed through publications that analyze recordings

of performances by "master" musicians. Deeming these recordings to be original and autonomous musical objects, such publications present the reader-listener[30] with a neatly abstracted listening "map" (cf. Neuman 2004) in the form of reductive notations or descriptions of rāga grammar, conceived of as the sum of a combination of relative pitches. Similar to the canonizing mode of "structural listening" critically examined by Rose Rosengard Subotnik in *Deconstructive Variations: Music and Reason in Western Society* (1995), such listening out for rāga grammar ignores, and thereby silences, other sonic nuances, treating them as aesthetically and academically irrelevant. However, perhaps exactly because such nuances defy those analytical categories historically employed by academics, a listening out for details beyond structural listening is often central to musicians' aesthetic valorizations and claims to musical authority. Rather characterizing one form of listening as more valuable than others, I argue it is crucial to ask what types of knowledge we produce when we listen, structurally or otherwise. What narratives of (musical) mastery do these forms of listening adhere to, reproduce, question, and on which and whose terms? And (how) do they intervene into, amplify, reproduce, or question the naturalized status of larger power-knowledge structures involved in their manipulation? *How* do they perform, here understood in the Butlerian sense, *which* sounds as Hindustani classical instrumental music?

I explore these questions throughout the rest of this book. In the section that follows, "Structural Listenings in Hindustani classical music (studies)," I examine how specific forms of listening become invested with authority within this academic field. I investigate how scholars have disciplined and claimed Hindustani classical (instrumental) music as their own through such naturalized selective listening acts. I ask what assumptions about listening and music these scholars take for granted in their representations of, and claims to, musical knowledge. And how do these assumptions, in turn, take part in the construction highly selective forms of listening as academically and aesthetically authoritative?

In the subsequent section, I draw parallels between a mode of structural listening, as identified by Rose Rosengard Subotnik (1995), and the mechanisms of power and knowledge within Hindustani classical music studies that I have explored above. Examining the influences of postmodern thought and debates from postcolonial theory on our understanding of listening, I argue that the increasingly urgent calls for a radical re-thinking of naturalized,

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[30] As I elaborate in more detail below, Subotnik (1995: 161–162) has noted that in structural listening practices the notion of listening often takes on dimensions of the visual, rather than the sonic. Hence the distinction between listener and reader becomes blurred.

colonially connoted epistemologies arising from these approaches have not yet been answered within contemporary Hindustani classical music studies—perhaps because this would necessitate a letting go of the painstakingly assembled music(ologic)al authority that structural listening affords and performs. Elaborating my approach to the double existence of listening out for sonic nuances, I end the chapter with a plea for an active denaturalizing of these taken-for-granted relationships between listening, knowledge and power. Listening for details, I argue, indeed offers alternative narratives of (musical) mastery, as suggested by recent studies that emphasize the destabilizing potential of (close) listening (cf. Vasquez 2013; LaBelle 2016; Ismaiel-Wendt 2011, 2013, 2016; Abels 2016b; 2016c). However, exactly because this mode of listening has become a discursive trope that carries its own highly problematic connotations within the Hindustani classical instrumental music context, proposing it as an alternative to structural listening would reinforce rather than question the power-knowledge structures that I critically examine here. Crucially, I do not suggest that structural elements of rāga are aesthetically or academically irrelevant. Neither do I seek to simply debunk the academic studies that utilize this mode of listening, nor am I invested in proving that other modes of listening are strictly separable from, or more valuable than, structural listening. Rather, I end this chapter by asking how listening, in its double existence as knowledge practices and discursive tropes, allows negotiation of the severe tensions over the aesthetic boundaries and contents of Hindustani classical instrumental music.

Structural Listenings in Hindustani Classical Music (Studies)

Musicological studies mainly attend to Hindustani classical music by listening out for and representing structural elements of rāga. These are often analyzed and described in terms of ārōhaṇa, āvarōhaṇa, defined as melodic phrases that constitute the rāga's allegedly prescriptive macro-melodic "grammar" (cf. Raja 2015: 8–12): "modern authorities on rāgas have documented the … aspects of rāga grammar" (2015: 12). Scholars document these aspects, and increasingly have made it their task to define the parameters of its correctness. Perhaps this is related to the authority ascribed to rāga theory as described in the Sanskrit treatises and amplified through orientalist and Indic musicological texts, as explored in the previous chapter. With growing popularity of participant observation and "bi-musicality" (Hood 1960) within the emerging discipline of ethnomusicology, such listening out for rāga grammar

was often paired with the embodied musical knowledge gained from studying with musicians such as Nikhil Banerjee, Ali Akbar Khan, and Ravi Shankar. Such approaches might be perceived as attempts to reverse the pre-independence musicological rejection of the embodied knowledge of musicians as academically valuable. However, the mode of representing and listening out for this embodied knowledge, I argue below, remains unchanged.

Harold S. Powers's (1976) analytical model for comparative rāga analysis is exemplary of (the limits of) such modes of relating to music. This model, he proposes, "affords an easy operational test for both grammaticality and meaningfulness on musical levels" (1976: 315). He developed this model, it seems, to give the musicologist the correct measurements for judging the quality of a performance. To exemplify his model, he examines relationships between melodic phrases, analyzing them in terms of motives—a musical concept borrowed from European art-music theory—created by shifts in relative pitch.[31] He represents these pitches numerically, at times accompanied by flat or sharp symbols from the staff notation system. The resulting analysis of the "actual meaning of 7-♭2-3," an order of relative pitches that can be used in more than one rāga, "must be further determined … in context with other motivic types: 7-♭2-3/7-♭2-1 means pūriyā, while 7-♭2-3/♯4-b2-3 means pūriya-dhanāsri, and 7-♭2-3/♭2-3-♭2-1 means pūrva-kalyān" (Powers 1976: 330). Based on these abstract relative pitch orders, Powers conflates musical meaning with a reductive notion of rāga. His framework for a "test of acceptability" (ibid.: 315) of the use of specific melodic phrases within rāga performances distinguishes between four categories. A phrase within a performance should be evaluated as "acceptable, positive, meaningful, rāga is āvir-bhāv (essence-manifest); acceptable, neutral, grammatical, rāga is tiro-bhāv (essence-concealed); unacceptable, positive, wrong meaning, another rāga; unacceptable, meaningless, no rāga" (ibid.: 316).

This approach illustrates several symptoms of a structural mode of listening to Hindustani classical (instrumental) music. First, Powers bases the proposed categories on certain structural elements of rāga: "series of collected motives and phrases" (ibid.: 314) as analyzed in terms of numbers attributed to succeeding pitches. It is the musicologist's task to normatively listen out for these elements in performances of master musicians and to neatly categorize these complex musical events in terms of rāga. Musical order, in turn, is created through listening on these terms, because performances should be tested on their inherent musical value. Because one can conveniently "test" these aspects based on the order of

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[31] Powers has numbered each pitch, presumably for comparative purposes. 7-♭2-3 translates as shudh Ni, kumal Re, shudh Ga.

numbered representations of pitch, understanding and evaluating music seems to have little to do with listening to an actual sonic event over time.

Reminiscent of orientalist discourses, such highly reductive analyses are often accompanied by mystifying discourses that emphasize the difficulty of analytically grasping or even defining rāga. Anthropologist and musicologist Wim van der Meer, for example, opens his *Hindustani Music in the 20th Century* (1980) with a statement on the impossibility of conceptually grasping rāga:

> The central and predominant concept of Indian music is rāga. We must refrain from definition, the implication of the concept will grow and become clear in the course of this study as practically all aspects of Indian music somehow pertain to rāga. In the first place it must be made clear that rāga, although referred to above as a concept really escapes such categories as concept, type, model, pattern etc. (Van der Meer 1980: 3).

Although he goes into more detail than Powers, Van der Meer similarly focuses on structural elements of Hindustani music: he examines the structural development of khayāl and dhrupad performance, the structural development of dhrupad alāp, categories and delineations of rāgas, and writes about swāra, scales and compositions. Similarly, his mode of categorization of rāgas echoes Powers:

> It is generally considered the greatest challenge for a vocalist to sing rāga Chāyānata after Gauṅḍsāraṅga. The first follows the patterns: s – r g m pr, g m d pr, g mr s. m p n s' r' s' d pr, g m d pr, g mr s. D P N s r S. The patterns followed in Gauṅḍsāraṅga are: s N r s g r m g p m̄ d p m̄ p m - g, r g r m g pr – s. p m̄ d p s' n r' s'. m̄ p n s' r s' – ndpm–g – r m g pr – S. A very considerable difference, but the similarity in scale and particularly the use of the mīṇḍa pa–re can cause an artist to drift from one rāga into another. (ibid.: 74– 75).

Analyzing the rāga's macro-melodic structure in terms of note names, van der Meer suggests that these patterns of note orders are constitutive of differences between rāgas.

This move of claiming that the complexity of rāga goes beyond any conceptual or analytical approach, while in the same breath reductively documenting, ordering, and describing structural aspects of rāga performance, is not restricted to Powers and Van der Meer. *The Raga Guide: A Survey of 74 Hindustani Ragas* (Bor et al. 1999), for example, provides the reader with a guide for listening to "miniature" versions of rāgas and their allegedly prototypical melodic structures. These miniatures are performed, recorded, and transcribed in

"Western notation" especially for the guide. Following the orientalist tradition, the authors start their description of rāga with a reference to "king Nanyadeva of Mithila (1097–1147)" (ibid.: 1). The reader does not learn why the opinion of this long-deceased King is relevant. Instead, the guide states that he wrote that "the variety of ragas is infinite, and their individual features are hard to put into words.… The profoundly learned in raga, even Matanga and his followers, have not crossed the ocean of raga; how then may one of little understanding swim across?" (ibid.: 1). This mythologization is followed by a definition found in a Sanskrit treatise, the *Brhaddeshi* (800 AD), attributed to selfsame Matanga: "In the opinion of the wise, that particularity of notes and melodic movement, or that distinction of melodic sound by which one is delighted, is raga" (1999: 1). The authors build on this over 1,200 year-old definition to demarcate their own understanding of rāga as a

> tonal framework for composition and improvisation; a dynamic musical entity with a unique form, embodying a unique musical idea. 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 the virtue of these musical characteristics (ibid.: 1).

The authors furthermore emphasize that although "Hindustani music often uses long steady notes, what happens in between the notes … is at least as important" (ibid.: vii). The guide's introduction provides the reader with a list, transcription, and definition of "ornamentations," such as gamak, mīnd, andolan, and murki, that happen "between the notes" and "define" the rāga's "flavour" (ibid.: vii). However, the descriptions accompanying the recordings and transcriptions refrain from linking the actually sonic nuances captured on these recordings to such "flavour" of rāga. Instead, as in Van der Meer's and Powers's examinations, they mainly describe the rāgas' "structural features" (ibid.: 1).

The very act of recording, describing, and transcribing a "miniature" (ibid.: 8) version of seventy-four rāgas in such structural terms constructs several forms of musical hierarchy. While acknowledging that musicians have different styles and that conflicts over rāga interpretations do exist, the guide frames its recordings with the statement that these "raga sketches" (ibid.: v) are modeled after "the 78 rpm discs which were recorded during the first half of this century" (ibid.). In "these recordings, great vocalists and instrumentalists were capable of bringing out the essence of the ragas in just a few minutes. Like their predecessors, the artists recorded for

this project have been able to create little raga jewels, masterpieces" (ibid.). Thereby, the authors legitimize the recordings' reduced form and relatively short duration by comparing them to the now canonized 78 rpm recordings of "old masters," which are currently listened out for as authoritative representations of rāga (cf. Neuman 1990 [1980]; Neuman 2004). Furthermore, the musical content of these miniature rāgas, they claim, is based on "learned and poignant conception" as "painstakingly composed" (Bor et al. 1999: v) by vocalist Dilip Chandra Vedi.[32] Crucially, the guide only transcribes, records, and describes certain musical elements as representative of this music. This selectivity, however, remains unmentioned. In tension with their own suggestion that "a melodic outline cannot (and is not intended to) reveal the minute and decorative details of a raga performance" (ibid.: 2), their analysis suggests that a rāga's essence can be known through a listening out for the structural elements that the "great" Devi so "painstakingly" composed.

The tendency to produce master narratives about one's own guru and/or gharānā is another prominent aspect of structural listening within Hindustani classical music studies. Relatively easy access to (the musical knowledge of) musicians such as Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan, and Nikhil Banerjee from the 1960s onwards enabled (ethno)musicologists such as George Ruckert, Allyn Miner, Stephen Slawek, Huib Schippers, Martin Clayton, and David Trasoff to cultivate long-term guru-shishya relationships. Because the gharānā tradition was legendary for its strict guarding of musical secrets (cf. Neuman 1990 (1980); Slawek 1991), participatory observation was celebrated as the *only* way to get supposedly real, insider knowledge about this so hard-to-access music. At the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first century, then, academic knowledge production was largely informed by such associations. Their close relationships with musicians informed how these scholars came to listen to and represent Hindustani classical instrumental music in their academic publications, leading to a body of canonizing work on the topic.

Van der Meer's "survey of the most important aspects of classical North Indian vocal music" (1980: x) exemplifies the complexity of these dynamics of knowledge and power. He partly based his study on the musical knowledge he received through his ten years of studying vocal music in Mumbai with aforementioned Vedi: "I was fortunate enough to be a pupil of one of the greatest masters alive and I finally attained an acceptable level (giving several concerts) and a fair knowledge" (ibid.: xi). He often quotes his guru as the authoritative source of the

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[32] Not coincidentally, Vedi is also the teacher of both Bor and co-editor Van der Meer.

allegedly correct rāga grammar presented in his books and convivially combines this knowledge gained from "one of the greatest masters" with details from Sanskrit treatises and (ethno)musicological secondary sources.

This canonizing tendency is similarly present in Ruckert's *The Classical Music of North India; The Music of Baba Allauddin Gharana as taught by Ali Akbar Khan at the Ali Akbar College of Music. Volume One. The First Years Study* (2012 [1998]). An unnumbered page tells us that this "is a book of and about the classical music of North India, among the oldest continual musical traditions of the world" (ibid.). Such a framing of the compositions found in the book, combined with canonizing descriptions of Khan as "one of this century's greatest musicians" (ibid.: vii), equate Khan's music, as taught at the college, with Hindustani classical music as a whole. Presenting Khan as a musical genius, Ruckert's publications are exemplary of the active role (ethno)musicologists have played in raising their gurus into an emergent Hindustani classical music canon. Similar to Van der Meer, Ruckert, who had been "a disciple of Ali Akbar Khan for nearly twenty-five years," utilizes this relationship to legitimate his expertise on the topic. Namely, this relationship makes him "especially qualified to convey the music and teachings of his mentor" (ibid.). Such publications illustrate how the various layers at work in mechanisms of musical legitimization build on each other to perform, in the Butlerian sense, the acceptability of musical knowledge and knowledge about music.

The information about the rāgas transcribed—prescribed—in *The Classical Music of North India*, is strongly reminiscent of Bhatkhande's publications examined in the prior chapter. The book acknowledges that the "system of notation used in this book is derived from the letter notation used by the innovative twentieth-century musicians, Allauddin Khan … [and] Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande" (ibid.: 15), but Bhatkhande's influence reaches far beyond this system of notation. The labels Ruckert uses to categorize rāga, such as thāt, jati, vadi and samvadi, time, mood, and arohi and avarohi, pakad, and chalan, are those which Bhatkhande propagated to enable his students to quickly and easily grasp this music. Khan also used these labels when his students asked for more information about the rāga they were learning. However, musicians who consider themselves to be senior reject the usefulness of such labels—a clear denigration of such categorical musical knowledge as distinct from and less valuable than embodied knowledge, which cannot be explained, but only experienced.

> Like, you listen to an alāp. Like, you kind of listen and you know the alāp, maybe if it's a shorter alāp too, you'll, totally, remember it, same kind of thing, you know. But uh, the theory behind, introducing each

note, and going this way, and that's all, more heavy-duty old traditional alāp style talk and, um. You know, my father was not really one to speak so much on theory, he did sometimes, but it was more just like, just do this. So, then I just do it, more the way that he taught it. And sometimes it is hard for me to explain, what, the, technical things going on with things. Or the theory behind what is going, and why you are showing this note, when you are doing it.… I don't know, like, I just play back what I learned, you know, and what I got from it.… Or I listen to old recordings that are shorter, or modern versions where a person starts on like, high Sa.… So why isn't this the same as, as, as, Nankauns or Jogkauns or like that. "Isn't this the same rāga?" Well no, because I am using this here, I mean. That kind of stuff. And that's already you can tell that, that's their (sic.). People wanna know exactly what's going on, you know. If you sum it up that's the thing. People wanna know the answers to all these things sometimes, so it's like, they have to get, very, and, dissect stuff and, and write books on stuff (laughing). You know, like, it has to be this way, and I am like, I don't know if there really is like, that that, way, I mean, if it was just that way, then everybody would play the same. And nobody plays the same, and everyone has their own opinions, you know, and there is no ever knowing, because this is North Indian classical music (laughs) … there is so many aspects to it, and do's and don'ts and yes and no and opinions and egos and things and history.… Who knows, who knows, all we know is it, it's very powerful and beautiful, and you can see that in the people that listen to it and play it, that's the only thing you can know about it. And you try to find the right guru, the right teacher, that will teach you the most authentic things.

(anonymous interlocutor)

Ruckert at times also likes to argue along similar lines. However, in his publications such notions are completely absent. Like Bhatkhande's books, Ruckert's publications mainly consists of compositions that supposedly can be learned during one's first year of studying at the Ali Akbar College of Music. Represented in sargam notations and categorized in terms of rāga, they can supposedly be learned by sounding out the notated relative pitches with an instrument or by voice. Thus, the book implies that these representations are rāga, turning the book into a medium through which one can get to know rāga. That is, if you are able to reproduce what is written on those pages, you somehow "know" that rāga. Pitch orders are once more constructed as essential elements of Hindustani classical music, while other musical parameters are excluded without comment, deemed irrelevant for understanding rāga.

Another element of structural listening in Hindustani classical music studies, is the already-mentioned mystifying discourse. This is often combined with a promise of analytical clarity through a structural analysis by the carefully listening musicologist. Such a promise is expressed in the cover blurb of Nazir A. Jairazbhoy's *The Rāgs of North Indian Music; Their Structure and Evolution* (2011 [1971]).

An aura of mystery has always surrounded the theory and practice of Indian music and now, with its influence ever strengthening in the West, a study as lucid and penetrating as that made by Professor Jairazbhoy is of special significance. Its subject is the Rāgs, and the whole tonal and scalar basis of North Indian music. The important features of the idiom are considered in detail—the structure of melody, the effect of the drone, ornamentation and intonation, the function of accidentals and so on. (cover)

The use of the notion of "penetrating" here is symptomatic of such structural analysis. Although described as "a dynamic, and not static, system" (ibid.), in the analysis itself rāga is nonetheless treated as an object rather than a process. This object can be "penetrated" to "illuminate" or "enlighten" (cf. Atre 2004) the listener. Whereas its mysteries have so far remained covert, our hero Jairozbhoy will provide the reader-listener with "a model of clarity".

Sangīt encounters: counterposing field notes, secondary literature, listening exercise

November 2012, my first fieldwork trip. I just participated in the week-long Annual Seminar at the Ali Akbar College of Music, Switzerland. It is about 01.00 a.m.; all students are sitting in Ken Zuckerman's living room. Tablā player Swapan Chaudhuri is centrally located in the room's largest and most comfortable chair, drinking whiskey and telling stories about Ali Akbar Khan. Suddenly, he turns to me, looks me straight in the eyes and says: "So you are an ethnomusicologist? And you are going to write a book about our music? I'll tell you one thing: start from the music! Those so-called ethnomusicologists in America, many of them, they can't even sing a single Sa, then how can they write about music?!"

A prominent feature of Indian music is the use of a drone, which sounds at least the ground-note, Sa, throughout the whole performance. The ground-note is the point of reference for measuring the intervals used in any rāg.… The particular relationship of any note to the ground-note is responsible for the dynamic quality or function of that note.… The degree of instability and the corresponding tension does not increase in proportion to the distance from the ground-note but is governed to a large extent by the smoothness or roughness (consonance or dissonance) experience in the relationship of that note with the ground-note.… This scheme cannot be applied directly to Indian music primarily because a secondary drone is generally used. This is usually the fifth (Pa) but it is sometimes the fourth (Ma), depending largely on the relative importance of these notes in a particular rāg.
(Jairazbhoy 2011 (1971): 62)

Please listen to the tanpura [sound example 3.2] and try to locate and sing the tonal center categorized as Sa. Have you found it? If not, what (forms of) knowledge do you think you are missing, to be able to do so? If so, then please ask yourself the following questions: how did you find this tonal center? How did you listen to this complex combination of sounds, what aspects did you listen out for, and which aspects

did you tune out? Did you try to sing along? Did you visualize something, remembered a concert, a musical phrase, a recording that helped you to relate to this complex sound structure? Did you measure certain intervals? Did you apply a (listening) scheme or use a graph?

Jairazbhoy's publication focuses mainly on the structural features of rāga, analyzing transcriptions of selected recordings created for the occasion by "one of India's leading musicians, Ustād Vilayat Khan" (2011 [1971]: ix). In this study, musicians figure as sources of musical objects that Jairazbhoy analyzes to penetrate this music's mysteries. He analyzes these objects in terms of tonality and several other European classical music concepts, as well as the analytical approaches based on them. Aspects such as drone are analyzed through graphs and interval measurements; listening seems less relevant for understanding this music's mysteries. This illustrates that Jairazbhoy's structuring of rāgas in terms of Bhatkhande's thāts is not the only remnant of pre-independence music scholarship present in the prior's work.

Musicologist José Luiz Martinez reduces Hindustani music to a neatly readable map of the rāga's essence as melodic movements. Capitalizing on the abovementioned mystifying discourse, he metaphorically characterizes Hindustani classical music as a "maze … its boundaries are vague, and several labyrinths are interconnected, with labyrinths within labyrinths … and obviously, at the core of the labyrinth is a sphinx. I have not met her yet, but parts of her riddle are scattered here and there along the walls" (Martinez 2001: xiii). Such mystifying discourses are not restricted to academia alone, but rather intersect with stories told about (often deceased) musicians, as the following example of a story circulating among Maihar gharānā musicians illustrates:

> Khansaheb used to learn rāga darbari[33] from his father, but each time when he was practicing the andolan on Dha, Allauddin Khan would tell him, "no, this andolan is not right, you are not giving the right sur. You have not yet reached the moment in your learning where you are able to comprehend, access, and express the depth of this rāga. There will come a moment, when you will be able to play this the right way. But you have to wait, be patient, and practice, then it will come. And you will be able to hear the difference". Khansaheb used to think that his father was playing games with him or maybe has started to lose his ability to listen properly. Namely, to Khansaheb's ears, he was playing exactly what his father had taught him. However, years later, long after his father had passed, he heard a recording of himself playing this rāga back then. Only then did he realize that his father had heard right, he did not get the feeling of Dha. In that moment, Khansaheb realized how much he had not gotten back then.
> (Anecdote told by several of Khan's disciples)

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[33] I have heard versions of this anecdote referencing other rāgas, but the story's core message remains the same in each of these versions.

Like Khan's disciples in the above, Martinez constructs Hindustani classical music as a mysterious object, an "enigma" (ibid.) whose secrets can be discovered and presented to the reader by a self-reflective and determined musicologist such as himself. Martinez solves this riddle by providing the listener with a "map which can be used for future explorations" (ibid.: xiii), using semiotics for "its cartography" (ibid.: xiii). Aesthetics, for Martinez, can be understood by combining semiotics with theories of rāsa and bhāva as based on treatises such as the Sangita Sastras (cf. ibid.: 333, 332–365). Acknowledging that such theories have little relation to contemporary musical practices, Martinez insists on their relevance for examining the aesthetic experiences of rāga. Illustrative of the colonially rooted musicological desire to "map" ancient music theory onto aesthetic appreciation, Martinez seems to consider listening irrelevant as a knowledge practice.

Another remnant of colonial modes of engaging with Hindustani classical music that I consider part of structural listening, is the explanation of musical concepts in term of, or in comparison to, musical concepts and modes of selective and prescriptive representation derived from European art music (theory). The widespread use of staff notation in transcriptions is an obvious example. In addition, musical elements are often contrasted or compared with notions such as harmony and tonality in "Western" music. Clayton, for example, finds it necessary to compare "Indian music" to a particular form of European art music to define how a rāga performance "works":

> Indian music is considered to be pre-existent in a rather different sense to that of a European composition, which is stored in written form. Form, indeed, is the keyword here—a classical symphony has a form which is conceived as essentially permanent and unchanging, and a considerable part of its value is understood in terms of that form or structure.... A rāg performance works rather differently. (Clayton 2000: 13–14)

Clayton and other musicologists' translations of "Indian concepts and terms to Western terminology" (Bagchee 1998: 10) might cater to an assumed reader's frame of reference. Nevertheless, such writings construct the "Western musical system" (ibid.: 10) as a norm against which Hindustani classical music can be listened out for, analyzed, explained, mapped, and valued. I consider this a covert, and perhaps therefore all the more dangerous, reproduction of musical value systems and order.

As Raja suggested regarding rāga authenticity, it is crucial to ask "who applies the yardstick; and, with what motivation?" (Raja 2015: 18). Rather than critically questioning the naturalized status of such aesthetic yardsticks, however, Raja's self-legitimizing answer to his own question combines several elements of structural listening that I have already flagged. He mobilizes these to outline his own model of aesthetic judgement:

> What novices perform is of no consequence to anyone; and undiscerning listeners do not have the knowledge to apply any yardstick to what they hear. The rāga authenticity issue is, therefore, between the leading musicians of each generation, and the corresponding generation of cognoscenti. The cognoscenti use the weapon of rāga grammar to enforce upon their aural experience a comfortable degree of familiarity. The musician of stature, on the other hand, is driven by the urge to liberate literature from grammar and is under no obligation to dish out repackaged doses of the familiar.… At the fruitful level of debate, the crucial issues are: it the melodic identity — no matter by what name called — sufficiently distinctive? Does it steer sufficiently clear of the risk of confusion with other well-established melodic entities? Is it consistent in its painting of the melodic canvas? Is it aesthetically coherent? Does it make a discernible emotional statement?" (ibid.: 24–25)

Raja's answer constructs two distinct groups based on what he considers contrasting modes of listening: the connoisseur's "weapon" of listening out for familiar rāga grammar, and the musician's desire to liberate music from these structuring rules. Raja does not ask who decides who these leading musicians and cognoscenti are, nor what norms such decisions are based on. Instead, he takes up the challenge of defining the parameters by which the authenticity of a performance should be judged. In the end, he seems to suggest, only the musicologist should judge.

Approaches to Hindustani classical (instrumental) music explored above illustrate several symptoms of structural listening. First, there is a delight in melodic complexity in direct relation to an emphasis on the impossibility of analytically grasping all its refinements and nuances. Despite discourses that emphasize rāga's processual nature, it is analytically treated as an autonomous musical object. An attentive and well-trained listener can appreciate its aesthetic and melodic grammar, because this grammar is logically unfolded by an able musician's performance. It is best analyzed in terms of relative pitch orders conveniently represented as notes, and it gains legitimacy if it echoes rāga descriptions found in Sanskrit treatises or pre-independence writings. At its best, the embodied musical knowledge of musicians who have achieved canonical status serves as a prime source of authority. Writings

are highly normative and consider it the musicologist's task to define these aesthetic norms, often in comparison to or in terms of European art music. The ability to analytically listen out for, understand, and represent a rāga's structural parameters, finally, is utilized in claims of musicological authority.

Self-legitimating experts, in sum, provide the reader with an easily consumable version of Hindustani classical (instrumental) music while simultaneously emphasizing its inherent ungraspability. Thereby, academia continues to fuel the fantasy that it can fully know and hence control this music. Packaged as a postcolonial gesture of inclusion, structural listening leverages several forms of historically naturalized authority to legitimize its claims. The act of not naming, articulating, or denominating a (listening) norm, constructs a framework that affords the naming of that which deviates from the norm (hornscheidt 2012: 22, 41–45).[34] Thereby, this mode of listening actively partakes in the dynamics of musical knowledge and power examined in this book.

Beyond Structural Listening? On the Impossibility of Decolonizing My Ears

The dynamics of knowledge and power that are manipulated and reinforced through structural listening are certainly not confined to the realm of Hindustani classical music studies. My critical exploration of these mechanisms is informed by three intersecting strands of thought that have challenged the epistemological foundations of the humanities during the last thirty years. First, influenced by postmodern thought, a body of work labeled New Musicology questioned the naturalized status of formalist analysis within musicology. Authors in this field inquired into the discipline's role in (retrospective) constructions of a music(ologic)al canon. Second, postcolonial theory questioned the taken-for-granted epistemological assumptions underlying academic work which had the effect of the reproducing colonial power structures in the context of political de-colonizations. Third, sound studies emphasized sound's potential as an alternative mode of knowledge to hegemonic occularcentric epistemologies, thus opening up an understanding of listening as a type of knowledge practice. In this section, I examine the consequences these strands of thought have had for often taken-for-granted notions of

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[34] As hornscheidt puts it "so werden normalitäten häufig nicht benannt, sondern bilden den rahmen, kontext und hintergrund der benennung des außerordentlichen" (2012: 41).

(structural) listening. Emphasizing the need to take these consequences seriously, I end this section by underlining the urgency of denaturalizing—not simply rejecting—the epistemological foundations of Hindustani classical music studies examined above.

Inspired by Joseph Kerman's *Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology* (1985), several authors retrospectively grouped under the banner of New Musicology have critically questioned dynamics of knowledge and power within the musicologies. Influenced "postmodern strategies of understanding" (Kramer 1992: 5), Kerman was the first to point to historically informed assumptions, blind spots (or selectively deaf ears), and modes of thought informing the work of prominent musicologists. Critically inquiring into relationships between taken-for-granted assumptions about music, and musicology's authority and legitimacy as an academic discipline, he emphasized its roles in dynamics of canonization. This led scholars to question the naturalized status of musicological concepts, methods, categories, and objects of analysis, and to reflect on the musicologist's role in processes of knowledge production. Deconstructing the normalized and normative status of often self-legitimating goals, methods of analysis, forms of representation, and epistemological assumptions, they questioned the validity of the discipline itself.

Such openness to doubt and ambiguity, emphasis on fluidity and multiplicity, and problematizing of master narratives also included a critical questioning of concepts and methods of listening. For example, while debating the consequences of postmodern thought for musicology, Lawrence Kramer and Gary Tomlinson notions of listening's role therein were distinct. Kramer insisted that listening was central to the musicological endeavor. For him, it was informed by a broader discursive field: "not an immediacy alienated from a later reflection, but a mode of dialogue. And like all dialogue, it is fully participatory even when one interlocutor is doing the talking. It follows that the aim of musicology, ideally conceived, is to continue the dialogue of listening" (Kramer 1992: 17). Kramer argued his case by describing his experience of listening to Mozart's *Divertimento for String Trio, K. 563*. Consciously playing with a listener's expectations, Kramer suggested, Mozart's music asks the listener questions and stimulates her to think about larger philosophical issues. Tomlinson, however, pointed to a flaw in Kramer's argument: "He offers as the goal of musicology the continuance of 'the dialogue of listening,' but he gives little hint as to how we might begin to reconceive this dialogue in postmodern terms" (Tomlinson 1993: 20–21). That is, Kramer's example utilized and thus reproduced formalist musicological paradigms: it cast Mozart as a master whose intentions were equated

with musical meaning, and it ground its argument about the centrality of listening in a visual representation of music. Furthermore, Kramer was committed to the "inviolate security of his knowledge" (Tomlinson 1993: 21) as gained through relational listening. All such strategies, Tomlinson argued, were reminiscent of modern rather than postmodern approaches.

Tomlinson instead emphasized the radical consequences of postmodern thought for musicology. Namely,

> categories as … "the aesthetic," even "music" itself are not truths given to us by the world through which we and others must always conceive musical utterances but rather are themselves cultural constructions darkly tinted for us with modernist ideology.… In questioning them we might begin to … [move beyond] the limitations of … modernist musicology." (ibid.: 23).

Attempts to deconstruct the "most basic, apparently 'natural' categories" (ibid.: 23) that musicologists take for granted in their approach to music, Tomlinson argued, might be aided by Foucauldian discourse analysis. He suggested not engaging with musical works "by possessing them as newly minted canonic objects of study—a common enough strategy in the expansion of the observed musical universe that has marked" (ibid.: 23) early writings in the discipline (cf. Radano and Bohlman 2000). Instead, he sought ways of engaging with music that "do not aggressively familiarize (colonize, terrorize) them" (Tomlinson 1993: 23). While acknowledging that ethnomusicology "might seem to be the obvious place to look for help in this endeavor" (ibid.), he rejected this option and argued, like Kramer, that ethnomusicologists "have often defined their project by transferring onto the musics they study precisely the western presumptions—of internalism, formalism, aestheticism, transcendentalism—that we need to question" (ibid.: 23–24). Exactly because it carried remnants of the colonial and modernist modes of engaging with music he found so problematic, Tomlinson rejected (close) listening as a musicological method, aim, and concept.

Published in the same year as the start of this debate, the edited volume *Disciplining Music: Musicology and its Canons* (Bergeron and Bohlman 1992) critically explores dynamics of musicological and musical mastery and knowledge. In its introduction, Bergeron borrows Foucault's notion of discipline to grasp this mechanism's layers. Specifically focusing on the "scholarly 'disciplines' of historical musicology, music theory, and ethnomusicology," and the "connections such practices have to that valued space we call canon" (Bergeron 1992: 1), she argues that listening both disciplines music and simultaneously functions as a form of

surveillance. Disciplining music, for her, first of all relates to the "training of the body in an orderly relation with itself in the production of music" (1992: 2). When practicing scales, for example, the body is repeatedly ordered in a specific way to create the exact sound required. This interacts with and presupposes what Bergeron classifies as a "more primary discipline—that of tuning, or playing 'in tune'" (ibid.: 2). This necessitates "a disciplining of the ear …; for to play in tune is to make judgements, to mark precise distances between sounds in the act of producing them" (ibid.: 2). In the scale, she continues, order becomes "audible … as a finite set of intervals," which is "made into a standard" (ibid.: 2). Musical norms such as scale function as disciplining tools within performance and practice situations, where the player becomes his own discipliner through listening: "the player is entrapped by an acoustic constraint: he cannot escape his own audibility" (ibid.: 4). Thus, whether in a performance, during practice, or while learning, musicians are always inherently listeners, surveilling the sounds they produce based on the musical norms they have internalized.

Bergeron extends her notion of surveillance to the musicologies, arguing that academia is itself "a site of surveillance, a metaphorical space whose boundaries … are determined by the canon that stands at its center" (ibid.: 4). Scholarly training is at its basis a training in the negotiation of this field: the academic "canon, always in view, promotes decorum, ensures proper conduct. The individual within a field learns, by internalizing such standards, how not to transgress" (ibid.: 5). Like any canon, the scholarly canon has yardsticks that maintain the discipline's standards of musicological knowledge production. The skills to listen out for, represent in sargam, categorize, and judge the sounding out of a particular succession of relative pitches in terms of rāga, perhaps? Questioning such norms as a measure of aesthetic and academic value, Bergeron proposes, means being willing to imagine another world of sonic "values that might reside in between—to squint, as it were, into those unmarked spaces that … the discipline has not accounted for" (ibid.: 8). Sadly, Bergeron does not bring these two arguments together, thus missing the opportunity to emphasize listening as an act of academic surveillance that plays a crucial role in establishing the discipline's yardsticks of academic value. Furthermore, not listening beyond or listening away from (hornscheidt 2012: 41–45) music's (structural) parameters also, perhaps most powerfully, disciplines music. Thus, practices of *not* listening, or listening away from, particular elements of Hindustani classical instrumental music, construct ontologies as much as a listening out does.

While listening played relatively small roles in these texts, Subotnik's *Deconstructive Variations* (1995) gave central focus to it as a form of academic and aesthetic exclusion. Tracing a train of musicological thought to the work of Theodor W. Adorno and Arnold Schoenberg, Subotnik argues that these authors presupposed "structural" listening—an "attentiveness to a concretely unfolding logic" (Subotnik 1995: 154) inherent in a musical work—as an academically and aesthetically legitimate mode of relating to music. They conceptualized the musical work as autonomous, "concrete, and … objectively determinable" (ibid.: 154), which should be judged by the listener based on its (lack of) adherence to these formal parameters. Such structural listening did not necessarily include sound; these thinkers considered the realm of the sonic to be a messy distraction from the work's structural argument as intended by the composer. Seeking to "transcend the potential sloppiness and impreciseness inherent in the physical manifestations of sound," prescriptive representations of sound in the form of scores had more academic and aesthetic "integrity than any sonic realization of the musical work" (Dell'Antonio 2000: 3). Dell'Antonio distinguishes between the concept of "listening" that emerged from this paradigm and the sense of hearing, following Subotnik's claim that "to an important extent, structural listening can take place in the mind through intelligent score-reading, without the physical presence of an external sound-source'" (ibid.: 3, quoting Subotnik 1995: 161–62).

Structural listening as identified by Subotnik, then, was explicitly normative and depended as much on the abilities of the listener as on the (written prescriptive version of) music. Good music, as an autonomous entity, allowed the well-trained, sensible, structural listener to "understand, from the position of an insider, not just the lines but the totality of the argument as it unfolds" (Subotnik 1995: 154). Music that lacked such structure was discarded based on its inability to offer the insider listener "its own unity … both within its unfolding as a temporal process and also retrospectively, as a complete, stable, unified, and aesthetically satisfying structure" (ibid.: 111). Judgements of music's aesthetic and academic value, then, depended on specific relationships between a necessarily disciplined, rational, and concentrated listener and the presence of particular musical-structural parameters that could best be located in scores. This required a "very specific notion of listening, one that can be gained through technical training and serious self-discipline; such training and self-discipline, in turn, are the mark of an aesthetically prepared and culturally elevated individual" (Dell'Antonio 2000: 2–3). In sum, structural listening as critically analyzed by Subotnik is a knowledge practice

utilized to exert power, casting the structurally listening musicologist as the ultimate judge of music's aesthetic and academic relevance. Their verdict, in turn, is based on a listening out for structural parameters, which in the process are raised to the level universal aesthetic norms. Explicitly normative, reductive, and objectifying, its many parallels with the mode of structural listening examined in the previous section are clear.

While its tools, parameters, and discursive tropes differ, the role of selective listening in Hindustani classical music studies resonates with the power-knowledge dynamics Subotnik analyzed. As Raja's work illustrates, the notion that a distinguished listener is the only legitimate judge of a music's aesthetic and academic relevance is widespread in this field. Structural listeners expect a competent musician to unfold the structural melodic framework they listen out for, categorize, and valorize as rāga. Musical value becomes reduced to an analysis of the written representations of these pitch successions. As my analysis of Powers's model illustrated, the structurally listening musicologist is cast as the judge who listens out for, fixes, and decides on those norms. Hindustani classical (instrumental) music, then, is disciplined by its own version of structural listening, and this has long informed its core epistemological assumptions. Problematically, as I illustrated in the "Historical Fragments" chapter, these assumptions are rooted in colonial power structures. Veiled by postcolonial discourses of inclusion that celebrate musical difference, listening structurally to Hindustani classical music is always inherently a reproduction of these structures.

Seeking to destabilize accepted notions of knowledge and authority, authors such as Edward D. Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Gayatri C. Spivak, Paul Gilroy, Walter D. Mignolo, and Sara Ahmed have emphasized the need to critically inquire into relationships between knowledge production and colonial power structures from the late 1970s onwards. Their critiques have explored, among other things, resonances of imperial thought in hegemonic modes of knowledge production and representation in the wake of political decolonizations. Spivak (1988), for example, inquired into "the topographical reinscription of imperialism" (Spivak 1988: 85) in politically postcolonial conditions. To "uncover the perverse logic" (Mignolo 2007: 449, quoting Fanon 1961) inherent in and formative of colonially informed (orders of) knowledge, Mignolo argued for what he called an epistemological "delinking" (2007). While at times differing in their solutions, such postcolonial approaches have a common aim: to "disturb the order of the world," "to intervene, to force its alternative knowledges into … power structures" and thereby threaten "privilege and power" (Young 2003: 7).

Mainly educated and working at elite North Atlantic academic institutions, however, these authors were—and are—confronted with a dilemma already briefly touched upon in the prior chapter. Namely, their vigorous critiques were themselves based on and strongly rooted in North Atlantic academic modes of thought. They are thus highly indebted to the philosophical traditions whose normative epistemological status they sought to question (Solomon 2012: 236; Stokes 2003: 104). Rooting (the legitimacy of) their arguments in the very knowledge-power structures they wanted to critically assess, their suitability for a "decolonizing the mind" (Thiong-o 1986) or developing a "grammar of de-coloniality" (Mignolo 2007) is questionable.

Radically distancing oneself from the influence of colonial modes of thought—and listening—on how we think about, listen out for, and produce music(ologic)al knowledge does not solve this postcolonial dilemma. Instead, such an approach risks presenting colonialism as a discrete historical phase whose effects have been completely undone (cf. Hall 1996: 247; Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2003[1989]: 195), and de-colonization as a singular process. Both negate the very real, context-specific lingering consequences of imperial projects as well as an enduring "dominance of Western epistemology" (Mignolo 2007: 451) within the humanities, covering up rather than laying bare academia's role in the reproduction of structural inequalities. This fundamental dilemma led Ahmed to emphasize that we paradoxically "need to think the impossibility of the 'post' if we are to make the 'post' possible" (Ahmed 2000: 13). But how can one go about this impossible "quest" of "decoloniality" (Abels 2016b: 10)? And how have the musicologies dealt with the challenges posed by this dilemma?

As has so far become clear, musical knowledge and (academically produced) knowledge about music can certainly not be exempted from these challenges. To be sure, themes and concepts central to postcolonial theory, such as questions of identity, difference, otherness, race, ethnicity, and nationalism, have found their ways into (ethno)musicological discourse (cf. Solomon 2012). Canonical texts, such as Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994) and Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic* (1988), provide a safe theoretical basis to prove music's role in constructions and negotiations of (alternative to hegemonic) identities. Theorizing music in relation to such fundamental concerns offers (ethno)musicology a neat way to legitimize itself as a discipline. Offering proof that music, in fact, matters, postcolonial theory enables rather than deconstructs the discipline's "curiously unironic … sense of virtue and righteousness"

(Radano and Olaniyan 2016: 10) that works to reproduce rather than destabilize its problematic epistemological basis.

This is a complex issue, as texts that critique others often are caught in the same dilemma they critique the others for. Solomon's *Where's the Postcolonial in Ethnomusicology?*, for example, diagnoses the presence of the aforementioned "postcolonial dilemma" (2012: 236) within ethnomusicology. He cites the example of Kofi Agawu's rigorous postcolonial critiques of constructions of "African" music (2003) in music analyses. These critiques are based on formalist music analysis that, as Meintjes also emphasizes, has origins "in the very colonial enterprise he critiques, replicating the discourse that uses the techniques of analysis of the high-art canon of Euro-American classical music as the standard against which the analysis of African musics is to be measured" (Meintjes 2006: 770). While the critique is certainly fair, the solution Solomon offers revives colonially informed paradigms. He suggests that ethnomusicology's long-term interest in and method of embodied musical experience may provide a potential alternative mode of knowledge. Ignoring that the legitimacy of this method is itself based on and rooted in a body-mind binary that has been instrumental in ethnomusicological Othering of musical practices, Solomon proposes a decolonizing the ears, by "listen[ing] through what might … be called 'postcolonial ears'" (Solomon 2012: 217). Sadly, as Clelia O. Rodríguez recently pointed out, the "politics of [and discourses calling for] decolonization are not the same as the act of decolonizing. How rapidly phrases like 'decolonize the mind/heart' or simply 'decolonize' are being consumed in academic spaces is worrisome" (2017). Rodríguez' claim can be extended to the rapid consumption of the notion of "decolonizing the ears" within music studies. Denning, for example, uses the idea prominently in the title of his work, and states that "vernacular phonograph musics not only captured the timbres of decolonization: the emergence of these musics … *was* decolonization. It was not simply a cultural activity that *contributed* to the political struggle …; it was somatic decolonization, the decolonization of the ear and the dancing body" (Denning 2016: 30). Without further explanation of how these processes decolonized the ear, these claims reduce the complexity of processes of decolonization and suggest that it is a closed-off process. Similarly, Lovesey in the same year claimed that "popular music sometimes had a direct role in fostering anti-colonial cultural resistance and organizational communication, as well as decolonizing hearts and minds and ears" (2016: 1). Rodríguez calls this consuming of knowledge about "the pain of others" in the name of politically connoted but ultimately empty concepts

such as decolonizing the ear "intellectual masturbation" (Rodríguez 2017). Its metaphorical "'release' comes in the forms of discussions, proposing questions, writing grant proposals" (Ibid. 2017). In the form of above explored structural listenings to Hindustani classical (instrumental) music, perhaps?

<u>Sangīt encounter: field notes</u>

> I am at a conference at Harvard University, Cambridge, USA. I am listening to a paper on "Indian Recordings on Wax Cylinder from the Berlin Phonogram Archive" presented by German ethnomusicologist Lars Koch. He plays a recording from the archive. As its sound quality is relatively low, I am only able to distinguish the main melodic phrases in terms of note order. However, I am happy. I am able to immediately categorize them. It is a rāga whose characteristic pitch order I have listened out for many times: Behag! Just as I look up, relieved, Koch stops the recording and confirms my categorization. As I happily mumble its name along with him and nod my head in confirmation, we quickly exchange a look. He knows I heard it too and smiles approvingly.
>
> What a great feeling, after all these years of research, I finally recognize rāga! And that during a conference at Harvard. I might not be a complete failure!

While certainly pleasurable, the academic satisfaction that comes with such recognizing of abstract note patterns does very little to change the structural inequalities at stake in the knowledge practices examined here. Which we study in the name of art, in the celebration of difference, in the name of a decolonizing the ears. Following Rodríguez, one of my aims in this book is to unpack "the intellectual masturbation we get out of … the logic of power that is behind … our research work. We must listen to the silences, that which is not written" (2017). Unpacking the logic of power behind such insistence on the possibility of decolonizing the ears, especially when used uncritically and without definition, is necessary to counter the celebratory picture such studies represent. As Dillon Parmer recently suggested, what "needs to be talked about more is the cultural work that music scholarship itself enacts, about how it … inscribes hierarchies that marginalize and oppress" (2014: 59). The fundamental epistemological concerns that postcolonial theory brought to the fore, however, have still had shockingly few consequences for a (sub-)discipline operating under its banner.

In their introduction to *Audible Empire: Music, Global Politics, Critique* (2016), Radano and Olaniyan make this challenge explicit, arguing for the need to take into account the role of (representations of) the sonic within these colonially connoted knowledge power dynamics. They argue for the need to "comprehend how the emergence of European imperial orders and

the concomitant rise of political democracies have also been matters of the ear" (2016: 2). Pointing to the significant body of historical research that recently emerged from the field of sound studies (cf. Corbin 1998; Bull and Backs 2000; Erlmann 1999, 2004, 2010; Sterne 2003, 2012), they suggest sound has played and continues to play important roles in "imposing … forms of discipline and order" (Radano and Olaniyan 2016: 2). That is, sound studies have characterized listening as relational, as a way of getting to know and ordering ourselves in relation to the world (cf. LaBelle 2012; Ingold 2011). As Schwarz has emphasized, this is not a neutral process. Instead, listening is an intentionally selective process, a practice of auditory discrimination (2003). Sound "fundamentally puts into question … singularity … through profound relationality: as a listening subject, one is prone to fragmentation, amplification or dissolution" (LaBelle 2016: 297). Sound, therein, is a potentially disruptive force, exactly because it disregards the borders carefully guarded by hegemonic occularcentric epistemologies. To acknowledge this "dirty" (ibid. 298) aspect of sound, LaBelle proposes the notion of "dirty listening"—a "listening contoured by the radically heterogeneous force of sound" that potentially enables a grasping of those aspects that "interrupt and lead me away from what I know.… It draws into question assumptions as to what qualifies or constitutes a … general" (ibid. 298), the normative, if you will. Following sound studies, then, listening might be able to destabilize both epistemological norms and musicological conventions and power structures.

Without explicating their notion of musical knowledge nor differentiating it from knowledge about music, Radano and Olaniyan point to the postcolonial dilemma within studies of sound-and-music. To repeat their earlier quoted work: "Euro-western musical knowledge itself conveys imperial power and intent. It does so because its very conception and form belong to the epistemological orders and historical localities of its various emergences" (2016: 7). It follows that the ways in which music scholars listen out for, always inherently convey imperial power and intent. Perhaps the strongest examples of this are attempts at academic inclusion operating under the banner of de-colonization, such as a listening out for the academic and aesthetic value of musics that, in the process, become constructed as historical or cultural Others. (ibid.: 8–13). The challenge academia faces, according to these authors, is "to sharpen our listening and hearing abilities" (ibid.: 13–16). However, none of the volume's chapters (Denning 2016; Kun 2016; Seigel 2016) that promise to do just that, make explicit how

they dealt with this dilemma in relation to listening. Thus, this volume illustrates that we cannot simply ignore the problematic epistemological assumptions naturalized in relation to listening.

Several scholars of music have recently tried to overcome this quandary. Musicologist Johannes Ismaiel-Wendt, for example, coined the term "Un-gehör-sam," perhaps best translated as non-ad-hear-ing, signifying "a disobedience to conventional music-related cultural representations" (Ismaiel-Wendt 2016b, my translation).[35] He is interested in critically rethinking "systems of regulation, standardizations, established mechanisms, that can also dominate in academic modes of thought" (Ismaiel-Wendt 2016a: 3). Treating music as knowledge, he argues, potentially makes room for alternative modes of thought to hegemonic representations of the (musical) world order: it allows for what he calls, in resonance with Mignolo, a "sonic de-linking" (2013). This form of listening seeks to disobey "the burdensome obligations of acoustic representation, liability, and belonging" (Ismaiel-Wendt 2013: 102) rooted in colonialism. In her search for "the possibility of … thinking about things differently" (2016c: 158), Abels likewise uses the notion of "sonic de-linking" in relation to listening. For her, it signifies a listening out for how music breaks up "entrenched, and colonial, associations" (ibid.: 159). Like Ismaeil-Wendt, she argues for letting go of academic authority and instead locating alternative epistemologies within music. Such an approach foregrounds the "need to prioritize close listening practices … to listen out for practices of sonic de-linking, and naturally, re-linking" (ibd.: 159).

As a simply rejection of problematically connoted categories of listening would silence the histories of repression that stand at the roots of their emergence, Vasquez argues along similar lines. Like Abels and Ismaiel-Wendt, she emphasizes listening's potential as an academic-political intervention that necessarily "presses against and moves away from how … music has been packaged, circulated, and written about" (Vasquez 2013: 9). Refusing to present the reader with a "fixed theoretical formula" (ibid.: 38) or detailed definition of listening, she nevertheless makes clear that it entails a radical openness that is simultaneously afforded by and necessary for "listening closely" (ibid.: 8). Details, for Vasquez, are the sonic elements that constitute

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[35] Mit Sonic Delinking meine ich, dass wir geradezu systematisch daran arbeiten müssen, uns von der Kartierung und Kategorisierung der Musik zu befreien. Es bedarf einer intensiven Hör- und Dekompositionsarbeit, sich von der musikalischen Weltkarte zu trennen. Ich nenne das auch «Un-gehör-sam» gegenüber den üblichen mit Musik verbundenen kulturellen Repräsentationen. (Ismaiel-Wendt 2016b)

those fugitive and essential … components that contribute, in a very specific way, to an event and its aftermath. Details might be interruptions that catch your ear, musical tics that stubbornly refuse to go away. They are things you might first dismiss as idiosyncrasies. They are specific choices made by musicians and performers and come in an infinite number of forms (ibid.: 19).

Examples include a slight nuance in dynamic energy creating a distinction between two otherwise similar phrases, the minor change in timbral quality occurring during a sitar concert due to the "going" of the jawāri, the specificity of a melodic curve, the length and place of a pause, or the effect of the difference in timbre and dynamic energy between a da and a ra stroke on the overall phrase. Crucially, Vasques does not want to reproduce "the satisfaction that motivates some projects of recovery—the false belief the work is done when something or someone is made visible or audible"(ibid.: 19-20). No intellectual masturbation here! No assumptions that we can rid ourselves of the shackles of colonialism if we just listen close enough. No promise of a new listening paradigm. Instead, a listening out for the musical parameters that often "get skipped over," are "left unattended" (ibid.: 20), might be one way to potentially unsettle the master narratives produced by and part of naturalized forms of listening. Exactly because these details have been historically un-heard—silenced as academically and aesthetically relevant—such sonic nuances are potentially "wonderfully disruptive fissures that crack many a foundational premise behind all sorts of narratives" (ibid.: 20). A listening out for how musicians "reveal and misreveal … sonic details"—how they manipulate them, if you will—can resist approaches that perform them as "a singular, transparent, commodifiable, or in any way fixed object" (ibid.: 21) of knowledge.

Finally, to counter the workings of "structural listening as a means to judge not only the value of musical works, but also their place in the musical [and musicological] canon" (Dell'Antonio 2000: 2), the chapters in the edited volume *Beyond Structural Listening* (2000) explore the critical potential of what Dell'Antonio calls several "postmodern modes of hearing" (Dell'Antonio 2000: 1). These chapters aim to critically question listening's role in musical control and narratives of musical mastery and discuss strategies ranging from listening to details as necessarily incoherent and disorienting, listening for disruption rather than continuation, to contesting the usefulness of the very notion of listening. This, in the conviction that "listening is a political and ethical act, and that an awareness of the diversity of interpretative strategies … can mitigate the hegemony—and the hubris—of the

totalist/organicist listening project.… We [therefore] call for alternative political/ethical strategies of listening" (ibid.: 11).

Central to these academic approaches to listening, then, is the question of how to listen beyond academically naturalized parameters while critically invoking—and therein always already entering the confines of—the established analytical categories that continue to be instrumental in musical disciplining and the disciplining of music. This challenge to the very foundations of the musicologies necessitates a radical questioning of taken-for-granted relationships between listening, authority, and knowledge. Rather than proposing one alternative form of listening, however, I reject the usefulness of a singular mode of listening out for Hindustani classical instrumental music. Instead, in this book I seek to denaturalize my (understanding of modes of) listening itself, laying bare some of the many intersecting layers of its double existence within Hindustani classical instrumental music.

The Double Existence of Listening as Knowledge Practices

The theories I have examined above might best be thought of as impulses that have stimulated me to question the naturalized authority of various modes of, and discourses on, listening that characterize contemporary Hindustani classical instrumental musical practices. Consider the following interview excerpt, which leverages several topoi regarding listening, music, and musical knowledge in connection to musical practice. Here, I am supposed to hear the details he just claimed illustrate the greatness of his guru, and, by extension, him:

Interlocutor: Most people, don't, didn't get the uh, level of instruction and, and detail of rāga that we were, you know, privileged to get.… With Khansaheb certainly with him, I mean. There are, I mean there are other music, there are other musicians who are very, very good rāga. But not that many, not that many. Not, not, not at the level that he, you know, put upon us, so often, you know. Because every time he, every time he would teach any rāga, you know, whether it was vocal, or instrumental, whether it was a little composition or a big one. He was always, showing, everything, you know.… It's like, you know, "here is what is important," you know, "here is the thing that you, you know, need to, here is what really makes it what it is". And then you listen to other people, and then you don't really hear that, it's like. Yeah, it's the same notes, [laughing]

Eva-Maria:	And then, what would make the difference, then?
Interlocutor:	It's this, level of, of detail. And, and having it in your mind and you know, in your hand … so that, you know, whenever you are moving in a particular rāga, that uh, you know, the detail that makes that rāga alive, is just always, in, you know, always in the tip of your finger.
Eva-Maria:	Yeah. Could you give an example of that?
Interlocutor:	Uh, well I am pretty cold. I am not playing, I haven't practiced much, uh. [sound example 3.3] And this is nothing, I mean, you know, I mean, he would, I mean. I am doing the best I can, he would break it down into, you know, a thousand more details, it's like, no, no, do, you know. This isn't, even, no. It's like this, it's like this, it's like this. I mean, you sat with him, one on one, or when he chose to just show that, he would show a level of uh, of conscious level of, of detail, that went into, just every tiny phrase of every rāga, that is just, you know, staggering.

To make this complexity of the double existence of listening graspable, I follow anthropologist Annemarie Mol's approach to knowledge as something that is done in practice (2002).

In her study of atherosclerosis, Mol critiques what she calls a paralyzing "perspectivalism" (2002: 10). This leftover of postmodern approaches to, among other things, disease, "turns doctors and patients into equals, for both interpret the world they live in" (Mol 2002: 10). This problematically implies an absence of relations of power and negates the different real-life consequences of disease for the various people involved. In foregrounding day-to-day knowledge practices through which atherosclerosis is "done in practice," Mol attempts to find a way out of this dilemma (2002: 12–13). Crucially, this entails a shift in approach to and understanding of knowledge. From an understanding of epistemology as a system of reference that seeks to authoritatively construct objects of knowledge, she understands knowledge as a matter "of manipulation.… With this shift, the philosophy of knowledge acquires an ethnographic interest in knowledge practices" (ibid.: 5) to which I would add listening. Following Mol's critique of perspectivalism, I argue that it is crucial to refrain from understanding music as the central point of focus of different people's per-auditives (cf. van Straaten 2016a). Instead, it is manipulated and done, performed, in listening practices. Foregrounding such practices of manipulation has far-reaching effects. Paraphrasing Mol (2002: 4–5): what has long been thought of as singular—Hindustani classical music—multiplies.

Following this approach, I examine how Hindustani classical instrumental music's aesthetic borders and content are brought into being, amplified, or faded out through the listening practices I encountered. From thinking about musical knowledge as a matter of

reference—"rāga so and so is structured melodically in such and such ways, and I can acquire such knowledge through structural listening"—I shift towards an inquiry into the interrelationships between the double existence of listening. How is listening, as knowledge practices, manipulated musically and how is listening, as discursive tropes, used to manipulate music? And how do these layers interrelate, build on, amplify, discard, reject, contradict, and/or reproduce each other? The below interview excerpt gives an indication of the complexity of the issue at hand:

> Details, are, detail is something which can only be illustrated through the music.… Details are details, you know, when you go in the details, you would see what you are doing, how you are staying on a note, how you are moving from one note to the other … what kind of pause you are giving, how many, what is the speed of the, entire, alāp, if you think of the alāp, you know.… Where are the pauses, how do you divide the different sections, you know? You say something, you give a story of the, Sa, and then after that, let us say Re or Ga. In between, how you finish, so that the mood you feel, it is very hard. It is like I am burning an incense, or wearing a perfume, and that fragrance, you don't see, but it is there. So, at the end of the, first section, the, that, the effect of that note that you are trying to establish, the Sa or Ni or whatever [sound example 3.4] Or that you are playing that in a, I am giving example of Sa, like [sound example 3.5] So, after four five phrases, this Sa is in your heart.… So this is what I mean when you build up something. So, when we are going like this [sound example 3.6] it, all these details are there, [sound example 3.6] Ga, around Ga.

This interlocutor leverages a mode of listening distinct from, but partially overlapping with, categories used within structural listening. He emphasizes feeling, affect, and indicates the importance of embodied knowledge for listening out for sonic details beyond recognizing pitches in terms of the notes of a rāga. In the same breath, he emphasizes that it is a long and difficult process to obtain this type of musical knowledge, the details of which can never really be captured in words. This illustrates how musicians mobilize modes of listening in direct relation to notions of musical details. Strategically emphasizing its discursive ambiguity, combined with a leveraging of listening out for details as the only way to get knowledge about them, this instrumentalist performs the authority of his embodied musical knowledge in relation to specific musical nuances. Being interviewed by a musicologist from a German University, a lot is at stake. At the same time, the interview excerpt signals the relevance of such nuances for understanding the many roles of listening in the dynamics of musical inclusion and exclusion. The fierce debates over the allegedly correct "effect of the note you are trying to establish" cannot be understood through structural listening alone.

It follows that a listening out for nuances might indeed allow me to sensitize my ears to musical narratives of mastery different from those encountered within academia. This book, however, is not a project of ultimate correction. I do not seek to re-write history, nor do I attempt to make an allegedly subaltern musician play or be heard. Instead, I listen out for a limited number of sonic nuances that musicians manipulate in their attempts to negotiate or upend the aesthetic boundaries and content of Hindustani classical instrumental music. Thereby, I aim to give insights into the complexity of this double existence of listening within contemporary dynamics of musical inclusion and exclusion. This requires me to actively sensitize my ears to those sonic details that I have been academically disciplined to filter out. I invite my reader to do the same. Listening, in this book, is a theoretical approach, a topic of research, and a method: entangled in and as knowledge practices.

Concluding Remarks

Selectively listening out for sonic nuances, always inherently involves not-listening, listening away from, others. Based on historically conventionalized listening norms, we include and exclude. Ignoring sounds that do not adhere to the norm, or labeling them aesthetically and academically irrelevant, is a process of exclusion. Listening practices are discriminatory acts that perform musical order. Within Hindustani classical instrumental music, listening works on two complexly entangled levels. Perhaps these are best thought of as the two sides of a coin, distinct but inseparable. Academic studies of Hindustani classical (instrumental) music have accepted one mode of listening as the standard. It is characterized by a normative listening out for melodic and aesthetic structure in terms of rāga grammar, a tendency to reductively fix music as an object and describe it in terms of or in comparison to European art music, and an inclination to write one's own guru into an emerging canon. Such structural listening is at work in the reproduction of the academic legitimacy of colonially connoted epistemological assumptions, reinforcing the power structures these uphold under the banner of revering difference. The challenges this poses to the musicologies are manifold: we must acknowledge the impossibility of this "post" in the present in order to make it possible for the future. Several authors have recently argued that listening is a potential strategy of resisting hegemonic narratives of (musical) mastery. If so, listening in detail might provide an alternative mode of engagement with this music. However, I have argued that in the case of Hindustani classical

music, such a listening out for sonic nuances cannot simply be considered a strategy of intervention. While such a mode of listening can indeed sensitize us to alternative ways of relating to Hindustani classical instrumental music, musicians leverage exactly such listening for detail as a discursive trope within their musical knowledge practices. Hence, presenting such a mode of listening as an ultimate counternarrative would simply reproduce a different master narrative based on listening out for different musical parameters. Thus, it would leave intact the mechanisms I seek to question. Seeking to gain insights in this complexity, I follow Mol's approach to knowledge as something that is done in (listening) practice and can be manipulated (musically). In the following chapters, the sonic elements listened out for as "note," "sound," and "virtuosity" will emerge as multiple.

"If you are not gonna play, at least write it down"
Methods After Method

Stepping into the (mine)field of Hindustani classical instrumental music practices meant having to deal with confusion, anger, sadness, insecurities, playing instruments, listening, refusing to listen, refusing to play, talking, debating, gossiping, crying, hating, being yelled at, being hit on, getting hurt physically and emotionally, being abused, being used, using, being loved, feeling vulnerable, enduring pain, feeling like a complete idiot, enjoying, laughing, being rejected, ignored, humiliated, praised. Doubts regarding my research (capabilities) often arose during such moments of tension. Did they signal I was on the wrong path? Shouldn't I prove that my ears really are trained? Doesn't a doctoral book mean proving one's capabilities and knowledge as a musicologist? And how else am I going to produce valuable academic knowledge? Stress about the future. My future. Who is going to read my book if it doesn't cohere to academic norms? Won't people put it down after reading the first few pages, rejecting it as complete nonsense. Will I be rejected for scholarships, jobs, publications, because of my refusal to listen structurally? For listening dirtily, disobediently? And what about my interlocutors? If I write about their angry outbursts, their (ab)use of music to assert several forms of power, their tricks for discrediting (the music of) other musicians. (How) will they retaliate? Will I lose friends? To be taken seriously as an academic, should I try to ignore and blend out those moments when I felt like crying and hiding under the bed? Must I toughen up, be glad that musicians wanted to engage with me at all, accept that suffering for my knowledge is a necessary, and maybe even honorable, part of research? Should I ignore these difficult aspects and instead focus on an analysis of the hard data I had gathered through interviews and sound recordings of concerts?

In retrospect, it was during these emotionally intense and often difficult moments that I learned the most about the dynamics of musical knowledge and power I have since often regretted wanting to write about. Namely, they made me aware that my experiences brushed up against, confirmed, or violated normative (musical) boundaries. At times, my own.

Sangīt encounters: aspects I am not allowed to write about

I know you want it. I mean, you suggested to meet at my house! Why else would you want to meet there? Don't worry, I am very discrete.… All those women they were all hot for Khansaheb, the whole mystical guru thing and all. And you know, as by that time, he was with Mary, and she was really keeping her eyes

on him, and I as his student was the next best thing for those girls. I got all his leftovers. So now that he is gone, I am missing those opportunities also. But I never told anybody about that when it happened. So, you don't worry.

Yeah let's go for a drive. We can talk while driving, I'll tell you more about my music while we drive.… I'll park here, you know, it is so beautiful here. And you can see the moonlight on the water, the stars in the sky. We are all alone, here. You know. All alone. Anything could happen.

Yeah, sure, you can come with me later today to my gig. That will be good for your book, you know, to get all the information. Just come with me. You can stay here in my house with me until then, we can talk. You know, tell me about yourself, what do you like, do you have a relationship? What kind of guys do you like?… Because you know, I think it is perfectly good for people to just have sex, you know, if they are not in a relationship, and just for fun, if both are not in a relationship, why not.

You know, one of the reasons I started to do research on this music, was that it is just such a great music for sex. You know, just so relaxed and everything. Oh, by the way, my assistant is out today, she will not come back.

You know that he had to leave there, because he was a little too close to his students, right? So, finally, one of those girls put in a formal complaint, and they couldn't let him teach anymore. [laughing] That's why they called him "dirty Harry." [36]

Please don't quote me on this, but …

If you turn off the recording, I'll tell you how … completely fucked up that concert by playing …

I don't need to tell you that anything you heard here remains between us, right?

Throughout the years, I lost count of the number of times such moments were accompanied by the explicit order to not repeat in my work what I had just experienced. However, as Hauke recently reminded me, when "I write, I have a responsibility for the tracks I leave behind" (2015: 192, my translation). Silence, listening away, is the strongest force to reinforce the very power structures at work in those moments of tension, of vulnerability, of pain, and fear. What structures of dominance do I perpetuate when I do not include these moments of tension in

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[36] In the weeks prior to handing in the dissertation version of book, the hashtag #MeToo, used to break the taboo surrounding sexual abuse, caused debates regarding the role silence plays in structural misuse of power relations. The question of whether to name the abusers is one of the aspects in this debate. As I am more interested in a de-naturalizing the power-knowledge structures that enable such abuse than to flash out individuals involved in its reproduction, I do not name people.

my book? When I do not take this as a, perhaps "less" academically conventional, form of data? Too many. I cannot ignore this, because it is central to the very dynamics I am interested in. But how can I deal with such felt aspects that are often difficult to reduce to the realm of the discursive? And what about all those aspects that my informants explicitly told me not to write about? The very fact that my interlocutors felt whatever happened during those encounters needed to be faded out, silenced, is itself already illuminating of issues of power and knowledge. This brings with it an ethical dilemma: it is precisely the most revealing moments that I am not allowed to repeat. But in my not repeating them, I silence them, and thereby reproduce the power structures I seek to critically denaturalize. This paradox led me to search for methods that allowed me to examine these dynamics in as nuanced and detailed way as possible without breaking the ethical norms of research. This necessitates a reconceptualization of what we consider academically legitimate knowledge production and the methods we use in the process.

In her introduction to the edited volume *Embracing Restlessness: Cultural Musicology* (2016a), Birgit Abels pleads for alternative ways of conceptualizing and producing knowledge within the musicologies. As my previous chapters have correspondingly illustrated, the discipline's taken-for-granted analytical tools, research methods, and modes of thought have long been at work to "discipline" (Bohlman and Bergeron 1992) the many musics of the world and our knowledge about them. Abels points to the lack of critical attention to the role of such disciplining of music, including methodological, in (re)productions of power structures. Instead, she proposes maintaining an "intellectual restlessness" (Abels 2016b: 3) in our relating to music. Inseparable from such a shift in intellectual approach is an alteration of methods and normalized notions of methodological legitimacy. This, she argues, includes a rejecting of academic authority as central to and constitutive of its knowledge production:

> Gone, with this, is the clear distinction between theory and practice; gone is methodological exclusivity. Gone, then, of course, is academic authority. Towering tall, however, is the productive precarity of a musicology invested in the relationship between fleeting and ambivalent musicmaking practices and an intellectual pursuit that's not invested in predictability and result but in curiosity and question. (Abels 2016b: 3)

I foreground such an "intellectual restlessness" in my endeavor. Namely, the double existence of listening as developed in previous chapters makes maintaining an a priori distinction

between theory, method, and practice impossible. A restless approach to the tensions negotiated in and through this double existence of listening might enable an attending to those aspects I cannot make explicit but which I refuse to silence.

But then, one might ask, what methods are best suited for an intellectually restless musicology, and how does this allow us to attend to the tensions discussed without breaking research ethics? True to her own argument, Abels does not give practical instructions for achieving such intellectual restlessness. Any fixing of methodological procedures would undermine the very potential of restlessness to inhabit the constantly transforming relationship between listening practices and the (questions asked by the) musicologist. John Here, John Law's critical rethinking of method provides impulses for thinking about how I might "embrace restlessness" (Abels 2016a) through the methodological choices I make in relation to the specific goals and questions attended to in this book.

In his book *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research* (2004), Law identifies a tension between methods, academic valorizations of knowledge, and what he calls 'reality'. In light of the postmodern notion that the world is messy, complex, fluid, and ambiguous, Law wonders whether academia doesn't make a mess of researching this messy world by using methods that fixate, structure, and categorize (2004: 2). Academic legitimacy is often derived from and based on such clarity, structure, and (a search for) linear arguments presenting singular answers. Based on this paradox of the need to structure messiness in order to grasp it academically, Law asks a question crucial to my methodological decisions: "If much of the world is vague, diffuse or unspecific, slippery, emotional, ephemeral, elusive or indistinct, … can we know them well? Should we know them? Is 'knowing' the metaphor that we need? And if it isn't, then how might we relate to them?" (Law 2004: 2). More specifically, if I understand my work as knowing in the sense of irrefutable musical facts and singular master narratives, do I not then impose control over music in the same breath as I critique it? And does this not run the risk of excluding those details so crucial for the tensions I am interested in?

Responding to this paradox, Law proposes a rethinking of the very notion and aim of knowledge. He suggests seeking "ways of knowing the indistinct and the slippery without trying to grasp and hold them tight" (Law 2004: 3). This proposition enabled me to listen out for sonic details without trying to fix them as authoritative knowledge. "Trying" is a crucial facet in this endeavor, as every act of thinking about music is—as Bohlman (1999) has pointed out—always inherently a claim of owning and thereby a grasping and holding music tight. However,

paraphrasing Ahmed (2000), if we want to make such a mode of knowledge production possible in the future, we must insist on the impossibility of knowing without fixing music in the present. That is the paradox inherent in this research: if I listen out for the details leveraged in sonic conflicts in my attempt to listen beyond, I still fix and objectify, exactly because listening is a knowledge practice.

The question of how to go about knowing without attempting to fix and therein control the world, for Law, cannot be answered in the singular. Like Abels, he instead gives thinking impulses that stimulate questions rather than provide answers. Thereby, he seeks to motivate his readers "to teach ourselves to think, to practice, to relate, and to know in new ways" (Law 2004: 3). Refusing to prescribe particular methods as academically more legitimate than others, Law offers a specific way of thinking about methods:

> They condense and manifest a version of reality, but as they condense it they re-enact it, they re-confirm it. Method always works not simply by detecting but also by amplifying a reality. The absent hinterlands of the real are re-crafted—and then they are there, patterned and patterning, resonating for the next enactment of the real. (ibid.: 116)

It follows that my methods not only influence what I construct—fix—as knowledge about Hindustani classical instrumental music; they also amplify specific versions thereof.

Such a take on methods as simultaneously amplifying and creating one—always selective—version of reality might enable a closing of the often-assumed gap between theory, practice, and methods (cf. Abels 2016b). That is, such an understanding of methods centralizes the abovementioned complex double existence of listening, both in my theoretical approach and through my methods. They are inseparable, complexly interwoven as a topic of research, as methods that I critique, as methods that allow me to develop both this critique and my argument, as theoretical approach, and as discursive tropes travelling through time and space. Following Law (2004: 116), a critical dealing with such complex dynamics might only be possible through choosing methods that enable me to create silences within the authoritative loudness of realities of Hindustani classical instrumental music, as amplified by established research methods, most prominently structural listening. Namely, by dimming those "loud" aspects, we might be able to listen out for, "detect and amplify particular patterns that would otherwise be below the threshold of detectability" (Law 2004: 116). Following this idea, my choice of methods is informed by my attempt to temporarily silence those academically amplified

aspects of Hindustani classical instrumental music as elaborated in the previous chapter: primarily, by not listening structurally. This is not because I think they are irrelevant for listening practices or unworthy of academic attention. Instead, it is a strategy that allows other sonic details to emerge.

My methods are far from unitary, coherent, or neatly reproducible. They have provided me with fragmented—but somehow related—bits and pieces of stories, discourses, sounds, experiences, connections: realities I amplified through the methodological choices I made. Some of my data is only located in my embodied memory: a hunch, a feeling, a shiver down my spine as my ears—my body—selectively relate to and judge aspects of a complex sound event. When I stopped listening structurally to a musician practice a sapat tān, instead letting the sounds wash over me, perhaps bore me, while wondering why a musician so obsessively repeated one phrase, an idea popped into my head. While listening to another musician performing a similar tān, this idea developed further, which informed a question I asked during an interview with a third musician. The answer to this question, combined with a remark about tāns made by my teacher during tālim a year earlier, resulted in a transformation in my aesthetic appreciation of tāns. Combined, these aspects influenced which aspects of virtuosity I listened out for, amplified, and which ones I silenced through my listening practices. All these elements informed the ideas that can be encountered in the chapter on virtuosity. I hence cannot present my reader with a singular narrative or specific answer. Nor can I always locate my argument in one specific aspect of my data—not solely in interviews, field notes, stories, recordings, my body, or in literature. Instead, I attempt to let knowledge come into being through my trying to create silences that enable me and, crucially, my reader, to listen out for, detect, and maybe amplify some sonic details that have previously been silenced. The form of this work as elaborated in the following section, becomes a method in and of itself. It is meant to stimulate my reader to relate to music in new, perhaps uncomfortable, ways. An invitation to become—or perhaps become aware that one always already is—response_able for one's own listening practices.

As such, this approach is necessarily time-consuming. It "is about patience too … you have to just lay in moments like these" (Vasquez 2013: 19–20). Following such necessary moves away from a fast production of objects of knowledge, I locate this book within recent pleas for what, among others, Isabelle Stengers has called "slow science" (Stengers 2011: 1). "Slow Science" entails an academic "mode of appreciation" of that which is messy, incoherent, or

inconsistent from the point of view of "fast science," "as nothing else than the irreducible and always embedded interplay of processes, practices, experiences, ways of knowledge and values that make up our common world" (ibid.: 10). The challenge for a slow science lies with accepting the messy, boring, detailed, and seemingly insignificant "not as a defect but as what we have to learn to live and think in and with" (ibid.: 10). The sonic details in the normative knowledge practices performing Hindustani classical instrumental music might be listened out for with boredom exactly because they have been dismissed as irrelevant—un-heard, silenced—by academic studies on the subject. They are the nuances that do not fit within the established rāga categorizations and classifications readily waiting to be filled up with information through structural listening. Seeking to deal with such problematics, slow science is invested in "the art of dealing with, and learning from … what escapes general, so-called objective, categories" (ibid.: 10). Positioning my book within such a plea—to take one's time to learn from what might have escaped by listening structurally—forced me to slow down. And slowing down, in turn, enabled me to listen. And listen again. And again. To that one phrase, that one note. Or is it really one note? Once more![37]

On Becoming Uncomfortable: Form and Response_ability

My conscious transgression of academic conventions of form is mainly inspired by hornscheidt's play with form, language, and structure (2012) as well as by the "unconventional reading experience" (Rizvi 2014: xvi) offered by Richard Wolf's mixing of fictional narrative with academic discourse. In *The Voice in the Drum: Music, Language, and Emotion in Islamicate South Asia* (2014), Wolf shifts abruptly between different perspectives, narrative forms, and fonts. Thereby, he plays with and disrupts both the carefully guarded boundaries between science and fiction as well as academic norms of argument structure and logic. That this narrative and structural ambiguity might result in confusion on the part of the reader (Rizvi 2014: xvi) is deliberately part of the book's argument. The reader is urged to ask "'why is this happening now?' when you encounter structural changes in the text" (Rizvi 2014: xvi, in Wolf

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[37] Clearly, such a lingering in details is in tension with academic structures of knowledge production. Those require quick, well-planned, and carefully structured (doctoral) research, and a quantitatively large output in the form of publications and conference presentations. Work is partially measured by the number of interviews one has conducted, the number of musical examples one analyzes, and the size of one's bibliography. Slow science does not work like that, and neither does this book.

2014). Wolf invites the reader to take on active relationships with the book, giving the reader thinking impulses rather than making a singular argument.

In a similar way, in *feministische w_orte; ein lern-, denk- und handlungsbuch zu sprache und diskriminierung, gender studies und feministischer linguistic* (2012), hornscheidt is not interested in searching for unitary, perfect, finished answers about the performativity of language. Neither is the author invested in developing a linguistic system that is more gender neutral than the current hegemonic system based on binary notions of gender. Instead, hornscheidt wants to stimulate in the reader, to develop a "curiosity and fascination, to want to and be able to ask questions, to experience me and others and the world in an alternative way with and through questions, to be present in a new and different way with me, others and in the world" (2012: 14, my translation). hornscheidt wants to actively engage the reader to take up a responsibility for their own speech acts. This is not just rhetorical for hornscheidt. Instead, this is performed throughout hornscheidt's book: its play with linguistic form, its differentiating structural parts of the text through variations in formatting, and its at times academically unconventional content, such as poetry. The conventional flow of argument, for example, is sometimes disrupted by writing exercises or questions that directly address the reader (cf. 15, 208, 214, 240). Texts framing such interruptions usually do not explicitly refer to them, thereby encouraging the reader to make connections herself. By not using capitals and inserting underscores in certain words, furthermore, hornscheidt stimulates the reader to become aware of one's own taken-for-granted linguistic norms. This awareness, in turn, gives impulses for reflecting on the roles of speech acts in the reproduction of power structures. By writing the German Verantwortung, which translates as responsibility, as ver_ant_w_ortung (2012: 17), for example, ecs[38] invites the reader to become aware of the hierarchical ordering that is always necessarily involved in language. This point is both revealed and performed by the use of underscores: they emphasize the ortung, implying the activity of putting something in a particular place. Combined with the w_ (the German Wort translates as word), this signaling the never neutral categorizing work language always does—it labels and fix something fluid. And for this ordering, hornscheidt argues, we need to take ver_ant_w_ortung: responsibility. A breaking of established academic boundaries of argument flow, structure, formatting, and linguistic norms, might incite annoyance on the part of the reader. ecs asks the reader to critically reflect on any irritation provoked by the book. Namely, this irritation reveals

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[38] hornscheidt does not identify as either one of the binary gender types and therefore prefers the use of ecs as alternative to she or he.

something about the reader's naturalized assumptions about normative (categories of) language and academic knowledge production. The form of the argument, then, is inherent in and part of the book's statement: it invites the reader to become open to oneself for a questioning of one's own naturalized categorizations, and to take responsibility for one's own speech acts (2012: 17).

In a similar fashion, I chose not to italicize words from languages other than English appearing in this book. Such formatting naturalizes English and inherently the categories and systems of thought it enables, as the norm, while constructing an inherent otherness of words italicized. As the implied otherness of (the phenomena signified by) words such as rāga and sitar have a long history of evoking orientalist connotations, my refusal to adhere to the academic norm of italicizing foreign language words can be understood as one attempt to break with these long histories of musicology's performative "Othering." My use of an underscore and the strategic change of spelling response_ability, emphasizes the relational and agentive aspect of writing and listening. By talking about a response_ability of listening, then, I mean to stimulate the readers of this book to become aware that your listening acts—like mine—are also performative: they perform ontologies of Hindustani classical instrumental music.

Like hornscheidt and Wolf, I play with and seek to tease out often heavily guarded and purportedly stable disciplinary categories and boundaries, using narrative tactics to encourage readers to take on active relations with what I present. The reader-listener encounters musical objects, interview excerpts, listening exercises, gossip, stories, jokes, and questions, sometimes abruptly disturbing the main narrative or argument. Here, I seek to mirror the fragmented nature of the elements at work in the performance, boundaries and content of Hindustani classical musics, as well as to create an awareness of the taken for grantedness of academic forms of knowledge representation. I do this to both sensitize myself to the legitimizing work such norms might do in my own research and entice the reader into similarly taking on this response_ability. I mean them as non-binding invitations, urging you to open your ears and relate to what you encounter in not-yet explored ways. It is my attempt to explore ways of knowing without trying to grasp and hold tight. Such examining of potentially alternative modes of knowing "can and has to become uncomfortable.… Only an uncomfortable production of knowledge can lead to changes" (Hauke 2015: 192).[39] My bolding of particular words within

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[39] Wenn ich schreibe, habe ich eine Verantwortung für die Spuren, die ich hinterlasse. Ausblenden und Ignorieren ist die stärkste Kraft, um macht- und Herrschaftsverhältnisse aufrechtzuerhalten. […] Schreiben kann und muss unbequem werden. […] Nur unbequeme Wissensproduktion führt zu Veränderungen.

sangīt encounters, in a similar way, plays with and performs how particular tropes travel through and become amplified as authoritative through knowledge practices. As my frustrations, mistakes, annoyances, insecurities, impatience, and pain, have become part of and even central to this book, the writing process itself is uncomfortable for me. Writing about that which has been historically silenced makes me vulnerable—to rejection, to accusations, to a loss of the little academic credibility I might have gained as a doctoral student. It risks my future career in academia, the potential of tenure, a stable job, a livelihood. It risks my already fragile relationships with musicians, some of whom have become my friends, relationships in which I have become emotionally invested.

I am asking of you, the reader, to join me in becoming uncomfortable, perhaps even vulnerable. To open your ears to nuances you might not be able to immediately categorize. To allow yourself to become impatient or to be irritated by my lingering description of minute nuances. To allow yourself to become insecure in moments you are not able to structure, to know, to claim control through listening and reading practices you have familiarized yourself with. When this book resists such familiarity, I encourage you to perceive such frictions as instances that can teach you something. What it is that annoyed you? What norms or expectations were broken and led to your confusion, insecurity, or irritation? What might such frustrations, irritations, insecurities, and boredom reveal about your own naturalized categorizations, aesthetic and/or musical orders, listening norms, and notions of valuable knowledge? When you listen out, which and whose sounds are you including and excluding, and based on what and whose aesthetic conventions? Your listening out will become part of, will perform, this book. Or it won't. That, I consider your response_ability.

This strategy might leave me with more questions than I started with. Throughout the research I have made choices regarding the question of inclusion and exclusion: which and whose musical practices take place, and where? Partially, these choices were influenced by practical issues such as (lack of) funding, geographical distance, my job as a research assistant, and other aspects of life that like to intervene into that which we enjoy distinguishing as academic life. I made other choices based on the fact that the research had to be finished within a particular time frame. I briefly elaborate on these choices below.

When starting my research, I was mainly interested in the movement of music around the planet. My starting point was its potential to disrupt often taken-for-granted relationships between music, place, space, and belonging (cf. Connell and Gibson 2003). In the case of Hindustani classical music, this rupture has resulted in discussions about the authenticity of performances by non-Indians: "To be a non-Indian performer of Indian music means to be either ignored or even ridiculed" (Zuckerman 1996). Tracing links between music, place, space, and belonging, the study was supposed to explore how semantic associations and dissociations occur when music travels around the planet.

I started my research under the assumption it would be possible to include all musicians of Hindustani classical music. I thought the number of musicians would be rather limited, as many prominent musicians had already died. This idea quickly turned out to be too optimistic. Due to the possibility of studying at various music schools, including those founded by Bhatkhande and Tagore in the early twentieth century, increased easy access to canonized musicians, and a growing investment of (diaspora)[40] Indian upper-middle class in this music, there are many musicians currently scattered around the planet. Crucially, this scattering is related to genre. In the North Atlantic realm, most of the musicians performing are either dhrupadya or instrumentalists; performances by khayāl vocalists are almost exlusively organized by and for the Indian diasporic community. Within the Indian context, this is reversed. Khayāl numerically dominates at most prominent musical festivals and on radio and television programming, while instrumentalists and dhrupadyas are less audible in this public sphere. As the dynamics of my interest turned out to be rather different for each of these genres, it was necessary to narrow my focus both geographically and musically. As instrumental music was the most prominent in relation to the question I started with, I chose to only examine this genre. However, this already narrow focus was still too broad.

Namely, this genre consists of varied musical practices, each with distinct musical strategies of inclusion and exclusion. Due to time limitations, this variety was impossible to explore in depth. Second, due to in-between gharānā tensions, it is difficult to develop long-term relationships with musicians from more than one gharānā. At the very best, such research would raise eyebrows and irritate musicians. At worst, I would be either used as a puppet in

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[40] For example, the Bay Area Silicon Valley hosts a large community of Indian diaspora.

these conflicts, or musicians would refuse to engage with me because of my relationship with their arch-enemies. Attempting to avoid such complications and invested in building long term relationships with a smaller group of musicians, I narrowed my focus to musicians claiming to belong to the Senia Maihar gharānā. This gharānā has played a prominent role in the movement of this music around the planet and hence was a logical choice. During my research, I further narrowed my focus to disciples of three second-generation Maihar gharānā musicians: Ali Akbar Khan (1922–2009), Annapurna Devi (1927–), and Nikhil Banerjee (1937–1986). This decision was mainly based on access to informants I gained.

Each of these three musicians are canonized as belonging to and having been formative of (the musical style of) Senia Maihar gharānā. All three have learned from (among others) Allauddin Khan (1862–1972),[41] the multi-instrumentalist[42] who, as I elaborate in more depth in chapter five, in the 1970s was retrospectively declared the gharānā's founder. My interlocutors claim that each of these musicians has developed distinct musical styles, teaching, promotional strategies, and performance and recording practices. Such stylistic diversity, in turn, is said to be characteristic for Allauddin Khan's teaching style and methods, and therefore for Maihar gharānā at large. That is, Allauddin Khan transformed what he taught based on each student, actively encouraging them to develop their own distinctive musical style. It is precisely this diversity that is paradoxically leveraged as proof of their membership to the same gharānā. Due to these amplified (Law) differences between musicians, their disciples employ (partially) distinct listening practices. Hence, this narrowing down of interlocutors illustrates the variety of musical knowledge practices within a gharānā.

During the period of my research and writing of this book, Nikhil Banerjee and Ali Akbar Khan had already passed away. At the time of writing, Annapurna Devi is still alive, but is bedridden, no longer able or willing to teach due to considerable illness, and living as a recluse. Their first-generation disciples consist of a rather varied group of musicians who are often categorized based on their status as a musician: professional musicians who make their living solely from teaching and performing, such as Alam Khan, Tejendra Narayan Majumdar, Partha Chatterjee, Ken Zuckerman, Purbayan Chatterjee, and Shubhendra Rao; musicians who have built less of a name for themselves, do not get their main income from music, and mainly play

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[41] Because there was no birth registration in British India at that time, his actual date of birth is unknown. His first- and second-generation disciples use his alleged birth in 1862 to make claims of his musical genius and god-like status—because he became so old and yet still played until shortly before his death. Others contest these claims, suggesting he must have been around eighty years old when he died.

[42] I do not know the actual number of instruments he played. Crucially, his disciples and some biographical documents claim he was able to not only play, but play masterfully, over two-hundred instruments, leveraging this ability as proof of his unusual musical talent and genius.

as a—rather serious—hobby or out of love for the music, such as Christopher Ris, Meena Ashizawa, Nanda Sardesai, Hemant Desai; and people who shift in between those problematic categories, such as David Trasoff, George Ruckert, Terry Pease, Stephen Slawek, and Suresh Vyas. The already problematic notion of musical seniority is another way of categorizing, which would group the same musicians rather differently. I refrain from categorizing of these musicians, as this would always produce hierarchical ordering as to their importance within the gharānā. Instead, I am interested in the listening strategies involved in the claims of their importance. Hence, I will provide the contextual information necessary to understand those strategies throughout the book. Such contextualization again brings along the question of ethics. To avoid conflicts and protect the identity of musicians, I have often anonymized encounters. However, to examine what is happening musically and which strategies of listening are employed by a particular musician, context is often necessary. And the more information is given, the easier it becomes to identify the interlocutor. When dealing with this ethical dilemma, I chose to guarantee anonymity over what in conventionally academic terms might be conceived of as evidence—at times, perhaps, at the cost of my argument. As described above, I tried to solve this challenge, through this book's form, inviting the reader to make connections regarding the larger argument I make.

Finally, by focusing on the listening practices of a gharānā that has already received a relatively large amount of academic attention, I become part of the canonization of this gharānā. I try to circumvent this inherent problematic by my restless and response_able approach to these mechanisms, as elaborated above, while emphasizing that I am never able to overcome this dilemma. But which musical practices do I take into account when examining listening practices of these third-generation musicians?

What Musical Practices?

The correct melodic approach of tivra Ma in rāga behag, the accurate way to do the sitar jāvari to get the right timbral quality, the suitable performance structure, the including or excluding of tāns in alāp, the appropriate volume of sound systems during concerts, and the amount of echo effect that should be added during the production of recordings: these are just some of

the many details of aesthetic aspects listened out for in the name of the gharānā. But during what musical practices do these musicians listen out and how did I engage with them?

Most analysis of Hindustani classical music focuses on (recorded (miniature versions or excerpts of)) performance. As a (recording of a) live performance is the most convenient to listen out for the masterful unfolding of rāga by the musician, such an analytical focus might be a logical consequence of the academic legitimacy given to structural listening. Another element involved in the centrality of analysis of performance over other forms of musicking might lie with the complexly connoted positive value attached to a notion of ephemerality in relation to a live performance (cf. Neuman 2004) of Hindustani classical music. Listening to and recording live concerts was therefore part of my research activities. Whenever I had the chance to hear a performance of one of my informants, I went. On the few occasions that the situation allowed for it, I also recorded the concert. When the concert came unexpectedly and I was not carrying my recording device, I used the recording function on my smartphone. However, playing (and listening to) concerts takes up the smallest part of my interlocutors' musical knowledge practices. While on tour during concert season (summer in the North Atlantic realm, winter in India), musicians might play two concerts a week, but most of my interlocutors were happy if they played two concerts a year. As these moments are only one of several arenas in which Hindustani classical instrumental music's boundaries and content are negotiated, attending performances took up only a small portion of my research.

Depending on the stage in their musical development, musicians also spend a large amount of time giving and/or receiving tālim, the second listening practice I examine. As Neuman (2004) argues, tālim is an important way through which musicians embody musical knowledge. However, perhaps because it is not exactly graspable through structural listening, academics have not examined this practice. Tālim takes on multiple forms, depending on, among other aspects, the level of the students, the context, and from which of the three canonized musicians the guru/teacher or shishiya/disciple/student[43] has learned. From a teacher sitting with a group of beginner students who are learning how to play Sa Re Ga Ma on the frets of a sitar, to a one-on-one session between a guru and a long-term shishya during which five alāp phrases are taught, to a skype session between a teacher in India and a student in Europe: during these moments, gurus may listen to their students playing what they have

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[43] The use of terms such as tālim, guru, shishiya, and riyāz varies between encounters. The ways in which these concepts are used already say a lot about dynamics of knowledge and power, as the analytical chapters illustrate: they are discursive tropes in themselves. Hence, I do not want to make a choice here for one or the other but instead examine how these categories are strategically utilized by musicians in their judgements of listening practices.

learned, teachers may play themselves and have the students copy them, or the teacher might correct certain aspects of the playing of the students while leaving other mistakes uncommented. The following entry in my field notes gives insights into the usefulness of this method:

> I am listening to a tālim session, the student is learning alāp, at that very moment a phrase that shows Ma. The phrase that he is learning, has quite a strong andolan on Ma. However, in his repeating this phrase, the student does not play that andolan, he sits on Ma and then moves away from it again. After having repeated the phrase a couple of times, each time with an emphasis on the andolan, thereby musically attempting to correct the student, the teacher moves on, without verbally commenting on the distinction between what the student plays and what the teacher played. At the end of the learning of the alāp, the student writes down all the phrases in sargam. He then re-plays the phrases, reading them from the paper, "to make sure he has got all the right notes."
> After the student has left, I ask the teacher about this specific case: why did he not correct this student here? Was that not an important aspect of the rāga?
> "You have good ears, Eva. You know, he comes here, and he wants to quickly learn a rāga, you know. But really, he just wants to learn a melody, so that at home he can play this and perform some Indian music. So, if he doesn't get all the details right, it doesn't matter."

By listening out for how musicians teach, learn, copy, comment, and correct, I learned a lot about the musical hierarchies created through these listening practices. This form of listening told me what aspects musicians deem important enough in that moment to correct, repeat, or silence by not commenting on them. Crucially, I was almost never allowed to record or even take notes during tālim sessions: "Well, I would love to let you just record the class, but really, that would not be fair to the others who pay to get access to the recordings that we make, now would it?" or: "But if you would record it, it would be like you would get my lesson, but for free." While such equating of musical knowledge with a recording is in itself telling for transformations in notions of what constitutes musical knowledge, this has also left me with relatively little analyzable sound objects. As will be revealed below, I therefore had to search for and capitalize on other forms of data and knowledge. I base a lot of what I write here on memory.

Another aspect of Hindustani classical instrumental music that has received little academic attention is riyāz, or practice. Neuman (1990 [1980]) and Neuman (2004) have emphasized the centrality of practice within Hindustani classical music, but these studies mainly focus on the social-cultural role of practice. Not all musicians were comfortable with me

listening to them practicing. Some simply refused. I was only once allowed to record a practice session. When allowed to be present during riyāz, I would usually sit in a corner listening to what aspects the informant repeated and how. At times, I would practice along. As this chapter's title also indicates, my interlocutors strongly encouraged this. They at times found it strange that I was just sitting and listening, suggesting that the only way you could really learn about this music was by playing. Or, as the title indicates, if not playing along, then I should at least take notes. Again, this is telling for the epistemological conflict at stake. Like my listening to tālim, and combined with interviews and informal discussions during which I asked why a musician would practice certain aspects a specific way, such listening to riyāz taught me a lot about my informants' aesthetic norms: about how and what they normatively listened out for during their own practice.

Where? On Multi-sited Ethnography

Travelling for concerts, teaching, and learning Hindustani classical instrumental music has been inherent to and constitutive of the listening practices of Maihar gharānā. As a result, disciples are currently scattered around the planet, often travelling between India, the North Atlantic, Japan, and countries such as Dubai, the United Emirates, and Qatar. India-based musicians travel to the United States and Japan for summer tours, perhaps stopping in Europe or the Middle East on the way. Similarly touring or following their teacher to learn, USA-based musicians travel to India for the winter concert season. I decided to follow suit and move around the planet in a similar manner.

However, research funding structures do not resonate with such multi-sited ethnography. Most foundations only provide funding for traveling to and staying in one country. Although I was able to secure several research scholarships, my traveling possibilities were still limited. This meant that I was forced to exclude several informants based on their location. Musicians located in Dallas and San Antonio, Texas, for example, I only interviewed via Skype, whereas I did not meet musicians based in Hyderabad, Delhi, and Jodhpur at all. I have furthermore not spent any time in the UK, Japan, or the Gulf States. With this decision, I reinforce Maihar gharānā's geographical center–margin structure: its main hubs are California (USA), Kolkata, Mumbai, and Pune (India), and Basel (Switzerland). My fieldwork was mostly

based in those locations: during the three-and-a-half months of research time in Western Europe, I spent a little over two months in Basel at and around the Ali Akbar College of Music, one month in the Amsterdam area, the Netherlands, and one week in the Vienna area, Austria. During the three-and-a-half months of research time in the USA, I spent two months in the Bay Area, two weeks in the greater Los Angeles area, two weeks in Austin, Texas, a little under a week in Portland, Oregon, and the rest of the two weeks moving between Boston and New York. Of the six months spent in India, I lived in Kolkata for two weeks, and the rest of the time I was moving between Mumbai and Pune.

This movement allowed me to establish long-term relationships with informants who were similarly travelling between, or stayed at, the aforementioned hubs. The encounters with people living outside of those hubs were logically different from the meetings I had with people whom I met on a regular basis over a number of months, sometimes years. I barely had enough time to drink a cup of tea or coffee before getting the interview going with some informants. With others, I perhaps had the chance to listen in on a lesson, but there was not enough time afterwards to elaborately discuss the lesson, the aesthetic choices made, and the own practicing, learning, and performing experiences, leaving some listening experiences un-contextualized. The notes I made about them afterwards are usually vague and non-specific. With other musicians, I spent a lot of time listening to them teach, practice, perform, and talk about all the aspects I had learned to listen out for. The knowledge gained from my relationship with these musicians is different in character from that based on a Skype meeting, and such relationships have informed my listening abilities and aesthetic preferences. I attempt to take this into account in my analysis as much as possible.

Sangīt encounter: encounter relationships

I heard sarodiya Tejendra Narayan Majumdar perform for the first time at the Tropentheater, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, on 9th May 2009, well before the start of the research. My ears were, at the time, mainly trained to listen out for the sitar as (representative of) Hindustani classical music. I had little experience with listening to or knowledge about other instruments or vocalists. The element of Majumdar's performance that I still remember was the timbre of his instrument, the sarod, as different. This, so I remember stating to the person who had accompanied me to the concert, I found rather disruptive. Compared to the sound of the sitar I had learned to love, it sounded metallic. As a result, I found Majumdar's performance not so enticing as the sitar concerts I had listened to. The harshness of the sound and relative loudness of the instrument did not suit my ears.

Five years later, we met during his visit to the Ali Akbar College of Music in San Rafael, USA. I was watching and listening to an audio-visual recording of one of his teachers, Ali Akbar Khan, playing rāga Shree, in the college's archive. An informant had told me that Majumdar would be coming: "He is really open and easily approachable." She suggested, "he is very active on Facebook, just write him a message." When he walked into the archive, I had not yet written to him, and was a bit overwhelmed by the sudden presence of such a famous musician. After briefly greeting him and paying my respects, I went back to my recording, headphones on. He started listening to some archival recordings of a specific rāga composed by Ali Akbar Khan that he wanted to check out. After some time, he looked at my screen and asked: "rāga Shree?" Because I was listening with headphones, his recognizing of this rāga surprised me. He explained he saw Khan repeatedly play mīnds between Pa and Re, which made him think it was Shree. Later that afternoon, Khan's son suggested that I could make use of Majumdar's presence to interview him for my project. Majumdar agreed to meet the next day at Swapan Chaudhuri's place, where he was staying. He would add me on Facebook to send me the details of the address and a convenient time.

Having arrived at Chaudhuri's house, it seemed like both of us were uncertain of how to proceed. I had not had as much time to prepare myself for the interview by listening to his recordings as I would normally do before an interview. In contrast to the other musicians I had met so far, who usually started mansplaining their well-rehearsed master narrative of musical self before I would get the chance to ask a single question, Majumdar seemed hesitant to talk about himself or his music. After asking him a question about his musical style, he asked me: "Oh, you want me to play for you?" He almost seemed relieved, and so was I. A strategic move into his comfort zone. He played for about two hours. No recording was made. I did not ask. It did not feel like a moment for recording, it felt like a moment of experience, of being-together-in-sound. One short break for his cigarette in between. Sometimes, in the middle of a phrase-cluster, he would look up and say "Chandranandan," "Shree," indicating the name of the rāga he was playing. I sat in front of him and listened, looking at what his hands were doing, how the movements of his fingers responded to the sounds that emanated from the instrument, how the different strings each produced a slightly different sound color, how the instrument responded to his various left-hand movements, the fluctuations in and contrast between dynamic qualities, contrast in speed and rhythmic-melodic movements, and rhythmic patterns created by the right hand. It was an intense experience for me.

We met again two days later at the college, this time for his concert. I quickly walked by the green room to wave and give my pranam, listened to the packed concert from my spot in the back, and said a quick thank you and goodbye before I left. I did not want to disturb the many people who wanted to get his blessing or take a selfie with him after the concert.

We kept in touch via Facebook messenger, reiterating the experience we shared that "very special day." As Majumdar knew I was coming to his home town Kolkata for my research, he offered that I could stay at his guest house opposite his house when I was there. And then "N [sic] ALSO U CAN LEARN FROM ME...JUST OPP TO MY HOUSE […]If u want..of course […] And also u can go with me in different places for concerts...sure...but if u book now..i will keep it" (private communication). As I was planning to stay in Kolkata for about two-and-a-half months, this seemed like a great opportunity. It would provide

me with access to other Kolkata-based musicians and simultaneously give me a chance to learn with this musician whose music had made such an impression on me. As the rent of the room was reasonable and he insured me that some of his students abroad had stayed in the guest house for longer periods, this seemed like a great deal. I accepted, suggesting I would come to Kolkata 1st December to end of February. We were planning to meet beforehand in Daha, Bangladesh, at a music festival where he would perform and which he invited me to accompany him.

However, due to a family emergency, I had to return from my research to the Netherlands and could not attend the festival in Daha, nor be in Kolkata on the 1st of December. Before I came to Kolkata, he came to Pune for a jugalbandi concert with Karnatic venu player Shashank Subramanyam. I made the trip to Pune to attend his concert. He told me to meet him beforehand in his hotel for lunch, where he was accompanied by as Subramanyam and three of his students who had also traveled to Pune for the concert. Majumdar introduced me to Subramanyam as a "musicologist professor," not to his students. After lunch, the students and I accompanied him to his room, where he received a massage from one of them while we talked. Because he wanted to take a little nap, we were told to go and come back some time later to help him get ready and accompany him to the concert. We traveled to the venue in the cars provided by the festival organizers and were present one-and-a-half hours in advance. After the sound check and performance, people came back stage to greet and pay their respects to Majumdar. Thereafter, he went back to the hotel with his students, while I went back to my own accommodation.

In January, I finally got to Kolkata. I planned my stay around the time of the Doverlane Music Festival, as that would enable me to listen to live performances and meet some of the musicians I had previously met in the USA, who all traveled to India/Kolkata for the occasion of the festival and learning. I stayed at Majumdar's guesthouse as agreed beforehand. The other two rooms were occupied by a Japanese student who came to study with Majumdar for the second year and one of his long-term students, whom I had already met in Pune. During my stay, I was allowed to sit in, listen to, and (partially) record Majumdar teaching both of my roommates, as well as several relatively quick successive teaching sessions with students that Majumdar considered beginners. I furthermore got to listen to my roommates practice, got to talk to them about their experiences learning with Majumdar, their reasons for traveling thousands of kilometers to study with him, the amount of money it cost them. During my stay, Majumdar used some of Khansahab's students and myself as a white-faced-diversity-background for a television interview framing a television broadcast of the celebration of saraswati puja at his house. I listened to the saraswati Puja concert he and his wife gave together with their students, and I came along to Majumdar's concerts.

After returning to Mumbai, I tried to make it to another of his concerts in Kolkata. He was very excited about this concert and insisted I should come as he was accompanied by Zakir Hussain, but the flight tickets between Mumbai and Kolkata were too expensive. Thereafter, we still kept in touch a bit via Facebook, but the contact decreased over time. Through concert announcements and YouTube videos of concerts he and his students post on Facebook, I know when some of his concerts take place and get

to partially experience them[44] through my computer in my living room in Germany. By liking his posts, I let him know that I am still listening to his music.

December 2016. I want to come to Kolkata to pick up the sitar I had ordered from sitar maker Barun Roy. I wrote to Majumdar to ask him how he was doing, letting him know I was coming, would like to meet to say hello, and would like to stay at his place again if possible. Although he read the message five minutes after I wrote it, he never responded.

These various encounters I had with Majumdar, taking place over a number of years in three different continents, informed how I listen. These encounters therefore exemplify the usefulness of multi-sited research for gaining insights in the dynamics of musical knowledge and power, illustrating their complexity.

Both Majumdar and I wanted several things from each other. Majumdar was hoping to capitalize on my willingness to pay a lot of money for musical knowledge (he charges 2,000 rupees, about 25 Euro for a 20-minute lesson) and for simply being close to and having easy access to a musician such as himself (for 1,000 rupees a night). He was also invested in being recorded as a member of the Maihar gharānāin a book written by a musicologist whose authority is legitimated by her belonging to and working for a North Atlantic university. Having studied with Ali Akbar Khan, Majumdar is well-aware of the canonizing power of musicological texts. He furthermore enjoyed spending time with me or, perhaps, looking at me: "I like your laugh." Related to this, he used me—or rather my white skin—as cultural capital in a context where the foreign and whiteness is still something desirable. He knew exactly how to use me. I, on the other hand, also capitalized on this relationship because he allowed me to make recordings, conduct interviews, and do participant observation—everything a budding music scholar could desire. And the more I listened to his music, the more I started to like it. This relationship informed my listening norms.

Multi-sited ethnography, in sum, allowed for both diversity and depth while at the same time preventing depth and excluding informants. But how did I do research in those multiple sites?

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[44] https://www.facebook.com/ustad.i.khan/videos/10202319982957626/?pnref=story, last visited 20th September 2016.

My choice to make listening beyond structural aspects the main method as well as theoretical focus of this study has organically grown out of a combination of my research experience with a number of academic studies that urge methodologically including the "ear" (cf. Clifford and Marcus 1986; Bendix 2000; Erlmann 2004; Solomon 2012). During the first few months of my research in Basel, Switzerland, I was allowed to record most of the vocal and instrument classes taught by Ken Zuckermann, but on most other occasions I was not allowed to do so. However, informed by authoritative musicological and music-theoretical discourses that I had read in preparation for the research, I felt insecure about my own listening abilities. Especially at the beginning of my research, I was very aware I was not able to aurally recognize or classify many rāgas according to the widely cited system attributed to Bhatkhande. Trying to find a way out of this double dilemma of not being allowed to record but not yet well enough trained to listen structurally, I started listening to concert recordings over and over again. I felt I should learn to aurally recognize and be able to distinguish between the melodic contours of different rāgas; I wanted to train myself to immediately hear which notes were played, to be able to categorize "key phrases" and "melodic outlines" (Bor et all 1999: 2). In other words, I was trying to train myself to listen structurally. However, the more time I spent listening out for these structural elements, the more I realized how much of what was going on musically I was missing out on.

As already suggested in previous chapters, those sonic elements that my interlocutors listened out for, gossiped about, pointed out to me, and bickered over were nuances that I similarly had to train myself to be able to catch, but which did not match the literature on the topic. Once I realized this, I stopped attempting to categorize what I heard in terms of rāga. Instead, I started to listen out for which elements musicians repeated while practicing, what they corrected in their teaching, how they instructed an instrument repairer while he worked and how the sound of the instrument changed in response to this, and how they argued with sound engineers, screamed at their students, and judged recordings we listened to together. I tried to gain insights into what and how they listened out for. This listening out for the details that have been ignored by academic studies, as elaborated in chapter three, became my main method.

In a context in which embodied musical knowledge is both a discursive trope as well as a potential tool for research, the question of whether to do participant observation and what that might entail is complex. For example, if I revealed during a joint practice or teaching session that I was not a great sitar player musicians might not have taken me seriously as a researcher, listener, or person. On the other hand, if I refused to actively participate in musical practice, I ran the risk of being categorized, and rejected, as a musicologist who was only interested in words and not really interested in the real music? This challenge is in itself revealing of different values given to various types of musical knowledge and necessitates a clearer delineation of the notion of participation.

I decided to understand participant observation in terms of different varieties of listening. Taking part in tālim or riyāz while using my voice as an instrument; taking part in tālim or riyāz while using my sitar as an instrument; taking part in tālim or riyāz by listening, without making sounds myself; listening to a concert, perhaps humming along; or just hanging out with a musician for hours, gossiping, drinking tea, laughing, and talking about serious aspects of life: each of these, and everything in between, I consider participant observation. Each of these is different, and taught me different things, exactly because I listened differently in each situation. I decided which form would be the most suitable depending on my aims in that particular moment. Perhaps I played my sitar because I wanted to avoid conflict with a senior musician who had told me to play. Or I listened silently because I did not have the money to pay for a lesson myself. Perhaps I wanted to invest in a relationship, which required me to become vulnerable to critique by practicing along. Or I hung out with a musician because I wanted to hear the latest gossip. Or I just felt comfortable with that person and simply needed to feel like that for a minute in between all the tensions. I did not apply a singular formula but tried to participate in whatever way seemed most suitable at that time.

I conducted and recorded conversational interviews with thirty-two musicians. The interviews took between one and three hours and were usually conducted in the house of the musicians, so that their instruments were present, and I could ask them to play something in case

clarification was needed. Most of these I conducted with musicians that I spent much time with and whose musical practices I had listened to on many occasions. In several cases, I did not do formal recorded interviews with musicians with whom I spent a lot of time, mainly because they felt uncomfortable with this method. This is again indicative of the sensitive nature of the topic of this book.

I planned to conduct these informal interviews at the end of each research stay so that I could first establish a relationship with my informant and become familiar with their musical practices, which I would use as basis for discussion. Before each interview, I made a non-exhaustive list of topics for discussion. Some were the same for each interview, others were person-specific. While I made sure these topics were indeed touched upon, I kept such interviews as open as possible to allow unexpected topics to emerge. I always asked the musicians to bring their instruments to the interview so that they could demonstrate elements we discussed. I transcribed all the interviews. However, I lost most of the transcriptions due to a computer crash and my failure to back up. I have re-transcribed parts of the interviews, but not all of them due to time limitations. However, as I think the value of transcription lies in the process of transcribing—developing one's thoughts in the process of this engagement with fragments of one's research—rather than in the fixed end-result, I do not see this as a problem. I did back up the recordings of the interviews, so they are available for transcription in the future. These recordings also provided me with sound examples that I have inserted throughout the book for my reader to response_ably listen to.

How? Discourse analysis

As Starks and Brown Trinidad have summarized, discourse analysis "can shed light on the creation and maintenance of social norms, the construction of personal and group identities, and the negotiation of social and political interaction" (2007: 1374). However, within the humanities and social sciences, many strands of discourse analysis exist, each of them with very different methods and based on different ideas. I am here using discourse analysis as informed by Michel Foucault's work. Foucault himself never developed a set of methods for discursive analysis, and hence it might be best to speak of "Foucauldian-inspired analyses of discourse" (Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine 2008: 91). Discourse, for Foucault, can be understood as a set

of statements that are at work to construct objects and subjects; each contain and construct their own distinctive knowledge and authority. Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine distinguish three dimensions of Foucault's approach to discourse: "Firstly, the analysis of discourse entails historical inquiry…. Second, analysis attends to mechanisms of power and offers a description of their functioning. And lastly, analysis is directed to subjectification—the material/signifying practices in which subjects are made up" (2008: 91). Discourse analysis, it follows, entails an examining of the historicity of discursive practices—a tracing of how these discourses have been, and continue to be, operative in the construction, reproduction, or (attempted) rejection of institutions of power.

As I claimed in the first three chapters of the book, in the case of Hindustani classical instrumental music, a number of power institutions are at play in the double existence of listening as a knowledge practice. Approaching these institutions through discourse analysis necessitates a historical inquiry into the discourses that have contributed to their construction and normalization as sources of authority. Besides the discourse analysis done in chapters two and three, therefore, each of my analytical chapters begins with an analysis of (historical) discourses relevant to that chapter's topic. This enables me to examine how such historical discourse resonates in contemporary listening practices and which elements they leave out. Elements contributing to this discourse include recent academic writings, concert reviews, music descriptions on flyers, CDs and LPs, books for learning to play a musical instrument, (auto)biographies, the conversational interviews I conducted, the many informal conversations, pieces of gossip, and anecdotes I took part in and encountered, comments on and descriptions of YouTube audio and audiovisual uploads, and interviews with artists published on websites. Taking these elements as statements that take part in the framing, informing, and performing of listening practices allows me to examine them as elements of a musical mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion that work to uphold the entangled power structures of musicology and gharānā.

"The many maestros of Maihar"[45]
Dynamics of Canonization

> In every **culture**, certain **personalities** appear from time to time that **profoundly affect** the course of a particular **field** for **generations** to come. In the sphere of North Indian Classical Music, **historical figures** such as Swami Haridas, Mian **Tansen**, Sadarang, Masit Khan, **Bhatkande** … **shape** the **very standards** of **excellence**, and even the requisite **repertoire**.… What they **contribute** becomes part of the **lexicon** and **required knowledge** for the **serious professionals** in the **field**.… In the 20th Century, India was fortunate enough to have another such **musical pioneer**, the **great Ustad** (**maestro**) **Allauddin Khan**, **created new pathways** in musical culture. He **broke** the **bonds** of **orthodoxy** and **closed**-**mindedness** of the **old families** and **teaching lineages** who held the **wisdom** of the **Raga** and **Tala** music of North India and brought it out to the **modern world**, **without sacrificing** the **art** in any way whatsoever. (Roy 2010: 11)

Allegedly born in 1862 in British India, Allauddin Khan (1862–1972) is remembered as a renowned multi-instrumentalist who served at the court of Maihar. In this now legendary court village, he taught, among others, Ali Akbar Khan, Annapurna Devi, and Nikhil Banerjee. Today, these musicians are remembered as three of his most prominent disciples. They were each in specific ways constitutive of Senia Maihar gharānā style. The claims made in the above excerpt from the canon-building publication *Acharya Ustad Allauddin Khan: Musician for the Soul* (2010) are exemplary of several tropes mobilized in the canonization of these three musicians. In this chapter, I examine these mechanisms, asking how they become invested with authority.

As the following chapters illustrate, contemporary disciples leverage these features in their (retrospective) canonization of their gurus. Correspondingly, my interlocutors mobilize these qualities in their musical claims of their own authority and value. The above canonizing biography, for example, asserts that Allauddin Khan had a central, transformative influence on twentieth-century Hindustani classical instrumental music. It equates him with other legendary figures, such as Bhatkhande and Tansen. These musicians-and-musicologists have become known for their crucial roles in shaping the normative aesthetic boundaries of a (discourse about) music that, in the process, became constructed as traditional, classical, and Indian (cf. Bakhle 2005; Neuman 2004; Jones 2013). The knowledge these people produced, Roy claims, is essential for any person with a serious interest in North Indian classical music. Placing Allauddin Khan alongside these legendary characters, he implies that Khan played a role of

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similar importance for Hindustani classical music. In the process, the biography legitimates its own existence: for serious professionals, it is essential to know Khan's musical contributions. Conveniently, these can be found in the biography.

The author leverages concepts borrowed from European art music to construct Khan's authoritative status as distinct from the apparent orthodoxy of hereditary musical lineages. Translating Ustad as "maestro," the use of notions of "repertoire" and "art" music, and the idea of a musicological lexicon, all presented as essential aspects of Hindustani classical music, illustrate the use of the remnants of empire as building blocks for canonization. Roy suggests that Khan broke the bonds of this orthodoxy "without sacrificing the art." This is anachronistic: Hindustani music only came to be thought of as art music some time after Khan's alleged bond breaking in 1900 (cf. Neuman 2004). However, such historical inconsistencies do not make such claims any less effective but rather glorify Khan for his innovative transformations. Namely, he was not part of a musical family but was nonetheless able to learn from several prominent musicians. These assorted musical influences from vocalists, instrumentalists, and percussionists, the biography claims, allowed him to make inventive musical changes in instruments, musical form and structure, rāga approach, compositions, and the use of embellishments. He even composed many new rāgas. Simultaneously, Roy emphasizes that despite such "modern" transformations, some essential quality of this music and its tradition remained intact.

Such tropes of canonization are not restricted to the biography. Disciples, biographers, listeners, musicologists, and (governmental) institutions mobilize complexly connoted notions in claims of Khan's importance as a musician. Concepts of tradition and modernity, heritage, art, musical knowledge, and musical transformation and authenticity are often leveraged in relation to specific historicized figures. As I argue in this chapter, these are not neutral celebrations of a person's life and music. Rather, they serve the particular (political) aims of those involved in his retrospective valorizing. The portrayal of Khan with sarod, tabla, violin, and a dilruba on a stamp in the "Modern Masters of Indian Classical Music" series issued by the Indian government in 1999, for example, reveals how he has been instrumentalized in (retrospective) constructions of India as a nation-state with a rich cultural heritage. Corresponding to the biography, the variety of instruments portrayed on this stamp perform Khan as a multi-instrumentalist, while the series' title utilizes tropes of modernity, classical,

India, and master. This indicates the entangled layers at work in the dynamics of canonization within Hindustani classical (instrumental) music.

From the 1970s onward, Khan's first- and second-generation students retrospectively historicized and traditionalized themselves as a part of, and constituting, Senia Maihar gharānā. Khan was retrospectively named its founder. Crucially, gharānā itself is a mechanism of control over musical knowledge (cf. Neuman 1990 [1980]: 168–169). The reference to Maihar suggests a direct relationship between musical practices, the court village where Khan worked and taught his disciples, and his musical genius and authority. "Senia" refers to the "Sen" in the name of Tan Sen or Tansen, the figure legendarized as a musician at the court of Mughal emperor Akbar in the sixteenth century. As there is no method of verifying a hereditary relationship with this musician, claims of direct musical descending from this musician is a common legitimizing strategy among contemporary musicians. Musical authority, here presents itself as Senia Maihar gharānā tradition. It becomes institutionalized and canonized in and on those terms. As Neuman has illustrated, questions about the "authority of gharanas as institutions determining stylistic appropriateness, and the relative authority of different gharanas as legislators of stylistic authenticity" are "wedded to the definition and salience of tradition and the role of pedigrees as the embodiment of tradition" (ibid.: 145).[46] The concept and practice of gharānā, in sum, cannot be separated from musical authority.

In the case of Khan, such constructions of gharānā authority includes a convivial narrative of physical and psychological abuse. He is portrayed as

> both **domineering** and **pliable**.… He wanted his students to be **seriously disposed** towards their **art**.… At any **delinquency** or **drawback** on the part of any of his **students**, he would become **furious** and would ensure that the **defaulter** make **reparations**. It was a kind of **baptism of fire** that he would have his students come through. Naturally many of them **could not fall in line with his arduous rules and routines**. (Roy 2010: 53)

Such poetic description of acts of violence are often legitimated as a "**sacrifice** for the **music**": "Baba was also very well **known** throughout the **musical** world for his temper.… He would **hit**

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[46] In contemporary musical practices, however, one strategy of musical legitimation is to explicitly reject belonging to a gharānā. Sitariya Niladri Kumar, the son of one of Ravi Shankar's disciples, for example, was eager to talk to me when I first contacted him about my research. However, upon explaining that I was mainly focusing on Maihar gharānā musicians, he got angry and no longer wanted to cooperate. He was not interested in this "gharānā business. I make music, so music is not about gharānā; music is about beauty, and I take that from all music, I listen to all music and get inspired by all that. So why should I have to restrict myself to gharānā? You ethnomusicologists and your gharānā and your tradition. Why are you not interested in music?" Such bursts of frustration can be understood in the light of Niladri Kumar's musical choices, which do not adhere to its normative sonic boundaries. These strategies, however, are outside aims of this dissertation to examine in detail.

him with the top of his hookah [smoking pipe] and shout" (Shankar 1968: 51, 58, 73). This disciplining, in the most literal sense of the word, is presented as a token of his devotion to music. The rigidity of musical training is portrayed as a norm:

> It is only when he is **wrapped up utterly** in his **music** that he becomes a **stern taskmaster**, for he **cannot tolerate any impurities or defects** in the **sacred art** of **music**, and he has **no sympathy or patience** with those who can. His own life has been one of **rigorously self-imposed discipline**, and he expects no less from his **students**. (ibid.: 58)

Made by one of Khan's most well-known and long-term students, such abuse-glorifying descriptions implicitly transfer the ascribed purity and perfection of music onto Shankar's music. Without having to call himself a perfectionist and his music pure, Shankar implies just this. In turn, as I illustrate below, my interlocutors now use this as a strategy within their own musical knowledge practices. Ali Akbar Khan's students, for example, use this narrative of violence to legitimate the fact that Khan seldom practiced: because he had been so traumatized in his youth by the constant pressure to practice, never to make mistakes, never considered good enough, they claim he later did not want to practice any more. They also use this narrative to explain why he was never able to explain music theory: he was disciplined into music as his first language.

The difference between the tropes—purity as leveraged by Shankar, and the lack of practicing by Ali Akbar Khan—can be attributed to the supposed diversity of Allauddin Khan's individualized teaching methods. Interlocutors explain this diversity in relation to the variety of stylistic influences on his own musical knowledge practices. The willingness of Allauddin Khan's teachers to instruct him despite the fact that he was not a hereditary musician is said to have been a primary influence on his decision to take on non-hereditary student such as Nikhil Banerjee. His own musical diversity, my interlocutors furthermore assert, is apparent in his playing styles, approach to rāga, and his alleged ability to play over a hundred musical instruments. These characteristics are often cited to explain the differences in musical styles of his students even though they learned from the same guru. That is, Khan gave musical knowledge to each of his students according to his or her own needs and personality. In the music of these disciples, in turn, "his great heritage is undying and is being carried" (Roy 2010: 120). Musical heritage, this suggests, is present in and can sound out through the embodied

knowledge of Khan's disciples. As I argue, this audible variety of embodied musical heritage is canonized as specific to Maihar gharānā tradition.

Perhaps as a logical consequence of the roles of the musicologies in these dynamics of canonization, as examined in the prior chapters, I am not aware of any studies critically detailing these mechanisms. Instead, there is a tendency to eulogize musicians in academic publications. This often serves to legitimize and glorify their musical achievements, and thus the musicological findings based on an analysis of those accomplishments (cf. Napier 2007b: 276). Studies solely use the notion of canon to uncritically refer to "canonical" Sanskrit texts. These are contrasted with embodied knowledge and musical authority: "craft-based authority is not based on scriptural or canonical sources of authority" (Neuman 2004: 28). Thus, the field has remained conveniently oblivious to a shift in musicological attitudes to canon-building as established by Kerman (1983). The debates following this publication have informed my approach to these mechanisms.

Inquiring into musicology's roles in the origin, legitimacy, and mechanisms at work in sustaining the European art music canon, Kerman critiqued the active roles musicologists played in determining its normative boundaries and content. Kerman proposed instead asking: "How are canons determined, why, and on what authority?" (Kerman 1983: 124). Following this approach, canons can be thought of as mechanisms of power that implicitly and/or explicitly contain a valorizing component (cf. Assmann 1992; Berger 2013: 47–58). At stake in the dynamics of musical canonization, then, is a specific interaction between processes of musical valorization (cf. Brown 1998; Kasten 2004; Coombe 2010) and valorization of music. As such, canons not only represent but also create hierarchy; they are constitutive of musical order. It furthermore follows that a canon is not fixed but should instead be approached as "something alive, and hence we speak of canon as a form of memory, specifically cultural memory" (Assmann 2013: 103). Cultural memory, for Assmann, "is a form of collective memory, in the sense that it is shared by a number of people and that it conveys to these people a collective, that is cultural, identity" (Assmann 2008: 110). Canons, it follows, are "an instrument of forgetting as much as of remembering" (Assmann 2013: 105), of exclusion as much as inclusion. Indeed, it is a "marking of difference … that both embodies a standard of measure and makes possible its reproduction. The [musical] canon is, in this sense, an ideal of order" (Bergeron 1992: 2) made audible.

Such rethinking of a musical canon, not as static and naturally given but as a transforming and transformative instrument of power, has been taken up by several music scholars (cf. Bohlman 1988; Bergeron and Bohlman 1992; Weber 1999; Samson 2001; Kärjä 2006; Michaelsen 2013). They have argued that we cannot speak of the musical canon per se; rather, we must inquire into the specific dynamics of canonization as particular to the music under scrutiny. This might necessitate analytical categories and understandings of processes of canonization that differ from those involved in European classical art music canon-building. Namely, it can involve a complex variety of musical (knowledge) practices, re-interpretations of musical ideas, audio(-visual) recordings, written sources, ideologies, and (cultural) institutions. It is itself a field of tension in which culturally and historically inflected notions of originality, origin, tradition, musicality, aesthetic value, heritage, and legacy carry connotations that need to be examined in and on their own terms. This means exploring which value systems, modes of knowledge, ideologies, and materialities play a role in the mechanisms of remembering and forgetting of (musicians of) Hindustani classical instrumental music.

In this chapter, I introduce musicians Ali Akbar Khan, Annapurna Devi, and Nikhil Banerjee by exploring elements involved in their canonization. In the process, I flesh out overlapping and distinct aspects in these dynamics. This allows an understanding of the individual, and at times seemingly contradictory, strategies of listening that my interlocutors employ in their valorizing of music and musical valorization, which will be further examined in the chapters following. In the spirit of Mieke Bal's method of never simply theorizing a research object but rather allowing such objects to "speak back" (2002: 45), I use my "confrontations" (ibid.) with three objects—Ali Akbar Khan's gravestone, a sign next to Annapurna Devi's doorbell, and a segment of an unfinished documentary on Nikhil Banerjee's life—as objects that "speak back" in Bal's terms. They serve as a springboard into the deep waters of canon-building within the field of Hindustani classical instrumental music.

"The Emperor of Melody": Ali Akbar Khan

It is June 19, 2014, California, USA. I am sitting next to a grave at a cemetery located between the towns of San Anselmo, Fairfax, and San Rafael (see figures 5.1 and 5.2). It is not just any grave: it belongs to a recipient of the MacArthur Genius Grant and the second highest civilian

award of India, the Padma Vibhushan. Although I have never met Ali Akbar Khan in person, nor heard him play live, I have been sitting next to his grave in the hot Californian afternoon sun for quite a while.

Fig. 5.1 Gravestone of Ali Akbar Khan.

In my head, I have been talking to him about the tension, insecurity, and confusion I have been experiencing during my research. I have told him about the emotional struggles and musical choices his disciples have been facing since his death. I have talked about their rather infectious desire to keep "his" musical heritage alive through their own playing, teaching, and safeguarding of recordings. And I have told him how these struggles have influenced me, my research questions, and approach.

Their investment of a large part of their lives in the preservation of Khan's musical heritage, combined with discourses about Hindustani classical instrumental music's forever-lost golden years, have made me doubt my own life goals. Is becoming a passively writing academic really the way I want to relate to music? Should I instead invest my time in learning to play, in keeping this beautiful music alive? During the more reflexive moments of my visit, I laughed about and felt slightly ashamed of my lack of analytical distance and apparent emotional investment in this musician. At other moments, I felt strangely comforted by the presence of this man, whom I have come to consider one of the most important sarodiyas in the history of Hindustani classical music—an authority to whom I could turn for advice. The grave did not actually "speak back" or give me the answers I sought in that moment. However, this instant does provoke a number of questions regarding canonization. How has the—at that moment felt—presence of a deceased musician become invested with so much authority that I, albeit with some anxiety, felt the desire to turn to him for counsel? And (how) can I distance myself from these dynamics of power and knowledge? Keeping these questions in mind, in this section I take this encounter as a point of departure to examine the specific dynamics involved in the ongoing canonization of sarodiya Ali Akbar Khan.
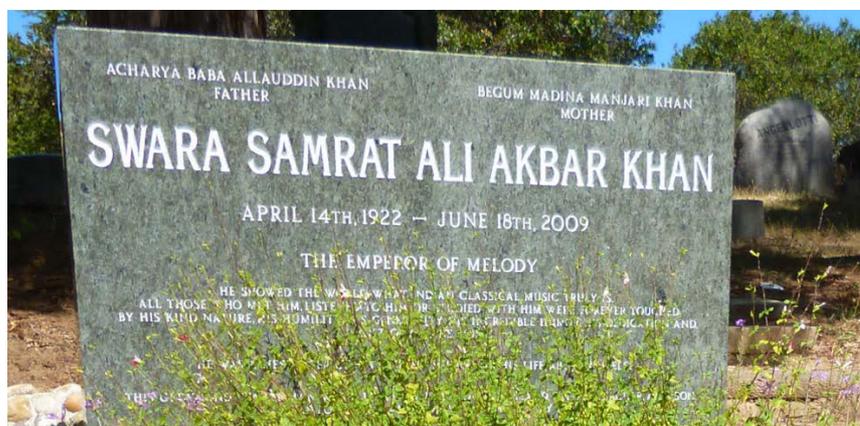
Fig. 5.2 Detail of the gravestone.

The first telling detail is the location of the grave. At the end of 5th Street, situated between San Rafael, San Anselmo, and Fairfax, California, the choice of this spot has been a matter of public dispute. Magnifying a long-standing tension between his "Indian wives and families" and his "US wife and family,"[47] this row is symptomatic of tensions related to, and debated in terms of, ideologies of (national) tradition, heritage, and Hindustani classical music that are leveraged in canon-building discourses. Immediately after Khan's death on June 18th, 2009, one of his

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[47] A number of interlocutors in India, Europe, and the USA referred to these two families in this way throughout the research.

daughters from his second marriage claimed that he had wanted to be buried in Maihar, India, next to his parents.[48] His "American wife" Mary Khan, by contrast, stated that he had wanted to be buried at the cemetery in Marine County. Chronicled in a newspaper article published days after his death, his Indian family involved political authorities, prominent musicians such as Maihar gharānā bansuri player Hariprasad Chaurasia, and "his disciples and fans" in their claim of the necessity of burying him in India: "Rajeev believes Mary is denying the rights Khan's disciples and fans have over him. 'They all wanted him in India.'"

This issue of grave location is not the only thing provoking debates on the value of Khan's musical heritage for India. The Indian government's September 2014 issuing of a set of stamps portraying, among others, Khan and Shankar incited similar unrest. While Shankar's portrait was printed on a twenty-five rupee stamp, Khan's was printed on a five-rupee stamp. This created a controversy. Several of Khan's disciples and family members on both sides of the Atlantic took this difference in monetary value to imply that the Indian government valued Shankar's musical contributions over Khan's. Again, government officials were contacted, prominent musicians were mobilized to protest, the Times of India (TOI) dedicated an article to the issue,[49] and my Facebook timeline was filled with angry discussions on the topic. According to the article in the TOI, the "postal department assigns values to commemorative stamps arbitrarily."[50] The commotion, however, both implies and constructs Hindustani classical music as representative of, and crucial for, the construction of India as a nation. Combined with the debates over the location of Khan's grave, this signals how claims of musical ownership, (national) heritage, and musical authority play complex roles in the determining of how this musician is remembered, and on whose terms.

Besides the grave's geographic location, the text engraved in the stone of Khan's final resting place reveals several canonizing aspects. First, the mentioning of his father's name performs the hereditary relationship between the founder of the Maihar gharānā and Khan. As asserted above, claiming a belonging to a gharānā is in itself a powerful tool to legitimize musical knowledge practices. A blood relationship with the conceived founder of a gharānā is a powerful trope within this context; the gravestone's emphasis on this father–son relationship invests the figure of Khan with musical authority. It furthermore ties his (recorded) musical

[48] http://www.dnaindia.com/mumbai/report-ali-akbar-has-been-denied-his-last-wish-1266961, last visited 9.10.2016
[49] http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/Stamp-dishonour-riles-music-fraternity/articleshow/44999546.cms, last visited 20.10.2016.
[50] http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/Stamp-dishonour-riles-music-fraternity/articleshow/44999546.cms, last visited 20.10.2016.

articulations to a very specific musical history: that of the gharānā and his father as chronicled in above briefly examined publications and oral histories.

Another striking element of the gravestone text is the statement that Khan is "THE EMPEROR OF MELODY." This declaration references the notion of Khan as the "Emperor of Sarod," a label used for the title of CD-recordings[51] and casually amplified by his disciples in conversations. Combined with the claim that "he showed the world what Indian classical music truly is," this choice of a colonially connoted notion of emperor to designate Khan's apparent musical superiority over all other musicians hints at the lingering legacies of colonialism within the field. We might wonder whether the designation of Khan as the emperor of melody might be interpreted as a claim of empire playing back. Answering this question is outside of the scope of this thesis. The use of the notion on the gravestone, however, indicates two aspects of central importance to understanding the musical knowledge practices of his disciples in relation to Khan's canonization.

First, it is illustrative of the complicated and controversial relationship of power between Khan and his disciples, signified in the following joke that I encountered several times during my research:

> Question: How many Ali Akbar Khan disciples does it take to change a light bulb?
> Answer: Thirty-one. One to change the light bulb, and thirty to say: "That's not how Khansaheb did it."

As this joke reveals, especially in the North Atlantic realms, Khan's disciples are known for their complete dedication and obedience to him, both musically and otherwise. They consider him the highest authority and their ears and bodies have become disciplined to normatively listen out for aesthetics that resonate as closely as possible with Khan's. In their musical knowledge practices and narratives of self, he is, often literally, portrayed as an emperor of melody, whose every musical articulation should be copied exactly. As one of his disciples suggests: "Khansaheb did that all the time, so I try to do, well, really I have always wanted to be a little Khansaheb. [laughing] I don't wanna be Christopher Ris, I wanna be a little Khansaheb. [laughing]" (Christopher Ris, 2014). Several of Khan's disciples likewise reject musical originality as relevant in their own playing. Simultaneously, however, they emphasize the same quality as crucial for their valorization of Khansaheb's playing, using this aspect to legitimate their

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[51] The Emperor of Sarod Ali Akbar Khan Live Vol. 1. SNCD 71090, The Emperor of Sarod Ali Akbar Khan Live Vol. 2, SNCD 70293.

attempts to copy exactly what he has taught: "And Khansaheb, he would just go off, and nobody could follow him there. And that is, that is just why he is such a genius.… So why try to do that myself, when I have gotten so much material from him, you know?" (anonymous).

A second aspect of Khan's canonization signaled by the notion of emperor, is his movement between (mainly) the North Atlantic realm and India from the 1950s onwards. The text on the gravestone refers to this history of musical encounters. The gravestone's collating of Hindustani classical music with "Indian classical music" inherently silences the Karnatic tradition from this "audible empire" (cf. Radano and Olaniyan 2016). In 1955, Khan was one of the first Indian musicians to perform in the United States after India's political independence, famously invited by violinist and conductor Yehudi Menuhin. This moment is recorded at the Museum of Modern Art of New York on April 18, 1955,[52] and published as an LP recording titled *Ali Akbar Khan – Music Of India, Morning And Evening Ragas* (Capitol Records – DT 2721). On the record, Yehudi Menuhin introduces Ali Akbar Khan, tabla player Chatur Lal, and tanpura player "Mr. Gaur, a pupil of Mr. Khan" to the US public, framing the performance with an explanation of the instruments and the concept of rāga. This recording is often portrayed as marking the start of Ali Akbar Khans' musical career in the USA. In the late 1960s, Khan established the Ali Akbar College of Music in the Bay Area, assisted by early disciples. According to stories told by these disciples, every student was welcome to come and study at this college: "as long as you paid your fees" (anonymous informant). Now in a different location, the college still exists and is currently managed by his widow Mary Khan.

The college became a place where one could learn, listen to, and practice not just Hindustani classical instrumental music but, most importantly, his music. This discourse of genius as illustrated through his extra-ordinary musical ability is told and re-told by his disciples, as the following interview excerpt exemplifies:

> So, people were talking, and saying it's like, what do you **know** about **Indian** music. And I was like, well, I've **heard** some, some **music**, and you know, I was like, **it's ok**. And uh, I remember somebody saying to me, yeah, **but you haven't heard music like this**. And uh, they put on one of **Khansaheb's great recordings**, you know, from that time, these connoisseur recordings, right. I think, probably the **Chandranandan** and **Gauri Manjari**, especially the Gauri Manjari.… **I never heard anything, anything like that**. I mean, such an, not just an **incredible sound** and an **incredible**, you know, **feeling** and just, **sheer power**, of what that **music** was **saying**.… He was clearly just a **completely unique musician**. I mean that was **instantly clear** to me … I

mean, he could be from Jupiter, ok, so he is from **India**, he has to be from some place, so he is from India, but it has, it's like. It did not seem to have any, anything really to do with, who he was, and what his music was, **his music was**, **so far beyond**, **any kind of,** uh. Any **categorization** like that was **completely superficial**, something that I still absolutely believe until that day … **his music stands alone**. (anonymous interlocutor)

During this disciples' first encounter with a recording of Khan's playing, he claims to have immediately recognized Khan's extra-ordinary musical abilities. Often combined with a friend or lover already studying at the college, such listening experiences resulted in people relocating to the Bay area for the "real thing." Not all of the thousands of students who at one time or another studied at the college became long-term disciples. But many of the people who studied with him for a shorter period, so his disciples claim, at least became trained as a listener, and thus Khan created a knowledgeable and appreciative audience across the planet. The phrase "he showed the world what Indian music truly is" reproduces this trope leveraged in his canonization.

In the case of Khan, canonization is directly influenced by recordings evidencing his musical genius through teaching. Throughout his approximately sixty years of teaching, his disciples recorded his lessons through written notation as well as audio(-visual) recordings. These recordings of approximately sixteen teaching hours a week for over fifty years, combined with the private and commercial recordings made of Khan's concerts, support claims that he is the most recorded musician in history. A music archive hosted at the college hosts over 8,000 hours of audio(-visual) recordings of unique musical material, accompanied by transcriptions and/or notations. Digitized, catalogued, and categorized in a database that is only accessible at the institute,[53] 7,164 compositions are available to listen to, and to learn from "the master himself." His disciples construct his legitimacy as a canonical musician through this archive: the fact that he has been extensively recorded is in itself taken as proof of his musical importance, regardless of the musical content of these recordings. However, the role of these recordings in Khan's canonization is not limited to their quantity. His disciples listen out for particular musical elements captured on those recordings as sonic proof of his musical genius. When I inquired into musical specifics, disciples often responded: "Just listen to any of his concert recordings." As I have argued elsewhere (Van Straaten 2016b), the re-issuing of such recordings with labels

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[53] On the internet page of the library, visitors can listen to a small selection (a few examples of twelve rāgas of a total of 361 rāgas available at the actual library) of classes. http://aliakbarkhanlibrary.com/library_site/class-examples-morning-and-afternoon/ last visited 27.10.2016.

such as "Signature Series" performs the idea that they contain musical elements specific to Khan's musical signature or style.

One of these elements is the aforementioned unpredictability of his playing, as evidenced through recordings of his teaching and performing. Such leaps might be listened out for as mistakes when played by other musicians: going out of, or switching between rāgas, not landing on sam, not coming back to the mukhra after a complex tihai, or announcing one rāga and then playing something his listeners categorize as a completely different rāga. His disciples, however, kept referring to these as characteristics that I had to listen out for if I wanted to understand his musical genius. Exactly because he managed to touch people with his music despite such playing with and crossing of musical boundaries, so they argued, he was such an extra-ordinary musician: musical rules did not apply to him. Khan was beyond all of that, he did not have to cohere to normative musical structure but rather "disappeared in the music" (anonymous disciple). This discursive mobilization of musical unpredictability as proof of his musicianship includes his lack of didactic concepts. His teaching technically difficult phrases, compositions, tāns, or vistars in an introductory instrumental class, for example, is said to show his untamable, and hence implicitly natural, musicality.

Such strategies are neither new nor specific to the Hindustani classical instrumental context. While the leveraging of the notion of musical genius to valorize musical practices is a relatively recent within this context (cf. Neuman 2004), Kivy (2001) has examined several concepts of musical genius leveraged within European art music. The "notion of the natural genius" plays with the idea that "even with the application of rule and precept, works of genius must perforce be contrary to rule and precept, hence 'imperfect,' but in a praiseworthy way" (2001: 20). Inscribing Khan as a relevant member of the Hindustani musical canon, his disciples build on this notion of musical genius, as the following interview excerpt illustrates:

> If a piece does not have these kinds of contrast and motion, then it becomes **boring**. And also, if the melody doesn't go anywhere, it's very much like … I mean, **Khansahab would**, in such a **perfect way**, **spend** just the **perfect amount** of **time focused around** each **note** in the **melody**. You know, if it were a slow part, spend some time on Ga, then move to Pa, then back to Ga, up to Pa, maybe go up to Ni, and then wind the line down. And **everything always felt** so much like, this was just the **right amount** of time here and here and here and here. Sometimes you hear **other people**, and for me … they s**pend too much time on a particular note**. Or, conversely, they never really sink in, **they never really hang out on one note**. It's just all kind of flighty, you know, like [sound example 5.1]. That's like … not, not really spending time

anywhere…. I mean, if you do the same idea [sound example 5.2]. So, by spending a little more time, you can, add a little better **effect**. So, there's a, you know, there is a **balance**.

My interlocutor here legitimates a particular melodic approach through a direct reference to the "perfect" melodic-temporal balance in the vilambit vistars of a rāga as played by Khan: his emphasis on particular tonal places by "lingering" on them. The approach to and showing of Ga in example 5.1 takes place within the first 1.9 seconds: we can listen out for a very soft krinton ending with a strong stroke on Ga, a quick GaRe krinton followed by a stroke on the Ma fret, and back to Ga with a stroke. This is followed by another stroke on Ga. This simple way of playing, according to my interlocutor, is boring, flat, "not really hanging out on one note." He presents it as exemplary of how he played prior to studying with Khan. The counterexample starts with a run from lower Dha, Ni, Sa, to a much stronger attack on a therefore much louder Ga, followed by three more attacks with slightly less dynamic energy on a straight Ga, followed by a very quick stroke on Re, a krinton towards Ma, and back with a krinton to Ga. He then repeats the Dha Ni Sa, but instead of going to the middle saptak Ga, he plays a GaMa–Ga mīnd on the jor string. This mīnd is taken quickly from Ga, lingers slightly on Ma and then quickly moves back to Ga. He strokes the lower Ga twice more before seemingly sliding from this lower Ga to the Madhya Ga. He attacks Ga twice before he develops the next aspect of the melodic idea.

While a similar melodic idea is developed in the first 1.8 seconds in example 5.1, the counterexample takes 8.9 seconds to present the same basic melodic idea. To emphasize and show different "dimensions" of the "note" Ga, my interlocutor played with dynamics, repetition, jumped octaves, utilized playing techniques such as krinton and mīnd. Giving Ga weight, he created the "perfect" balance, as "Khansaheb would have done it." The notion that Khan is a natural musical genius can be exploited to specific ends by a range of actors invested in his canonization: his disciples to construct their own musical authority, the Indian nation-state to construct a national—classical—culture, and academics to legitimate their work on his music.

George Ruckert, for example, has been an important player in the establishing and managing of the Ali Akbar College of Music in the United States. His dissertation titled *The Music of Ali Akbar Khan: An Analysis of his Musical Style through an Examination of his Composition in Three Rāgas* (1994) frames Khan and his music in similar glorifying terms. Ruckert legitimizes his choice to write about of his composition in three rāgas instead of a more general "the"

music of Ali Akbar Khan, for example, by suggesting this "would be as absurd as writing a dissertation entitled 'The Music of Beethoven' or 'Shakespeare'" (1994: 3). While the author does not explain why it would be absurd to write a dissertation about "the music of Beethoven" or about "Shakespeare", I take that he is referring to the quantity and variety of data that would have to be examined in both cases, which would lead to a lack of depth in the inquiry. Crucially, implicit in this comparison is the claim that Khan is of similar stature to these canonical figures. The perceived authority of academic publications, in turn, is one of the elements performing Khan's place within a Hindustani classical musical canon. The dissertation's abstract, for example, leverages several of the elements flagged out in the above, and therefore I quote it as some length:

The music of Ali Akbar Khan ("Khansahib") represents a **high-water** mark in the Hindustani classical tradition in the twentieth century. Born in 1922 in rural **Maihar** to **Allauddin Khan**, himself a **virtuoso** of Hindustani classical music, Khansahib has built on the **stylistic amalgamations** of his father to base his musical ideas on the **broadest reaches** of the **tradition**, and at the same time created a personal style which is deeply **expressive**, **powerfully rhythmic**, **tonally innovative** and **compositionally complex**. **Compositions** in three **rāgs** have been analyzed herein as representative of his large creative output. Each uses the same basic tonal material, but represents different stylistic aspects of the tradition. Rāg Darbārī Kānrā is a **traditional** and highly respected rāg in the **repertory** of most **mature** Hindustani classical musicians---a rāg with many **versions** and a vast **literature**. It has not changed remarkably through the years of Khansahibs conception. Rāg Chandranandan is a more **recent compilation** by Khansahib **based** on **four other rāgs**. Composed forty years ago, this rāg has evolved to become a show piece in Khansahib's repertory. Rāg Kirwānī, **ancient** in **pattern** and **conception**, is more **recent**, and shows a **range** of **styles**, from khayal to thumri.

Beginning with a preview of the **instrumental heritage**, the dissertation includes an overview of the music of his father and a discussion **Khansahib's place and contribution to the vast tradition of which he is a recognized and respected bearer**. (Ruckert 1994: abstract 1)

From the first phrase onwards, this abstract illustrates that the repercussions of the "postmodern strategies of understanding" (Kramer 1992: 5) that were shaking the foundations of the humanities at the time of its writing had not reached Hindustani classical music studies. It claims that Ali Akbar Khan should be considered a figure of central importance in Hindustani classical music. The formalist mode of analysis that new musicology critiqued is used to argue for the presence of musical expression, tonal innovation, and compositional complexity within Khan's music. Notions of "composition," "repertory," musical "piece," "tonal material,"

"pattern," and the idea of various existing "versions" of a rāga are combined with concepts of "tradition," "ancient," and "heritage." As Ruckert unapologetically points out, this illustrates that "We in the West love to relate the music of India to our own conceptual frameworks, to lay it down for measurement beside that of our own tradition, and to talk about it in terms of our own understanding. I raise my hand and admit guilt to this account as well" (Ruckert 1994: 9). This self-diagnosis of a highly problematic approach, however, is not followed by a possible solution to this challenge. An awareness of one's problems, it seemingly implies, erases the need for a solution. Structures of dominance, thereby, remain intact. Namely, Ruckert sees it as his task to prove Khan's musical genius, and the aesthetic yardstick on which he bases his claims that Khan's music represents "a high-water mark" are borrowed from European art music. We can listen out for "what Indian music truly is," but only on our terms.

Sitting at the gravesite, I wondered about this "truly." Is it an implicit slap at other musicians? Perhaps at his gurubhai Shankar, who is often criticized for not having remained true to this music's purity? Or is this a claim of Khan's musical authenticity? A reproduction of the notion that his musical approach and style, and hence his musical legacy, is the purest and hence most valuable form of Hindustani classical music that will ever enter our ears? Perhaps the suggestion is directed at his disciples, to imply that they have been shown the true version of Hindustani classical music? In each of these cases, the text engraved in the stone does something. It is one of many elements performing Khan's importance as a musician. As I illustrate in the following chapters, these aspects have become building blocks that his disciples use to (de)valorize their own and others' musical knowledge practices.

"The greatest surbahar player you never heard": Annapurna Devi

October 2014, I am standing in front of a door on the sixth floor of a building named Akash Ganga, in the Breach Candy area of Mumbai, India. About to finally enter the apartment I have heard so many stories about, I am nervous. My interlocutors have told me stories about her, emphasizing her importance for my research as well as her well-known refusal to speak to people she does not know intimately:

> "Eva, you must at least **try** to **meet** her. I mean, if you are doing research about Maihar gharānā, she is the **only one** still **alive** of that **generation**."

> "Well, I went to that **house** at least three times, I even had an appointment. So, once I even came all the way from Delhi. But **I rang the bell**, and **nobody answered**. All three times it went like that."

Searching for the doorbell, my eyes fall on a sign that reads:

> Please ring the bell only thrice.
> If no one opens the door please leave your name and address.
> Thank you very much. Inconvenience is regretted.

I have heard about this sign, but seeing it, being able to touch it, and potentially ringing the bell below it, invest these anecdotes with a sense of authenticity. I am really here. This is where it all happened. This is where she has been, for the last sixty years. Taking a deep breath, I ring the doorbell to Annapurna Devi's apartment, knowing very well "the greatest surbahar player you never heard" [54] will not open the door for me.

Why was I so nervous about ringing a doorbell? Why is this little sign above the doorbell so famous that I heard so many stories about it before coming to India? And if I knew she would not come to open the door or meet me, why was I ringing that bell to begin with?

Born Roshanara Khan in 1926 in Maihar, colonized British India, Annapurna Devi is the daughter of Allauddin Khan. She was married off to Ravi Shankar when she was thirteen, they separated in the late 1950s, and thereafter she never appeared in public. She has led a reclusive life of teaching a selected few at Akash Ganga, not allowing visitors to meet her or listen to her music. Four secretly taped, undated, low quality audio-recordings of parts of her performances have surfaced on YouTube in recent years. Despite this low sound quality, listeners' comments emphasize, perform perhaps, her legendary status as a musician:

> "Hearing the Legend is a DREAM come true .Only if i could hear her Live !!!"

> "No Words to describe the beauty of the Surbahar Mastero [sic]. She is indeed Ma Saraswati."[55]

Furthermore, an allegedly authorized biography titled *An Unheard Melody: Annapurna Devi, An Authorized Biography* (Bondyopadhyay 2005) is a source of information as well as conflict.

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[54] http://www.mansworldindia.com/fresh/annapurna-devi-sitar-music-pandit-ravi-shaker-wife-lost-music/, last visited 17.10.2016.
[55] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMwszmsoTPA&spfreload=5, last visited 23.06.2017.

Namely, Devi's disciples claim its author has never met her and certainly has never received permission for its publication. As the title indicates, the biography capitalizes on, and amplifies, the aura of mystery surrounding her person. The captioning of a picture "Annapurna Devi, an enigma" (unnumbered page between 46 and 47) is exemplary of such a framing—one that resonates with (the stories about) the sign on the door.

Despite her almost complete absence from the public eye and ear, she received multiple musical honorary titles and prizes throughout her life. She was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1977, the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1991, the Deshikottam in 1999, and she has been designated a Ratna by the Sangeet Natak Akademi in 2004. The simple fact that a biography has been published further performs her importance as a musician. Contemporary musicians and listeners actively debate and play something they designate "her music," and she is commonly referred to as a "living legend." Combined, this indicates that she did enter the collective "cultural memory" (Assman 2008; 2013) as a renowned musician whose musical practices are considered a valuable part of Hindustani classical music. In contrast with the abovementioned overload of evidence about her brother's individual style, musical genius, and hence rightful place in the canon of Hindustani classical music, Annapurna Devi and her music are inscribed into this canon despite the almost complete absence of such conventional material evidence.

Instead, Devi's canonizing builds on narratives such as the one about the door-bell sign, which signify her (musical) exclusivity. Anecdotes are orally transmitted by her disciples and reproduced and fixed in interviews, biographies, and on websites. The well-rehearsed story about her father's initial refusal to teach her is exemplary of several discursive tropes that portray her musical talent as innate. As the anecdote usually begins, Muslim girls were not supposed to learn music in early twentieth-century British India. Although she was therefore not allowed to learn music, Roshanara Khan

> used to sit and listen to her **father** and **brother** [Ali Akbar Khan] very carefully. One day when Baba [Allauddin Khan] was out in the marketplace, she began to **sing** like her father and **amended a piece** which **Ali Akbar had not picked up correctly**. Baba had forgotten to take his purse and came home to fetch it…. The **great master stood**, **speechless** and **deeply moved**…. Annapurna almost became **petrified** with fright at the sight of her father, who asked her to come with him to his apartment…. She could not help giving way to wailing in apprehension of being **beaten** black and blue by her father. But, to her great surprise and relief, nothing untoward occurred. The **Ustad made her sit** and wanted her to **sing** a second time what she had sung a little earlier. With a lot of hesitation and panic, **she sang through her tears**, weeping all the

while. Her performance **pleased Ustad Allauddin** so much that he patted her back in appreciation and **directed her to learn from him regularly** from then on…. She studied the sitar and after some time took to surbahar, for which she was the most known, and **often thought to be peerless on that instrument**. (Roy 2010: 125)

With the publication of this story in her father's biography, the author fixes this orally transmitted anecdote in written form, thereby investing the narrative with authority. The story makes use of several discursive tropes to perform Devi's musical genius. First, the author portrays listening as a valid musical knowledge practice. Devi's ability to, without formal training, pick up music that was taught to somebody else capitalizes on notions of natural musical talent, her listening skills presented as extra-ordinary. Her ability to effortlessly pick up a "musical piece" that her brother, Ali Akbar Khan, could not is another strategic element, implying that she must be an even greater musician than the "emperor of melody." The claim that her untrained singing made the great Allauddin Khan speechless has a similar effect. These tropes are not restricted to this anecdote but exemplify the ideologies and (musical) notions that her disciples leverage in their canonizing strategies.

These strategies are combined with ideologies of rigorousness and strictness regarding riyāz and tālim, up to the point of normalizing emotional and physical violence and abuse. Such violence is often presented as illustrative of dedication to the music on the side of both the guru and the shishya. Allauddin Khan, for example, allegedly hit his disciples and showed no mercy when they were tired or ill. He is said to have bound their hair to the ceiling, so that if they fell asleep during practice, the pain from their hair being pulled would wake them up. This physically disciplined them back into riyāz. My interlocutors legitimated such forms of disciplining his son and daughter by arguing it was done with good intentions: "he wanted his children's first language to be music, so naturally he had to be strict with them" (anonymous). In turn, this relationship of violence between Allauddin Khan and his disciples is leveraged to negate the physical and emotional abuse Annapurna Devi's students endured. That one was not allowed to move for five hours, resulting in excruciating leg cramps during tālim, is presented as a natural consequence of her upbringing and devotion to the music. And furthermore, these abuses were nothing compared to what Annapurna Devi, Ali Akbar Khan, and Nikhil Banerjee had to endure to obtain their musical knowledge. Similarly, her abusive screaming is presented as care: if she shouted at you, she cared about your musical learning. In the anecdote about how she started to train, however, Devi's disobedience did not result in

violence. Instead, her father took her to the music room and started to teach her. This active rejection of violence reinforces and reproduces a related narrative: he could have punished her, but instead he started to train her to enable her already present musical abilities to blossom. Music is again presented as the higher goal, but in this case it prevented rather than provoked violence. Similarly capitalizing on this ideology, Devi's disciples often contrast stories of abuse with anecdotes about her sweet and caring personality outside of the teaching context. She would feed everybody and give advice about their personal lives. Finally, her disciples, finally, leverage their endurance of abuse at the hands of Devi as evidence of their own dedication to the music.

This is a brief example of the instances and forms in which aspects of Devi's teacher–disciple relationship with her father is mobilized to make implicit claims about her place in an emerging canon of Hindustani classical musicians. Within her house, material features such as pictures and a bust sculpture of Allauddin Khan actively perform this hereditary relationship. Furthermore, because Allauddin Khan's bust is included in the puja for the various deities present in the house, such as Saraswati and Maa Sharda Devi, this hereditary relationship is reinforced daily. The relationship is also mentioned in various newspaper articles, her students' concert announcements, and websites. Anecdotal accounts (re)told by her disciples, similarly build on other canonized musician's authority to evidence hers:

> You know, Eva, as Baba Allauddin Khan used to tell everybody who wanted to hear it, "Annapurna Devi has gotten [understood] **ninety percent** of his musical teaching, Ali Akbar Khan **eighty**, and Ravi Shankar [only] **sixty** percent." That should tell you enough.[56]

> Pt. Ali Akbar Khan, Pt. Rabi Shankar and Pt. Nikhil Banerjee: all three put together is no match for Annapurnaji's talent.[57]

Her relationship with her ex-husband Ravi Shankar is especially well-represented in the gossip arena. One example is the story that Devi retired from the concert stage because Ravi Shankar got jealous of her receiving more applause during their shared concerts. Trying to save her marriage, so these narratives go, she stopped performing altogether. Almost seventy years

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[56] The percentages vary between anecdotes, but Annapurna Devi is invariably attributed the highest percentage, followed by Ali Akbar Khan, who is followed— with a considerable percentile gap— by Ravi Shankar.
[57] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tdm6eyqUEdc, accessed 23.06.2017.

after this alleged conflict took place, such stories still frame the single recording of them performing together that is available on YouTube, as the following comment illustrates:

> It is **bad taste** to tall about **perspnal** appearance while talking abouy Annapurna Devi.She **was** a **great artist** and we do not know what happened leading to the separation between **her** and **RAVISHANKAR** These are **personal matters** and we should respect them as personal [58]

The implications of such accounts are similar to the ones elaborated above: if Devi received more applause than a world-famous musician such as Shankar, certainly there can be no doubt about her musical brilliance.

Another aspect of Devi's canonization is (the lack of) audio-recordings substantiating her legendary musical talent and skills. To my knowledge, there are just four secretly taped and undated recordings of her performing circulating on the Internet, in different versions of varying sound quality and length. Often, such recordings are labeled and discussed as "rare." They are accompanied by one or more of the few widely circulating digitized pictures depicting a young Devi with her instrument, the surbahar. In the context of an archive fever over recordings (cf. Neuman 2004; Van Straaten 2016), framing these recordings as rare affords a sense of value to the sounds captured. The uploading of a "rare" recording on the internet makes it accessible, audible, and reproducible to anybody with internet access—thereby paradoxically reducing one form of its "rarity." So far, this seems to have had little influence on their role in dynamics of canonization. Instead, the notion of rarity is related to the promise of a chance of listening to something special—an exclusive chance to hear this musical enigma. In turn, this rarity enables the people posting these recordings to gain a name as music connoisseur, collector, or even musician. Devi's Kolkata-based cousin and sarod musician, Shiraz Ali Khan, for example, who is currently attempting to establish himself as a musician, uses such "rare" recordings to publicly demonstrate his musical knowledge. Responding to a 22:54 minute recording uploaded under the label "Annapurna Devi (1) Raga Kaunsi Kanada,"[59] he corrects the uploader: "CORRECTION... Raga: Kaushiki." By showing that he is able categorize this great musician's musical articulation, he is strategically implying his blood and gharānā relationship with Devi. Listening out in certain ways, this illustrates, is a tool to assert power.

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[58] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tdm6eyqUEdc, mistakes original, last visited 23.06.2017.
[59] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyb9LAY7BCA, last visited 15.09.2016

The element of her reclusion, as symbolized by her door-sign, resonates with discussions on the few recordings available on YouTube. A ten-minute alāp labeled "Smt Annapurna Devi-Surbahar-Raga-Kaushiki"[60] is accompanied by a picture of Devi playing surbahar, surrounded by attentively listening men. User Mridul Das comments that "She is **greatest** of the **greats**, she is heavenly, she is as if incarnation of **Maa Saraswati**. How much she **sacrificed**...." Such a portrayal of Devi as an incarnation of the goddess of music and knowledge is immediately linked to her "sacrifice," referring to abovementioned gossips. This in turn evidences the rarity of the recording because this sacrifice has led to the absence of her audible presence in the Hindustani classical music world. Finally, it feeds into narratives of her goddess-like character, perhaps not coincidentally similar to tropes of Hindu goddesses sacrificing their own happiness to perform their duty: despite her musical greatness, she sacrificed it for the greater good of saving her marriage.

Another element in her canonization the alleged direct, uncontrollable physical effect that her music has on listeners. Anecdotes about smelling fragrances during her practice sessions, or crying when hearing her teach, attribute an almost superhuman quality to her music. Such tropes also circulate in response to the few recordings of her playing, for example in a comment on the aforementioned alāp recording: "wow im [sic] actually crying." Despite the occasional almost complete absence of sound (0:23–0:26), sporadic distortions of the surbahar's melodic phrases by low-frequency sounds (0:27–0:31, 5:39–5:49), a limited audibility of the response of the tāraf strings, the sudden, relatively loud, high-frequency overtones (3:23–3:25), and the change in balance between audibility of the melodic phrase and the chikari strings, such comments perform her musical genius by referring to such physical and/or emotional responses. In the following comment made by user Imnop 1990, such claims are taken one step further: "Unbelievable!! Listen to how the **surbahar** growls... **Even messes up the mic for a second.** Thank you for posting! **Beauty** such as this rightfully deserves to be **shared** with the **world**."[61]Perhaps, such claims are all the more effective exactly because of this glitch in the recording quality. Namely, her music is so powerful that it even has a physical effect on recording technology. And if, even at this poor sound quality, it already makes a listener cry, how good must the live experience have been? Again, her almost complete in-audibility becomes evidence of the rightfulness of her place within a musical canon.

[60] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TARyHE-i1W8, last visited 15.09.2016.
[61] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tdm6eyqUEdc, last visited 23.06.2017.

Annapurna Devi's direct disciples, however, in some cases question the authenticity and musical (knowledge) value of the sounds captured on those recordings. Authenticity, in such debates, does not refer to the question of whether it is actually her playing on the recording. Rather, as for example bansuri player, disciple, and her current caretaker, Nityanand Haldipur, asserts about a 19:40-minute Manj Khamaj recording circulating on the Internet,[62] Devi has told him that she knew she was being recorded. Therefore, she played differently from how she had actually learned this rāga from her father, who is known to be its composer. Haldipur's claim does several things: It emphasizes that Devi has received her rāga knowledge directly from its perceived source, thereby authenticating her version of that rāga. It furthermore mystifies the figure and music of Annapurna Devi. That is, even though we can hear her music on several recordings, Haldipur leverages his personal relationship with her in his claim that the musical knowledge captured on these recordings is not genuine. Simultaneously, such statements increase the value of the embodied musical knowledge that Haldipur has gained through his thirty years of musical training with Devi.

In the context of her absence from the stage, such embodied musical knowledge is a significant asset for her disciples. Often in combination with the aforementioned references to gharānā relationships and Devi's various honorary titles, disciples claim embodied knowledge in relation to characteristics they attribute to "her music":

> It was after 1986, when Padma **Bhushan** Smt. **Annapurna Devi**—**doyen** of the **Senia-Maihar gharana**—and **daughter** of the **legendary Ustad Allauddin Khansaheb** (Baba), the fountainhead of the **gharana**, accepted him as one of her **disciples**, that Nityanand's talent and musicianship truly flowered. It progressively acquired **depth**....[63]

This excerpt from Haldipur's online biography claims that Devi transmitted unspecific musical elements, such as "musical depth," to her disciples. Exactly because the question of how musical depth might sound is open to various interpretations, such notions lend themselves particularly well to strategies of canonization. As I illustrate in the following chapters, Haldipur claims this depth is audible in his music both as a characteristic of his style and as a signifier of his guru–shishya relationship with Devi. This depth is listened out for in terms of rāga purity, a slow, step by step exploration of tonal space, a clarity of macro- and micro-melodic structure,

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[62] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7-yc8DOxXY last visited 16.09.2016.
[63] http://www.nityanandhaldipur.com/site3/index.php?module=cv last visited 16.09.2016.

dhrupad alāp, a strict adherence to musical structure on various levels within performances, and a micro-melodic form of virtuosity. Claims about her extra-ordinary musical depth, and her ability to instill this depth in her students, mutually authorize her place in the canon of Hindustani classical music based on the music played by her students, and the legitimacy of her students based on their relationship to her.

These claims are backed up by specific ideologies. The notions of musical legacy or heritage, Indianness, and ideologies of purity, tradition, and authenticity, are attached both to her name and to musical elements through the musical knowledge practices of her disciples. In the following sound example, disciple Daniel Bradley is teaching a particular phrase in rāga Behag to a group of his students at the Ali Akbar College of Music in Basel, Switzerland. [sound example 5.3] During this moment of teaching, Bradley relates notions of musical purity and tradition to a macro- and micro-melodic structure of rāga Behag that he asserts Devi has taught him. He uses this to back up his claim that the phrase he is teaching is the (only) right way of approaching this rāga. This emphasis on his relationship with Devi simultaneously builds his musical authority and valorizes the musical articulations he is teaching. It furthermore invests the figure of Devi with ideologies of purity, authenticity, and tradition, performing her musical authority.

Finally, social media also play a role in canonizing Devi. Most Hindustani classical (instrumental) musicians actively use social media such as Facebook. They announce and post pictures and audiovisual snippets of (foreign) concert tours or (usually overseas) teaching sessions. For example, Devi's already-mentioned cousin, Shiraz Ali Khan, posted a photo on Facebook[64] of himself posing with several musicians. Musical instruments frame them. The picture's caption claims that it was taken at Annapurna Devi's famously difficult-to-access house, Akash Ganga. Devi, who has at least four Facebook pages although she does not use the Internet, is neatly tagged for all Shiraz Ali Khan's followers to witness. By illustrating his access to the house, Khan is performing his musical heritage. At the same time, such posts assert Devi's relevance within the Hindustani classical music context; the fact that the musicians in the picture visit and take care of her adds to her musical value. Similar to biographies, anecdotes, and YouTube recordings and comments, such posts canonize the "enigma of a recluse"[65]: she who does not allow the door-bell to ring more than thrice.

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[64] https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1297286250298630&set=rpd.842444094&type=3&theater, last visited 23.02.2018.
[65] https://www.facebook.com/atul.merchant.77/posts/10154067785289939, last visited 20.10.2016.

So why was I so nervous to ring that door-bell? Because her caretaker and (some consider, most senior) disciple, Haldipur, was going to answer it. And even though I had never met him before and had never heard him play, the fact that he was taking care of Devi had already made him a legend in my head. I did not want to screw this up because I expected that my access to him would give me opportunity to gain rare (musical) knowledge. Once again, I was completely caught up in the dynamics I examined.

"Ninety percent perspiration, and ten percent inspiration": Nikhil Banerjee

The "Nikhil Banerjee" group on Facebook is buzzing: today, October 16, 2016, would have been his eighty-fifth birthday. In its honor, Steven Baigel has uploaded a segment of his unfinished documentary, *That Which Colors the Mind* (referring to the definition of raga found throughout orientalist writings on the topic, as illustrated in chapters two and three), dedicated to "the life and music of the incomparable Indian classical music sitarist Nikhil Banerjee"[66] to the online platform Vimeo. The unfinished status of this documentary is, according to Baigel, mainly due to a lack of funding that is necessary to obtain all the legal rights of the audiovisual footage used in the documentary.[67] Excited about the new upload, I decide to watch all the segments again before checking out this new one. Watching the introduction, listening to Banerjee play while actually being able to see him, fills me with sadness. What a pity I have never heard him play live. What a pity that he never taught anybody. Because clearly, this musician is one of the greatest. Boy, would I have loved to have learned from him. Even though he died five months after I was born, relatively few audio-recordings of his music exist, and their quality is relatively low, I still highly value his music. This raises the question of canonization: based on which elements has this musician come to be valorized as part of a canon of Hindustani classical music? In this section, I use the introductory segment as a stepping stone to examine what insights into elements of Banerjee's canonization it can give.

The documentary starts with a little over a minute of audiovisual material of Banerjee playing alāp phrases in rāga Desh and presents the audience with the part of the performance that, from a structural listening perspective, would be expected at its beginning. However, the

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[66] https://vimeo.com/118071763, last visited 03.11.2016.
[67] As Baigel states in the video description: "The film has been stalled for a number of years largely due to lack of funding, especially for archival rights as well as other issues. Many people have inquired over the years so I thought to start releasing short segments from the film that can be viewed on Vimeo." https://vimeo.com/118071763, last visited 17.11.2016

melodic-rhythmic material presented in the first thirteen seconds (00:04–00:17) indicate that it is not the beginning of the performance. From shudh Ni, Banerjee moves up to shudh Ma, back down via kumal Ni until shudh Ma, and back to Sa via shudh Ni. The specificity of these curves, combined with his play with dynamics, use of playing techniques (krinton), and stroking of chikari, create a tonal tension that is resolved when he lands, with relatively little dynamic energy, on Sa. Banerjee then attacks the main tar twice, giving it more dynamic energy. Thereafter he briefly refrains from playing the main tar, but continues to strum the chikari, jor, and khāraj tar. Thereby, he sonically signals that he has arrived at the end of a phrase cluster and has finished his elaboration of the specific melodic idea. Audiences trained to listen out for and recognize the tonal places that Banerjee moved through either in terms of notes or the specific tonal tension these elements create might categorize this combination of phrases as rāga Desh. Those familiar with the musical-structural norms of Hindustani classical instrumental music in general, and Banerjee's alāp style in particular, might also recognize that the documentary starts right in the middle of an elaboration of a melodic idea. The part of this idea that is presented, however, is undeniably Desh. From this segment alone, there is no way of knowing whether the original recording contains the full performance and has been cut by the documentary maker, or whether the recording simply started later than the performance, as is often the case with such archival material. However, the choice to start the documentary with a phrase that audiences listening out in and on these terms can easily categorize as rāga does several things. First, it performs this structural element as important for valorizations of Hindustani classical instrumental music. It furthermore immediately affords the self-appointed musical connoisseur the satisfaction of recognizing, categorizing, and controlling the sounds they encounter. Simultaneously, starting the documentary with such a clearly categorizable phrase sonically performs Banerjee as a musician who strictly adhered to the melodic structural boundaries of rāga. This is also one of the tropes often leveraged in canonizing discourses about his musical genius.

After a little over a minute of alāp, the volume of the musical material is lowered significantly in favor of a dynamically dominant voice-over. The prominence of other voices over Banerjee's music continues throughout the introductory segment. Alternating between audiovisual footage of interviews with people who claim relationships with Banerjee, the audio of Banerjee's Desh is reduced to a sonically submissive background against which others can elaborate on his musical greatness. His actual music is silenced in the very process of

discursively glorifying it. This hints that the stakes in the retrospective canonization of musicians like Banerjee are higher for those doing the remembering than for those remembered. The canonizing voice-over tells the audience that

> in January 1986, the **world** lost one of its **preeminent** musicians, when at the age of fifty-four, **Indian** classical sitarist, Pandit Nikhil Banerjee, died of a sudden heart attack. Though Nikhil Banerjee had often **traveled**, **taught** and **performed** in the **West**, he was largely unknown and unappreciated outside the rarified environment of North Indian Hindustani classical music. A **shy** and **humble** person, he never sought the limelight, and in fact he shunned it in his **quiet** and **dignified** pursuit of **spiritual transcendence through music**. (01:05–01:37)[68]

This segment mobilizes several tropes that I consider crucial elements in the dynamics of Banerjee's canonization. First, he is commonly described as shy and humble, while music is presented as a spiritual journey. Furthermore, his early death combined with long periods of illness throughout the 1970s is often said to be the reason he did not teach. However, the voice-over's claim that he often taught in the West indicates that his teaching is a controversial topic. This tension is heightened by the fact that, despite several claims that he never taught anybody, many contemporary musicians play in his style and claim to "study" Banerjee. His early death is also used to explain the relatively small amount of audiovisual material available. This "rare" musical material, in turn, is listened out for and portrayed as evidence of his musical genius and as musical knowledge that can be studied to learn to play his style. The use of "The West" combined with "even though," finally, signals a central paradox within contemporary Hindustani classical instrumental music, which is here mobilized to construct Banerjee's importance as a musician. The fact that he was musically active in "the West," the voice-over implies, should be enough proof of his importance as a musician. Framed by discourses of inclusion, however, this reproduces the "West" as deciding on the parameters of canonization. I examine each of these elements in some detail below.

The aspects the voice-over ascribes to his character, first, resonate with and amplify the suggestions about his character implied by Banerjee's much-quoted statement[69] that music is "ninety percent perspiration and ten percent inspiration." Allegedly, Banerjee was softly spoken, hard-working, and generally introverted. Some less romanticizing narratives suggest

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[68] https://vimeo.com/118071763 last visited 03.11.2016.
[69] The quote "genius is one percent inspiration, ninety-nine percent perspiration" is famously attributed to Thomas Edison (1847–1931), inventor of among other things the phonograph. I do not know whether Nikhil Banerjee was aware of or might have referred to this quote, but I have not heard the people who quote Nikhil Banerjee link this to Edison.

that he would have probably been diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder if he had lived today. These characteristics are related to his strict approach to rāga and extreme practice regime, often in explicit contrast with gurubhai Shankar's sacrificing of purity and tradition. These aspects of Banerjee's character are in turn mobilized to explain his extra-ordinary musical abilities and linked to specific musical characteristics said to define him as a musician. In Roy's biography of Allauddin Khan, for example, the section on "Baba's Disciples" (2010: 120–133) includes a short piece on Nikhil Banerjee. It ends with the following description:

> As a **virtuoso** of commendable **skills**, performances on the sitar in **Europe** and **America** received the highest accolades from the circles of **scholars** and **music lovers** alike. An absolute **master** of the **instrument**, he **passed away** at the **early age** of 55 in the year 1986. His **dedication** to **riyaz** on the instrument was unparalleled, and was demonstrated in performance after performance of **high art** and **flawless** presentation. (Roy 2010: 132, my bold)

This illustrates how concepts borrowed from European art music, such as virtuosity, high art, and mastery, are directly linked to Banerjee's dedication to practice. In contrast with the canonizing of Devi and Khan as natural musical talents, Banerjee's command over the instrument, as sonically evidenced in the flawless presentation of rāga, is attributed to this perseverance and hard work. This commitment is further amplified through anecdotes about the rigorousness of his riyāz, such as the following:

> Once, **Nikhilda** had played a **concert** for three hours. So afterwards he went back to the hotel where he stayed, but he had forgotten something. So, I went back to the hotel to bring it to him, and as I was about to knock on his door, when I **listened**. It was three in the morning, he had **just finished a concert**, and **there he was**, **practicing**. (Anonymous interlocutor)

This, so his followers suggest, led to a precision in his music that is unprecedented until this day.

The musical parameters defining these qualities, however, often remain ambiguous. In the introductory segment of the documentary, for example, Partha Chatterjee suggests that Banerjee's music is "brilliant …, [the] right kind of expression that would give the music its best dimension. The right kind of balance and proportion, that is the hallmark of any great work of art, was the first point under consideration for him." However, the details of such a "right" kind of expression producing the "best" dimension remains unarticulated. As the spoken glorifying

narratives sonically dominate Banerjee's playing, the audience cannot listen out for its details. Similar vague descriptions tell us that Banerjee had "a conception of music that was universal, and yet was being realized in a very particular idiom that was deep and linked and continuous and true to its origin and just beautifully realized" (Roche), and that Banerjee's "musicality, his depth was far transcendent of just Indian music" (Dresher). Both claim a universality and depth in his music while not specifying how one hears this in his music.

Echoing already mentioned strategies that leverage listening as a mode of recognizing musical genius, Dresher suggests that certain aspects were audible for, and would affect, "anybody who understands musical depth and understands the combination of virtuosity in the service of musical expression, not in the service of display" (1:44–1:53). In other words, the familiar trope: just listen, and you will recognize his genius. And if not, your listening skills and musical understanding are lacking; the listener requires a specific musical knowledge to be able to appreciate this depth, which is understood in terms of universal music aesthetics. This is a commonly heard attribute in the case of Nikhil Banerjee, and is, as the documentary illustrates, leveraged in claims of his musical abilities.

The notion of virtuosity is another central concept. As indicated by Dresher's claim, such discussions frequently revolve around the question of its function within the overall musical performance. This is regularly related to discussions about what virtuosity is, or perhaps what it should be and how it should sound. In the documentary, Desher does not attend to the latter aspect. Instead, he simply delineates virtuosity as a musical element that both enables and plays a role in the creation of musical expression. He distinguished this from other forms of virtuosity, specifically that of displaying technical skills. This distinction is a common listening strategy to distinguish between musicians. Mobilizing of this concept is perhaps effective because it resonates with other discursive elements that play a role in Banerjee's canonization, such as the notion of his solitary and shy nature, his habit of extreme practice, and his alleged search for spirituality. Furthermore, combined with his claimed humility and early death, the dedication to riyāz that led to this virtuosity is frequently cited as one of the main reasons why he did not teach anybody. That is, my interlocutors state, he often suggested that he still needed to practice before he would be ready to teach.

As the introductory segment illustrates, however, people do claim either to have learned from him, to be influenced by his music, or to play in what they refer to as his style. While this seems to contradict the documentary's statement that Banerjee "taught" many in

the "West," crucial here is the flexible use of notions of "learning" or "studying" in such claims. These involve several, at times conflicting, forms and practices. People who once received advice from Banerjee about their right-hand playing technique claim to have learned from him. Others who were allowed to hang around in his quarters, listen to his practice, and even accompany him on tanpura during concerts mobilize these experiences as a mode of transmission of musical knowledge:

> He gave me the **privilege** to get **close** to **him**, **listen** to his **practice** whenever I could, I even played some tabla with him when he was **practicing**. And, **I had to, used to, travel with him for his concerts**. All along, like, like, **exactly like it happens in the tradition**, that **you absorb** more in the **company** of your **guru**, **than from**, **spoon-fed lessons**, you know, like that. But I was with him for over well, I would say twelve years. So, **twelve years you would get** to, **little drops**.

This contrast that this interlocutor makes between his relationship with Banerjee and the "traditional" guru–shishiya relationship can be considered a claim to authority. Having been close to Banerjee allowed him to get "little drops" of musical knowledge, which informed his playing. Other musicians, however, frame the relationship slightly different: "he never learned from him, he was just his secretary, that's all" (anonymous musician). These conflicting concepts and practices of musical learning interact with and build upon aforementioned canonizing narratives about Banerjee's devotion to riyāz that allegedly prohibited him from teaching.

Musicians born around the time of or after his death cannot capitalize on such personal interactions. However, this does not stop them from making (musical) claims regarding his influence on their music. This includes the framing of their own teaching and performing with anecdotes about Banerjee and his music: "Nikhil Babu always used to say, 'musical talent is ninety percent perspiration, and only ten percent inspiration'" (anonymous interlocutor, born in the mid-1980s). The "always used to say" implies that the narrator had been in the presence of Banerjee. Calling him Nikhil Babu, furthermore, suggests an intimate relationship between the two. While the impossibility of such affiliation between younger musicians and Banerjee is clear for everyone involved, they do employ such narrative strategies to legitimate their musical articulations. Simultaneously, this amplifies Banerjee's importance as a musician. At times, such tactics are combined with a claim of a promise of a future relationship, as in the following excerpt from an interview printed in prominent newspaper *The Hindu*, which sitarist Purbayan Chatterjee posted on his Facebook page:

My father, Partha Prathim Chatterjee **learnt** from **Pandit Nikhil Bannerji**, and I remember my earliest **memory** of **him** is in **our house** when I was about six, and I **played** what **little** I **knew**. He **examined** my **hands**, (**for strength**) advised me to do some "**paltas**" (**note patterns like scales**), and told my parents he would hear me again in a few years time. When I was eight years old he **again** made me **play for him**, and then told my parents he was **willing** to **teach** me formally in the **proper guru shishya parampara tradition**, when I turned 12. But I would have to live with him, eat what he gave, wear clothes he gave me, and in every way be detached from my old way of life. I was very **excited**, but sadly, he **died**. So I missed out.[70]

Asked to describe his association with Banerjee, Chatterjee re-counts the former's alleged promise of a "proper" teacher–student relationship. As Banerjee is known for his strong right hand, suggesting that he examined Chatterjee's hands for strength invests the story with authenticity. Although Banerjee's early passing meant that this did not become a reality, the narrative about the conditions of this promise reproduce the strict-adherence-to-tradition narrative pointed out above. However, the story also does something else: the alleged willingness of Banerjee to teach Chatterjee implies that while listening to this young musician perform for him, Banerjee already heard his musical potential. Thereby, Chaterjee produces and builds on the child prodigy narrative he has created around himself, investing it with authority through this account about Banerjee's willingness to teach him.

Banerjee's early death, it turns out, does anything but stop musicians from claiming his influence on their playing. "He used to say that when you start playing, you have to blindly copy, and imitate. After you evolve musically then you have to consciously play your own music, tell your own story. He said he himself had to do this." (anonymous interlocutor) This musician relates an anecdote about ways of learning, musical growth, and transformation to Nikhil Banerjee's own learning process. This reproduces the figure of Nikhil Banerjee as a devoted disciple and musician. For the musician telling the story, however, the suggestion that one should start learning by blindly copying legitimates the now common practice of learning through listening to recordings. That is, recordings such as the Desh that the documentary starts with become sonic proof of Banerjee's musical genius. In turn, through such anecdotes, they are portrayed as legitimate objects of musical knowledge. Several musicians use this strategy of learning from recordings to openly declare they study Nikhil Banerjee, categorizing their music as "Nikhil Banerjee style."

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[70] http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-features/tp-fridayreview/music-is-about-finding-who-you-are/article9302089.ece, The Hindu, 4th November 2016.

This learning from recordings is intimately connected to listening practices. Musicians use these as a measuring stick of others' musical knowledge, as reflected in the ability to correctly listen out for audio examples. That these are at times acoustically unclear does not stop these processes, as the following interview excerpt illustrates:

It's **hard work**, to take something like that, and to **really try**. It takes some **time** to **figure out exactly what he is doing**. There are so **many things** that you have to **try to listen** to and some things when you **can't hear it really very well**, but **if you know what he was doing, then you can say, ok, it has to be this**, or it has to be that, or.... I'll give you the slow version of it, it **sounds horrible, but** you can **hear everything**.

As Elsdon has argued for jazz, such recordings serve a double function: it "may represent a performance … but it also accomplishes an important kind of cultural work in investing certain performances with an authority.… Recording accomplishes far more than merely documenting something–it writes itself into musical history" (Elsdon 2010: 153, 157). In the case of Banerjee, these often privately made recordings selectively preserved the music of an instrumentalist who passed away at a relatively young age. Increasingly, copies of such recordings are digitized, uploaded on YouTube, or exchanged between younger sitariyas. Often labeled as rare recording at the time of their upload or while being exchanged, these have become the main source of (musical) knowledge about Banerjee's style. They have become representative of his musical history and offer a sonic way to remember him as a Maihar gharānā musician.

Interlocutor:	So now I am trying to go back from that **perspective** and **study** a lot of Nikhil Banerjee **technique** and **lines** […]
Eva-Maria:	Hm, yeah ok. And what does, uhm, in practical terms, mean. What does it mean to study Nikhil Banerjee? […]
Interlocutor:	Well, **study recordings** and **videos**, and uh.
Eva-Maria:	And how do you do that, then? You, you. I mean, videos, you look at his hands?
Interlocutor:	Yeah, I mean, videos, (laughing) like. **I'll slow it down**, you know, I mean. I mean, we have some videos here. Uhm, I think only, only one that I know, but it's a full concert. **Nikhil Banerjee's last concert here at the college, full concert at video, which is awesome, you know, you have so much you can learn there**.
Eva-Maria:	Yeah, yeah.
Interlocutor:	So, **I was studying that, quite a lot last year**, um. Yeah, I mean now, often times I can **tell his finger position just by listening**. You know, **sometimes it's hard**, but, you know, I am getting better at that. So that **I can just listen**, and **then I can figure out how to play**, um,

you know. I had a lot of, basically **everybody** who is studying Nikhil Banerjee stuff is you know, becoming very good at learning from recordings and what not.

As this example illustrates, as a result of listening to these recordings, disciple's ears increasingly become disciplined to hear his style as the norm. Listening out for the details that distinguish his style from that of other musicians becomes a basis for their sonic claims that he belongs in the musical canon.

Musicians also seek to reproduce these details on their instrument. This learning from recordings results in many musicians who (try to) sound like Nikhil Banerjee. This partially answers Neuman's question of whether an ever-growing number of increasingly large collections of recordings "may in the future perform the role of gharanas in the past, not as social but as mechanical embodiments of tradition" (Neuman 1990 [1980]: 225). Sitariya Josh Feinberg, for example, claims to be "establishing himself as a sitar torch-bearer of the Maihar Gharana of the younger generation" (personal communication) by, among other things, sounding out elements of Banerjee's style as he learnt from recordings. One of his strategies to establish himself is to regularly post short audiovisual clips of his playing on Facebook. Framed as a message to a London-based organizer of a house concert where he recently played, he posts a 90-second audiovisual clip accompanied by the following text:[71] "Rahmat Simab Jan, this is that Hameer composition you were enjoying at your music room. Just a little clip." Responding to likes and comments from his followers, Feinberg writes: "Thanks so much everyone. Glad you enjoyed it. This is Pt. Nikhil Banerjee's composition. He performed it with Ust. Zakir Hussein in Delhi in 1982 (I believe)." In the context of the traditional value given to guru-shishiya paramparā, where compositions are learned through oral transmission from student to teacher, attributing the composition to Nikhil Banerjee, suggests an (impossible) relationship between Banerjee and Feinberg without having to actually make that claim. It also re-amplifies Nikhil Banerjee and his music as important for Hindustani classical music. Namely, he is the source of the musical articulations the followers valorized positively.

This way of learning from recordings is heavily debated. Several hereditary musicians claim it is impossible to learn from a recording because one does not know the musical concept behind the captured aspects and also cannot be sure what aspects are inaudible due to the (often low) recording quality. Others seek to copy every musical parameter, including elements

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[71] Posted on November 22, 2016.

that other listeners categorize as mistakes in Banerjee's performance. Thereby, they listen out for the specifics of these recordings as "an archetypal performance … classic recordings" (Neuman 1990 [1980]: 224–225). As such, these partially preserved musical articulations become active agents in Banerjee's retrospective canonization. On the one hand, they increasingly come to serve as proof of his musical genius. On the other, musicians learning from those recordings repeat and thereby amplify musical details particular to his style as Maihar gharānā.

Finally, such recordings can also serve as status symbols for those possessing them. In the digital age, however, such notions of ownership are inherently complex. A less-than-five-minute-long audiovisual clip of Banerjee, for example, was originally uploaded onto YouTube in 2006 by user Naada Yogi, with the comment "Nikhil Banerjee playing beautiful sitar with Anindo Chatterjee."[72] Two years ago, Nicholas Proctor, an avid collector and seller of musical instruments and, apparently, also a collector of audiovisual material, posted a comment in response to this video. This sparked a discussion about the value of such recordings and the alleged rights of uploading such archival material in the comments section of this YouTube page.

Nicholas Proctor:	Where did you get such an **awful copy of my near perfect ORIGINAL upload** of several years ago???? Nick
Vijai Kumar:	What happened to your videos? I can't seem to find them anymore.
Nicholas Proctor:	Mine are but so many have been **copied & passed off as THEIRS** that I stopped. **Stealing others' videos & acting as if THEY originally recorded them is cheating & lying** in MY book, Nick
Vijai Kumar:	Ah, I see. I totally agree. You have **gems**. I suppose that's why people copy your videos. I am a really **big fan of your stuff**. When I started learning Tabla and discovering Indian classical music (probably around 06/07), your videos were some of the first that inspired me. I am a huge **fan**. Your videos made me fall in love with music and I just wanted to thank you for that.
Nicholas Proctor:	No problem. There were very **few of us recording** soooooo many UK tv programmes in the 80s. NOW it's the ONLY way to see them. The BBC **won't ever** let you **see** them in their **archives**.[73]

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[72] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MgRMOOgt40&feature=youtu.be, last accessed 10.10.2016.
[73] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MgRMOOgt40&feature=youtu.be, last accessed 10.10.2016.

This brief online exchange between two people who have never met in person is illustrative of the crucial role of the (limited availability of) audio(visual) recordings in the processes of Banerjee'canonization. Crucially, while "my recording" in Proctor's original comment implies that he recorded the performance, his later comments indicate something different. His "owning" the recording, in fact, is based on his recording the footage from a BBC television broadcast: "original" footage that he allegedly uploaded onto YouTube in "near perfect" condition. Proctor has apparently extended his interpretation of ownership from the physical object (the video) to the musical/audiovisual content saved on that video. User Vijai Kumar, who is "a big fan" of Proctor's "gems," seems to accept this curious claim by giving Proctor— and not the musicians whose sounds are captured on these recordings—credit for enthusing him about this music in the first place.

This flexibility in use of various notions of (musical) ownership and understandings of "original recording" indicates that such recordings have come to be perceived of as valuable objects in their own right. This value, in turn, can be transferred to the person claiming to possess some form of that musical object. Such objects allow collectors to make a name for themselves as musical connoisseurs without having to actually "prove" their connoisseurship in any other way.

This also brings me back to my own excitement and simultaneous sadness in response the segment of the documentary uploaded on Banerjee's birthday. Over years of learning sitar and doing research, I have been disciplined by the very dynamics of his canonization I have discussed above. With the exception of Shankar's direct disciples, all of my interlocutors emphasized their preference for Banerjee over Shankar: while Shankar's early recordings might be worth listening to for rāga interpretation, I should listen to Banerjee for the "real feeling." And that is exactly what I did throughout my research—I tried to train my ears to hear it too. I endlessly listened to and discussed recordings, asking what musical moments were so special for my interlocutors and why. I read articles, biographical accounts, listened to anecdotes, watched YouTube clips. I had one teacher teach me a specific playing technique he attributed to Banerjee. His ecstatic response when I "got" that "Nikhil Banerjee feeling" that should come with that technique taught me I was on the right path; it made me want to adhere to that specific combination of sonic nuances, that Nikhil Banerjee feeling. The multiple layers at work in the dynamics of his canonization, had disciplined me into listening out with his sitar style as the norm.

> And with Ali Akbar Khansaheb, he took me to Ali Akbar Khansaheb. It was more like that, **you wouldn't ask, dare ask any questions**. You would just sit there and try to **imitate** whatever he was doing and, later on in life, I realized, and I was doing. And **I was listening to a lot of Nikhil Banerjee recordings**, and I was blindly trying to imitate what he was doing. Which is how one has to do it. Initially, you have to. People talk about their own style. The own style never gets formed till you actually go down some path. If you want to find, uh, you know, a way from point A to point B, and **if it has to be your own way**, your starting point has to be something that has to be shown by somebody, then you can search for **your own**, own kind of thing.

As this interview excerpt illustrates, my interlocutors often mention the names, styles, and knowledge practices of Ali Akbar Khan, Nikhil Banerjee, and Annapurna Devi. These processes of canonizing are not restricted to written form. Instead, they involve intertwined tactics of selective preserving musical knowledge and knowledge about music. Disciples leverage several forms of embodied musical knowledge, orally transmitted glorifying anecdotes, audio(visual) recordings, and even government-issued stamps in their claims of musical value.

Due to differences between their (musical) biographies, the ideologies, musical parameters, and material elements utilized in these dynamics are distinct for each of them. Ali Akbar Khan('s music) has been widely documented through anecdotes, the embodied musical knowledge of his many disciples, and a large number of recordings and notations of him teaching, performing, and even practicing. His music has been the topic of dissertations, academic books and articles, and other canon-building publications. After his death, his son and other disciples continue to teach "his music" at the college in San Rafael, USA. His disciples use ideologies of originality, musical genius, the crossing of several (musical) borders, and in-depth musical knowledge in their claims of his rightful place within this canon. The terms of Annapurna Devi's canonization are rather different. Little material evidence of her musical capabilities exists. However, she has received several government prizes, and orally transmitted anecdotal accounts are combined with the musical knowledge of her disciples to claim her genius as a musician. The musical particulars that her disciples listen out for as characteristic of her style are accompanied by ideologies such as musical depth, rāga purity, strict adherence to tradition, and musical individuality. Nikhil Banerjee, finally, while a fair number of recordings of his performances exist, has not taught anybody in the guru–shishya paramparā. Because he

died relatively young, the anecdotes circulating about him are limited to a repetition of a few instances illustrating his perseverance as a musician and dedication to practice. He is remembered mainly in terms of musical feeling and emotion, strict practice regimes and adherence to rāga boundaries, his strong hand, and specific playing techniques.

Through their active participation in legendarizing these musicians, my interlocutors legitimate their own musical articulations and aesthetic choices in relation to and based on this canonized status. By adhering to the sound quality of Nikhil Banerjee's javāri, using specific micro-melodic-rhythmic-dynamic nuances to "show" Sa, as taught by Annapurna Devi, or by crossing of the rāga boundaries in the name of Khan's virtuosity, contemporary musicians play out these guru-specific elements to invest their own musical practices with legitimacy.

> I can **play** you for instance a little bit of uh, of my gurubhai, Amit. Yeah, here he is, bacchu, uhm, I am not sure what [sound example 6.1]. Very sw, **sweet hand** [sound example 6.1]. He, he had, he **picked up** what Partho was **completely unable** to pick up from **Nikhilda**. And that's the **sound** and the **emotion**, you know."
> (anonymous interlocutor)

> So, a **good sound**, for me, well, it's **compelling**. [sound example 6.2]

These interview excerpts and accompanying audio-recordings represent two moments during which musicians use the category "sound" to valorize musical articulations. The first footage captured a tālim session during which my interlocutor, who claims to have been a student of Nikhil Banerjee, showed[74] me rāga Ahiri. The tālim was followed by a discussion about, and listening to, different interpretations of this rāga as played by Maihar gharānā sitariyas. My informant played Ahiri on his own instrument and we listened to two recordings of Banerjee performing the same rāga. During the moment excerpted in the above, my interlocutor and I were listening to a recording of a musician my interlocutor described as a close student of Banerjee. Our goal was to listen out for the small musical differences that constitute individual rāga interpretations.

Following this goal, I was mainly listening out for micro-melodic-rhythmic differences that would create slight variations in tonal emphasis between this performance and the ones we had listened to before. However, my interlocutor did not detail these aspects during or after this listening session. Instead, his only direct comment on these thirty seconds of music concentrated on the sitariya's "sweet hand." For at least a brief moment, he was pulled away from his intended analytical listening out for the rāga's micro-melodic grammar. Emphasizing the "sweet" quality of the sounds produced by Amit's hand, he did not detail its sonic qualities. However, its significance for his valuing of the music is illustrated by the content of this comment as well as the fact that he articulated it in the middle of our listening act. His voice was dynamically dominant over the music and he was physically present in the room. His attempt to attune my ears to this specific aspect of the music, thereby, paradoxically drew my

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[74] My interlocutors often use the visual metaphor of "showing" a rāga. This refers to the playing of an alāp or alāp phrases, which these musicians considered characteristic of that specific rāga. In some cases, my interlocutors insisted I should (try to) copy these phrases through playing or singing, in order to "really understand how this rāga works."

attention away from the music, disturbing my listening out for musical nuances. The many times he suggested me to "stop talking and start listening" to what he was playing during tālim showed that he was aware of the disturbing effect talking can have on listening. His seemingly spontaneous outburst is therefore all the more indicative of the significance my interlocutor attributes to this "sweetness" of sound: he just had to emphasize it, even though this very act risked silencing it. A more cynical interpreter might wonder what this moment tells us about listening as a negotiating of power relations; is it more important to illustrate that one knows what to listen out for than to listen?

Additionally, this moment explicates that the normative and vague category of sound is listened out for and utilized in dynamics of musical inclusion and exclusion. Namely, as apparent from our discussion, my interlocutor first of all perceives of Amit's "very sweet hand" as clearly audible on the recording. He implies that the music exemplifies what a sweet hand sounds like and that I am able to hear this. Portraying them as audible and hence self-evident in the music, my interlocutor does not have to define or musically pinpoint his concepts. Second, he takes the audible sweetness of the hand to indicate that Amit had picked up two musical qualities from his guru Banerjee: his "sound" and his ability to bring out "the emotion" of the music. As I illustrated in the previous chapter, these qualities are historicized as characteristic of Banerjee's style. Third, my interlocutor mobilizes this ability so as to create a contrast between Amit and another musician claiming to be Banerjee's student: Partha Chatterjee. The latter, so my interlocutor asserts, lacks the skill to reproduce these aesthetics in his playing. This implies that Chatterjee may have been close to Banerjee but his inability to pick up some of the latter's defining aesthetic elements disqualifies him as a real disciple. In this sangīt encounter, in sum, one particular take on sound quality was listened out for, valorized, and effectively mobilized in an act of musical exclusion. Having heard Banerjee's sweet hand on many recordings myself, at that moment I was entirely sure: Amit, although no longer playing and living in Japan, is "in"; Chatterjee, a professional musician currently teaching at the Sangīt Research Academy in Kolkata, India, is "out." I heard it myself. Didn't you?

The second quote at the beginning of this chapter, is extracted from the start of an informal interview with one of Ali Akbar Khan's disciples in California. This moment illustrates the importance this musician attributes to sound quality as a part of his sonic self-representation. Specifically, sound quality was central to how he presented himself as Khan's disciple to me as a researcher. He characterized it in terms of physical sensation, hence implying

that it is perceivably real. Before this meeting, the disciple and I had gone to concerts together and talked about my research and his musical experiences on several occasions. Prior to the interview, we had been chatting about Khan's life and music and the disciple's experiences with him. The interview took place at home in his music room, where all his instruments were displayed. He told me he had prepared the instruments especially for the interview, restringing and tuning them, doing the javārī of the various tanpuras, and cleaning the blade of the sarod(e)s.[75] This prompted a conversation about which of the various tanpuras and sarod(e)s was his favorite instrument and why. A "good sound" turned out to be the most significant factor in his preference for instruments. To illustrate what constitutes a good sound, he played mīnd phrases on his instrument, noting that a "big" and "rich" sound is important to him. He added that there is another relevant aspect, but lacking the words to describe it, he demonstrated by playing more mīnd phrases.

Perhaps reflecting a lack of music(ologic)al concepts available to describe sound quality, this musician made it a point to musically demonstrate a good sound. Combined with the fact that he especially prepared his instruments to sound out in the best possible way during the interview, this sonic demonstrating is in itself revealing of the central role sound quality plays in his musical practice. As he suggested in an interview:

> For me, it is about **sound**, it is it is the **quality** of **sound**.... It is **getting** the **sound** that makes the music, uhm, **compelling** you know, that **grabs** you, you know. And so, I want that from an instrument and there is something that when, uhm, when I can play that way, when I can get that sound, then I **know** that the **music** is **real**. And it is funny, a good sound in a sarode, to be able, the **mīnd** in a sarod, to get the **mīnd** [sound example 6.3], that is **easy** to get, but to get the **descending mīnd** [sound example 6.3] mīnds, so the, that. And that's a good **instrument**, that can **hold** the **sound** and **rip your heart**. (anonymous 2014)

Besides emphasizing the centrality of sound quality in his playing, this interlocutor mobilizes a normative notion of sound—for him to "know" the music is "real," sound has to be "compelling," it has to "grab you," and "rip your heart." Following Moore's understanding of "authenticity as authentication ..., a construction made in the act of listening" (2000: 210), this getting-to-know through listening out for sound quality hints at its authenticating power within musical knowledge practices. It points towards a physical aspect of listening beyond the ears, here categorized as a "grabbing" sound quality. My interlocutor relates this quality to a playing

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[75] Ali Akbar Khan's disciples in the USA spell sarod with an additional e: sarode.

technique: a (relative) high-to-low-frequency mīnd on one of the four main strings of the sarod. He suggests that when this technique is executed properly on a good instrument, a good sound quality is indicated by a feeling of one's heart is being ripped out. He does not illuminate this aspect other than through his playing. Combined with his rhetorical question—"So, sounds ok?"—the implication is that I should be able to hear, feel, this compelling, grabbing quality. It certainly did sound ok. In that moment it completely grabbed me: I knew his music was real.

These brief encounters make one thing clear: sound is listened out for in aesthetic (de)valorizations of Hindustani instrumental music performances—recordings, riyāz, and tālim. An ambiguous quality referred to, among other things, as "the sound," "good sound," or "quality of sound" is the topic of lively discussions and vigorous feuds among my interlocutors. They plead for, adhere to, practice on, listen out for, perform, and quarrel over the sonic content of this slippery category. Private collectors and record producers tamper with archival and commercial recordings in order to create a "better sound," using sound effects such as delay, echo, and frequency filtering. Every self-respecting young Maihar gharānā sitariya has designed at least one electric version of a sitar,[76] which has "a better sound" than the acoustic version.[77] During sound checks, musicians fuss about the available sound system's feedback or the necessary combination of delay and frequency settings that produces the "right sound" for sarod, bansuri, or sitar.[78] It is one of the main qualities that informs the choices made by instrument builders regarding the materials, size, and shape of instruments and their constitutive parts. The notion is mobilized, furthermore, in relation to, or sometimes equated with, concepts such as timbre, javārī, sustain, or sur. It is often described using a wide range of normative adjectives, such as sweet, big, rich, open, closed, cold, warm, sharp, clear, and harsh. And, of course, sound quality is used to evaluate the weather: "Humidity is so bad in Mumbai right now, my sarod sounded terrible during riyāz today" (anonymous).

The above moments, then, prompt a number of questions: What might an instrument that "responds well" sound or feel like? What is "big" about which sounds produced by the sarod? How can a hand "sound" on a sitar? What exactly could be "sweet" about it? How can I approach these claims of music's effects on the body? Can I pinpoint these aspects in terms of musical parameters? Should I want to do that, and why? And moving to a meta-level: what can

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[76] Two examples are Purbayan Chatterjee's "See-tar" that can be hung around the neck and played like an electric guitar, which incorporates lights as to be visible on a dark stage, and Niladri Kumar's "Zitar."

[77] For example, its electrification results in a richer and more stable overtone spectrum, and it allows for elaborate mīnds whose dynamic energy can be easily sustained and a louder response from left-hand cutting techniques, such as krinton and jamjama.

[78] Clearly, the same is true for other instruments used in Hindustani classical music and beyond. However, as the musicians I engaged with during my research all played one of these three instruments, I focus my attention here on the specifics of these instruments.

these moments tell me about the physical dimensions of listening as a knowledge practice? How, by, and for whom are such subjective, normative, and imprecise notions of sound quality manipulated through listening practices? Based on what (naturalized musicological) notions of sound quality can I listen out for an answer to these questions? And how do I listen?

Despite the significance of sound quality in valorizations of musical practices, it has received little attention within Hindustani classical music studies. The musical practices referred to by the concept vary and its sonic parameters are actively kept ambiguous. In this chapter, I examine whether there might be a possible correlation between such ambiguity and the crucial role this element plays in dynamics of musical inclusion and exclusion. Might this alleged analytical opacity in direct relation to notions of feeling be so effective in negotiations of aesthetic boundaries exactly because they are vague concepts that resonate authoritative discourses about sound as found in Sanskrit treatises? What elements are relevant here for the double existence of listening? I argue that a critical attendance to these complex dynamics necessitates an understanding of Hindustani instrumental music's aesthetics beyond established approaches to sound (qualities) within Hindustani music studies.

Sound in the Musicologies

> The **sound** of the sarod, in the hands of an **adept**, is a delicious **thing** to **savour**. Capable of **seducing** the **senses** and nourishing the **souls** of **connoisseurs** of music, this instrument enables its performers to realize **delicate tonal qualities** and **subtly** manifest the feast of **nuances** and other delights of Hindustani classical music. It is this potential as much as anything else, that has made it a very suitable vehicle for instrumental music and ensured its central position in **India's shastriya sangīt** or '**art music' tradition**. (Adrian McNeil 2004: 1)

The above opening phrases of the chapter "Sounding out the sarod" are written by an "Australian-based sarod player and ethnomusicologist trained in the guru shishya parampara of Hindustani music by Pandit Ashok Roy, Professor Sachindranath Roy and Dr Ashok Ranade over many years in India and Australia."[79] The description is revealing of academic approaches to sound quality. First, the author directly links a highly normative notion of sound quality to at least two forms of musical knowledge. First, the sub-phrase "in the hands of an adept," suggests

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[79] http://adrianmcneil.com, last visited 01.12.2016.

that the instrument's "delicious" sound is made possible by a player's embodied musical knowledge. Again, we hear resonances of empire, in both the phrasing and the ideology behind this discourse: "the sitar … is really a very **pleasing toned** instrument in the hands of an **expert performer**" (Willard 1875: 98). However, what constitutes an "adept" and what that "pleasing tone" actually sound likes remain unclear. This indicates that the author either takes his notion of a musical adept for granted and/or assumes that no definition is necessary for the book's imagined readership of self-defined knowledgeable listeners. In the latter case, the author seems to assume that these so-called musical connoisseurs are capable of aurally distinguishing who is musically hot from who is not. Notions of the musical "adept," "delicate tonal qualities," and "feast of nuances," therefore, do not need further elaboration. The second notion of musical knowledge that McNeil mobilizes resides in his poetic reference to connoisseurs whose "souls" are "nourished" and "senses" "seduced" by the sounds of the sarod. This signals that the author privileges one form of listening—the musical connoisseur's—as an authoritative knowledge practice that is directly linked to aesthetic appreciation. If only the connoisseur can truly enjoy this music, we must conclude that the souls (and what about the bodies?) of non-connoisseurs cannot enjoy the sounds of the sarod. Such unknowledgeable listeners, McNeil implies, are incapable of making sense of, and hence savoring, this music.

I analyzed McNeil's opening phrases in such detail because they exemplify how scholars often leave sound quality undefined but use it to express normative modes of listening. In the excerpt, the notion does its discursive work through this ambiguity. Namely, anyone who requests clarification runs the risk of being categorized as unknowledgeable. Such use of the concept is not restricted to McNeil's work. Musicologists often mystify rather than clarify those complexly intertwined musical details that contribute to sound quality. At the same time, those who have allegedly penetrated its secrets through one specific form of listening, and the authoritative musical knowledge they have gained, are celebrated. Such poetic but unspecific mentioning of details of sound quality in relation to notions of art music, can be understood as a strategy of creating music(ologic)al authority. This is perhaps all the more effective because of its historical repetition.

The construction of rational theories of sound played an important role in orientalist writings seeking to prove the civilized status of ancient India. A desire to think about sound in objective terms already finds expression in Jones's (1875) treatise, which starts with a note on the philosophy of sound. Music, Jones states, "belongs, as a science, to an interesting branch

of natural philosophy, which, by mathematical deduction from constant phenomena, explains the causes and properties of sound" (ibid.: 125). Jones contrasts this rational, scientific approach to music with that of the artist, who, "without considering, and even without knowing, any of the sublime theorems in the philosophy of sound, may attain his end by a happy selection of melodies and accents adapted to passionate verse, and of times comfortable to regular metre" (ibid.: 125–126). The binary thus constructed—between the scientist who rationally understands music and the artist who merely learns a skill without understanding its basis—provides the basis for rejecting then contemporary musical practices as relevant sources of musical knowledge. Jones describes the practice of musicians in terms of melody, mode, modulation, accents, and regular meter. Sound remains unmentioned in relation to musical practices, seemingly restricted to the domain of scientific rationality. Although sometimes expressed differently, this mode of thought still resonates in musicological studies today.

Musicologist Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy, in the second edition of his much-quoted *The Rāgs of North Indian Music: Their Structure and Evolution* (2011 [1971]), for example, similarly approaches sound in terms of acoustic theory. Sound, for him, "is made up of periodic longitudinal vibrations—pressure pulsations—which, unlike light waves, cannot exist in a vacuum, but require a medium" (2011 [1971]: 7). He uses this approach to sound to launch into a lengthy examination of theories of tonality. In loyal (and perhaps legitimating) resonance with the writings of orientalist scholars explored above, Jairazbhoy references among others "ancient Chinese scholars" (ibid.: 10), Pythagoras (ibid.: 10), and the tuning systems of sadjagrama and madhamagrama described by Bharata in the Nāṭya Śāstra but "no longer in use in Indian music" (ibid.: 11). He furthermore mixes theories from acoustics with various conceivably authoritative "ancient" philosophies of music to construct a concept of sound as a function of, and hence music(ologic)ally subordinate to, tonality. He uses this notion of sound to understand tonality in Hindustani classical music in comparison to "Western music." Sound quality itself is not considered worthy of musicological attention. In the chapter "The Effect of Drones," Jairazbhoy similarly takes the tanpura "tone itself" (ibid.: 67) to talk about tonal tension created by its relation to the tonal places sounded out by the melody instrument or voice. He analyzes the effect of its broad overtone spectra in terms of dissonance and consonance, incidentals, and interval analysis based on Helmholtz's graphs (ibid.: 66). He ignores question of sound quality or its aesthetic concepts and functions. Instead, Hindustani

classical music is reduced to calculable intervallic relations, referring back to and inherently reproducing the academic authority of theories of sound in Sanskrit treatises, which are directly compared to Greek philosophy and Western musical theory.

A related approach to sound is the "philosophical commentary on sound," as "expounded through a series of treatises on music and the arts in general" that can be traced back "two millennia" (McNeil 2004: 2). In such texts, sound is usually treated as the domain of Sanskrit philosophy. Rowell's chapter on sound in *Musical Thought in Early India* (1992), for example, traces a musical mode of thought going back to the Ṛgveda (1500–1200 BC) that divides sound into four categories. This division, so Rowell suggests, was included and elaborated upon in a number of Upanishads. One key concept that keeps resurfacing in this and several other primary and secondary sources on Hindustani classical music is "nādabrahman," "a concept implying that the successive graduations of musical sound, both manifest and unmanifest, are identified with the creative vital force by which the entire universe is animated" (Rowell 1992: 36). Crucially, this concept is not only used in the musicologies but is also leveraged by musicians. Ravi Shankar, for example, dedicates a whole subchapter of his first autobiography, *My Music, My Life* (1968),[80] to explaining an emphatically spiritual Hindu philosophy of sound. This philosophy is allegedly steeped in and re-membered through written—and hence, Shankar implies, factual—history:

> In the **ancient scriptures** we read that there are two **types** of **sound**—the one a vibration of ether, the upper or purer air near heaven, and the other a vibration of air, or the lower atmosphere closer to the earth. The vibration of ether is thought by some to be **like** the music of the spheres that **Pythagoras** described in the sixth century B.C.… Musical **sounds** reflect the **orderly numerical** patterns of the universe. **Sounds** can be produced not only by **skillfully played musical instruments**.… (Shankar 1968: 15, 17)

Jumping between assorted texts and major branches of Hindu philosophy and comparing them to Greek music philosophy, Shankar's attendance to sound resonates the discursive strategies developed in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writings. The notion of skill in playing instruments reproduces a distinction between sounds produced by skillful and unskillful

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[80] Shankar was certainly exceptionally well-versed in capitalizing on such tropes. *My Music My Life* stands on the bookshelves of several informants. During my research, it kept surfacing as reference material: "See, this palta practice that I give my students was also suggested by Ravi Shankar." This indicates the clear impossibility of separating academic and musical knowledge practices: complexly connoted discursive tropes traveled through academic and musical practices and inform all forms of contemporary knowledge practices.

musicians respectively, but what exactly constitutes this difference in sound quality, however, remain mysteriously unspecific.

Even if musicologists do not acknowledge Sanskrit texts as the ultimate authority on sound, it is customary for them to at least acknowledge their importance. McNeil, for example, points out "that the exposition of this commentary has not been restricted to textual sources alone" (McNeil 2004: 2). Rather, he argues that

> the orally-transmitted knowledge contained within the myriad "schools" of interpretations and styles of musical performance passed on through personal experience, codified behaviour, practical instruction, anecdotes, maxims, metaphors, proverbs and, in this century, sound recordings. Common to all these written, oral and recorded sources, which interact together to form an aesthetic, philosophical, intellectual and metaphysical matrix of endeavor, are deeply-held beliefs concerning the cosmology of sound, the properties and effects of sound, and guides as to what is therefore good and meaningful in sound. The various designs of the sarod which have surfaced over the last two centuries have attempted to devise or enlist features which consciously or otherwise have sought to realize something of and/or adapt to this profound level of understanding sound. (ibid.: 2–3).

McNeil's use of the notion of exposition implies that he considers the treatises as the original source of such "deeply-held," and apparently shared, beliefs concerning sound aesthetics and its effects. Such suggestions were often rejected by musicians, who claimed such "bookish" knowledge does not bring about any real knowledge of sound qualities:

> You know, Eva, these people, they talk about the so-called **effects** these **sounds** should have, **rāsa** and **bhāva** and all that, which should be **in** the **sounds**, you know. All this, I think it is just a way of **showing**, you know, I have **read** this, I have read that. But they have not **felt** the **music**, this is **not** the **way** to **know**. It is **not music**. It is just **talking**. (anonymous interlocutor)

McNeil's choice of words implies that this text-based "profound" level of understanding sound is merely realized through, rather than produced or enabled by, contemporary musical practices. This implies a hierarchy in McNeil's understanding of knowledge, but he does not make his ordering explicit. Namely, he does not question the naturalized authority of the treatises within the academic context. Instead, he talks about a complex matrix in which all sources of knowledge coexist and join forces to form aesthetic beliefs. By treating aesthetics as devoid of power relations, then, McNeil actively reinforces the authority of musical treatises. Using notions such as "profound" and reproducing the idea of common-held beliefs regarding

sound aesthetics amongst all musicians, McNeil's fits neatly into above explored (ethno)musicological tradition of celebrating, mystifying, and legitimizing Hindustani (instrumental) music as a singular, Hindu art form. Such modes of thought ignore the many differences that result in the complex tensions over musical details such as sound.

Recent studies have used computer-based analysis to examine sound from a distinct angle, which ethnomusicologist Lars Koch calls the "acoustic point of view" (2011). Examining among other things the "sound-structure" (Koch 2011: 159) of Kanailal and Brother-built sitars and surbahars, Koch analyzes a relationship between the shape and material of the instrument and the sounds it produces. Using acoustic concepts too detailed to reproduce here, Koch explains the "basic idea—though in fact much more complicated" (ibid.: 159) on which the javārī, the word used interchangeably with (the specific shape and its resulting sound quality of the) instrument's main bridge, is based. Comparing an "open," "old style" javārī with a "closed," "new style" one (ibid.: 159), Koch pinpoints acoustic differences. He uses computer-based visualizations to examine the "overlapping of harmonic partials of different frequencies and different amplitudes" (ibid.: 160) in a three-dimensional diagram in which "the frequency is shown on one axis, the time on the other, and the amplitude in the third" (ibid.: 160). While thus attending to subtle timbral differences, this conflation between open and old on the one hand, and new and closed on the other, suggests that javārī has undergone a historical transformation and that musicians agree on its (re)shaping: before all were open, while now they are all closed. As I argue below, there are still relatively large variations in the ways that players within Maihar gharānā prefer their javārī to be "done". Instrumentalists bicker over these details, utilizing them as sonic means of locating themselves and others within or outside specific aesthetic boundaries and contents.

In their work on timbre in Hindustani chordophones, Demoucron et al. (2012) also use computerized quantitative data analysis. However, they are interested in sound aesthetics, basing their understanding on articulations of a "virtuoso sarangi player" (Demoucron et al. 2012: 88). Thus reproducing the ethnomusicological canon-building tendency, these authors examine the role of "timbre-shapers" in Hindustani instrumental music. This notion refers to "tāraf, sympathetic strings responsible for a haze of harmonic resonances, and jawari, wide slightly curved bridges that produce a buzzing, spectrally rich sound" (ibid.: 85). They link the "sounding features" to "a general ideal" of "aesthetic saturation" (ibid.: 85). These timbre shapers, so they suggest, participate in "the realization of three essential aesthetic ideas of

Indian music" (ibid.: 85). In order to gain insights into the "effect of these devices in a melodic, (quasi) musical context," their laboratory study aims to "quantify the contribution of tārafs and jawari for the achievement of the performance aesthetic and musical ideals described before, i.e. achieving a sense of continuity and spectral richness while preserving the clarity of melodic line" (ibid.: 85). While thus paying attention to sound as aesthetic elements, this study reproduces the idea that musicians all agree on these aesthetic ideals. Furthermore, the study is based on the suggestions of individual musicians whose aesthetic preferences they reinforce as standard. Thereby, they actively silence conflict over timbral nuance, capitalizing on the history of authority ascribed to such musicians.

Demoucron et al. borrow their notion of saturation aesthetics from the work of ethnomusicologist John Napier (2003), who defines this aesthetic as a "continuity of line, ornaments and a 'sonic depth' or textural richness that must be achieved without compromising the dominance and subtlety of melody" (Napier 2003: 116). Napier, in turn, draws on Slawek's (1998) writings. Slawek coined the concept to signify the aesthetic ideal of maintaining "the flow of the performance, keeping it going, filling in the gaps to approach … the ideal of a saturation aesthetic" (Slawek 1998: 337). Seeking to explain this aesthetic, Slawek ventures that it is "a natural consequence of the religious belief that sound is a form of God (Nāda Brahmā hai). The more sound there is, the more divinity is present in the environment" (ibid.: 365). Actively Hinduizing and Sanskritizing musical practice, this explanation does little to examine the aesthetic beyond its reification as Hindu Indian culture. However, as I illustrate below, this notion resonates within contemporary knowledge practices because interlocutors now listen out for adherence to this saturation aesthetic as typically "Indian."

In his expansion of the concept of saturation aesthetic, Napier takes this (ethno)musicological tendency to explain Hindustani classical music in terms of Hindu philosophical concepts one step further. Seemingly critical, he notes that "in studying the music of India" there has been a "tendency to validation through longevity and sāstric sanction" (Napier 2003: 115). Despite this critical stance, Napier falls back on this (ethno)musicological inclination to (de)validate contemporary musical practices[81] based on "several sources on ancient Indian music" (ibid.: 115). Himself actively involved in sangat, he argues that the "study of musicological and non-musicological sources may give evidence for the age of traditions that

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[81] Napier seeks to validate sangat, heterophonic melodic accompaniment of vocal music, which is usually considered hierarchically secondary to vocal music.

might be comparable to modern practice" (Napier 2003: 115) of sangat. This musical practice, so he suggests, provides one solution to what he calls "enduring aural-aesthetic needs. These provide what he calls the three essential features of Indian music he defined as saturation aesthetic: textural richness, continuity or flow of melodic line, and the presence of ornaments. The latter, however, should not disturb the alleged subtlety of the melodic line. Like Slawek, he draws parallels between this aesthetic and aspects of "Indian cultural products" (ibid. 116). Namely, it "also finds expression in several of the basic phenomena of Indian music: the continuous tamburā_, the intermittent plucking of cikārī_ (drone) strings, the resonant haze of tarab (sympathetic strings), and in the use of substantial, perhaps excessive, reverberation and delay in modern amplification" (ibid.: 127–128). Also like Slawek, Napier seems to consider it his duty as an ethnomusicologist to prove musical authenticity and historicity and provide aesthetic judgements.

Responding to the lack of critical (ethno)musicological attendance to sound (quality), Clayton identifies several aspects of sound experience. Drawing on "phenomenological listening," which he neglects to define, he attends to "the quality of the amplified sound" (2007b: 144). Thereby, he distinguishes between two understandings of "volume": referring on the one hand to sound's dynamic intensity, and on the other to its capacity to fill up a concert hall, music room, or practice space. According to Clayton, in the case of a concert the notion of "good sound" might refer to this capability to sonically fill up a space, but it is also used to evaluate the way in which the sound engineer mixes the textural layers of tanpura(s), harmonium, voice, and tabla so that it is difficult to pinpoint exactly when each layer starts and finishes. Clayton uses his analysis of sound experience to examine what the performance is about, a question I find impossible to answer. However, combined with the abovementioned elements of saturation aesthetic, this question provides me with starting points for thinking through the tensions regarding sound that I encountered during my research.

The limited attention to sound is not exclusive to studies of Hindustani classical (instrumental) music. The aspect of timbre, while certainly not synonymous with sound, might be "one of the most difficult sonic concepts to define" (Garcia 2015: 65). This is complicated by the prominent use of this category "as a shunting ground for any aspect of sound not adequately described by pitch, duration, and volume" (ibid.: 65). The lack of musicological attention to this complicated but central musical aspect might be related to a lack of "tools" in what Randel called the "Musicological Toolbox" (1992). He questioned relationships between

canonized topics of musicological research and the (lack of) tools for analyzing music. The toolbox, he suggests, is thus "a powerful force in keeping certain subjects out" (Randel 1992: 11). Sound, I would argue, is one of them. The disciplining effects of analysis on musicological knowledge production, however, are still largely ignored twenty-five years after its publication.

Below, I attend to aspects of sound as manipulated and valorized through contemporary knowledge practices. The work on saturation aesthetic and sound experience discussed above provides a starting point for critically thinking through these encounters. Each of the analyzed moments involve aspects afforded by the sitar javārī and/or the resonant strings known as tāraf. The latter are found on the neck of several instruments such as sitar, sarod, dilruba, sarangi, and esraj. Crucially, my interlocutors do not listen out for these elements in isolation. As I illustrate, they interact with other sonic elements, materialities, ideologies, and imaginations. I start by examining a sitar-cello-venu jugalbandi at Doverlane Music Conference in 2015. During this performance, a combination of several sound qualities suggested me a listening out for the cello and venu as adhering to the saturation aesthetic saved in the cultural memory as typically Indian. Performing acoustic contrast on exactly those elements that made the cello and venu adhere, the parts played by the sitar—the instrument saved in the global cultural memory and continuously performed in contemporary media as prototypically Indian—sounded less "Indian" than its "Western" and "Carnatic" counterparts. I follow this by exploring how contemporary musicians manipulate their javārī to adhere to the sound remembered as typical for either Nikhil Banerjee or Ravi Shankar. I argue that after their deaths, Banerjee's and Shankar's "sounds" have become increasingly remembered through recordings. Due to this mediated form, what is listened out for as a "typical sound," broadens. Or in Mol's terminology: "sound" multiplies as it is listened out for and manipulated in practice. A third encounter brings me to exploring tāraf response as acoustic disciplining. Such disciplining, I argue, allows for manipulation of musical order—for what is listened out for as the right note, the right rāga approach, the right feeling. In my concluding remarks, I come back to the "sweet hand" and "rich sound" with which I began this chapter. I ask whether I have come any closer to understanding their role within Hindustani classical instrumental musical knowledge practices.

The term javārī, "giving life to sound" or "the saddle that gives life to sound," formally refers to the process of an instrument builder, repairer, or musician shaping the top of the sitar's bārā gorā (big bridge) at the place where the tar (the main playing strings) touch it. The result of their interaction when the string is struck "is an overlapping of different waves in the string-vibration at the same time, which generates a very lively overtone-structure" (Koch 2011: 159). The material[82] comprising the upper part of the bārā gorā also influences the instrument's sonic affordances: the sustain and release of the main melodic line, as well as the (distribution of the) dynamic energy of its overtones. Materials used include ebony, camel bone, deer antler (bārahasiṅg), and synthetic materials such as resin.[83] Differences between the materials used for the top and the ways in which the javārī is filed also influence the differences in overtone structures that musicians currently listen out for and adhere to as style-specific. Within Maihar gharānā, the bārahasiṅg bridge is usually considered the best. Given that the deer from which the antlers are taken is typically only found in India and Nepal and is a protected species, this most-wanted material is increasingly difficult but not impossible to obtain.[84] Because it is the most durable and allows for the longest sustain, it is well-suited for the mīnd-oriented mode of presenting rāga characteristic of what my interlocutors categorize as the Maihar gharānā style of playing.

While some interlocutors do experiment with transforming other material aspects of the sitar,[85] once the sitar has been built these generally do not result in significant changes in sound quality. The bārā gorā, on the other hand, can be shaped by the musician or an instrument repairer with a file and sandpaper. The changes in sound quality resulting from such filing are considerable: from a sound that has relatively few overtones and a quick decay, to a sound that has a long sustain and so many overtones that it becomes difficult to tune the instrument. With each stroke, furthermore, the interaction with the string results in a slight tearing of the upper part of the bārā gora. This, in turn, transforms the sound through playing:

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[82] Other material aspects also influence the sitar's sound quality: for example, the type of wood used for the sitar neck, pecks, and faceplate (the tabli), the size and shape of the gourd from which its resonant body (the kaddu) is made, the presence or absence of a second resonant body attached to the upper part of the sitar's neck (the tumba), and the material, thickness, and amount of main and tāraf strings (tar).

[83] Resin is produced experimentally by sitar makers and musicians. Kolkata based instrument maker Barun Roy, for example, claims he imports the materials for the upper part of his bridges from the USA.

[84] It is also illegal to export bārahasiṅg antlers. In principle, therefore, one is not allowed to travel internationally with a sitar with a bārahasiṅg bridge. In practice, this happens regularly.

[85] Among others the thickness and material of the playing strings, cryonizing of the strings, and the replacement of kunti (tuning pecks) of the main strings with guitar tuning pecks.

deeper cuts result in an increased overtone texture. This results in a sound quality that is usually referred to as "buzzy" and/or "unclear"—the "javārī is gone": "I am playing that **concert** with a **sarodiya**. You know, he is so **loud** that I have to be very loud too. So even at the end of only one concert, my **javari can be totally gone**." (anonymous interlocutor). Such statements often imply particular judgements of sound: "Wow, your **javāri is really gone**, Eva. Can you stand it or do you want to play on this sitar instead until it has been done? It will make a big **difference** for **your practice**, no?" (anonymous interlocutor). Easily manipulated, and transforming through the process of playing, javārī not only refers to the process of shaping the bridge but is also listened out for as a dimension of sound. The notion of clarity, used in several ways in valorizations of Hindustani instrumental music, is usually used in the negative in discussions of javārī. A lack of clarity, in this context, means that the large number and loudness of overtones make it increasingly difficult to listen out for a main melody. Because musicians normatively listen out for javārī during concerts, riyāz, tālim, and on recordings, it provides a flashpoint of tensions over aesthetic boundaries and contents of Hindustani instrumental classical music.

The sounds listened out for as javārī interact with the sounds emerging from tāraf. This term refers to the strings attached to the neck of the sitar.[86] Instrument builders and musicians usually refer to sitar with eleven tāraf strings as Vilayat Khan style instruments, and a sitar with thirteen tāraf as Ravi Shankar style. The latter is also known as khāraj pancham sitar, referring to the addition of two low-tuned strings (the khāraj and pancham tar) that musicians often label as specific for Maihar. When a phrase is played on the baj, jor, pancham, or khāraj tar, "part of the vibration" of this melody "is transmitted to the tāraf strings whose … frequencies (fundamental frequency or higher partials) correspond to the harmonics of the played note" (Demoucron et al. 2012: 86). Musicians refer to this transmission of vibrational energy as the "response" of the instrument. This response does two things. First, if a stable pitch is sounding out from the main string, the overtone sound waves from the main string and the responding tāraf interact, producing a complex sound event. This creates slight changes in frequency and dynamic quality over time, destabilizing the pitch. Second, each time the main melody lands on or moves through a frequency to which a tāraf is tuned, that tāraf starts to vibrate on and amplify that frequency, resulting in a tonal emphasis.[87] A melodic phrase played with tuned

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[86] There are many instruments that host tāraf strings, among others the sarod, esraj, sarangi. However, in this chapter I mainly focus on the tāraf of the sitar. It can be said that the tāraf have similar musical functions in each of these instruments, although the specific details of their sounding out are clearly instrument- and player-dependent.

[87] Usually musicians will talk about this aspect in terms of tuning the tāraf to the notes that are allowed to be used in a rāga. However, in the next chapter I illustrate the problematic dimensions of the concept of note. Hence, I am hesitant to uncritically reproduce the concept here.

tāraf strings, then, creates a complex structure of harmonic-dynamic relations transforming over time. Depending on several material factors,[88] some instruments respond louder than others. Musicians listen out for the amount of dynamic energy released during the response, as well as its sustain. How much response is considered "good", however, depends on several factors.

Crucially, the texturally rich overtone spectrum afforded by tāraf and javārī has become saved in the cultural memory as (stereo)typically Indian. As Assman has pointed out "[c]ultural memory is a kind of institution. It is exteriorized, objectified, and stored away" (2008: 111). In this case, the academic who fixes these characteristics as typically Indian in their publications is increasingly echoed by CDs, LPs, and concert announcements. Revering the meditative character of this music, concert flyers or LP labels that proclaim, for example, "Ragas for Meditation," suggest a listening out for saturation aesthetic tāraf and javārī as typical of Indian music because they allegedly have a meditative character. Such objects are "carriers of memory…. They may remind us, may trigger our memory, because they carry memories which we have invested into them" (ibid.). An LP[89] of Nikhil Banerjee from 1969, the cover of which is depicted in Fig. 6.1, exemplifies how this saturation aesthetic becomes encoded within the cultural memory as innately Indian.
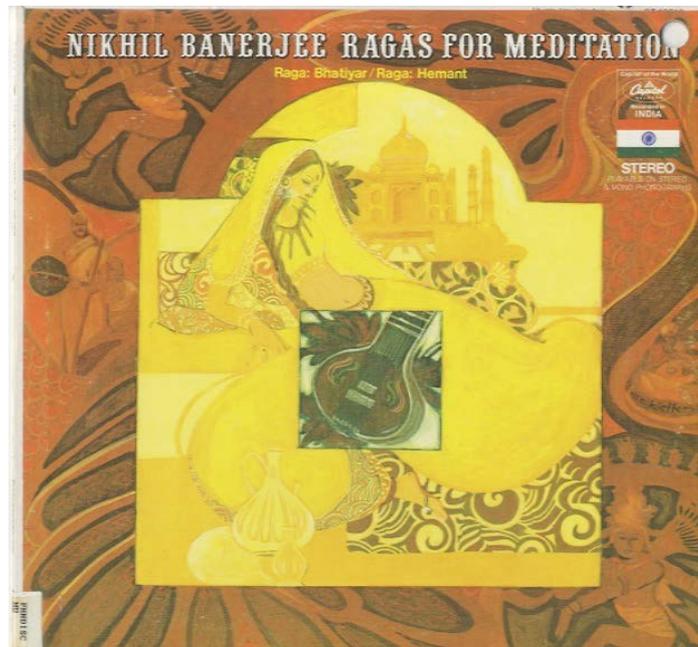
Fig. 6.1 Cover of Nikhil Banerjee's Ragas for Meditation.

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[88] It is outside the scope of this chapter to examine in detail.
[89] Capitol Records – ST 10518 (1969). Series: Capitol of The World. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSm7iqixbrg. Last visited 12 August 2016.

The Indian national flag in the corner directly under the word "India" and the image of a peacock, India's national animal, directly link the Indian nation-state and the music recorded on the LP. The title "Nikhil Banerjee Ragas for Meditation" suggests that the music has a spiritual character. The image of the Taj Mahal, combined with the woman in typical Mughal court clothing, associates both India and the music on the LP with Mughal court culture. The depictions of Nataraj, an avatar of the Hindu deity Shiva, in the lower right and upper left corners reference ancient Hindu mythology. The drawings of two people wearing robes and carrying a water jar on the left, and a snake charmer on the right, presents India as largely unaffected by technology. India, so the cover suggests to its listeners, is stuck in a strangely timeless mixture of rural authenticity, ancient Hinduism, and Mughal court life. The album contains rāgas for meditation, played on a sitar. The complex overtone texture created by the tanpura and sitar combination is clearly audible on this recording. Banerjee's phrases slowly disappear into this texture, filling up the pauses with strong chikaris that similarly disappear into the overtone texture. He does use some krintons and jamjamas. However, these are always part of a larger phrase of meends and thus do not disturb the melodic flow but instead contribute to the specificity of this melody. The recording has been manipulated with sound effects so that we hear a slightly delayed and almost indistinguishable second version of the melody after the main one, making the melody sound bigger and filling up space acoustically. Combined, the LP actively performs a memory of "Indian music"—a timeless India that adheres to the saturation aesthetic of a rich and large sonic texture, melodic flow, and embellishments that do not disturb the melodic details.

Such mapping of musical details onto geo-political entities dates back to at least seventeenth-century orientalist travel writings. To "travel was … to compare, and this vantage was often literalized in spatial terms" (Agnew 2008: 30). At the beginning of the twentieth century, comparative musicologists such as Erich von Hornborstel similarly sought to categorize the musics of the world onto a "world map of music" (cf. Werkmeister 2009). As Ismaiel-Wendt has pointed out, such "emplacement of music," therefore, "is the result of and often also instrumental in colonial modes of thought and practices in systems of representation" (Ismaiel-Wendt 2016a: 42, my translation).[90] Because emplacing musical instruments in geographic

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[90] Die inflationäre Verortung von Musik ist Folge und häufig auch Instrument kolonialistischen Denkens und Handelns in Repräsentationssystemen.

locations was one of the main methods of fixing of sounds in terms of an abstract world map, timbral qualities often came to be categorized as specific to place. Musicians, academics, and listeners invested in Hindustani classical instrumental music's popularization and marketing have deployed and are still deploying this broad spectrum of musical elements as a (highly problematic) signifier of India. To simply and wholly reject operating under such a sign—or to unbind these specific sound qualities from India is an impossible and undesirable exercise. Instead, I ask how musicians leverage the complex connotations attached to this category.

Emplacement through Saturation Aesthetic

Sangīt encounter: combining field recording, field notes, and a website

Please listen to the performance of sitar player Shubendra Rao, his wife and cello player Saskia Rao-de Haas,[91] and venu[92] player Shashank Subramaniam. It took place on January 23, 2015 at the Doverlane Music Conference, Kolkata, India, between approximately 4:00 and 6:00 a.m. [sound example 6.4]

I am tired. This is not the first night of the Doverlane music conference. I do not want to waste the relatively short research period I have in Kolkata by sleeping instead of listening to the nightly performances. During the days, I have either been practicing sitar or have been on the road for interviews with Kolkata-based instrumentalists. Because Rao and Rao-de Haas both identify as Maihar gharānā musicians, I am trying hard not to give in to the possibility of sleep offered to me by the warm auditorium and comfortable chair. Instead, I concentrate on what they are playing. Rao-de Haas starts the performance on an "Indian Cello", which on her website she describes as following:[93]

> I started envisaging the possibilities that resonating strings, as many indigenous instruments of India have, could give me.… The resonating strings had a special bridge as is common in many Indian string-instruments with Javārī, a kind of extra tinkle and resonance of the string.… With this instrument two of my wishes were fulfilled; to create an Indian sound even when playing open strings by the use of resonating strings and to be technically able to play the very fast gamakas.… After this … Eduard van Tongeren built his masterpiece; an instrument which I call 'the Indian cello'. This has the sound I had wished for all these years. It has 5 playing strings which are tuned to: D A D A D, D being the Sa. The resonating strings are attached on the body of the

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[91] Rao-de Haas learned Hindustani classical music with, among others, bansuri player Hariprasad Chaurasia, a direct disciple of Annapurna Devi.
[92] An instrument usually designated as "South Indian" or "Carnatic" bamboo flute.
[93] http://www.saskiarao.com/home.php, last visited 20.02.2017.

instrument in a diagonal line from the right top to the bottom left. It has a very practical tuning system and the resonating strings do respond very well.[94]

After Rao-de Haas has played several alāp phrases, Subramaniam takes over. He also plays some alāp phrases, after which it is Rao's turn to play. Throughout the performance, the musicians mostly follow this alternating pattern. They only sonically overlap during the gat, when one musician takes over from the other (e.g. 23:34—23:40), or when they are reinforcing a tonal place sounded out by one of the other musicians (e.g. at 22:58—23:06, the cello is playing Sa, thereby reinforcing Rao's mohra[95] [22:51—22:59]). They played, as Rao introduced it, "a beautiful morning rāga composed by my guru, rāga parameshwari. And Doverlane and parameshwari have had a long history, because my guru has played it a few times here." After almost twenty-two minutes of alāp, which ends with all three musicians showing the higher Sa (15:35—21:43), Rao initiates a structural change to the jor part of the performance. When Rao-de Haas finished her first exploration of tonal space in jor with a rhythmically simple tihai,[96] the audience responds, mainly with vocal responses such as "kya bat hai" and "vah" (24:50—24:59). Following his jor part, Subramaniam receives applause (27:15—27:20). I wonder whether these responses have created an obligation to applaud after each section. But just as I get ready to do my part in fulfilling this obligation after Rao's jhalla, the rest of the audience does not move. The silence is hastily filled in by the cello (28:58—29:02). After Rao-de Haas' jhalla, I hear a loud response from the audience (31:17—31:23). Throughout the performance, Rao-de Haas and Subramaniam's parts receive loud responses, in audible contrast to the responses to Rao's parts. After the performance, my friend notices: "wow, they blend very well together, Shashank and Saskia. This cello sounds very good, it is very well suited for our Indian music." I agree. Neither of us mentions Rao. We do not have to.

Even though we did not state it openly,[97] a negative valorization of Rao's music did take place in the course of the concert. To my ears, Rao's parts sounded empty, thin, slightly harsh, hurried and stiff. This in contrast to the sounds emanating from the cello and the venu. The parts played by the other two musicians kept me awake, their details resonating pleasurably with earlier listening experiences. Rao's playing, however, did not have the same flow and it somehow did not really reach me. Why was the mention of Subramaniam and Rao-de Haas' cello blending well with "our music" enough for me to know that my interlocutor judged Rao's part of the performance similarly? What elements did we listen out for in terms of "our" "Indian" sound? What prior encounters, tropes, and materialities, enabled "Indian" and "our" sound to become means of inclusion and exclusion during this moment of listening?

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[94] http://www.saskiarao.com/cello.php, last visited 20.02.2017.
[95] The metered closing phrase that creates structural distinction between the sub-sections within alāp and jor.
[96] Because one of the main musical goals of the tihai is to build up melodic-rhythmic tension that is released by the landing on a specific beat within a tala (usually this is either the first beat referred to as sam, or the (tala and gat specific) beat from which the mukra starts), playing a tihai in jor, where a pulse is present but tala has not yet been introduced into the performance, is usually not heard as impressive.
[97] Especially at concerts such as Doverlane, one would never openly criticize a performance. One never knows which of your neighbors is listening in on such conversations and how they are related to the musicians discussed.

At stake while listening to a jugalbandi of a rāga whose structural melodic elements I was unfamiliar with was an interaction between several dimensions of sound I listen out for as aesthetically valuable. Combined, these sound qualities made what perhaps might best be described as listening suggestions to me. They offered a listening out for the sonic contrast between the respective instruments to be valued in terms of (a lack of) Indianness. Enabled by and reproducing a long tradition of "musical mapping" (Agnew 2008: 41), the sound qualities resonating with the saturation aesthetic were positively valued as our Indian sound. Paradoxically, the parts played by the sitar—the instrument whose sound has been saved within the cultural memory as (stereo)typically Indian—adhered to this aesthetic significantly less than the cello and the venu, to the extent that it came to sound as the "stranger" within the context of this performance. A listening out for some of the details of this saturation aesthetic, or its lack, in the above performance helps to clarify this argument.

One of the musical nuances involved is the sound qualities afforded by the techniques used to play the respective instruments. The (almost) continuous blowing on the venu and continuous bowing of the cello allow both instruments a long and (potentially) dynamically stable sustain. In sonic contrast, the sitar's main tar are struck by the mizrab. After this attack and short sustain, the sound quickly decays, more quickly because of Rao's relatively open javārī. This results in a complex and loud overtone texture upon attack, with a relatively short sustain and quick decay. To adhere to the saturation aesthetic and keep the melodic flow and rich overtone texture, Rao frequently struck the baj and jor tar within melodic phrases and filled up potential silences with quick and loud chikāris. He combined this with repeated use of krintons (e.g. 03:54—03:55, 04:15—04:16, 04:30—04:40) and jamjamas (e.g. 22:43—22:52). To be valorized positively as "clear,"[98] these embellishments need to have a quick attack-sustain-decay. Combined, these playing techniques create a contrast with the long sustain of the immediately following cello (e.g. 04:48—04:53). It is almost impossible to determine the exact moment the cello starts, in stark contrast to the sitar, whose moment of attack is clearly audible. The cello's soft attack is followed by a long sustain that increases in volume. This makes the phrase seemingly arise from the tanpura-produced soundscape, the rich texture of overtones. The venu, through the player's gradual variations in the amount and pressure of the breath, creates a similar sense of sonic continuity. The contrast between these elements made

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[98] The relatively frequent and extremely clear and rigid use of such playing techniques is strongly associated with, and often suggested to be characteristic of, the music of his guru Ravi Shankar. As such, the employment of these techniques in themselves are claims of sonic belonging and legitimacy of his musical knowledge. An in-depth examination thereof is outside of the scope of this book.

me a listening suggestion: the gradual emergence of and immersion into the tanpura-soundscape of the cello and venu made me categorize the sitar's part as less flowing, abrupt, not adhering to the saturation aesthetic.

Another aspect that played a role in my listening out for contrast between these instruments is their frequency spectrum in relation to what Clayton (2007b) refers to as spatial acoustics. Combined with the relatively high volume of the auditorium's sound system and the addition of the taraf strings to the instrument, the low frequency range of the cello allows its sounds to travel through the large space of the Nazrul Mancha auditorium. Filling it up completely, it afforded me a physical sense of being encompassed by a texturally rich sound. The venu's frequency range is much higher than the cello's, and without amplification its sounds would not travel as far. However, the audio engineer has added a clearly audible reverberation effect to this instrument (cf. 02:20—02:25; 7:20—7:30). This effect is specifically designed to create a sense of both space in sound and of sound traveling through space; it offers a sense of immersion in a large sonic space and creates a sense of flow that is simultaneously melodic, dynamic, and spatial. At some moments during the concert, the reverb was so heavy that the sound of the last note played still resonated throughout pauses for breath (cf. 07:34—08:24). The sitar's main melodic range, with the exception of several phrases on the lower range pancham and khāraj tar (cf. 08:48—11:34), is also relatively high. The tāraf strings should provide the same aesthetic of continuation of sound that the echo effect has on the venu. However, during this concert they were not loudly amplified, had a short sustain, and no clearly audible reverb. The frequency range of its clearly distinguishable overtones, furthermore, is large. Specific overtones are partially audible in isolation,[99] creating a slightly scattered, rather than overall rich, sonic texture. The chikāri filling up the pauses on the sitar, finally, sound hasty and disruptive of the main melody when heard in contrast to the much more continuous main melodic lines of the venu and cello.

This analysis of a small fraction of the musical details that informed my listening out for and judging of the performance illustrates the complex amalgamation of musical parameters at play. Their effectiveness as a listening suggestion, however, cannot be understood without taking into account Rao's framings of this moment. He announced that Parameshwari is a rāga that was composed by his deceased guru Ravi Shankar, arguably the most widely-known sitariya

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[99] This is another element listened out for as sound qualities, here in direct relationship to the Ravi Shankar style javārī that Rao adheres to in his playing. I attend to these dynamics in more detail below.

on the planet. This canonized musician, so Rao emphasized, had played rāga Parameshwari at that same music conference on several occasions. Both assertions make strong claims of musical authority. First, they characterize Shankar as the main—but crucially, no longer alive—authority on the specificities that distinguish rāga Parameshwari from other rāgas and give it its specific flavor or feeling. Rao mentioning that Shankar is his guru draws on the latter's authority . Namely, Rao has learned this rāga directly from its authoritative composer. Thereby, this framing leaves little room for listeners to question his approach, infusing it with authority before a single note had been played. I was expecting to hear, at least from Rao, a rāga as taught to him directly by Shankar. Rao's statement that Shankar has played this rāga twice at the same music festival, furthermore, conferred the moment with historical significance. Listeners were reminded of the long history of the music conference and its substantial role within (patronage of) Hindustani classical music. We were also made aware of the role both Shankar and the rāga played in this history. Combined, these announcements created an awareness of the potential historical significance of the music that we were about to listen to. We were about to witness a concert that might be remembered on similar terms.

Rao's announcement also imposed a hierarchy between musicians. It left me wondering how the other two instrumentalists on stage, who had not studied with Shankar, had learned this rāga. I remembered that Shankar had based a lot of the rāgas he composed on the melodic material of Carnatic rāgas. Hence, I (perhaps mistakenly) decided that Subramaniam must be familiar with whatever Carnatic rāga had inspired Shankar's composition of Parameshwari. Because Rao and Rao-de Haas are married, I furthermore concluded that the former must have taught this rāga to the latter. Based on this assumption of an order of musical knowledge transmission, I provisionally categorized Rao-de Haas as Rao's shishya in the context of this specific performance. Spatially, furthermore, Rao sat between Subramaniam and Rao-de Haas and introduced them to the audience. Before a single Sa had sounded out, I had categorized the musicians I was about to listen to, with Rao infused with a sense of authority over both Rao-de Haas and Subramaniam.

However, this order changed over the course of the performance, illustrating Napier (2007b) suggestion that contrast is both an aesthetic tool as well as a means to negotiate established musical order. The transformation took place first and foremost through my listening out as described above, but it was also influenced by the audible and visible responses

of the rest of the audience. This audience was diverse: it included Kolkata's intellectual elites,[100] young artists listening to catch as much detail as they could, people who came to be seen, socialize, and gossip, and people who had traveled thousands of miles just to attend this festival. Despite the varied character of the audience, the audible difference between the audience's responses to the individual musicians was relatively consistent throughout the performance. This influenced my judgement of the music and musicians in that moment; at that time, reflexive academic distance was the last thing on my mind. Because most applause happened at the end of structurally separate parts, I understood it not to be related to executions of specific melodic phrases or rhythmic patterns but rather to timbral distinction and flow through playing techniques, reverb effects, and play with dynamics. It confirmed my own experience.

This brings me back to the questions posed at the beginning of this section: why were our aesthetic judgements articulated in terms of "our Indian music"? One element was certainly the active framing of musical endeavors as an encounter between "East and West." Rao and Rao-de Haas, a married couple who perform together regularly, promote their concerts using, among other things, this trope. Take, for example, the following excerpt from Rao-de Haas' website:

> EAST MARRIES WEST
>
> Back in the sixties, two **virtuosos**, Ravi **Shankar** and Yehudi **Menuhin** brought the music of the East and West together with their **historic collaboration** titled 'East meets West'. Five decades later, Shankar's **protégée**, Shubhendra Rao and brilliant cellist Saskia Rao-de Haas, **prove** that the **music of East and West no longer just meets but are ready for an abiding relationship through their path breaking music East Marries West**…. Saskia Rao-de Haas is a **pioneer** in the world of music for introducing **her Indian cello** to North Indian classical music. Speaking about Saskia, her **Guru Flute maestro Hariprasad Chaurasia** said in an interview: … "**She is Indian, because of her music**."[101]

Although this excerpt claims that Rao and Rao-de Haas are the embodiment of a (musical) marriage of East and West, in the concert the addition of Subramaniam had the effect of undermining any musical chemistry between husband and wife. This stood in stark, and for me increasingly painful, contrast to an audible synergy between Rao-de Haas and Subramaniam.[102]

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[100] Some of whom were snoring so loudly that their neighbors must have had difficulties hearing the music.

[101] http://www.saskiarao.com/images/East%20Marries%20West.pdf?phpMyAdmin=ELo9k%2CTkAjrfq7VFuiR37L4G4I7, last visited 24.10.2016.

[102] Versed in Carnatic music, a musical system distinct from Hindustani classical music in several aspects, Subramaniam in that moment was included in the latter category.

In the article quoted above, furthermore, Rao-de Haas uses the notion of "Indian sound" in direct relation to the adding of the resonant strings. Namely, these provided the "Indian cello" with the "very rich" sound, including "a kind of extra tinkle and resonance of the string as is common in sitar and tampura," which she "wished for all these years." A newspaper article dedicated to Rao-de Haas' "Indian Cello,"[103] similarly isolates the instrument's reduced size and the addition of ten tāraf strings to "enrich" the instrument's "tonal quality" as markers of a musical tradition defined spatio-geographically as "Indian." Thus by adding the tāraf strings to the cello to create the typical rich overtone timbre, Rao-de Haas actively performs herself as Indian through her music.[104] This authorized her to play "Indian music" during one of the prime timeslots of arguably the world's most important contemporary "Indian" classical music conference.

Clearly, I am not suggesting the adding of tāraf strings is the only reason that Rao-de Haas was invited to play at Doverlane. Besides the well-known but seldom-discussed musical politics of nepotism, there are many elements in Rao-de Haas' playing that allow for a categorization of her music in terms of Hindustani classical instrumental music. At Doverlane, the presence in her playing of several elements adhering to the saturation aesthetic enabled the audience to categorize her music as blending well with "our" music, removing the need to listen out for other aesthetic nuances. Especially because this timbral element combined with an adherence to the "Indian" saturation aesthetic, it was seductive to simply sink into her performance of Parameshwari.

To end this section, I return to the question of why it was not necessary to talk about Rao's performance. Rather than providing a definite answer, I have offered my reader several elements at play in this encounter. Not all of them are directly related to each other, but did play a role in my judgement of the concert. A combination of recorded music, Rao's framing of this performance, the responses from the audience, my narrating of my own listening experience, an LP cover, and abstracts from newspaper articles, books, and websites. But based on my description of the details that informed my selective listening experience, I invite you to answer this question yourself—to make relations, to listen out for them, and to, for yourself, construct the boundaries of Hindustani classical instrumental music through your listening practice.

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[103] http://www.saskiarao.com/home.php
[104] Many people are not able to distinguish between the timbral differences afforded by instruments such as sitar, sarod and even tanpura, and hence usually go straight to sitar when they hear an instrument with a lot of overtones.

"ha, well, listen … I want my sitar to **sound** exactly **like that**."

(Stephen Slawek, personal conversation).

In this quote, Slawek is referring to a sound recording of a concert played by his guru Ravi Shankar that had been uploaded on YouTube. The comment was part of a discussion about differences between various sitars, instrument makers, and the influence assorted material aspects have on the instrument's sound. I had just told Slawek that two other Maihar gharānā sitariyas had told me they wanted their sitars to sound as close as possible to Nikhil Banerjee's. In response, Slawek turned on the recording of Shankar's concert, telling me to listen to the exact "sound" that he wanted to emanate from his own sitar.

These are not the only musicians wanting the "sound" of their sitar to adhere to that of a canonized instrumentalist. The authoritative names of Vilayat Khan, Banerjee, and Shankar have become strongly associated with distinct timbral qualities. In this section, I examine connections between these intricate processes of association, exploring (partially retrospective) dynamics of musical inclusion and exclusion. While sound is influenced by a number of factors, my interlocutors often discuss them in terms of two aspects, javārī and tāraf, which they directly associate with, and use to debate, the "sound" and "style" of specific instrumentalists. A sound referred to as "closed" (band) javārī is associated with Vilayat Khan. A "semi-closed" javārī is often referred to as the Nikhil Banerjee sound. And an "open" (khula) javārī, is connected to Ravi Shankar. The tensions over these acoustic qualities, then, can be understood as part of two interrelated levels of musical inclusion and exclusion. The sonic distinctions listened out for in Banerjee's and Shankar's playing are part of intra-gharānā musical politics. In contrast, the distinctions listened out for as open and closed javārī are leveraged in inter-gharānā musical politics—mainly between Imdadhani and Maihar gharānās. The prior distinctions are smaller and hence more difficult to listen out for than the distinctions between open and closed javārī. Despite, or perhaps because of, these relatively minor distinctions between Banerjee's and Shankar's sounds, the debates about the respective qualities of these distinctions were more poignant than those discussing the difference

between Shankar and Khan.[105] Hence, I here only focus on the tensions over and manipulations of sonic distinctions as listened out for in terms of the sound of the prior two Maihar musicians.

While both are widely accepted as Maihar gharānā musicians, contemporary instrumentalists listen out for their distinctive "individual styles." Because publicly articulated disrespect of (the music of) such canonized instrumentalists would mean an end of one's musical career, few instrumentalists openly discuss their, at times extreme, dislike for either one of these musicians. The following interlocutors, for example, made it explicit that they did not want their names to be mentioned in relation to these statements:

> But Nikhil Banerjee, I mean, people always talk about the **feeling** in his music, his **sweet** hand, his **sound**. But if you **really listen** to his **recordings**, his music is really **boring**. He always does the same **trick**, over and over again. You know, many people say he was autistic, you know, and you hear that in the music, in his **structure**. No freedom, **nothing exciting**. (anonymous interlocutor)

> And you know, with Ravi Shankar. Like, his **javārī** is so **open**, that at time you can't even **properly hear** the **melody**. Surely, it sounded good for the **larger audience**, they **just like** the **sound**, you know. And he played for them. But for me, it's just too much. (anonymous interlocutor)

However, even if they won't discuss it on the record, many Maihar gharānā sitariyas have strong preferences for (selected aspects of) Banerjee's or Shankar's style, and sonically adhere to them in their own playing. Elements of their "sound," I argue, can be manipulated relatively easily. These are part of musicians' strategies of sonically relating.

Sangīt encounters: listening exercise

> Please listen to the following examples, concentrating on timbral of the sitar.
> Josh Feinberg—Malkauns [sound example 6.5]
> Nikhil Banerjee—Rāga Malkauns:
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwOatPsTNxs
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssO9fHiDJrg
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wukDeb0ThY
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNsYYdQsrxA
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgoajYsgYF4
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wgUGEsbjDT8

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[105] Certainly, this has to do with my research focus. However, another factor might be precisely because they were such closely connected musicians who, however, had very different musical careers and marketing strategies, the relatively minute differences between them become a source of tension. Vilayat Khan is often more easily dismissed as "a great musician, but just a completely different style."

Stephen Slawek—Malkauns [sound example 6.6]

Ravi Shankar—Malkauns

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8nRps5RbSE

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VwgNUNZPv7Q

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kMGsKCki4VQ

I have framed these moments of reaching the higher Sa within Josh Feinberg's and Stephen Slawek's alāp in rāga Malkauns, with links to several YouTube uploads. These contain recordings of Banerjee and Shankar playing the same rāga. In asking you to listen out for the subtle differences in sound qualities, I seek to make audible the work they do as sonic means of both distinction and alliance. Slawek wants his sitar to sound "exactly" like his teacher Ravi Shankar's; Feinberg wants his instrument to sound as close to Banerjee's as possible. However, as I suggest below, what is currently remembered and adhered to as their respective "sounds" is also influenced by differences in the quality of recordings. This is also audible in the differences between the individual recordings of Shankar and Banerjee. Both Feinberg and Slawek have experimented with shifting combinations of the materials used for the bridge as well as its shape, the thickness and material of the strings, and the frequency to which to tune Sa. Their adherence to these—after Banerjee's and Shankar's deaths, increasingly mediated—acoustic norms during performances and teaching is one of many strategies of referencing, and thus claiming a musical relationship with, these canonized musicians.

Importantly, the recordings that my interlocutors increasingly use as acoustic blueprints of these instrumentalists' "sounds" are not neutral representations. First, they are inherently selective. As the above YouTube uploads illustrate, which elements of a musical encounter are recorded depends on, among other aspects, the technology used, the location of the recording device, and its settings. Second, musicians and collectors tamper with such recordings to "improve"[106] the sound quality. Using software such as Adobe Audition or Audacity, they change Banerjee's "sound" for aesthetic and didactic purposes, as the following interview excerpt illustrates:

[sound example 6.7]

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[106] For example: the following recording uploaded on Youtube under the label "Nikhil Banerjee: Raga Patdeep: Anindo Chaterjee: Improved Sound" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fC7SB8bO4J8.

Interlocutor: Let's see, this one might be. I've **cleaned** this one up, I've **changed** the **EQ** a little bit, trying to…

Eva-Maria: But I like the other better actually…

Interlocutor: I like this because I am **able** to **hear**…

Eva-Maria: Yeah, fair enough … but the sound is a bit slimmer than the other…

Interlocutor: Because it's, it's. All the **highs are taken out**, you see.

Eva-Maria: Yeah it sounds more muffled here.

Interlocutor: Yeah, it's **muffled**, yeah. I am just trying to **get** so that you can, that is, **it is not as easy to listen to**, but **I wanna be able to hear what he is doing**.… **Ah, so great**.… This might have been a radio program or something that **somebody** has **recorded**, I don't know.

Improving the "sound," this example illustrates, does not always mean making it adhere to aesthetic norms. Instead, during this encounter my interlocutor listens out for good sound as interference. "Good" sound is an acoustic disturbance rather than a desired result. Good sound quality was sacrificed in favor of a sound that he negatively judged as sharper. This made it "difficult to listen to" but allowed this avid learner from recordings to listen out for the fine nuances of micro-melodic movements that, for him, also contribute to Banerjee's "sound." To enable such listening out, my interlocutor had filtered out the high frequencies that created too much "buzz," the rich overtone texture adhering to the saturation aesthetic. This distracted his ears from listening out for elements of the recording he prioritized. Such cleaning of a recording's sound quality, importantly, both bases itself on and becomes a sonic model for aesthetic norms and musical order. Now circulating widely on the internet, in the absence of the "maestros" themselves, several versions of often home-improved archival recordings become listened out for and discipline listeners ears as the norm. And because these recordings capture such a large variety of sound qualities, I argue that this gives Maihar musicians who claim a relationship with Banerjee or Shankar a lot of acoustic leeway. This is best exemplified through two examples.

First, the guru–shishiya relationship between Slawek and Shankar is relatively well documented outside the auditory realm. For example, there are photographs of Slawek sitting on stage with Shankar during performances, and Shankar wrote the foreword to Slawek's book on sitar techniques. Furthermore, like most disciples of canonized musicians, Slawek is eager to narrate anecdotes substantiating their relationship, as he does in the following interview:

Eva-Maria: What for you makes you say like, wow, this was, these are the things that make a **good performer** a good performer and a **bad performer** a bad performer?

Slawek: Well, that's a whole range of things, first, **sweetness**, which, uh, is very much tied to **being in tune**, and have a **good tonal quality**.

Eva-Maria: So of this, of the instrument?

Slawek: Yeah, sometimes that's, yeah. Well I am talking about **instrumental** music. So, sometimes you know, the **instrument** is a **problem**. I mean **not everybody is lucky enough** to get one that **sounds good** to begin with, and then **you can make it sound better if you play well**. So, **being in tune**, and um, not that I am always perfectly in tune, which would **bother** me a lot. Like I'll **listen** to something **afterwards** and realize that I did not realize that **my Re fret** was just a **tiny fraction** off, you know, because **on the stage you can't hear as well**, that is really difficult, I mean. And **even**, you know, like **Ravi Shankar**, was a, in **1996** or so, in Houston. He came backstage in the intermission and was **incapable, he** just could **not get the sitar in tune and he gave it to me to tune**. And it was partly the **sitar** was, **acting up**, you know how they can be, like children or something, misbehave, and uh, **I had to tune the sitar for him. So, it's not, like, inadequate, when Ravi Shankar was having those problems as well.**

Slawek here utilizes an anecdote about Shankar not being able to tune his instrument to justify why he himself is not always in tune. More importantly for the current argument, however, he uses the fact that Shankar asked him to tune his instrument to testify to their close musical relationship. Other strategies include having the javārī filed in exactly the "right" way to adhere to the sound quality of Shankar's sitar—that is, so that it sounds "open" without producing too many overtones, thus allowing one to hear whether the instrument is in tune— or being "lucky enough" to have found a "good" instrument which sounds "exactly" like Shankar's. These, I argue, are examples of the multi-layered strategies of emphasizing, amplifying, performing his relationship with his guru—they are acoustic claims of belonging. Combined with other elements, such as playing techniques, form, and rāga approach, this open javārī suggests: listen, I am part of the Maihar ghārana, specifically, Ravi Shankar's disciple. Listen: I matter as a musician. What I play is important. What I know is important.

In contrast to Slawek's well documented relationship with Shankar, Feinberg was born in the year before Nikhil Banerjee died. Hence, he has never received tālim from him nor heard him play live. In a context where embodied musical knowledge is considered the most—and for many older second-generation musicians, the only—valid source of musical knowledge, this presents him with a challenge. Feinberg's capitalizing on Banerjee's musical authority in his attempt, ultimately, to "achieve greatness … to become the first famous white sitar player in the world" (personal communication) both partially overlaps with and differ from Slawek's case. The differences are not unique to these two musicians. Rather, they are symptomatic of

tensions between second-generation players: those sometimes referred to as "older second-generation" Maihar gharānā instrumentalists have been present at concerts, tālim, and sometimes even riyāz of Banerjee and Shankar, while younger second-generation sitariyas have had little or no chance to build relationships with these musicians and hence cannot capitalize on the authority attached to such encounters.

Usually describing himself as a student of Ali Akbar Khan,[107] Feinberg is very aware that any assertion that he has learned from Nikhil Banerjee would be immediately discarded by any listener familiar with the name. Namely, Banerjee is currently remembered for his dedication to practice rather than for his teaching. However, Feinberg has found ways of carefully working around that challenge on both the musical and discursive level. He performs his musical belonging and "greatness" on multiple levels, one of which is adhering to Banerjee's sound quality:

> Most of what I **play**, in my head, **sounds** like an **attempt** at Nikhil **Banerjee**. That's what it sounds like.… More and more when I play for people, you know, they say I have my **own style**. And it reminds me of what I heard **Alam** say in an interview, actually, he **said something similar**, you know. Where you, he is just **trying** to **play like** his **father**, I mean, **people hear** what he is **playing**, then they say it sounds like **himself**, and I hear that as well. He, to me he **sounds different than** his **father**, but in his mind, I think he is trying to follow that and it is coming out in its own way. And I think, I think that's kind of how it should be, and I feel like **that** is kind of **how** it **happens with me**. (Josh Feinberg)

Nonchalantly comparing his relationship with Banerjee to the relationship that Alam Khan had with his father, Ali Akbar Khan, Feinberg leverages the well-accepted authority and well-documented depth of that hereditary guru–shishya relationship to legitimate his own musical practice and claim at individual style. During his teaching, concerts, and interviews, he often casually quotes "Nikhilbabu" and tells anecdotes about him, as if he has known him personally and closely. He furthermore often plays something he labels rāga Manomanjari, a rāga composed by Nikhil Banerjee, which he frames as follows during a concert announcement: "The **melody** I am going to be **playing** is called **Manomanjari**, which is a rather **uncommon**, uh, **rāga**. Those of you who **understand Indian rāga**, its uh, some people describe it as a **combination** of

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[107] This relationship is the source of controversy. Feinberg studied with a lot of different teachers before and after Khan, but until recently he usually only mentioned Khan as a guru and Banerjee as main influence in his promotional material. His other teachers thought this was disrespectful. Recently, Feinberg has started mentioning their names. Several disciples of Khan have suggested that Feinberg only learned with Khan for about two years in the group-classes context. Because this happened during the final stage of Khan's life, they question how much music he really got from Khan. Especially Khan's long-term disciples leverage the combination of these aspects to suggest that Feinberg is a fraud: the musical knowledge he gathered through his relationship with Khan is minimal, so he just uses Khan's name to get concerts and make a name for himself.

Puriya Kalyan and **Gawati**, which are two, uh, **mutually competent rāgas**" (Feinberg, concert announcement). When I asked him how he learned that rāga, as Banerjee was the only musician who knew it, he replied as follows:

> Eva-Maria: "But then, if nobody has learned it from him, how do you know what to play? How do you know the rules of this rāga, who has told you how it goes?"
>
> Feinberg: "Nobody. (laughing) Because nobody has learned it, and he is not there anymore. So, I **listened** to **recordings**, **picked up** from that, but **I can basically play whatever I want**. And **people cannot say** anything because they haven't learned it either. And most of them, **they won't hear anyway**." (informal conversation)

Categorizing the music played as rāga Manomanjari, to those familiar with it, signals Banerjee's influence without mentioning his name. Especially when combined with timbral qualities remembered as typical for Banerjee, playing this rāga is a sonic suggestion of the guru–shishya relationship without making this claim explicit. The explanation of this rāga in terms of its alleged two parent rāgas, furthermore, uses the musicological strategy of rāga grammar and evolutionary development. Thereby, he capitalizes on and at the same time performs a different, but not necessarily perceived of as conflicting, form of musical authority. Combined with such other strategies—his filing of the javārī, tempering with materials, and choosing an instrument whose tārafs respond in a manner similar to Banerjee's—are part of the tactics he employs in his struggle to be accepted as a Maihar gharānā musician.

Crucially, Feinberg's knowledge about Banerjee's music is limited to that which he has gained by listening to recordings:

> So, if I want to **learn** a **new rāga**, I **listen** to a **recording**.… I have at least **500 unpublished recordings**, you know, **full** recordings.… And I think that is important, you know, **training** is **important**, but **listening** is **also important**. You know, if you get to a certain **level** … when I listen, **I listen very intently**.… I am **listening for a few**, it **depends** on **what** I am **listening to**. (Josh Feinberg)

Feinberg's aesthetic concept of sound quality is based on such "Xerox" musicianship (Raja 2005). That is, the sound of Banerjee's sitar that he seeks to imitate is based on what he listened out for on sound recordings. He is not alone in this challenge; increasingly contemporary listeners' knowledge of the music of Banerjee and other deceased artists is solely based on recordings. This increased mediation of acoustic norms, however, does not make Feinberg's sonic claims less effective. Instead, it provides him with a little timbral leeway. As the Malkauns

examples in the above YouTube links make audible, the timbral qualities captured on those recordings differ both between recordings of individual artists[108] as well as between artists. Because contemporary musicians listen out for these sound qualities as sonic models, these recordings provide instrumentalists with a relatively large spectrum of standards of "Nikhil Banerjee's sitar sound quality" to acoustically align themselves with. Thereby, these recordings provide musicians with acoustically flexible norms of timbral qualities that inform how and on which aesthetic basis the sound of Banerjee's and Shankar's sitar are listened out for and remembered.

In sum, the "sound" of canonized musicians lends itself well to various forms of manipulation. I am not asserting that every contemporary sitariya listens out for, seeks to adhere to, or duplicate these sound qualities. Nor am I arguing that these are solely strategies of musical inclusion and exclusion, or that every listener or musician perceives these as such. I do assert though that these are some of the many elements that my interlocutors listen out for in their valorization of musical knowledge practices. Contemporary second-generation disciples musically claim, perform if you will, their relationship with canonized musicians by manipulating javārī and tāraf on the one hand, and tampering with recordings on the other. That is, they play with and capitalize on the auditory memory listeners regarding the relationship between subtle differences in timbre and musical authority associated with Nikhil Banerjee and Ravi Shankar. Exactly because these qualities are saved—have become naturalized—in the cultural memory and on recordings as characteristic for their style, they serve as normative acoustic parameters. The subtlety of these differences might itself be another factor in their effectiveness. The (lack of) ability to hear and play with these distinctions, for my interlocutors, is itself also a means of illustrating (a lack of) listening skills. Nagging about one's javārī being already gone even though it has just been "done," for example, can illustrate one's finely attuned listening skills. Listening out for sound qualities, in this sense, creates musical order. However, it is manipulated for other purposes than solely signaling musical relationships with canonized musicians.

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[108] My informants also claim that the "sound" of these musicians also changed over time. For example, Nikhil Banerjee is said to have experimented with the use of different strings and manipulations of the frequency of Sa. Narrating the importance of this transformation for the sound quality of his sitar, his disciples and followers claim he eventually tuned his sitar to a Sa to a D instead of the "usual" C sharp.

Tāraf can also serve as sonic confirmation or rejection of the correctness of a (part of a) melodic phrase during riyāz, tālim, performance, and listening sessions. That is, its vibrations allow for sonic feedback in a very physical way. The tāraf are tuned to what is often talked about as the "notes" of the rāga: the respective rāga-specific frequencies or tonal places where one is allowed to "land" or "linger." For rāga Yaman, for example, a sitar with thirteen tāraf most probably will be tuned: Sa, Ni, Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa, Re, Ga. Sounding out the exact frequency (or double or half) to which a tāraf is tuned, causes the tāraf to vibrate along with the main string. Musicians listen out for this release of dynamic energy of the tāraf in terms of the "response" of an instrument. If upon the sounding out of the main string the tāraf strings start to vibrate easily and loudly, and when it takes a relatively long time before its dynamic energy is completely faded out, musicians feel-and-hear this as the instrument responding "well."

How much response is listened out for as the "right" amount of response, however, depends on the musician. Some do not like a too loud and long sustain because a relatively long, gradual, and loud decay is listened out for as interfering with the main melody. Others will suggest that a soft and quick response of the tāraf makes the instrument's overall "sound" too empty. Like javārī, differences in response are often listened out for and categorized in terms of style of a canonized instrumentalist. While each instrument is unique, musicians adhering to Shankar's style have a relatively loud and long response. This results in a louder, more complex overtone spectrum. Those adhering to Banerjee's sound quality listen out for a slightly less broad frequency range and complexity of the overtone spectrum as "good response."

Such normative listening is not solely a matter of the ears. While playing the sitar, for example, one feels the response; the body parts that are in direct contact with the instrument, such as the fingers, the (left) foot, the elbow, and upper arm, sense the vibrations as transported through the various parts of the instrument. For the musician playing the instrument during performance, riyāz, and tālim, the normative listening out for a tāraf response therefore extends beyond the listening out for the amplification of certain frequencies with the ears to include a haptic form of listening, as the following situation during one of my riyaz sessions illustrates:

> No Eva! That is not Ma. **Where** is your Ma? **Check your tāraf. Listen**. See, that is **tuned** fine. So, it is not your tāraf, it is your Ma that is off. Now **play**.
>
> …
>
> Aaaaaaah, see, there is your Ma. Now it is fine. **Play it like this only**. **Practice** this phrase, and concentrate on that Ma. **Listen**, **feel your sitar responding**, then you will know it is right.

My teacher corrected a phrase I played. Through, among other aspects, listening out for the sounds of a tāraf response that did not come, he categorized one element of the phrase I played as a mistake: the lack of response told him I was playing my Ma besur. He told me to use my tāraf as sonic-tactile feedback in my attempt to find the correct tonal place within that particular melodic movement. As "sonic tactility" (Garcia 2015), it follows, tāraf is a source of constant aesthetic feedback for the musician. This response offers musicians sonic-tactile knowledge: they are in tune. Informed by naturalized conventions, it disciplines the musician's aesthetic choices—the way his fingers move, the musical actions he takes. It simultaneously contains and reproduces musical knowledge and order.

Such musical disciplining, and disciplining of music, takes on several forms and is contested. First of all, it disciplines the body of the student into a particular aesthetic norm. When I first started learning with my current teacher, for example, he told me that "if you want to **learn** from me, you will have to **start** all over. Start from the very beginning." I thought I had mastered my da and ra strokes years earlier when learning sitar for the first time in Amsterdam. One rests the thumb on the part of the gourd where it connects to the sitar neck, where it functions as an anchor from which the rest of the hand can move freely to execute various strokes and stroke patterns. Perhaps I had unconsciously changed my hand position since my lessons in Amsterdam, or possibly I had learned it differently from my first teacher. I couldn't remember. But my new teacher was clear: if I wanted to learn music with him, I had to be willing to let go of all my musical knowledge and skills, start fresh, and comply with his rules. I had to learn to hold my thumb stable during the da stroke, the upward stroke of the main tar, which should also stroke the jor tar. Namely, without that jor Sa sounding out, it would sound empty, and "That is how those Vilayat Khan people play, we don't want to sound like that." To get my hand to execute this stroke in the correct way, I have to practice four strong da strokes from middle octave Sa to higher Sa on each of those eight notes. I am only allowed to execute the next stroke when the sound from the last one is completely gone. I have to listen to what

happens to the sound: how the execution of the stroke influences the sound, how the vibrations from the jor tar interact with the main notes and create or release melodic tension, how and when the tāraf responds, how the sounds transform during their decay. Months later, I am practicing mīnd. Each time I put pressure on and then pull the tar away from its original location on the frets, I listen. I learn to listen out for the tāraf response. I learn how much tension from the strings I should feel on and in my fingertips, and to connect a slight vibration I feel transmitted to my foot to sur. I learn to categorize response as a confirmation of aesthetic correctness. I learn to want that response. Slowly, I learn that the response tells me something. It tells me the sounds I make are ok.

Such sonorous disciplining of the body during long hours of riyāz, however, is not favored equally by all musicians. This knowledge practice is also a flashpoint of negotiations of musical power and authority. Consider the following contradictory statements from two musicians:

> These **traditionalist** people. They will have you just **practice** Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni Sa
> for a year, what is the use of that? It's just a way to **assert power over you**.
> Why not **teach** some **simple tunes**, you know, just to **make** it **interesting**?
> That is what **I do** at least, **with my students**.
> (anonymous interlocutor)

> You know, I think maybe he **just wants to learn some tunes**. Which is fine, if he
> wants that, sure. But then he **should not come to me**, he should just find anybody
> and ask them to teach him some Bollywood songs or something. Or go on **YouTube**
> and **try to copy that**, simple. That is **not** the **way that I teach**.
> (anonymous interlocutor)

The first instrumentalist quoted here was responding to my telling him about my new practice regime. He is in his forties, and portrayed in the media as one of the "young" or "new" generation Maihar instrumentalists. This labeling is a source of frustration for him, because he is thereby denied the musical authority ascribed to "old" generation musicians. Simultaneously, however, such categorization allows him leeway for his musical strategies of distinction. He often distances himself from musical practices he frames as traditional, instead portraying himself as a "modern" artist. In the context of India, the notion of modernity and tradition are

themselves complex. Their unpacking, however, is outside of the scope of this book.[109] Of relevance here is that such dichotomies can be leveraged to legitimate musical practices. Namely, my second interlocutor emphasizes that the simple playing of tunes for him is not the goal of teaching the music, but instead one should practice one element to slowly gain in-depth knowledge of the many details of the music. The first interlocutor, however, actively rejects the usefulness of this disciplining form of listening as knowledge practices. He utilizes the, for him negatively connoted, notion of tradition in the process.

In these moments, these instrumentalists were legitimating their knowledge practices in contrast to those of the other, through me. For the first interlocutor, rejecting the "traditionalist" form of listening to details also serves as a basis to assert his mode of teaching as superior. Because I had been present while he had been teaching some of his students, he knew that I was aware that he did things a little differently from my teacher. During these teaching sessions, he did not train his students to listen out for tāraf response, nor did he teach them how to tune these strings. Instead, he taught them to play children's songs. This, he explained to me, was his way of making them create a relationship with the instrument; by giving them something they already partly knew (the melody) and having them translate that melody into sargam, and then translate that sargam into places on the sitar's neck, he disciplined their ears and hands. This, however, favored other musical elements and a different basic concept of the music than the one I was exposed to through my teacher. As my teacher's forms of knowledge transfer could be framed as "traditional" tālim, which within Maihar gharānā still carries connotations of musical authority, my interlocutor needed to legitimate this playing with norms of musical knowledge transfer to me.

The second-generation musicians he described as traditionalists similarly struggle with this issue, but from a different angle:

> You know, **students nowadays**, they just don't have the **patience** to **sit and practice for hours** straight and **really learn how to listen**. So, you know, I find that very **difficult**. Because, really, I don't want to teach like that. But what to do, you know? **They just want to learn some music, and they don't really know what it takes.** They can't even **tune** their **instruments**, they don't even tune their **tārafs** because they are **too busy wanting to learn the next thing**. (anonymous interlocutor, personal conversation)

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[109] See Breckenridge (1995) and Gupta (2000) for various takes on this debate.

Here, the role of tāraf as an acoustic discipliner simultaneously functions as a signifier of the (lack of) dedication and discipline of the student. This, in turn, is linked by musicians to notions of musical authenticity and depth of musical knowledge, contrasted with a desire for quantity, impatience, and superficiality:

> So, this one **student**, now, I just have him **really slowly practice** his **da and ra strokes i**n yaman kalyān **thāt**. And I told him to **listen** to the **tāraf response**. This takes a lot of **concentration** and **patience**, and some of them, they don't have that. Or they come and expect very **quick progress**, asking **how many rāgas they will learn in a year**, like that. Then when I tell them the first year they will be practicing like this only and their **progress** will depend on **their work**, they don't come back. But I am not going to change that, **this is how I learned from Mā, and this is the way I teach**. (anonymous interlocutor, personal conversation)

Several forms of knowledge are simultaneously discussed in terms of tāraf and obtained through a listening out for tāraf. Here leveraging the authority of his canonized guru, Annapurna Devi, who is well known for her strict adherence to tradition, listening out for tāraf signifies a student's dedication to "real" musical knowledge.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Devi's name and musical practices have become attached to and legitimated in terms of notions of tradition, (musical) purity, and extreme forms of (musical) discipline and rigidity. This happens, in part, through canonizing narratives elaborating on her unusual listening abilities. Anecdotes about her alleged capacity to pick up on a slightly out-of-tune tāraf string from another room of the house serve as proof of her natural and extraordinary musical talent:

> You know, we were sitting in that **room**, and [student] was practicing. And **Mā** was in the kitchen, cooking something. So, nobody thought she was **listening**, she was **far away**, so we were **relaxed**. And all of a sudden, there she yells "your tāraf is out of tune, your Ni, fix it." That is what she is like, you know. So, from that moment on, we were always very **conscious** in that house, because **she was always listening**. (anonymous interlocutor)

This anecdote gives the concept of tāraf as sonic disciplining a new dimension, illustrating that "history of surveillance is a much a sound history as a history of vision" (Bull and Back 2003: 5). Tāraf can be simultaneously understood as a form of sonic "surveillance" (Foucault 1985) and surveillance of the sonic, as also briefly touched upon by Bergeron (1992). During any moment, her disciples expect Devi to be listening out for (a lack of) particular frequencies within the overtone spectrum of the sounds they produce. If the tāraf responds at the wrong moment,

this potentially leads to punishment. Namely, to her such response indicates a besur playing and/or an out of tune tāraf. In this example, such punishment took on the relatively mild form of a reprimand and an order to correct and thereby adhere to the—in her ears correct—musical order of things.

Musical Order: Sur, Rāga, Feeling

Besides a disciplining mechanism, tāraf is also used to create tonal emphasis. Thereby, it plays a role in the disciplining of the ears-and-body in listening out for such emphasis as characteristic of specific rāgas. This saturation aesthetic, as performed through and desired in the form of "continuity and textural richness" on the one hand, exists in tension with an aesthetic weight given to "melodic clarity on the other hand" (Demoucron et al. 2012: 92). Affording a listening out for specific ratios between this richness in overtone spectrum and melodic clarity, tāraf and javārī allow musicians to perform yet another form of sonic order. The tāraf amplify particular tonal places within a complex harmonic structure, in specific relationships to lesser amplified places. The response of the tāraf strings, when amplifying the perceivably correct location within the tonal space, is an aesthetic element often referred to as "let the sur come out." Sur, in turn, is one of the many aspects involved musicians' distinction between "simply playing the notes" and "getting the feeling of the rāga."

The desire to "let the sur come out" and/or to "play in sur," and the normative dismissal of a player who "played besur," was often mobilized in discourses of musical inclusion and exclusion during my research: "If you **move** your **finger** just a bit like this, the **sur** will **come out so beautifully**!" (anonymous interlocutor). It can also be used with a negative connotation, for example during a discussion about a concert my interlocutor and I just heard: "How did you **like** his playing?", I asked my interlocutor. "Well, I mean, it was **interesting**, but, well, he **didn't** really always play in **sur**," he replied. Within the academic literature, Jairazbhoy misrepresents the concept in his description of the drone: "The closest to this in North Indian music is the word sur, which implies the ground note, Sa. The drone, however, involves several notes in addition to the ground note, and implies the continual sounding of these throughout a performance" (2011 [1971]: 7). While sur can refer to Sa as well, this simplifies a rather intricate concept. Ranade points to its complexity in understanding sur as "more of an atmospheric agent than a

mere supply of one basic note etc.,” which he relates to notions of sur dena, “to give a sur,” and sur bharna, “to fill a sur” (1990: 16). He suggests that “any sur should necessarily possess” the “elements of continuity and fullness” (ibid.: 16). However, he does not elaborate on what the concept means musically and how it is listened out for as an aesthetic element. Nor does he relate the notion of sur to rāga or feeling. I am not aware of any other publications mentioning this notion.

What do musicians listen out for and valorize as sur? How does it relate to rāga and rāga feeling? The distinct but interrelated uses of the notion mentioned above illustrate two elements that musicians listen out for as sur. First, sur is used to discuss whether an instrumentalist did or did not play in tune, the latter referred to as besur. If the tāraf is tuned correctly but the musician does not play that frequency or land on a slightly different one with the main string, the tāraf does not respond or responds loudly at a frequency close to the frequency of the main melody. The latter creates an unwanted tonal tension, which will be categorized as the musician playing besur. Contrastingly, if the tāraf strings are tuned to vibrate at a frequency that does not correspond to one of the notes that a musician wants to “show”— that is, amplify, as a part of the rāga—the tāraf will still respond when a mīnd phrase “moves” through that particular frequency. A response at such an aesthetically undesirable moment within the melodic movement, combined with a lack of response at the aesthetically desirable moment, might make it sound as if the main melody is besur. In this, then, tāraf also holds the potential of sonorous disturbance. That is, melodic tensions built up through the main melodic articulations can be broken or changed when the tāraf resonates on a frequency different from the ones the musician wants to amplify.

Such amplification of certain frequencies as an aesthetic element is the second way in which the notion of sur is used: if the tāraf responds at the structurally right moment within the rāga, one “lets the sur come out,” or “gives sur.” This amplifies the tonal place played by the main string and thus creates tonal emphasis. Because the tāraf are much thinner than the main tar, they produce a slightly different timbre, but still close enough so that it is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between them. This dynamic and textural emphasis of tonal places, combined with the amount of time spent on each one, creates a hierarchic order between tonal places listened out for as characteristic for rāga. It allows musicians to recognize the character of the rāga through the tonal tensions and complex repetition and difference thereof. The notion of feeling of a rāga, I argue, among many other elements, is informed by a

naturalized desire for these responses in complex relation of difference and repetitions. I attend to other aspects constitutive of this complex notion of feeling of rāga in the following chapters.

<div align="right">Concluding Remarks</div>

In this chapter, several dimensions of sound as listened out for in Hindustani classical instrumental music emerged. Listening out for spatial-dynamic dimensions, the (lack of flow) caused by playing techniques, the relative frequency of respective instruments, and their (lack of) sonic blending with the tanpura, I argued that the combination of these elements resulted in a contrast aesthetic between sitar on the one hand, and cello and venu on the other. My interlocutor and I valorized this contrast based on saturation aesthetic. In the following section, I argued that, in the case of Maihar sitariyas, specific timbral characteristics caused by, among other things, a combination of javārī and tāraf have come to be listened out for as one of the aspects representative of the respective "sounds" of Shankar and Banerjee. After their passing, however, it is impossible to listen out for these dimensions as they directly emerge from their sitar. Hence, the sonic standards of the collective remembering of Banerjee and Shankar's "sound," are increasingly mediated by audio recordings with distinct recording qualities. The range of sound that one can listen out for as characteristic of these musicians' styles therefore becomes ever more flexible. Musicians manipulate these aspects on their own sitars to resonate with the specifics of these sounds, making sonic claims of musical relationships. I furthermore argued that tāraf plays central roles in the disciplining of listeners' ears. Simultaneously, such an ability to listen out for the tāraf response has become a trope leveraged in negotiations of power. How one listens out for and values tāraf depends on musical practices, one's guru, and ideologies such as modernity and tradition. Related to this, I argued that tāraf also plays roles in the creation of musical order: a response tells the listener something about sur, both that it is in tune as well as regarding the related aesthetic notions of "giving sur" and "letting sur come out." The latter also plays a role in the mystified notion of bringing out the feeling of rāga. Other constituting elements will be examined in the following chapters.

Coming back to the encounters that this chapter started with, what dimensions of sound did these musicians make operational to (de)legitimate their own and others' musical articulations? In the case of the "sweet hand," Amit's adherence to the timbral quality of Banerjee's instrument certainly played a role in this positive valuing. His ability to "let the sur come out" was another factor. However, as I illustrate in the following chapters, this emotion and sound of Nikhil Banerjee, as here transferred to and sonically evidenced by Amit's "sweet hand," is not restricted to these categories. The same can be argued for the "sound" that "rips your heart." Certainly, a good response of the tāraf when giving sur played a role in the big sound, as well as the long sustain. Through his many years of learning with Khan, his body has been disciplined to want to feel the instrument responding at a specific place within the overtone spectrum. Examining other nuances constitutive of this "feeling," in the next chapter I listen out for several dimensions of note within Hindustani classical instrumental music.

Khansaheb, he could just, he could **just** play **one note**, **one single Sa**. And that Sa would just bring the **feeling** of the rāga, and it would just **completely grab you**. That was so special about his playing, he could bring out the feeling of the rāga with one single note. So that is what **attracted** me. Listening to him, I realized that is what I wanted to be able to do, you know.

(anonymous disciple of Ali Akbar Khan)

And these guys **nowadays**, these **young players**, like your friend Purbayan. They just play really **fast**, a bunch of **speedy sapat tāns** or a **complicated** long **tihai** they will play, which of course doesn't come spontaneous. It is all **memorized** because nobody can compose and calculate such long tihais on the spot, you know. And then the **audience** will go like, "ooooooh, wah wah," and they will just be **impressed** by the **speed** and love it. But **it is just a bunch of notes**, sometimes it is not even **clear**, and it could be any **rāga** they are playing. This kind of **virtuoso** display, it has **nothing** to do with **Indian music**.

(anonymous instrumentalist, personal conversation)

It must be **understood** that though many of these **melodies** were in queer **scales**, no attempt has been made, beyond an occasional ♭ , ♯, or ♮, where the **effect** was **characteristic**, to **represent niceties** of **intonation**.… As it is **impossible** for the **European reader** to **reproduce** the **local colour** which is imparted by **curiosities** of **grace-note** or of **intonation**, it is **unnecessary** to **trouble** him with them at this stage. (Fox Strangways 1914: 17)

The above quotes each mobilize distinct versions of note to (de)valorize musical articulations and/or musicians. While in the first the concept seems positively connoted, the second interlocutor uses it as a critique. In the third excerpt, Fox Strangways utilizes note to create an a priori distinction between the European reader and the musicians producing the note. Analyzing and debating Hindustani classical (instrumental) music's alleged essential characteristics, (ethno)musicologists represent something they designate as "notes" in staff notation, sargam, (computer-based) graphs, or in a combination of the above.[110] Crucially,

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[110] Nattiez has called this process "discretization" (1990: 80): the "written note articulates, within an exterior continuum, units that have a beginning and an end. It captures a number of that sound's salient characteristics—those that are essential to preserving certain systems (in classical music, first and foremost, pitch and duration; to a lesser degree, intensity, timbre, and tempo)" (Nattiez 1990 80–81). Within Hindustani classical instrumental music, I argue, the concept of note can refer to several flexible musical phenomena.

while the note is "not 'naturally' given" (Nattiez 1990: 81) as a clearly marked musical unit ready to be listened out for by the carefully listening musician, musicologists often present it as such. Portrayed as a truthful representation of a complex musical phenomenon, the notion allows a privileging of particular musical elements over others. Musicians also use the term, at times contrasting such abstract reductions and at others (partially) echoing it. This raises the question of the note and its role in dynamics of knowledge and power: what elements do which interlocutors listen out for as note, and how do they leverage this in dynamics of musical inclusion and exclusion? In this chapter, I examine these questions. A brief exploration of note, as mobilized in the three quotes above, reveals the variety of musical knowledge practices the concept can refer to.

In the first passage, one of Ali Akbar Khan's disciple uses the concept to describe how he became attracted to Khan's music. My interlocutor portrays Khan's ability to grab the listener with one single note as audible evidence of this musician's musical genius. Such discursive leveraging of the notion of note is not unique to this situation; I encountered similar narratives throughout my research. In such narratives, Khan's disciples often connect the "effect" the note had upon the listeners to a notion of musical depth:

Interlocutor: My father[111] taught me a lot of really important things, about the **structure** of the **music**, and teaching me the, the **bols**, and making **tāns** from particular places and, make, how to make **tihais**, and, and all the, all the **structure** that you, you know, you need to learn to play this music. But it was all, all kind of, uhm, had a **certain level**. And then with **Khansaheb** it was like as if you **dived down** in a **deep well**, to the center of the earth. And you **understand** like the **essence** of the earth, you know. (laughing) It's like that kind of experience, versus, like, hanging out on the **outside** and **seeing** what it's like.

Eva-Maria: Yeah, oh, that's a beautiful tree.

Interlocutor: Yeah exactly, it's like, you know. You, if you wanna say you **understand** the planet, you know, say, you go and you crap all around and you understand. But if you were to sit at the center of the earth, of course that is impossible, but have that **experience**, like you are, and **feeling** the whole entire earth, that is kind of what it was to **sit with him**. It was like he would just, **boil** it **down** to the **essence** of it. You know, like, one **note**, two **notes**, what they **can do to you**. That's it, you know, whether you are, when you hear, you know. Some of my **memories** of **hearing** him in **concert**, it's just like, one **note**, and that sticks with you, for your life, you know. To, to be **able** to **play like** that, I think is the most **privileged power**, you know.

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[111] A disciple of Ravi Shankar.

In above interview excerpt, the disciple metaphorically contrasts two ways of knowing the earth, to explain his distinction between two types of musical knowledge. By sitting on the earth's surface and visually observing it from the outside, one gets a different form of knowledge about the earth than when one physically experiences it, feels it from the inside. Thereby, the metaphor hints at a notion of musical depth as experienced through Khan's playing of note, as something felt, something inherently connected to physical experience. Aspects such as structure, rhythmical and melodic patterns, on the other hand, are cast aside as standardized surface knowledge. Musical depth, the second interlocutor suggests, can be experienced both when "sitting" with Khan or when listening to him in concert.

However, note has taken on several different dimensions. The term "sitting" refers to tālim, where one literally sits with one's guru in order to receive musical knowledge from him. In Khan's case, this can refer to either one-on-one or group teaching at the Ali Akbar College of Music. During such tālim, whatever happened musically would be notated in sargam. This system of notation produces a "graphic sign for a given sound-material" (Nattiez 1990: 80)—here, a sign for relative pitch order. These notations are currently archived in personal libraries, which contain up to thousands of such "discretized" (ibid.) musical objects. Disciples treat these as rare musical knowledge treasures, a form of musical heritage that is to be shared only with those deserving of it. Long-term disciple and handyman Terry Pease, for example, repeatedly asked me what he should do with the meter of maps containing "his heritage": notations from his classes with Khan from the mid-1960s onwards. Because his guru is dead, his own body was giving out on him, and his memory was fading, these notes on paper had become the only remaining trace of the musical knowledge he had so painstakingly gained through his extreme dedication to Khan. Notes, for Pease, no longer needed to sound out and grab him. Instead, the fact that they were there with him in his room in a house for the elderly, thousands of musical objects captured on paper, was enough. In their discretized, notated form, notes served as evidence of his life and relationship with Khan.

While in the above cases note is connoted positively, in the second excerpt the concept de-valorizes musical practices. The "nowadays" and "young" furthermore indicate that this use of the concept is related to an idea of modernity often contrasted with ideologies of tradition and purity. The interlocutor relates the concept of note(s) to speed, complexity, and (a lack of) clarity. These elements are in turn associated with virtuoso display: the playing of a quick succession of notes from low frequency to high and back (sapat tāns), or through quick

threefold repetition of a rhythmically and melodically intricate pattern (tihai), might impress an audience. However, my interlocutor emphasizes, this is not to be considered "real" Indian music. That is, such virtuoso (dis)plays of notes lack nuances that enable the listener to distinguish between rāgas. In contrast to the connotation of depth of musical knowledge attached to note as leveraged by Khan's disciple, the visual metaphor of display indicates an idea of musical superficiality. My interlocutor mobilizes this to disqualify such musical articulations. He furthermore implicitly listens out for this form of note to categorize audiences as musically unknowledgeable. Namely, applauding such a "bunch of speedy notes," for him illustrates their lack of knowledge about what Hindustani classical instrumental music is "really" about. Listening out for speedy notes, in sum, is a form aural surveillance on two interrelated levels. First, it excludes Chatterjee's music from the category of real Hindustani classical instrumental music and thereby disqualifies him as a real musician. Second, it categorizes certain members of audiences as unknowledgeable listeners.

Finally, the writings on note in *The Music of Hindostan*[112] (1914) by British musicologist Arthur Henry Fox Strangways, are exemplary of the leveraging of several discursive topoi echoed in later (ethno)musicological discourses on the topic. The text is considered one of the early canonical works on this music, aiming to inform a European audience about the "curiosities" of the music of "Hindostan." Fox Strangways argues that "Grace is inherent in the note, not an appendage to it" (Fox Strangways 1914: ix). This indicates that he might have been aware of a disjuncture between the, at that time conventional, concept of note as prescriptive for pitched sound and the musical practices he transcribed as notes. He might have intended to lay bare the problems of using a notation system for a music whose logics do not adhere to the structural parameters assumed and imposed by such systems. However, this text leverages the "curiosities of grace note" of the "music of Hindostan," to perform a tension between an alleged ungraspability of this music's essential details and the (musicological) desire to control it. That is, the details of the grace notes remain un-representable and thus, perhaps, even more desirable. Throughout the text, Fox Strangways emphasizes this ungraspability, while still offering a representation to satisfy the potential readers' desire: "if the grace … were put, as it were, under an **aural microscope** the **real sounds** would appear something like this " (Fox Strangways 1914: 190). Thereby, he draws on and reproduces

discourses of the perceived impossibility of accurately representing the nuances and mysteries of Hindustani classical music on paper, while still offering the reader a sense of knowledge, and hence control, through staff notation. The same visual metaphor of the microscope emerges again in Napier's text, illustrating the depths of the roots of colonial modes of thought in our relating to Hindustani classical instrumental music: "These are **complex** and **subtle** issues.… Variation may be more 'neutral' and **microscopic**: articulation may be varied by the accompanist, **ornaments** reproduced as more substantial **notes**, **slides** as **discrete notes**, **discrete notes** as **slides**. (Napier 2006: 99). Like Napier here, Fox Strangways intensifies the mystery surrounding the curiosities of the grace note by arguing that his European reader would not be able to reproduce these "unusual" musical nuances:

> It is in the **grace-note** that the **unusual intonations**, which were **once** no doubt commoner in the Rāgs than they now are, still **survive**. A **grace** seldom consists of the diatonic **notes** of the Rāg.… Consequently it is **impossible** without a very elaborate **notation** to give a **true picture** of it. There is the less need to do so since, even if it were **faithfully presented**, it would be impossible for **European throats** or **fingers** to **perform** it. (Fox Strangways 1914: 186)

Thereby, the text performs an assumed ontological distinction between the European readers and the people making the "music of Hindostan." No matter how meticulously one transcribed these grace notes, no matter how powerful one's "aural microscope" was, European bodies are simply not equipped for the proper execution of this type of grace note. Fox Strangways' suggestion hints at an assumption of innate, natural relationships between musicality, musicians' bodies, ethnicity, musical parameters and geopolitical regions, as illustrated by the following statement of Zuckerman: "To be a **non-Indian performer of Indian music** means to be either **ignored** or even **ridiculed**" (Ken Zuckerman 1996, disciple of Ali Akbar Khan). Perhaps even more telling of this tendency is the following suggestion made by an interlocutor while discussing a concert played by Zuckerman in India: "His concert was really quite nice, he played very well. If you **closed** your **eyes**, you **almost couldn't hear** he was **not Indian**" (anonymous interlocutor). [113] This tension between ethnicity and music plays into the second aspect performed by Fox Strangways' text. It portrays the grace note as a cultural as well as a historical Other. Presenting it as a remnant of a lost, musically better time, it historicizes the grace note,

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[113] Without wanting to subscribe to or suggest that these categories are fixed and musicians can be neatly ordered as either Indian or non-Indian, my interlocutors listen differently to musicians they categorize as Indian than they do to musicians they categorize as non-Indian. Especially for second-generation diaspora, this categorization is problematic, context dependent, and has little to do with formal citizenship. An examining of these dynamics is outside of the scope of this book.

inserting it with musical value in the process. Fox Strangways thereby writes himself into the tradition of comparison,[114] playing into and reproducing the orientalist construction of this music as (partially) locked in ancient history. Partially transformed, these ideas are carried forward and resonate in contemporary musical knowledge practices, influencing how my interlocutors valorize through their selective listening.

My brief analysis of these varied uses of the concept of note illustrates a flexibility in its use. This might be one of the reasons why it is a beloved instrument of power within contemporary musical knowledge practices. Musicians listen out for, categorize, discuss, quarrel over, represent and reject partially distinct and partially overlapping dimensions of musical elements as note. However, within musicological debates about the alleged true nature of Hindustani classical music, the "right" approach to rāga, and the existence of srutis, this variety remains largely unheard. Silenced, if you will.

Note within the Musicologies

(Ethno)musicologists often portray note as the English translation of the concept of svāra.[115] Jairazbhoy, for example, writes about the "seven notes (svars)" recognized in "North Indian musical theory" (2011 (1971): 32): Sadja, Resabha, Gandhara, Madhyama, Pañcama, Dhaivata, and Nisada. Explaining Hindustani classical music theory in and on European art music terms, he uses note and svār interchangeably:

> The **Indian nomenclature** is **comparable** to that of **Western tonic-solfa**: there is **no** absolute or **fixed pitch** attached to the **notes**, and the **ground**-note (the note which serves as the point of reference of the **scale**) is called Sa, irrespective of its pitch.… Of these seven notes, Sa and Pa (I and V) are '**immovable notes**' (acal svar)—they have no flat or sharp positions and Pa is always a **perfect fifth** above the Sa. The remaining five notes are '**movable** notes' (cal svar).… This **system** of **nomenclature** has wide **acceptance** in India, and is generally used by **Bhatkande** … (Jairazbhoy 2011 (1971): 32)

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[114] In his preface, Fox Strangways emphasizes that "the study of Indian music is of interest to all who care for song, and of special interest to those who have studied the early stages of song in mediaeval Europe or ancient Greece. For here is the living language of which in those we have only dead examples." (1914: v) He bases this suggestion among others on his idea that there is very little harmony found in the "music of Hindostan." This mode of thought fits within the evolutionist musicological approach to various stages of development that each music should logically go through in order to arrive the highest stage of the aesthetic ladder represented by harmonically complex European art music, common at the time.
[115] Alternative spellings I have come across include swār, swāra, swaara, and svār.

Besides such translation of note as svār (or svār as note), Jairazbhoy here leverages musicologist Bhatkande's use of a "system of nomenclature" of relative pitches to legitimate his own use thereof in comparisons with "Western tonic-solfa." This again illustrates how canonized musicological texts build upon and reference each other in their uncritical reproduction of a music theory that reduces musical practices to, in this case, the notes historically used to order and control them.

In the long tradition of deriving academic authority from Sanskrit sources, (ethno)musicologists furthermore emphasize that the concept of svār is derived from Sanskrit and was already mentioned in ancient Sanskrit philosophical texts such as the Vedas, the Nāṭya Śāstra and the Saṅgīt Ratnākārā (cf. Coomaraswamy 1936; Te Nijenhuis 1974; Rowell 1977, 1992; Jairazbhoy 2011 [1971]). The author of *The Dictionary of Hindustani Classical Music*, for example, starts from the latter text to arrive at a definition of svāra:

> There are infinite **varieties** of **sound** in the world but all **sounds** are not **Svaras or notes**. **Sangitaratnakara defines Svara** thus: "The sound which has a vibrational (Anurananatmaka) quality of a **pleasing** nature (Snigdha) and also has **Srutis** immediately before it, and pleases the mind of the **listener** without depending on any other factor is called a Svara." This definition requires clearer annotations. The mention of "Srutis immediately before it" points to the fact that there are other sounds also, separated by **intervening Srutis**, and the sounds that have intervening Srutis can point only to a **scale**. Then we are to formulate that to be called a Svara, a sound in addition to the foregoing qualities, must be a note in the **scale** of **seven notes**. Therefore, we can **define** a **Svara** thus: If between a musical sound and its double in pitch, there are other musical sounds separated from each other, with gradual rising of the pitch following a particular law, then those sounds can be called Svaras and all such Svaras taken together can be called a scale. It should be remembered that an Indian Svara is not fixed by any frequency; any note can be a key note to a scale. (Roychaudhuri 2000: 122)

This definition privileges centuries old written music philosophy over musical practice as valid sources for definitions of musical concepts and knowledge, claiming them as innately Indian in the process. Furthermore, by using note and svāra interchangeably, the dictionary suggests that svār not only literally translates as but also carries the same connotations as note. While the content of the text suggests a more complicated understanding of svāra, it does not explicate how they differ from each other. This is symptomatic of the use of the concept within some musical practices, indicating that note has taken on new dimensions in musical practices as well:

Interlocutor:	See, there are two kinds of alāp, one is known as **svār alāp**, and second is known as **rāga alāp**. Now svār alāp is only applicable with a rāga like, Yaman, Puriya, Behag, Darbari.
Eva-Maria:	Ok, and what is svār alāp then?
Interlocutor:	One **note by note**, note by note, **brick** by **brick**, you **build** it.… **Exploring one svār** means what, you have **different approach to** that svār [sound example 7.1]. So, this way, I am approaching Ni.

Namely, this double-layered use of svār, presented at once as distinct from and used as a synonym for note, illustrates a flexibility in its use within contemporary musical knowledge practices.

(Ethno)musicologists also mobilize both notions in prescriptions of forms of (analytical) listening to detail how notes and note relations should be listened out for to categorize and define music in terms of rāga, as for example Jairazbhoy does in the following:

It is **not enough** to **define** a **rāg** in terms of **mode** or **scale** alone, as a number of rāgs have the same notes, yet each maintains its own musical **identity**. When we examine different performances of the same rāg we find that, allowing for **divergence** of **tradition** and the possibility of **experimentation**, not only are the same notes consistently used, but also **particular figurations** or **patterns of notes** occur frequently. The most **characteristic pattern** of notes in a rāg is described as **pakaṛ**, a 'catch' phrase by which the rāg can be **easily recognized**.… A more complete delineation of a rāg is obtained in the **svarvistār**—a series of phrases devised to show the various note-patterns which are **permissible** in, and **characteristic** of, the **rāg**. (Jairazbhoy 2011 [1971]: 38).

Jairazbhoy uses the notions of notes and note-patterns/svarvistār to build on and legitimate his abstract-theoretical approach to listening: listening in terms of melodic structures and note hierarchies affords the appropriate knowledge about this music. By defining rāga in terms of a pattern of notes that can be easily recognized and categorized, such texts imply a hierarchy of modes of listening. Correct listening is first and foremost listening out for and recognizing melodic structures, being able to categorize them in terms of notes, and being able to categorize these notes and the order in which they emerge in terms of one rāga.

The concepts of svāra and note are likewise frequently mobilized in debates about (the existence of) srutis. The sruti discussion has been at the center of tensions between (ethno)musicologists since the 1960s and is outside of the scope of this book to attend to in

detail. Of relevance, however, is that in this discussion, the sruti is often presented as an antithesis to a, presumably melodically stable, note:

> … in **reality**, **shrutis** in Hindustani music were **never** produced as **straight notes**, they were **always** **ornamented** by **undulations** or **glides**. (Van der Meer 2017)

> … certain **musicians** use the term **shruti** to indicate the **subtle intervals** produced as a result of this **oscillation** in **pitch**. They do however, maintain that these microtonal **deviations** from the 'standard' intonation may only be used in **oscillation** and may **not** be **sustained** as a **steady note**. (Jairazbhoy 2011 [1971]: 35)

To prove the (lack of) existence of such srutis, (ethno)musicologists such as Jairazbhoy and Van der Meer "measure"[116] notes, oscillations, undulations and/or glides in selected performances. Jairazbhoy's student Levy, for example, takes such quantitative measurements as proof that srutis are merely a discursive trope that musicians leverage to traditionalize their musically "more contemporary" style:[117]

> A number of **performers** have **difficulty** in **reconciling** the two **practices** [high and low interpretation of ga]. One of today's most well-known and **respected** sitar players for example, **states** that the Ga ♭ and the Gha ♭ [sic; he obviously means Dha ♭] of Darbari are ati komal or very flat (taped interview …). As seen in Appendix D, nos. 10–12, however this **prominent sitarist intones** the Ga ♭ extremely sharp rather than flat. The artist is thus paying **verbal** homage to a more **traditional style**, while **actually performing** the more **contemporary** one. (109) (Quoted in Van der Meer 2017)

Levy's approach echoes Bhatkande's use of musicians as the musicologist's source material, whose articulations could—indeed should—be proven wrong by objective academic work. In measuring notes, the musicologist provides evidence of the musician's faulty articulations of their music, and settles the debate about shruti's once and for all. Van der Meer, on the other hand, creates a different hierarchy of forms of musical knowledge, as he has "it on the authority of my teacher Dilip Chandra Vedi … that the near-straight, and extra flat (ati komal), rendering of the ga in Darbari was the hallmark of great masters" (2017). Leveraging his guru's authority as knowledge source, Van der Meer uses computer-assisted analysis to counter Levy's argument (2017). Music, such discussions imply, can be detailed and understood through

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[116] "On Measuring Notes, A Response to N.A. Jairazbhoy."
[117] Van der Meer gives an overview of aspects of this debate. https://wimvandermeer.wordpress.com/tag/shruti/

measuring notes, with fixed end results that reveal its allegedly true nature. Through such reductive analysis in terms of or juxtaposed with notes, the musicologist regains control.

Other than uncritically translating the concept of svāra as note or juxtaposing it with sruti, the notion itself usually remains undefined. Nonetheless, it provides the (ethno)musicologist with a system of categorization, a frame of relating to and listening out for this music. In *The Raga Guide*, many examples of such framing can be found:

> In **Bhatkhande's system** all ragas are grouped under **ten** scale types, each of which is named after a prominent raga which **uses** the **note varieties** in question…. There are quite a few **inconsistencies** in this **system**, … yet no musicologist has so far been able to come up with a **raga classification system** that has been **accepted** as **widely** as **Bhatkhande's**. (Bor et al. 1999: 3)

Despite their critical take on Bhatkande's work, the guide's authors use his thāt system because it has become the norm for rāga classification. The critique, however, is only directed at the inconsistencies in Bhatkande's system, not at the need to classify music in the first place. To authenticate the rāga categorization presented in its pages, the guide presents the opinions of Bhatkhande and "leading musicians" (Bor et al.1999: 24) on the inclusion or exclusion of notes within rāgas, side by side. While framed by the suggestion that rāga is more complex than melodic framework, this categorization implies that if one is able to recognize notes and categorize rāga through listening, one knows the mysterious music captured on the included CD. Thereby, it echoes Indian musicology, turning listening into a guessing game whereby an "epistemic formula establishes a link between a raga's name and its musicological law, which then becomes the template through which to mediate and listen to performance" (Neuman 2004: 70–71) as examined in chapters two and three. Taking the need to categorize in terms of notes for granted and offering it to the reader as normative mode of listening, *The Raga Guide* naturalizes this musical ordering in terms of note as aesthetically and academically authoritative.

(Ethno)musicologists similarly talk about vadi and samvadi notes in hierarchizing and implicitly normative instructions on how to listen to rāga. Lavezzoli, for example, elaborating on the question "what is a raga?" (2007: 22), claims that there

> are many ragas who have the same exact **ascending** (aroha) and **descending** (avroha) **notes**, but the **difference** between them is in **which notes** are **stressed**. There are always certain **dominant notes** that are the most **important** for each raga, and this dominant note is called the **vadi**, with the second most

important note called the **samvadi**. This creates a **hierarchy** within the raga. There are also certain notes that must never be played in a given raga, which are called the vivadi, otherwise the performance is incorrect. (Lavezzoli 2007: 22).

Lavezolli problematically assumes that there is one correct way of playing a rāga and that this can be defined in terms of notes. He does emphasize that rāga "is not just playing the right notes: there are specific microtonal inflections that are indispensable to the raga" (ibid.), but does not enlighten the reader on the specificities of these micro-tonalities. Nor does the reader learn *how* important notes are stressed, or how actual melodic order is created through sound. Similarly, while he emphasizes that every "form of Indian music … always has rounded edges, rarely squared off like the notes in Western classical music" (ibid.), the sonic details of these "rounded edges" remain undisclosed. Musicians often similarly refer to such raga-specific curves to reject the usefulness of note as a musical concept without discursively specifying the curves' dimensions other than through sound itself:

> As you know very well yourself, Eva, **rāgas** are **not defined** by their **notes**. They come into being through the way in which the **curves specific** for that **rāga** are **played**.
> (anonymous musician, personal conversation)

The question that Lavezzoli and others leave open, however, is what a curvy note sounds like. How do musicians listen out for it as defining of rāga?

Under the heading "Ornamental Melodic Figures," Bagchee does examine melodic curves, but defines them as ornaments, implying that the note is a melodically stable element while curves are a mere additions. Presenting ornaments as both external to but also part of the rāga, and defining "groups of notes" as ornaments of rāga as distinct from ornaments of notes, Bagchee's approach illustrates the ambiguity in (ethno)musicological discourses on the (aesthetics of the) note:

> While the **rāga** is the main **melodic form** in **Indian classical music**, other **melodic figures** also exist which act as **embellishments** to the **rāga** and are frequently used in its **presentation**. These are **not** mere **externalities** but play an important role in its **delineation** and are, frequently, a **part** of the **rāga characteristics**, especially **kana**, the **mīdh**, and the **āndolan**. These **embellishments** are essential as they enhance the **aesthetic potentialities** of the rāga. The most common term for these melodic forms is **alankār** (**ornament**) which generally refers to **decorative figures** or **melodic phrases** (a **group** of **notes**) employed to **adorn** a rāga…. In addition to the alankār-s, which as we have seen are **ornamental groups**

of **notes**, there are **graces** which can be regarded as **ornaments** of **notes**. The difference between these two is clear as the latter are means of ornamenting individual notes by various inflections. Notes sung in a flat manner have **limited appeal** and need to be accented and intoned in such a fashion that their appeal increases. This is achieved through tonal **graces** where **notes** are **attacked**, **ornamented** or **resolved** in various ways by gliding from one note to the other by swinging the voice on either side of the note and so on. These graces are very elaborate and have been listed by musicologists at different periods in the past, their number varying in each text and being as high as the 15 enumerated in **Shārangdeva'sSangīt**[sic] **Ratnakar**. However, in contemporary Hindustani classical music, only a few of these are well recognized and prevalent. (Bagchee 1998: 48, 51–52)

Bagchee's insistence on conceiving the note as melodically stable results in a concept of mīnd as gliding from one note to the next. The specifics of an "attack," "ornamenting," or "resolve" of notes are not discussed, nor is their relationship to rāga. A Sanskrit treatise provides evidence of the presence of more elaborate ornamentations of notes in the past, which are contrasted with contemporary musical practices in which "only" few prevail.

This illustrates the ambiguity of the concept of note within Hindustani classical music studies and practices, leaving its sonic articulation open for manipulation. In its written abstract representations, it provides musicologists with a feeling of control while simultaneously mystifying musical practices. However, its conceptual ambiguity, I argue, enables various forms of listening out: it is a flashpoint for negotiating musi(cologi)cal authority. In the rest of this chapter, I examine what combinations of musical parameters my interlocutors listen out for in terms of notes. To understand the, at times conflicting, ways in which it is utilized as an instrument of power within contemporary musical knowledge practices, I seek to sensitize myself to the range of sonic possibilities the concept might refer to.

Note, Musical Purity, and Simplicity

Hemant is, well, **Hemant** is **Baba's** [Allauddin Khan] **rāga**, he **composed** it. So, when I play it, I play it like he meant it, you know. And I know because I got it directly from the **source**, from her. Now if you listen to some others, like Purbayan, he has no idea, he is **just playing** the **notes**, some notes, that is not Hemant. Just **listen** to his alāp, I think there is a recording on YouTube. Like all that quick stuff he does there, and then he **swings** his **hair**, like he is some kind of a **rock star**. And **moving** his **hand** like this, you know, to **show what** he **does** with the **notes**.

(personal conversation, anonymous disciple of Annapurna Devi)

> I will play **Hemant**, because that is **Baba's rāga**. Because you know, it is Doverlane, so the Kolkata **audience**, they are going to want to hear something **special**. And this is the **rāga** from our **gharānā**. (Nityanand Haldipur, personal conversation)

The above quotes indicate the centrality of rāga Hemant for Maihar gharānā. It is widely believed to have been composed[118] by its founder, Allauddin Khan. This is usually mentioned as part of the lengthy announcements that often[119] frame contemporary concerts. Texts in (digital) booklets accompanying CDs, LPs, MP3s, and cassette recordings similarly emphasize the relationship between this rāga and the founder of this gharānā, as does this text excerpted from an LP:

> Homage to Baba Allauddin—Raga Hemant … Hemant is a raga created about 60 years ago by Baba Ustad Allauddin Khan, the guru of Ravi Shankar. Its mood is that of an autumnal evening and the ārohana and avarohana structure with C as the tonic is as follows:
>
> Western: C E F A B C, C B A G F, E G F E D C
>
> Indian: Sa Ga Ma Dha Ni Sa, Sa Ni Dha Pa Ma, Ga Pa Ma Ga Re Sa
>
> After a short ālap Shankar starts the gath [sic] in vilambit teental, a slow rhythmic cycle of 16 beats divided 4+4+4+4. This section is performed in vilambit khayal gayaki, a style of classical singing in which the music is developed in an unhurried and imaginative manner. There follows a short tabla solo by Alla Rakha which introduces the second gath in drut ektal, a fast rhythmic cycle of 12 beats divided 4+4+2+2.
>
> In choosing this particular raga Shankar commemorates here, in a very personal way, his vast indebtedness to his master Baba Ustad Allauddin Khan.
>
> Reginald Massey
>
> Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts[120]

Such framing performs musical authority before a single sound has been heard. Since this relationship between rāga Hemant and Maihar gharānā has been amplified in different media over the past fifty years, it is relatively widely known within listener circles. Because Hemant is

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[118] The notion of composer and composition within the Hindustani classical music context is in itself complicated and refers to musical practices vastly different from these referred to in European art music. However, an examination thereof would be outside of the scope of this book. Dard Neuman (2004) has done some historical research on the emergence of the idea of composition and composing within the Hindustani classical music context.

[119] I heard Nityanand Haldipur perform rāga Hemant live twice during my research. Once in Mumbai in a smaller concert hall where the audience was a mix of musicians, self-categorized music connoisseurs, and what these connoisseurs would perceive of as a lay audience. The second time was in Kolkata during the Doverlane Music Conference. In Mumbai, Haldipur announced the rāga, in Kolkata he did not. Afterwards, he suggested that at Doverlane it would not be necessary to announce the rāga as most people in the audience would recognize it and might be even annoyed if he were to announce it because that would suggest that he did not recognize their connoisseurship.

[120] Deutsche Grammophon STEREO 2531356 (1981, Germany).

listened out for as a sonic identifier of this gharānā, merely playing this rāga has become a strong sonic claim of belonging to this gharānā. Perhaps because of this historically amplified relationship of authority between rāga and arguably the widest known gharānā on the planet, Hemant was one of the most frequently encountered rāgas during my research—in live performances, lessons, and while gathering background information on my interlocutors. In some cases, a recording of this rāga was (one of) the only official recordings my interlocutors released.[121]

A prime example of several dimensions of listening out for note is Haldipur's performance of this rāga in Mumbai. Haldipur has driven us to the venue from his current residence, Akash Ganga, where he is staying with his guru, Annapura Devi. We arrive around 19:30, when the the program is about to start. We enter the concert hall to say a quick hello to the organizer. Then we disappear into the green room, where the tablā player is already waiting. Visitors keep coming in to pay their respects. While they are waiting to begin, Haldipur and the tablā player play through the Hemant and Pushpāchandrikā gats to get a feeling for the tempo. Now the concert is about to start. After what seems like a lifetime of announcements from the organizer, Haldipur briefly states the rāga and the fact that it is composed by Allauddin Khan. Then he starts to play [sound example 7.2]. This alāp consists of five structurally distinct parts, separated by an element usually referred to as the mohra. This briefly affords a sense of meter within the otherwise unmetered but rhythmic alāp. To the listener familiar with this element, it suggests that a structurally new part will follow. It can be listened out for (with slight variations) between 01:24–01:43, 03:03–03:17, 04:46–05:03, 06:39–06:53, and 08:39–08:59. After this last mohrā, Haldipur starts the mukhrā leading up to the first beat, called sam, of the vilambit ektāl. This division of alāp into five structurally separate parts is essential for understanding Haldipur's treatment of note in this performance. Namely, he listens out for each of the parts as an elaboration of one note, as he suggests in the following interview excerpt:

Haldipur: In a way, with **rāga presentation**, **rāga swarup**,[122] what **she** [Annapurna Devi] **used** to **teach me**, the **matter** of doing alāp, and uhm. So, it was very, **conflicting** for me, because uh, and because all these years, I was **not used** to this **style**.

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[121] For example: Ken Zuckerman's "Hemant – An Evening Raga," Partho Sarothy and Paul Livingston's Jugalbandi "Hemant: Confluence of Maihar Gharana (India/U.S. Jugalbandi Ensemble)," or Srinivas Reddy's "Hemant – Jog."

[122] The notion of swarup is literally translated as character or nature and is used to refer to that difficult-to-delineate character or feel of the rāga. How to sound this feeling out, which melodic-rhythmic-dynamic twists and turns are important, where should be a tonal emphasis, that audibly portray the rāga according to its perceived character. I come back to this aspect in the concluding chapter of this book.

Eva-Maria:	Yah, hm, ja.
Haldipur:	That's why I was **finding** it **alien**.
Eva-Maria:	Yeah, alien, ok.
Haldipur:	So **adjusting** to that. Now I am so **addicted** to this **style**, that I feel that this, these **styles** are **very**, **pity**, you know. Not pity, but, you know, **not so serious** kind of a thing.
Eva-Maria:	Hm, yeah, it's a different. So, before that, what way of alāp did you have before, how does this type of alāp differ from what you were doing before, can you say that?
Haldipur:	Yeah, see, for example, I'll give you a little example. I may not remember it, fully, what I used to play **previously**.
Eva-Maria:	No but in terms of style, and
Haldipur:	So, this is Yaman rāga this way, starting, initially [sound example 7.3] now [sound example 7.3]. So, less of arkats, less of murkis.

Haldipur relates "her" style to a specific way of presenting alāp. Listening out for discrepancies between the two examples, the main difference is the speed of the melodic movement and, related to this, the speed of expanding the tonal space within which he moves around. In the example of how he would have played prior to studying with Annapurna Devi, within twenty seconds he has played five phrases. He portrayed the character of the rāga by expanding tonal space, subsequently showing relationships between Ni-Sa, Dha-Sa, Ma-Ni, Dha-Sa, and Ma-Sa. To my ears, the movements sound curvy and relatively speedy; there is no resting on a specific tonal place for a significant amount of time. In the contrasting example, Haldipur takes thirty-five seconds for four phrases. The first and the fourth constitute a single mīnd from Ni to Sa and a slow mīnd from Ma to Sa respectively. The other two phrases develop the relationship between Dha, Ni and Sa. They first sound out the relationship between Ni and Sa while just moving through Dha, following a more elaborate including of the latter tonal place. There are audible differences between the amount of time he spends on the respective tonal places. The perceived forms of the melodic curves created by a simultaneous change in speed-and-frequency are different and specific for each (part) of the phrases. He listens out for this latter form of alāp as specific for Annapurna Devi's style:

| Haldipur: | Now, when I come **here**,[123] that time I did not realize that **playing simple music** was **very difficult**. |
| Eva-Maria: | (Laughing) Simple music meaning? |

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[123] The interview took place at Akash Ganga where Annapurna Devi famously lives and used to teach. As argued in the dynamics of canonization chapter, the house has become almost a synonym for Annapurna Devi.

Haldipur:	Simple music means, without. Typical **dhrupad** style of **playing** of **alāp**. Where, almost no murkis or arkats are there, **plain**.
Eva-Maria:	Yeah, so, meaning no uh.
Haldipur:	And then **still** make it **attractive**, becomes a very, very **challenging job**. So, this is what I have **learned** from **her now**.

Calling this dhrupad style alāp, or, as he called it in an earlier quoted excerpt, svāra alāp, is indicative of his strategic listening out for and leveraging of one version of note in relation to notions of tradition, authenticity, and purity. That is, Haldipur capitalizes on discourses portraying dhrupad as a much older, and hence more pure and authoritative, musical tradition than khayāl. The latter is usually depicted as a more recent, modern musical genre and is hence perceived by some as less authentic:[124]

> When you make, a **judgement** about an **artist**, first you have to, understand, what is the, **dhrupad** style. How it is, where the dhrupad style is, in terms of, the language, **pure** diction, pure language when you use, like, Latin, old, or Sanskrit, sanskritized Bengali you use, **very, very pure**. So, they speak for that **kind of dignity, here in music**. If you maintain a **straight**, straight, **without any curves**, **without** any **ornament**, then. **Dhrupad** is that sort of **bani**, as they say, **gaur bani**, the **pure**, **pristine**, **sound**, but only that will **not make** the **music colorful**. That is also true, you know, so at later age, all these nice things about **khayāl**, cropped into the [instrumental] music. (anonymous interlocutor)

In this context, the notion of tradition often connotes authenticity, sincerity, and seriousness. Haldipur emphasizes these connotations as well; over time he has come to listen out for svara-alāp as a more serious form of alāp, in contrast with the khayāl-informed style alāp he learned before. Crucially, one of his prior guru's, Pannalal Ghosh, also a disciple of Allauddin Khan, is known for his acceptance of the bansuri as suitable for playing classical music. Ghosh did this by inserting musical elements associated with khayāl, such as structure, form, and certain improvisational forms, into his playing (cf. Clements 2011). Like most Maihar gharānā instrumentalists, Haldipur blends such khayāl-associated aspects with musical parameters associated with dhrupad in his further classicization of the bansuri. The note plays an important role in these negotiations: the dhrupad-style svār alāp implies, and simultaneously performs, musical purity. To give these connotations more weight, Haldipur listens out for this form of note in direct relationship to Devi:

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[124] Musicologist and North Atlantic concert programmers have been instrumental in these processes. Dhrupad's musical characteristics fit very well within the orientalist imagination of India. An in-depth exploration thereof is outside of the scope of this book.

Haldipur:	And **she** is very **strict** about the **shruti**, ati komal means, it has to be like, exact, ati kumal, as **described** in the Śastra
Eva-Maria:	Hm, and how, uh, how do you know?
Haldipur:	And that aspect, you **cannot do** it, **unless** she is in **front**, and then, **she certifies** that, ok, now you are doing that **correctly**.
Eva-Maria:	Hm, ok, so she will sing and then you have to try to follow that or, how?
Haldipur:	Yeah.
Eva-Maria:	Ok, yeah, so have to be able to also hear, from her singing …
Haldipur:	She will keep **correcting**, "ok, now thora, slightly more, slightly less," whatever, until you play it **correctly**. Then she will ask you to **repeat** that, **place**, of that **note**, hundred times, so that it **sits** in your **head**, **properly**.

This illustrates that a referring to the Śastras as a source of musical knowledge and authority on the "proper" "place of the note," is not limited to the musicologies. Haldipur was not the only musician who referenced Sanskrit texts during my research; several of my interlocutors evoked such texts as authorities, often without precise reference. Whether Devi actually references the Śastras as her source of knowledge about the exact places is questionable. Nevertheless, in the interview Haldipur refers to it as the original source of her knowledge on the treatment of notes. He himself, however, emphasizes that he learned his treatment thereof by listening to her singing and repeating it until the "place" of the note was locked in his head. This mode of musical knowledge transfer, he claims, is the only way to really get the location right. Leveraging distinct forms of musical knowledge, this claim is typical of how musicians patch together perceivably contradicting aspects to bolster their musical legitimacy.

Haldipur's reference to the repetition of the place of a note in front of one's guru, furthermore, does two things. First, he draws on the authority of his guru to justify his approach to learning the exact place of a note. Such arguments are hard, if not impossible, to challenge, as very little is known about Devi's musical ideas and preferences beyond the mythicizing information that Haldipur and other disciples provide. The only sonic evidence of her performance of note and approach to rāga are the four aforementioned recordings and the playing of her disciples, such as Haldipur: they all claim to play "her" music. Such statements of complete musical fidelity, are usually paired with notions of individuality and purity:

She gave each of us **music specifically** for our **character**, as **Allauddin Khan** also did with **his students**. (anonymous interlocutor).

> Baba **Allauddin Khan** used to say: "**Annapurna**, she has understood most about this music, she has gotten **ninety percent** of what I have taught her. Ali Akbar, he got seventy-five percent. Ravi Shankar might have gotten fifty." So that is the thing, you know, we know that **her music** is the **closest to Baba's**, and she **hasn't changed** anything, so what we get from her is **pure**.[125]
>
> (anonymous interlocutor)

Haldipur's emphasis on learning in front of a guru furthermore hints at the disciplinary element inherent in tālim, specifically its relation to what musicians often refer to as the "feeling" of a note. Only by sitting in front of a guru who literally disciplines his body by having him repeat a tonal relationship affording such a feeling until his body "knows" it, he claims to have learned the feeling of rāgas beyond notes. Combined with his claim that simple music, one simple note, is the most difficult thing to play, it might be time to ask what makes a simple note so difficult to execute?

Some of its details might be grasped through a listening out for the first phrases of alāp in rāga Hemant—specifically, the nuances of the way in which the bansuri sounds out a shifting tonal relationship between tonal places within the tanpura-produced soundscape. These nuances include shifts in frequency, but are certainly not limited to this aspect.

<u>Sangīt encounter: listening exercise</u>

Please listen to sound example 7.4 several times, with the following questions in mind:

Could you aurally distinguish between the sounds produced by the tanpura and the sounds produced by the bansuri? How did you distinguish between them? Based on which parameters? Could you identify the exact moment when Haldipur starts to play? How did you identify this? How did the frequency of the sounds produced by the bansuri transform? Could you identify the melodic phrase in terms of sargam? How did you do this and why? Did the (lack of) ability to identify or categorize what you heard in terms of sargam add something to your listening experience? And by categorizing these sounds as such, what aspects of these thirty-nine seconds did you blend out? Did you hear dynamic changes in the parts played by either one of the instruments? Were there pauses? What did a pause sound like? Did you recognize a rhythm? Which sounds did you categorize as rhythmic, how did you do so, and what elements did you listen out for? Did you hear the breathing of the musician? Did the timbre of the bansuri remain stable throughout the phrase?

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[125] I am aware that a version of this anecdote is also present in the section on the dynamics of canonization of Annapurna Devi. With this and similar repetitions throughout, I mimic the ways in which such stories are repeated within the field. Thereby, I seek to perform not only that, but also how, such repetitions amplify a particular history.

The reader/listener whose ears have been trained to distinguish and categorize tonal relationships as performed in Hindustani classical instrumental music might have categorized the sounds Haldipur performed as one phrase: Ni-Sa—perhaps best phrased as a taking, approaching, or showing Sa from Ni. Without Haldipur's announcement of the rāga name, such listening out for and categorizing of relative tonal places does not allow us to conclude which rāga he performed. Those listeners trained to distinguish between shudh Ni and komal Ni could state that this is shudh Ni, allows them to exclude those rāgas that do not allow for any form of Ni and those that only allow komal Ni. If listened out for on such structural terms, the phrases might indeed be categorized as relatively simple. Besides the playing of this "one note," not much else is happening. However, Haldipur associates the nuances articulated through such "single note" playing directly to musical mastery, control, and as I argue in the next chapter, virtuosity. Hence, listening out for these details becomes crucially important.

After a prolonged sounding out of Sa, the bansuri briefly pauses, after which new tonal material is introduced. This leads me to retrospectively categorize these 00:39 seconds as the first phrase of the rāga. Listening out for melodic movements, I hear movement from Sa, via Ni, back towards Sa. The movement from Sa to Ni is relatively quick; I was only able to categorize it as such after listening to this phrase five times with high-end studio headphones. Almost but not quite inaudible, it contributes to the performance of that specific "note." Namely, instead of immediately releasing tonal tension by moving towards Sa from Ni, even if listeners are not conscious of this movement, this addition slightly heightens the tonal tension. Before it is released, the bansuri briefly lingers on Ni. Thereafter it moves back towards and lands on Sa, its frequency resonating with and thus enlarging the tanpura-produced Sa. This second part of the movement takes slightly longer, allowing a listening out for a now clearly distinguishable transition in frequency as a non-linear melodic movement. In other words, the speed of the shift in frequency from Sa to Ni and back to Sa is not stable but changes throughout the movement. Curvy, if you will.

As the above excerpt about the exact location of shrutis indicates, a playing of and in sur is important for Haldipur. However, when he talked about the difficulty of making a single note attractive, he was not just referring to exactly reaching a frequency. Another essential aspect lies with the details of this curve, in direct relation to transformations in dynamic energy. The instrument's partial timbral blending with the tanpura, which makes it difficult to aurally distinguish between these textural layers when they are sounding out the same frequencies,

also plays a role in Haldipur's complex aesthetic concept and performance of note. These aspects can be heard in that first phrase.

Please listen to the same phrase, now focusing on the dynamic energy given to Sa [sound example 7.4]. Listening out for dynamics, I suddenly heard the way Haldipur varies his breath. This creates several transformations in dynamic energy and timbral quality during that single Sa. Subtle, gradual shifts between a louder and softer Sa suggest a wave-like rhythmical pattern. By gradually becoming louder, the bansuri Sa seemingly arises from and simultaneously enlarges the tanpura-produced soundscape, only to become gradually softer, falling back into and blending with the tanpura Sa. Thereby, Haldipur sonically mimics the "ancient" and "pure" dhrupad vocal style, which known for its similar gradual and slow exploration of tonal space. By claiming a direct relationship to dhrupad, this manipulation of dynamic energy can be taken as a sonic assertion of seriousness, authenticity, and purity. But wait. What's that? Let's listen again to that one Sa. Is that really the same frequency as the tanpura the whole time? It seems like the bansuri's frequency is not stable at all. Let me listen again!

Listening out for dynamic changes within Haldipur's sounding out of Sa, I became attuned to a slight fluctuation in frequency that relates to, but is not exactly simultaneous with, the aforementioned wavering of dynamic energy. Whereas during the first seconds the frequency and dynamic energy performing the note Sa remain relatively stable, the fluctuations become more prominent during the note's performance. Together with the building and releasing of tonal tension produced by the aforementioned melodic movements, these carefully controlled transformations perform a specific, and certainly not universally accepted, version of Sa. It is performed as a combination of several musical parameters that sound out in shifting relations to each other. For Haldipur then, the difficulty of making a simple note beautiful, then, lies in carefully controlling these parameters so that they adhere to and resonate with what he learned through his tālim with Devi.

The above analysis was limited to the first phrase of a one-and-a-half-hour performance. The question of what make a simple note beautiful surely takes on other dimensions in the rest of the performance. That is, the phrase that I have analyzed does not sound out, nor is it listened out for, in isolation. While an in-depth listening analysis of the full performance is outside of the scope of this study, an analysis of relationships between the first and the second phrase might indicate how the dimensions of note can be developed. Haldipur

listens out for this second phrase as a "showing" of the possibilities of Dha (00:39–00:52). After repeated structural listenings, I distinguish a melodic movement from Sa to Ni, back to Sa to Ni, to Dha, up to Ni and back to Dha again. The phrase's specifics beyond this grammar, I argue, sound out in relation to the first phrase. Referencing it, extending it, sounding out a different-with-repetition version of this note, "showing" one distinct possibility by slightly nuancing elements from the first phrase and adding tonal material to it. This melodic line's curves are specific: it starts in one tonal place of Sa, moves down through Ni, and moves up again quickly, hesitating briefly on the "original" location. Then it quickly moves back to Ni after which it falls somewhat slowly, almost leisurely, into Dha. It is as if the melody tripped, balanced, and then again lost balance, landing on that newly introduced tonal place. The bansuri lingers on that tonal place for six seconds, moves "up" in the frequency spectrum towards Ni and immediately down to Dha, where it stays for another four seconds.

Melodically, the first part of this second phrase references the first phrase's beginning, but as it stays on Ni a fragment longer, emphasizing it before extending the tonal space to include Dha. Dynamically, the first movement from Ni to Dha is played with relatively little dynamic energy. At the moment of landing on Dha, the pressure from Haldipur's breath becomes stronger, resulting in a much louder sound that also affects its timbre. The Dha loses and gains dynamic energy during the following six seconds. The movement through Ni is played softly, extending this relatively low dynamic energy to the Dha for about two seconds. Thereafter the Dha regains its dynamic energy, becoming louder before slowly fading into the tanpura's overtone spectrum. It is again difficult to determine at what moment the phrase ends exactly, which is part of the aesthetic concept of note as Haldipur performs it here.

In this play with dynamics, Haldipur listens out for two interrelated aspects of notes. First, through an interrelation between melodic movement and dynamic energy, he creates a hierarchy between places within the tonal space. Although he moves through Ni twice before going to Dha, this movement is short and a movement through rather than a landing and/or staying on. Furthermore, in contrast with the high dynamic energy and long "resting" on an almost-but-not-quite-stable frequency of Dha, the relative small amount of dynamic energy released when moving towards and away from Ni offers the listener a hierarchy of tonal places that can be categorized as notes. It suggests that in this rāga, Ni is less important Dha. The play with dynamic energy and frequency on and of Dha, furthermore, is reminiscent of the initial play with Sa, suggesting a possible mirror relationship.

Haldipur is not alone in such play with dynamics. How this is done differs between instruments. The sitar, for example, needs an attack on the string to increase the dynamic energy of a note:

> I can **hit** it as **hardly** [sic] and, yet, I can **keep** it very **melodic** [sound example 7.5]. The **drama** comes from the **dynamics** of it, the **rise** and the **fall**. And I think that is my **signature**, in terms of **sound**, is that I can, **vary** the dynamics in a manner, that it is a **strong presence** and yet it is **not** a **boring monotonous** something which is going on in the end.… There has to be a **rise** and **fall**. That's where the **drama** is and that is my **sound**, that is the **signature**. (anonymous sitariya)

My interlocutor in the above interview excerpt claims the "drama" that is coming from transformations in dynamic energy as his musical signature. By increasing the strength of the stroke on the baj tar, he creates dynamic contrast. This is heightened by the length of the pause between the end of its decay and the next attack. As the difference between the chikari after the first and after the second note illustrates, its dynamic energy and timbral quality can also be manipulated. Whereas the first and second attack of the first phrase are dynamically soft, the chikari following has a lot of dynamic energy. This contrast gives a sense of closure, signaling to the listener that something different might be coming. The following attack on the main string is very strong, resulting in timbral and dynamic quality distinct from the prior phrase. This illustrates how manipulation of dynamics is listened out for as an aesthetic tool that performs dimensions of note as specific for rāga.

This mode of listening out for transformations in frequency, dynamic energy, form of attack, and changes in timbral qualities as constitutive of the character of notes within a specific rāga is often described as listening for the specific "curves" of a note. The curve is a spatial metaphor, offering a different mode of thinking about notes:

Interlocutor: The **dimension** of **notes**, in which way.

Eva-Maria: What do you mean with the dimension of notes?

Interlocutor: Dimension means, you know, **notes** are **not just one sound**. They have different **color**, they have different **radiance**, there is **sound**, there is **dynamics**, so [sound example 7.6]. If I sing, in the alāp. When you are playing Yaman Kalyan, easy. I mean, the shudh Ma, this little shudh Ma that he [Ali Akbar Khan] would show. [sound example 7.6] So [sound example 7.6]. That Ma, such a **little small**, **tiny**, dot of **beauty**. That if you **overdo** that, everything is lost.… I had to try, just to get that, small dot, with the **exact loudness**, and **softness**.… a very, very **subtle aesthetic sense**, that he, you know, was there behind.

Note, it follows, is not a stable entity. Instead, musicians listen out for its many dimensions, allowing it to emerge in direct relation to rāga character, feeling, and the individual style of canonized musicians:

> So, you have to find that **balance**. And that's one of the things that is **remarkable** about **Khansahab's** playing. It's like, it's so **perfectly measured** on **each note**. (anonymous interlocutor)

Dynamic qualities, timbre, transformations of frequency, creation and release of tonal tension, and the place and amount of pause are dimensions of note. Musicians simultaneously manipulate and selectively attend to (some of) these dimensions in their listening practices.

These specificities, then, are aspects that constitute the intricacy and beauty of a simple note for Haldipur. His performance of such notes, especially in gharānā-specific rāgas such as Hemant, can inherently be understood as a claim to musical belonging—exactly because the dimensions of note he is sounding out have become historically amplified and saved in the cultural memory of listeners as specific for that gharānā. And while each musician has his own strategy and emphasis, such sonic tactics are not restricted to Haldipur. In the following interview excerpt, for example, a disciple of Ali Akbar Khan leverages a specific concept of alāp that is not just notes to exemplify the Maihar gharānā style:

Interlocutor:	You know the **stamp** of the **teacher**, the **guru**, **should be there**. Not that they sound exactly, but there is something that is recognizable. Cause that is the **tradition**, that is the **Maihar gharānā**. And when you hear the Maihar gharānā, some people, uhm, not everyone is like that. Some, some like to play as **fast** as they possibly can, and even **faster**, for as long as possible (laughing) and even longer. And that gets **exhausting** for me. I like the **mood**, uhm, you know where each **rāga** has its own **distinct mood** and **quality of sound**.
Eva-Maria:	Ja, hmhm. And then, what would be uhm. How do we hear that you are from the Maihar gharānā?
Interlocutor:	Ow, ok, now, like this. Uhm, Amjad doesn't use a **tanpura**. But uhm [sound example 7.7]. So, what is distinctive about, hm, [sound example 7.7] the **mīnd** [sound example 7.7] and where **each rāga has**, very. **Not just notes**, but uhm [sound example 7.7]. So, this is Multani. And in Multani, uhm [sound example 7.7], in Multani the tāraf are in tune.
Eva-Maria:	Very distinctive for this gharānā (laughing).

Interlocutor: [sound example 7.7] **Evocative**. [sound example 7.7] So, that's. So, it is **specific** to this **rāga**, and you know it's really uh, the **mīnd**, and the **shape of the**. And I think the **alāp** is **slower** than in other **traditions**. I could be wrong. It is very like, **dhrupad**, there is a **feeling** of the **dhrupad vocal** in the **alāp**.

Furthermore, such strategies can be a claim of musical exclusion, an implicit or explicit attack on the lack of purity of musical knowledge demonstrated by another musician's performance of a distinct version of note. The fluctuating elements at stake in, and listened out for as, dimensions of note are as a sonic means of establishing and negotiating the aesthetic boundaries of the Maihar gharānā.

Note and Speed

An example of such exclusion is the criticisms on Chatterjee playing of a lot of quick "notes" in his performances. This might impress some audiences, but for his critics, it is not "really" the "essence" of Hindustani classical music: the character of the rāga is lost in such moments. My interlocutors often associated speed and (the crossing of) rāga boundaries with modernity, while associating strict adherence to rāga and a minimal use of speed as an aesthetic tool with tradition. The connotations attached to this dichotomy can be either positive or negative: while younger second-generation disciples often positively listen out for musical elements associated with modernity, older second-generation musicians utilize musical elements associated with tradition in their knowledge practices. Such distinctions are certainly not absolute. Musicians sometimes combine musical and discursive notions of tradition and modernity while at other times treating them as contradictory, as the following interview excerpt suggests:

I really did **not like** the last fifteen minutes of the concert. He was **just** playing **jhalla** as **fast** as he could. I mean, to me it is **just loud noise** by then, you know, **not really music**. If you play the **notes** so **fast**, you cannot **distinguish** anything anymore, there is **no feeling** of the **rāga**.
(anonymous interlocutor)

And I **used to**, like, **play really fast**. **But now**, I am, you know. As you get older, you like, you **appreciate** you know. Time goes so fast, anyway, so you try to **slow** it down.… But you know, it's, it's, uhm, it's nice that, **it's fun** to go **fast**, it requires **control**, and things happen faster, so you have to think more quickly.
(same anonymous interlocutor on a different occasion)

In distinguishing between a past musical self and a current musical self, between listening to others and listening to oneself, apparently concepts of notes, speed and (feeling of) rāga can become closely connected. Negatively valorized, the speedy notes do not allow the character of the rāga to come out, or allow for a crossing of the rāga boundaries. Positively valorized, it is fun to play fast notes and requires technique, control, and skill.

The following alāp in rāga Hemant, played by the musician who was critiqued for playing "just a bunch of notes," allows a listening out for two distinct negatively valorized concepts of note. [sound example 7.8] This is a performance of the same rāga, played in the same section of the performance, showing the same tonal relationships, and played by a musician from the same gharānā. However, these phrases sound nothing like the phrases Haldipur played. Certainly, the timbral qualities of the respective instruments are responsible for some of this difference. However, when listening out for the dimensions of note as examined in the above, several other differences become evident. Starting with a chikari that emphasizes and enlarges the tonal centre of Sa without playing it on the baj tar, the quick curves following immediately allow a listening out for this rāga's defining melodic curves. He starts from a relatively slow shift in frequency from Ni to Dha, then repeats that movement with a quick detour via Ni Sa. Another Ni to Dha follows, after which finally the tension is resolved with a quick transition up to Sa. Chatterjee takes his time on Sa, gives a stroke on Ni before moving immediately towards Sa, hanging around there for some time, and then falling down quickly to Ni and somewhat slower from Ni to Dha. Chatterjee does not let the sound die out, but gives frequent strokes that make sure the dynamic energy of the phrase remains without an audible decay. Only during the last part of the descending phrase, when he falls back from Sa to Ni and lands on Dha, does he allow its dynamic energy to become slightly weaker. Emphasis, here, is created through repetition of tonal places and tonal relations rather than through a play with dynamics in interaction with the above. Within fifteen seconds, Chatterjee has performed four different ways of approaching, four dimensions of, Dha.

Contrary to Haldipur's performance of one note at a time, Chatterjee's approach is more ambiguous. The curves are quicker, the tonal space immediately enlarged, dynamic play relatively minimal, and the duration of resting on particular tonal places shorter. Like Haldipur, Chatterjee does not linger on Ni but moves through it, thereby creating a similar hierarchy of tonal importance. However, he does not sound out a mirror relationship between Sa and Dha. The emphasis is on the tonal tension created by the movement from Ni to Dha with a particular

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speed, which in relationship to Sa creates a curve performed as specific for Hemant. The importance of a note, here, becomes attached to and performed through the location of the start and end of the phrase. This approach to (notes within) alāp is reminiscent of the vocal style khayāl. Not coincidentally, Chatterjee's main musical influence, Banerjee, is often claimed to have been majorly influenced by khayāl vocalist Amir Khan. For example, by Chatterjee's father, Partha Chatterjee in the following interview excerpt:

Chatterjee:	All that **alankar's** that I am using … When my student is **learning** from me [sound example 7.9]. If he says [sound example 7.9] I **won't allow** it.
Eva-Maria:	No.
Chatterjee:	[sound example 7.9] It goes this way [sound example 7.9]. So, then I would expect, all these things, in **detail** [sound example 7.9], **quick tāns** [sound example 7.9]. Now, if you say in the alāp no tān.
Eva-Maria:	No tān.
Chatterjee:	Yeah, but, **in khayāl**, these things are there. So, the **khayāl** style, when you follow.
Eva-Maria:	You can play, uh, tān?
Chatterjee:	Yeah, it does not make things unsettled, or rough, or any, any. You know, it doesn't disturb the peace … **when** I **learned**, I learned not, **not** with the **knowledge** of, what is a **khayāl** and what is a **dhrupad** and all this. **I learned it**. I **heard him**, I heard **Khansahab** also. **Khansahab** was more, I would say, more, stable more on **dhrupad** playing, than on khayāl playing.
Eva-Maria:	Especially in alāp, no?
Chatterjee:	Dada's [Nikhil Banerjee] yah, especially in alāp, also. But **Dada's alāp** was also very, very **tranquil**, peaceful, **beautiful**, but it has all those **ornaments** also. Because later on he was **influenced** by **Amir Khan's singing**, and, you know, that is very peaceful tranquil singing. Khayāl does not mean, it is going to disturb the peace, it's a wrong notion, so when you say [sound example 7.10] you take the beauty [sound example 7.10] so what [sound example 7.10]. So, in **khayāl**, it is **permissible**, but you have to maintain the peace. So, the **details**, are **there**, very **important**, that way.

Here, Chatterjee refers to the above-examined approach to note as khayāl style. Use of "ornaments" is permitted there, as long as it does not disturb the "peace" of the music. He vocally demonstrates the alankars as part of note: here, a sounding out of shifting tonal relationships.

This listening out for note as continuous transforming tonal relations is thus legitimated as khayāl tradition. Leveraged in specific relation to the authority of Banerjee and his alleged

influence of khayāl vocalist Amir Khan, we may turn to Purbayan Chatterjee's playing of the following phrases. These followed the previously analyzed cluster during his Hemant performance. [sound example 7.11] After the first phrase, a chikari is immediately followed by two more phrases, showing Ni and Sa respectively: Ni Dha—Ni Dha Ni-, chikari Ni—, chikari, Ni with andolan— and falls back with little dynamic energy to Dha, fading away into the tanpura soundscape. A pause follows, after which he introduces Ma into the tonal space with a technique of hammering, Ma (hammer) Ni Dha very quick descend, Ni—Dha much slower descend, Ni Dha slow descend and slowly up to Sa, chikari, Sa, chikari, Sa. After this, he immediately continues exploring more tonal space, but always including several forms of Ni-Dha mīnd. However, such emphasis on a tonal relationship can also be listened out for as overdone: "sometimes you hear other people, and for me, they **spend too much time** on a, **particular note**, or, **conversely**, they **never really sink** in, they never really **hang out** on **one note**, it's just all kind of flighty, you know." (anonymous interlocutor) Which of these two categories he thinks Chatterjee's performance belongs is of less relevance than what it indicates about his listening out for notes. In the first three analyzed phrases, a listening out for Chatterjee as "hanging out" on Dha, Ni, and Sa respectively refers to several elements beyond Chatterjee's playing Dha, Ni, and Sa. Rather, as the example illustrates, "hanging out on a note" in this context refers to a playing with relations between dynamic energy, frequency, attack, rhythm, and timbre over time, which afford a sense of musical difference and repetition.

A distinct version of note can also be heard in this performance. As indicated by the critique at the beginning of this chapter and examined in detail in the next chapter, this version of note is often related to negative notions of virtuosity. [sound example 7.12] Chatterjee starts with three short tāns, followed by a longer tān ending in a tihai (32:23–32:31). This is followed by a longer tān—which is rhythmically more complicated and technically more difficult to execute because he has to switch between the main, jor, and pancham tar (32:36–33:01)—and ends with a chakradar (3x3 repetition of melodic-rhythmic material 33:01–33:08). The last two repetitions constituting the chakradar loudly suggest a listening out for rhythm: because Chatterjee's Ra (downwards) stroke makes the main tar as well as the underlying tāraf strings vibrate, many overtones interfere with each other. These gain so much dynamic energy that a main melody can no longer be listened out for. Chatterjee positively valorizes this rhythmical version of notes whose pitch cannot be determined because this heightens the rhythmic build up of tension between the tablā and the sitar. However, Chatterjee's critics listen out for and

de-valorize this moment as "just noise" exactly because the "notes" (here, pitch) cannot be distinguished. Indeed, even before he starts to hit the tāraf with his Ra stroke, it is almost impossible to determine which places in the tonal spectrum he attacks during these tāns, tihais, and chakradars due to the sheer speed of his playing. Musicologists often negatively valorize such speed:

> The present author had occasion to review a **recording** by a **young sitārist** which had a 14-minute presentation of a **slow-tempo** bandisha with 18 **tihāyīs**, one every 45 seconds. The **tihāyīs** had **replaced** the **improvisation** as the **content** of the music. **Arithmetic** had **replaced music**. And, such instances abound. Today, one sees a real **danger** that the **appropriate** and **elegant** use of the melodic **tihāyī** or **cakradāra** will **depart** from Hindustani music along with some of our **living legends**. This is a **disturbing** prospect. (Raja 2005: 122)

Such critiques indicate the tensions over musical authority and knowledge negotiated through normatively listening out for the speedy playing of notes: here, rhythmically distinct rather than melodically fluid elements. Rather than a "disturbing prospect," Chatterjee frames this emphasis on rhythm as an attempt to transform and at the same time adhere to a musical norm:

> **Zakirbhai** and **Anindo Chatterjee**, these two people **influenced** me from a **rhythm** point of view. Anindoji, he taught me a lot of **intricate**, ah, you know **tihais** and how to approach. And Zakirbhai, the **approach**. Zakirbhai even when I **played with him recently**, the way you can deal with the **lāya**, you know when you are doing. Like, when he does this peshkar. [sound example 7.13] that whole language, **exploratory**, you know a little bit of **flirting** with the **lāya**, so [sound example 7.13]. So, like this, you know, so this kind of **exploratory** … if I have the, you know, like tān, **tān**, what is tān? [sound example 7.14] This is tān, but if I have the capacity, and [sound example 7.14]. If I can play it at that **speed**, and I play it and I **try** to **explore** it. I'll try to explore it, **why shouldn't I**?

Evoking the authority of two of the arguably most senior contemporary tablā players, Zakir Hussain and Anindo Chatterjee, to legitimate his play with and exploration of notes as rhythmic entities, Chatterjee makes a claim for the speedy execution of tāns, tihais, and chakradars as "exploration," as "flirting" with boundaries. Here, listening out for the rhythmic-dynamic dimensions of notes becomes authenticated by the weight of the musical authority of senior musicians from whom he picked up these rhythmic complexities. When playing such speedy notes, he doesn't listen out for their melodic clarity or exact adherence to rāga rules and

boundaries. Instead, notes have to sound "powerful"; they must have a high dynamic and rhythmic energy to make a claim of musical belonging.

"By playing that note, he destroyed the rāga": Note and Rāga Boundaries

Musicians mobilize the concepts of note examined above in debates about what might be called the metaphorical "elephant in the room" of this book: rāga. Contrary to the (ethno)musicological custom of starting work on Hindustani classical (instrumental) music with a definition of rāga, I have refrained from making my understanding of this phenomenon explicit. A number of definitions exist in literature on the topic, while other authors emphasize the phenomenon's ungraspable qualities:

> The **rāga** concept is a **complex idea abstracted** from **concrete music.**… As a **musical entity**, the rāga can be described by certain **specific characteristics** such as its **constituent notes**, the **ascent** and **descent** of the **melodic phrases**, the **notes** to be **emphasized**, the kind of **ornamentation** to be used, and so on. At the same time, the rāga is something **more** than the **sum** of these **characteristics**, and it has been regarded as '**total sound'** or a **tonal complex**. (Bagchee 1998: 17)

> The **music characteristics** that define a rāga are **derivative** of **concrete** music and a **source** of **concrete music**. **Compositions** and **improvisations** may, if similar, be **classified** as **belonging** to the same **rāga**, but it is equally possible to **create compositions** and **improvisations** upon the basis of **musical characteristics** of rāga. (Van der Meer 1980: 4)

> Broadly speaking, **raag** is a **system** of **developing** a **melodic scheme** upon a **scale.** (Atre 2004: 3–4)

> The **concept** of **rāga** is perhaps as **old** as **Bharata's Nāṭya Śāstra**, written approximately 2,000 years ago. Though there is no mention of rāga in this **treatise**, the **description** of jāti-gāyan appearing in it is **similar** to the **rāgas.** The concept of **rāga** reigns **supreme** in **classical** music (nowadays being referred to as "**art**" music) which distinguishes itself by relying the most on the two very **basic components** of **music** for communication, the **svara** and the **laya** … What is a rāga? Is it a **selection** of **notes**? A **scale**? A particular **phraseology** of selected notes? An interesting **composition/structure**/architecture of the phrases? A **mood**? A **personality**? An **organic existence**? … Perhaps **all of the above**. The **qualities essential** for any composition to be referred to as a rāga have been **well documented** from time to time. The **concept** of rāga is quite **well established** in Indian music. But, a rāga is something **more** than all the **qualities listed**

above; and this observation is also well known to the researchers of rāga saṅgīt. This "something" is what **attributes** the **rāga-ness** to the rāga and is therefore of immense importance. (Deshpande 2015: xi-xii)

In this study I have consciously refrained from defining rāga. Rāga is a multifaceted phenomenon, which my interlocutors listen out for in distinct ways. How one defines and listens out for rāga is therefore part of, rather than a prerequisite for, examining the dynamics of musical knowledge and power central in this book. Rather than providing a definition, I want this book to do its performative work. Through the offered patchwork of elements, the reader can form her own understanding of rāga. Simultaneously, the multiplicity mirrors how it is listened out for and represented in several ways to suit a specific politics of listening.

In this section, however, I explore how various versions of note are listened out for in negotiations and valorizations of what my interlocutors talked about as rāga boundaries:

Interlocutor:	What is the **rāga**, what is the rāga?
Eva-Maria:	Yeah, exactly, what destroys a rāga, and what?
Interlocutor:	Rāga is like a **description** of a **puzzle**. Now, if I look at you, I see your nose, from the tip, front. If I look at it a little bit from the side and the front, there is nothing wrong with it. A **note** is a **note**. If I just give [sound example 7.15] with a little **hint** of Ga at the back, nothing wrong with that.
Eva-Maria:	Yeah, because Ga is also important in this uh.
Interlocutor:	What is the **rāga**, **defined** as? So Darbāri Kanadā [sound example 7.15]. But you anyways have your tanpura going in the background, so there is Ga maybe playing in the background. [sound example 7.15] Dha is playing in the background on the tanpura, so why have a tanpura? I am, if I can do the same thing with **sur**, it has not got anything to do with the rāga. It is what **capacity** I can **explore** my **instrument**.... Why should you not explore? There is **no boundary** as long as the **image** of the **rāga** is **untarnished**. That is what you have to **figure** out. You can, I cannot play rāga Yaman and you know say that "Ow this is rāga Yaman, this is my rāga Yaman." and then completely **fuck up** the whole. But, what I can do within Yaman, I can **explore different mood** of **expression**, I can explore. That's the **art**, that is why it's an art, you stand on one note a little more. Like Darbari [sound example 7.16] these are the usual notes, but [sound example 7.16] I give the Ni a little more.
Eva-Maria:	You emphasize Ni?
Interlocutor:	Just **pushing** it a little bit, and seeing how it goes, but you have to have the **right judgement** [sound example 7.16]. Come back to Dha the moment you **feel** it's too much. If I do [sound example 7.16] then I **fuck** the **rāga up**. That is **judgement**, that is why there is **artistic judgement**, which I am sorry to say, but a **lot** of **people don't have**. When they,

once they start **flirting** with it, then they go **too far**. So that is, those are the people who do not last.

The interlocutor here compares the details of notes as played within a specific rāga to the elements making out the details that allow us to recognize a person's face. While "a nose is a nose," it characterizes a person's face, and it can be seen, felt, and represented from various angles. Similarly, "a note is a note," which in its specific multidimensional shaping is constitutive of and listened out for as characteristic of a rāga; just as one can look at a nose from different directions, one can sound out different dimensions of a note without destroying the character that is specific to a rāga. This metaphor indicates the usefulness of thinking about notes in spatial terms if we want to understand my interlocutor's concept of rāga in relation to note. In his example, the movement from Ni to Dha as performed as "note" at the heart of the character of rāga Darbari is sounded out quickly and lands on Dha. This Dha is far from stable. Pushing the boundaries of that rāga, he ends the phrase with the same movement, but stays on Ni much longer, "giving" the Ni "a little more." Dynamically, however, this Ni is slightly weaker than the Ni that moved immediately to Dha. According to this interlocutor, a player can only give so much emphasis to this note if he thereafter moves to Dha and allows it to sound out as a note specific to this rāga: he has to come back to the heart of the rāga. If one he not do this, as the second example illustrates, then he considers the inclusion of Ni in this way to have broken the boundaries of the rāga. Besides the amount of time spent lingering on frequency, several other sonic elements play a role in my interlocutor's listening out for note as "fucking it up." In the third example, after landing on Ni, he jumps back up the frequency, then down to Dha before jumping from Dha to Ni. On a macro-structural level of rāga grammar, the order of playing the notes (here, pitched tonal places) is disturbed in such a way that this phrase is not allowed. If Ni is played within this rāga and, more importantly, if that pitch is sounding out with a large amount of dynamic energy over a longer period of time, to my interlocutor's ears the phrase's frequency has to continue transforming until it has reached Dha for him to categorize and valorize the note as Darbari. Playing with rāga boundaries by playing with the dynamic and frequency dimensions of a note is contested. Other interlocutors listen out for that half-a-second, dynamically prominent lingering on Ni as a clear violation of the rāga's boundaries, its character destroyed. That is, such manipulations are a source of tension, which center around and emerge through distinct forms of listening out for note:

Interlocutor:	Sometimes people get very sort of, **academic** and scholarly about **following** the **rāga**, kind of for the purpose of just following it. Which, if you think about it from a **bigger perspective**, **musically**, I mean the **purpose** of this music is to have an **effect** on you, and to, to **convey** some **emotion**, right?
Eva-Maria:	Ok, hmmm, ja ja.
Interlocutor:	And if you are just, if you. If you are **playing** all the right **notes**, and you are not **creating** the **effect**, then, what have you **accomplished**, you know?
Eva-Maria:	Ja, ok.
Interlocutor:	So uhm, certainly my, my **early training** was much more, uhm, sort of **by the book** like that. Like, for instance, if we were playing Bhimpalasri, the way I **initially learned** it, was in no circumstance would you go from Dha to Ni, you know, like [sound example 7.17]. You know, very **strictly adhering** to that. Whereas Khansaheb would play **lines** like [sound example 7.17]. Or here, you are, you know, in **ornamentation**, you are **touching that**. So, things like that. And sometimes he would play lines that probably he was just **creatively inspired** to play, that you know. Someone **could debate** is not in a **strict interpretation** of the **rāga**, but **ultimately** it **had** an **effect**. And, it was close enough to the **heart** of the **rāga** that he could, and he would **bring** it **back right away**, you know. So, he was a **master** of like, **skirting** the edges of the **territories** of the **rāgas** and sometimes he would come very close to other rāgas. But of course, he knew how to bring it back in an instance, whenever it was maybe too out there. So, I mean I think that's a, **ultimately** that's more **important**. To be playing things that are musically **affective**, than, to be playing by the **rules** but **hollow**, you know, **hollow music**.

In this example, the interlocutor first describes the avroha and avaroha of rāga Bhimpalasri as he has learned it prior to coming to Khan to illustrate that, according to its rāga grammar, one is not allowed to go from Dha to Ni. He contrasts this with a phrase played by Khan, who would "in ornamentation" touch "that." This description refers to a mīnd from Dha to Ni and back, followed by another attack on Dha, which then moves up and down between the Ni and Dha several times before moving down to Pa. My interlocutor here is listening out for and leverages two different versions of note: first, a stable pitch that, according to the rules of structural listening to rāga grammar, one is not allowed to land on after going to Dha, as in the first example; second, a frequency that one can touch upon as ornamentation to create the effect of another note, even though the rāga's grammar prohibits this. Leveraging the authority of a canonized musician, my interlocutor argues for a normative listening out for and valorizing of the "musically affective" over strict adherence to rāga rules.

Crucially, as the above examples indicate, the way in which this specific form of note—a forbidden but aesthetically pleasing fruit—is listened out for is closely related to and valorized in relation which one of the four canonized musicians one has studied with. Annapurna Devi's and Ravi Shankar's disciples usually cite their guru's strict adherence to rāga purity in terms of their explicit refusal to include notes that were outside of the rāga. Because Ali Akbar Khan is well-known for defying the rules of grammar, inserting dimensions of notes into rāgas without caring about the rules, his disciples feel freer to break the structural rules of rāga grammar in terms of notes. Often, and especially in the case of younger disciples, such play with boundaries is accompanied notions of artistic freedom, inspiration, and feeling. In the following excerpt, my interlocutor contrasts these notions with written, notated "scholarly," or "academic" forms of musical knowledge and listening, musical fixity, and a too-strict adherence to the rules.

> If **he** [Khan] played, you know, the shudh Ni in **different order** with the shudh Dha once, and it **sounded great**, but it **wasn't** necessarily in the **rāga**. I mean, who is gonna care about that? Some really, some **scholar** who is sitting there, who is, you know, **notating everything**: "oh oh oh oh, you did that" you know. It's like, everybody else is just like, wow, that was **beautiful**, you know (laughing). I think **ultimately** that's what's **important** and like, yes. I mean, this is my opinion, but I think, I think **he valued** the, the **line** of the **melody more than** the **rules** of the **rāga**. And the reason I think that, is, **in addition** to **listening** to his, listening to his **playing**, is also. In **classes**, he would say, I mean, of course he said rāga is important, many times. But in particular classes, he would say, you have to, that, the **melody** is the most **important**, that you…. So, if you don't, you know, **especially** if you are playing **fast**, and stuff like that, you can, you can kind of, **put notes together** that **work**, but they don't really follow the line of the melody in a really compelling way. So, to do that well, sometimes you get in an area where you could make a choice to sort of **slavishly obey** the, the, **pakad**, I mean the chalan of the **rāga**, or you could do something a little **different**, which is maybe **dangerous**, but **follows** the **line** of the **melody** better. And in those situations, I think that **he** probably **chose** the one that **felt better**. And I think that's a good choice. I mean, the risk of that is: you start interpreting a rāga which **diverges** from the standard **interpretation**. But its **alive** and its **beautiful** and its **affective**. … The **risk** I think of having sort of **blind traditionalism** … I seem to have better results when I go for the more, **musically aesthetic choice**, **instead** of **slavishly obeying** the **rules**. (anonymous interlocutor)

The notion of speed is here leveraged to distinguish between "slavishly" following the relative pitch order characteristic of the rāga known as challan and "following the line of the melody." Distinct from the defining melodic line of the rāga, the latter refers to the development of a melodic idea within a larger structural context of melodic development. While most musicians and listeners agree upon the challan of most of the better-known rāgas, what exactly

constitutes the "musically aesthetic choice" in following "the line of the melody," rather than "slavishly" obeying the rules of "blind traditionalism," is wide open for interpretation. Rāga itself, in this context, temporarily takes on negative connotations when compared to freely following a melody outside the prescriptions of "academic" note sequences. Emotion, creativity, artistry, and feeling are privileged over structure, strictness, academic rules, and tradition to legitimate a deviation from the prescribed norm.

Concluding Remarks

While several versions of note circulate in academic texts on Hindustani classical instrumental music, the question of what musical practices the concept refers to remains largely unexplored. Often used as a literal translation of svāra to denote one form of musical order—determining the relative pitch order of vadi, samvadi, challan, and pakad as defining elements of a rāga— the notion has been instrumental in the construction of structural listening as an authoritative musical knowledge practice. Lacking a clear definition, its meaning is ambiguous, referencing a variety of musical knowledge practices.

In contrast to these structural approaches, I have examined several ways in which note emerges through specific listening practices. I have argued that the multifarious dimensions that emerged through my analysis demonstrate that note is a flashpoint of musical tensions; it is the site of negotiations of the aesthetic boundaries and content of Hindustani classical instrumental music. Analyzing several examples, I illustrated that dimensions listened out for as (manipulations of) note, include a play with dynamic contrast and/or gradual dynamic transformations. The specific speed of a frequency change is also listened out for as a dimension of note. Similarly, this term can refer to tonal tensions and relations as well as to stable pitches. Elements of a phrase that are melodically difficult to categorize but dynamically strong and characterized by rhythmic intricacies are also listened out for as notes. However, these musical nuances are not neutral elements but carry particular connotations. As such, they are utilized as aesthetic arguments, for example in musicians' claims that a note did not have the feeling of the rāga. Exactly because such feeling is kept vague, difficult to pinpoint, and multidimensional, these claims are hard to challenge outside of the musical realm. Thereby, "note" becomes a source of musical tensions and debates—to the extent that people may walk

out of a concert because a single frequency sounded out for less than half a second: "by inserting that note, he completely fucked up the rāga." These tensions are not restricted to note and sound alone; they find expression in related domains, for example in debates about virtuosity.

"A lot of virtuosities"
Virtuosity between "Flirting," "Rape," and "Abstinence"

The **talented** Nityanand Haldipur—**ranked** among **India's leading flautists** and a **senior disciple** of the **reclusive genius**, **Padma Bhushan** Smt. **Annapurna Devi**—represents the **pure essence** of a highly **revered musical heritage**.

Born in Bombay in a **deeply spiritual family**, Nityanand was fortunate to have the right **environment** for his **latent musical talents** to blossom. His first guru who initiated him into the art, technique and aesthetics of flute-playing was his father, the late Shri Niranjan Haldipur—a **senior disciple** of the renowned flute **maestro**, the late **Pandit Pannalal Ghosh**. The warm soothing sounds of the bamboo flute were an early, pervading influence. And for young Nityanand to be attracted to the instrument was only **natural**.

Over the next two decades, Nityanand's training continued under the late Pandit Chidanand Nagarkar, and Pandit Devendra Murdeshwar, **seniormost disciple** of late Pandit Pannalal **Ghosh**, under whom Nityanand **perfected** his **technique**.

However, it was after 1986, when Padma Bhushan Smt. **Annapurna Devi**—**doyen** of the **Senia-Maihar gharana**—and **daughter** of the **legendary Ustad Allauddin Khansaheb** (Baba), the **fountainhead** of the gharana—**accepted** him as one of her **disciples**, that Nityanand's **talent** and **musicianship truly flowered**. It progressively acquired **depth**, **maturity** and a **new dimension**.

The polished **tonal grace, rhythmic elegance, and depth** as well as **lucidity** of **expression evident** in Nityanand's **playing** are the result of his continuing **advanced training** and **refinement** under Smt. Annapurna Devi. **It embodies the hallowed teaching traditions of the Senia-Maihar gharana and follows the same arduous riyaz and persevering commitment that has produced virtuosi like Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Pandit Ravi Shankar, the late Pannalal Ghosh and the late Pandit Nikhil Banerjee.**[126]

Purbayan is considered as one of the **finest** Sitar players in **Indian Classical** music and has attained a very special **place** for himself among the musicians and music lovers around the world. Purbayan belongs to the **famous Senia Maihar Gharana**, the school established by musical **genius Baba Allauddin Khan**, the **guru** of such **stars** as **Ustad Ali Akbar Khan** on the sarod and sitar players **Pandit Ravi Shankar and Pandit Nikhil Banerjee**.… Purbayan has designed the DWO, which is a **Doppelganger** of the **Indian Sitar**. Purbayan's DWO celebrates the **oneness** of **two**. It creates **sound** where the **acoustic** and the **digital**, where the **ancient** and the **modern**, where the **ethnic** and the **urban**, where the **esoteric** and the **virtuosic**, all **complement each other** and **become one**.[127]

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[126] www.nityanandhaldipur.com/site3/index.php?module=cv, last visited 23.03.2017.

[127] www.purbayan.com, last visited 23.03.2017.

The above passages are extracted from biographies published on the personal homepages of second-generation Maihar gharānā instrumentalists Nityanand Haldipur and Purbayan Chatterjee. The texts deploy a version of virtuosity to assert the value of these musicians as Hindustani classical instrumentalists. In Haldipur's biography, "virtuosi" refers to canonized Maihar gharānā instrumentalists. These musicians, the website emphasizes, were contemporaries and (guru)bhai's of Haldipur's current guru, Annapurna Devi. The biography furthermore claims that the training (tradition) received from their shared guru and founder of the Maihar gharānā, Baba Allauddin Khan, "produced" them as virtuoso musicians. The passage thereby emphasizes riyaz and tālim as central factors in their becoming virtuosi. The biography stresses that Haldipur has been taught in this same tradition since his early childhood. It furthermore frames his musical talent as something latent, which was brought to blossom through this training. Talent is constructed as something already present in his body, but which can only be actualized through specific musical training. The biography directly connects all musicians Haldipur learned from to the virtuosi mentioned thereafter: Annapurna Devi learned from the same teacher as Khan, Shankar, Haldipur, and Ghosh, and both Haldipur's father and Devendra Murdeshwar were disciples of the latter.[128] Besides and in relation to his association with these virtuoso musicians, the biography highlights the increased refinement of his playing technique, hinting that it is central to how Haldipur understands, listens out for, and performs virtuosity.

Combined, I argue that the biography claims Haldipur is a virtuoso, but without making this assertion explicit. Instead, by emphasizing his place in a lineage of virtuoso teachers, his own virtuosity is implied. Without having to listen to his music, the text on the website thus performs Haldipur as such. Thereby, it is indicative of several aspects that play a role in the phenomenon of virtuosity as it is lived, negotiated, debated, and performed within the Hindustani instrumental music context. Often interrelated notions such as playing technique, tradition, heritage, talent, and embodied musical knowledge are attached to virtuosity. Furthermore, at least this specific case, virtuosity is performed and simultaneously listened out for as a positive aspect of Hindustani classical instrumental music. However, what virtuosity might sound like remains unclear from this brief analysis.

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[128] As briefly mentioned in the prior chapter, Ghosh played a crucial role in the classicization of the bansuri in the mid-twentieth century (Clements 2010, 2011). That is, at present Ghosh is considered the bansuri player who through his playing enabled the acceptance of this instrument as suitable for Hindustani classical music. Clements has analyzed the recordings of Ghosh's performances that were at his disposal at the time of writing his dissertation and identified some of the musical (structural) strategies Ghosh deployed to be accepted as a Hindustani classical instrumental musician.

In the second excerpt, from Chatterjee's online biography, the notion of "the virtuosic" appears in a series of paired concepts. Suggestively grouped together with notions of digital, modern, and urban, the virtuosic is contrasted directly with the esoteric, while the other notions are juxtaposed with the acoustic, ancient, and ethnic respectively. These dichotomies, the passage suggests, are unified through the sound produced by the instrument DWO. Chatterjee designed this instrument, which the blurb portrays as a doppelganger of the sitar. As in Haldipur's biography, the extract emphasizes Chatterjee's skills as a musician. It also places Chatterjee in the same musical lineage as Ali Akbar Khan, Nikhil Banerjee, and Ravi Shankar whilst asserting that Chatterjee has "studied"[129] with the former. In this context, the virtuosic is portrayed as distinct from, but potentially unifiable with, tradition through the instrument Chatterjee designed. That is, the reader is presented with a chain of associations and assumptions: the instrument was probably designed and build to accommodate his playing style. Therefore, might his style—without defining it here—similarly bridge these dichotomies? Although the text focuses on the instrument, Chatterjee's own virtuosity is also implied. As in Haldipur's biography, virtuosity has positive connotations. But what exactly it sounds like, how the DWO might afford this quality, or what Chatterjee listens out for as virtuosity similarly remain unarticulated.

Both biographies mobilize virtuosity as a positive quality in their descriptions of contemporary Maihar gharānā musicians. However, as the negative valorization of the speedy succession of "notes" known as tāns examined in the prior chapter signals, virtuosity does not necessarily only have positive connotations. In fact, this ill-defined phenomenon is the source of fierce debates among musicians and listeners alike. The audio-visual experience of a musician banging his head and waving his preferably long and curly black hair while playing a fast and long tān might enthrall some audience members: "what a virtuoso!" Others might listen out for the same tān as indicative of the instrumentalist's lack of a deeper, "real" understanding of this music: "it's just virtuosity, he hasn't understood what this music is really about" (anonymous interlocutor). The musician himself, furthermore, might only be listening out for the interaction between the tablā and the rhythmic patterns he himself creates to end the improvisation at the rhythmically appropriate moment: "You know, that energy when you build that tihai land there, on sam. Virtuosity is also a very physical thing, you know. A build-up

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[129] The use of the notion of "studied" is of interest here. It is widely known Partha Chatterjee studied for a time with Khan after Nikhil Banerjee's death, and that Purbayan Chatterjee was present at some of the classes and thus received some musical guidance from Khan. Purbayan, however, did not have a formal guru–shishya relationship with Khan. A claim of being a disciple would therefore be quickly dismissed. "Studying," by contrast, cannot be dismissed so easily.

and release of tension" (anonymous interlocutor). While they listen out in different ways, and for (partially) diverse musical elements, all three interlocutors use the notion of virtuosity to (de)valorize this tān. In a similar manner, nuanced and minor shifts in frequency, dynamic energy, and timbral quality, during which a musician keeps his bodily motions to the minimum, might be listened out for as the ultimate form of virtuosity: "did you hear how he moved around that Dha? Now that is the real virtuosity of our music" (anonymous interlocutor). Others, however, listening out for elements such as quick successions of notes and rhythmic intricacies, evaluate this as boring and repetitive: "Why is that guy just playing the same note again and again?" (anonymous interlocutor).

My interlocutors thus normatively listen out for divergent (combinations of) sonic elements as virtuosity. The various conceptions of virtuosity are inextricably tied to various (politically charged) ideologies: it is associated with notions of (musical) authenticity, ideas about the required relationship between music and a musician's control over his instrument and his body, several forms of musical knowledge, and ideologies of tradition, modernity, and musical mastery. While partially specific to the Hindustani classical (instrumental) music context, some elements of these debates about virtuosity resonate with, perhaps mimic, similar debates in other domains. To examine the nuances and variety of phenomena captured under this banner, then, it is essential to engage with virtuosity as multifaceted. Pleading for a "pluralistic definition of virtuosities, rather than a singular one implying integral cohesion" (Hoppe et al. 2017: 12–13), acknowledges the flexibility of its meanings and connotations as it travels between academic disciplines and between cultural, historical, geographical and musical contexts. Examining which forms musicians listen out for and musically play with, and how they do it, might help us to understand how they leverage their distinct aspects in their claims to musical value and authority.

It is possible that some of these virtuosities have traveled into Hindustani classical music as the result of (post)colonial mimicking (Bhabha 1994) of European art music and North Atlantic popular music virtuosities.[130] These themselves have a complex history, and we may ask when, under which conditions, and to what ends the notion of virtuosity entered the realm of Hindustani classical music practices. While an in-depth examination of such influences is beyond the goals of my study, it is clear that the concept emerges in concert announcements

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[130] Upon reading a final draft of this chapter, Dr. Christine Hoppe emphasized the overlap of discursive and musical strategies leveraged in debates within nineteenth-century European art musical practices about virtuosity and the elements encountered in this chapter. An exploration of the relationships between these musical traditions, however, is outside of the scope of this chapter.

and reviews in the North Atlantic realm from the 1950s onwards. The following letter (Fig.8.1), for example, was written by Ravi Shankar to a concert organizer in the Netherlands, giving instructions on how to announce the various musicians at the start of the concert. Shankar here uses the concept of virtuoso to describe his tablā player, Alla Rakha. Well-known for his strategic marketing skills, this indicates that Shankar thought the notion would resonate positively with the North Atlantic audience:
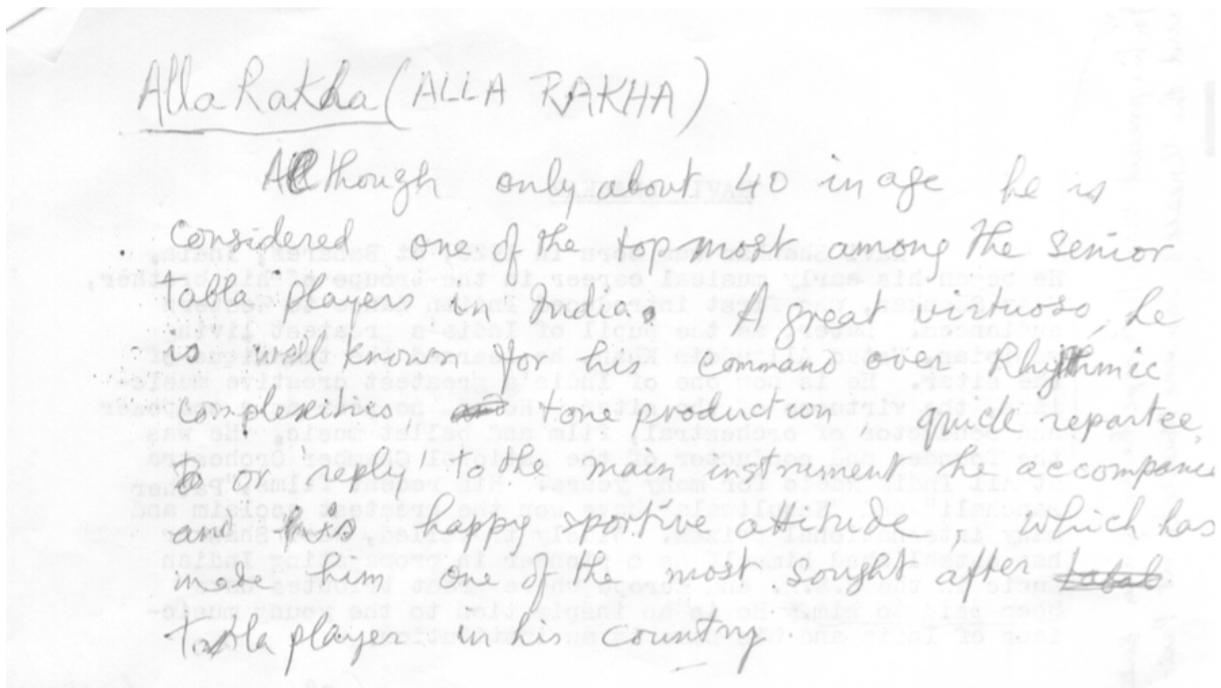
Fig. 8.1, letter from Ravi Shankar to concert organizer in the Netherlands. Source: van Lamsweerde archive.

At least from the 1960s onwards, the concept of virtuosity also appears in concert reviews in India. This undated[131] review from the *Times of India* of a seven-hour concert by Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan, and Alla Rakha at the Tilak Mandir hall in Mumbai is indicative of its positive connotations at the time:

> Ali Akbar–Ravi Shankar is by far the best combination. There is indeed none around to compare it with. In the playing, each has often achieved a **reach** of **music higher** than anyone could gain for themselves. The **team** has displayed both the **sweep** of **virtuosity** and the **perfect rapport** the two share when they **play together**. But in recent years, the **novelty** and **freshness** of their **idiom** are on the wane. Those who had discovered in this combination a **reward beyond** mere **music** now find little of that **spark** and **elevation** and even less of that **attitude** and **accomplishment**. The marathon Parle concert too confirmed

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[131] A note on the original clipping says "1964?" Source: van Lamsweerde archive.

this. We had a **neatly-molded** Jhinjhoti which was **over-stretched** within its limited compass for 90 minutes. The passages of the **popular** Kirwani, which most **music-lovers** by now know by **heart**, were **brilliantly** played. One could sense Ravi Shankar's **genuine feeling** for the lyrical and Ali Akbar's felicitous blend of **classical abstractions**. But why should the pleasant piece have merged into a **whirlpool** of **fast rhythm** and **noise**? The pathetic Lalit was impressive in spots, but oddly **ineffectual**. The **musically literate audience** needed a more **sympathetic treatment**.

(Our Music Critic, TOI).

While I mention this review only briefly to indicate a contrast between earlier shared concerts and present-day ones, this review uses several notions that still resonate within debates about virtuosity. The review suggests that during the seven-hour concert, the musicians "stretched" rāga Jhinjhoti too much. This rāga is characterized as relatively simple, and hence difficult to play for such a long time without boring audiences. Virtuosity is thus implicitly contrasted with boredom. The negatively valorized "whirlpool of fast rhythm and noise" that ended the performance of rāga Kirwani is also contrasted with virtuosity. But while in this case they are opposed, I will show below that many of my present-day interlocutors listen out for and negatively valorize fast rhythm and noise *as* virtuosity.

In the North Atlantic realm, reviewers unfamiliar with Hindustani classical music used the notion of virtuosity to describe an experience they could not give meaning to with the concepts they had at their disposal. The following late-1950s[132] review in a Dutch newspaper of a concert by Ravi Shankar illustrates this tendency, and it also displays the strong orientalist overtones of characterizations of the "music of India" for European audiences of that time. I therefore quote it at some length:

The music of India with burning incense

The **traditional** music of the more than 400 million souls-counting **India**, is univocal in all regions and uses **single chords**…. Ravi Shankar, sitar (string instrument—**melody**), Nodu Mullick, tanpura (string instrument—**harmonic**), and Chatus [sic] Lal, tabla (double drums—**meter** and **rhythm**), played five **pieces** of North Indian music, each taking between fifteen and twenty-five minutes, at the Concertgebouw yesterday, in the **required bodily positions** and **clothing**, sitting on a **carpet** on the small stage, surrounded by **incense**.

This music, which is far **superior** to our music in both **melodic** and **rhythmic refinement**, is an event for every music lover, especially when heard for the first time. All pieces are **structured** in a similar pattern as a long-stretched **climax**, and, through the constantly audible **bass-tones** of the tanpura and tabla,

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[132] The festival took place in 1956–1957.

sound out one **chord** (the first three pieces on the program were in D-flat—major and minor—the other two in G-flat.

Virtuosic

The three players, all exquisite musicians and big **instrumental virtuosi**, have rightfully become prominent. The only regrettable aspect was their insistence on the necessity to work with **speakers**. Because of this, the **sound character** of their instruments, which are **attuned** to **intimacy**, was **negatively deformed**.

With this well-visited manifestation—hosted by the Dutch Institute for **International Relations**, the Royal Tropical Institute, and the Exotic Music Society—the '56–57 season of Le Canard—Amsterdam Filmliga came to an end.

Every visitor received, as a gift from the Indian Ambassador, a **booklet** with a very **readable introduction** to the **classical music** of **India** written by P.C.J. van Hoboken.

Karel Mengenberg.[133]

Several aspects of this review indicate the comparative mode of listening popular at the time. The review also signposts the roles musicologists such as Van Hoboken played in the construction of easily consumable and controllable knowledge about the "music of India." Finally, it points to the roles of cultural politics in this music's popularization in the North Atlantic realm (cf. Lubach 2006). Disclosing few musical details, the review reveals how Hindustani classical instrumental music was listened out for, framed, and translated, and virtuosity's role in these processes. Reviewing the concert in "very readable" and easily graspable, recognizable, and comparable—because well-known—musical concepts, virtuosity became a way to communicate positive experiences without going into musical details. The notion, this fragment indicates, was used to positively valorize an unfamiliar musical phenomenon in music(ologic)al terms familiar to North Atlantic audiences and readers.

These archival fragments construct several elements of virtuosity that continue to echo in contemporary aesthetic debates, while also hinting at the partial transformation of this notion within the contemporary context. Selectively and normatively listened out for and (de)valorized in musical articulations, these days virtuosity is related to notions of musical mastery, real versus superficial musical knowledge, technical skill, abstract listening, and (lack of) feeling. It is at the heart of disputes about Hindustani classical instrumental music's aesthetic boundaries and content. In this chapter, I examine how musicians listen out for specific musical parameters as virtuosity. I argue that through selective listening to distinct

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[133] Original Dutch, my translation.

musical nuances, musicians perform, both in the musical and the Butlerian sense of the word, several forms of virtuosity as musically (not) valuable.

Virtuosities within the Musicologies

It may come as no surprise that (ethno)musicologists, who make their living from the production of authoritative knowledge about music, are intimately invested in debates about virtuosity. Deriving their legitimacy as academics from the perceived seriousness of not only the content of their work but also the topic of their research, (ethno)musicology has a long tradition of excluding musics that lack such connotations. These were simply ignored or explicitly deemed unworthy of aesthetic and analytical attention. Perhaps because it cannot be described within the structural parameters that musicologists listen out for as art music, virtuosity also suffered the same fate, being either ignored or examined a vague and explicitly normative manner. The rare cases in which virtuosity is a factor in such studies lay bare some of the naturalized assumptions about, and aesthetic notions of, virtuosity in Hindustani classical (instrumental) music (studies).

From Martinez's semiotic study of Hindustani music, for example, we learn that "at popular concerts, … at every instance of musical virtuosity someone in the audience says 'vāh!' even if that phrase is not particularly laudable from the experts' point of view" (Martinez 2001: 159). Martinez directly connects "popular" with "instances of musical virtuosity," and he is quick to distinguish the latter from phrases that "experts" would praise.[134] Here, popular concerts, rather than referring to a genre, are categorized by a specific relationship between musician and a listener. The act of favorably listening out for and audibly reacting to musical instances that Martinez characterizes as "virtuosity" becomes a means of categorizing listeners. But what virtuosity sounds like, or what parameters are listened out for as virtuosic, remains unarticulated. What it means to be an expert in this context remains similarly unclear; Martinez simply assumes that the reader is able to recognize which phrases are laudable and which are not. Besides leaving the notion of virtuosity open for interpretation, then, the Martinez also performs a vicious circle of connoisseurship: upon listening to music, "we, the experts," will

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[134] With this use of "expert ears," I consciously deviate here from Martinez' use of "point of view" in order to describe a listening experience. Martinez' notion illustrative of the occularcentric mode of academic approaches to music that is certainly not restricted to semiotics, which I seek to move beyond in this book.

simply be able to recognize whether it is good serious art music or bad virtuosic popular music. Therefore, there is no need to explicate its musical details. As signaled in the previous chapter, such discursive use of virtuosity as a signifier of knowledgeable versus unknowledgeable listeners is not restricted to the musicologies. My interlocutors also use this as a strategy of inclusion and exclusion.

Martinez also uses virtuosity to distinguish between types of musicians, again associating the term with "unknowledgeable" listeners. Understanding it as his academic task to categorize musicians, he bases his judgements on written sources such as the Sangītratnakara and the work of other musicologists (Martinez 2001: 166–169)—leaving unspoken that these musicologists are themselves normative agents of musical inclusion and exclusion. Martinez uses three categories: the emotional performer, the imitator, and the entertainer. The emotional performer "can strongly affect an audience, by means of his expressiveness" (ibid.: 168) while the second type, the imitator, "is able to perform accurately another's style" (ibid.: 168). By contrast, "the entertainer is the musician who most pleases lay audiences. S/he makes not only use of musical resources, such as the display of virtuosity, but also theatrical techniques, such as facial expressions, glances, hand gestures and costumes" (ibid.: 169). Thus, virtuosity is one of the musical elements that allows carefully listening experts to identify a musician as an entertainer. While Martinez does not order these types of performers hierarchically, the numbering combined with his suggestion that the ability to affect the audience is the most important goal of Hindustani classical music, does implicitly create a musical hierarchy. It paints a negative portrait of virtuosity, as distinct from an affective performance on the one hand, or fidelity to tradition on the other. Furthermore, while the people listening to the emotional performer are simply referred to as "audience," thereby implying them as norm, from which the "entertainer's" audience needs to be distinguished through the label of "lay."

Martinez understands virtuosity as something that can be displayed through the use of particular, but not specified, musical resources, distinguishing it from the physical movements musicians make during such displays. As the following analysis illustrates, he thereby differs from some my interlocutors, who understand physical movements to be an intrinsic aspect of the musical performance of virtuosity. The use of the visual metaphor of display is contrasted with affect, combined with the explicit distinction of this type of virtuosity from a physical dimension thereof. Finally, Martinez also argues that instrumental musicians rely on virtuosity

more than vocalists in their performance, thus implicitly privileging vocal music as more serious than instrumental music.

In his work on Hindustani music in the twentieth century, Van der Meer similarly does not define virtuosity. Nevertheless, the concept arises several times in his study. First and foremost, he relates virtuosity to speed. More specifically, musicians possess and can display it to the audience through speed: a "certain increase in the tempo is however allowed to enable the artist to display his virtuosity in fast passages" (Van der Meer 1980: 7). In another passage, he discusses virtuosity in relationship to the different moods (rāsa) that he claims can be expressed through performance, arguing that they are not solely based on melodic expression but are also influenced by lāya.[135] "Obviously the laya influences the expression. Devotion and pathos are not served by quick tempi and the virtuoso speed of recent time can only rouse adbhuta" (ibid.: 105). In a footnote, he clarifies that this critique of the virtuoso speed of "recent time" is based on a comparative, Sanskrit treatises-based music theory as examined by the musicologist Sharma. Thereby, Van der Meer's treatment of virtuosity is exemplary of the tendency to listen in terms of music theory. And because, according to this theory, only one rāsa can be aroused by virtuoso speed, regardless of the rāga, virtuosity does not allow structural listening. Schooled in and deriving their authority from a listening out exactly on those terms, the negative valorizing of virtuosities by (ethno)musicologists becomes clearer: "Tāna has a beauty of its own but can easily become a form of gymnastics in which the atmosphere of the rāga makes place for a single other expression, that of virtuosity" (ibid.: 26).

Van der Meer's negative characterization of virtuosity is strengthened further by his depiction of it as a recent phenomenon. Drawing on nostalgic discourses, explored above, that locate the golden age of Hindustani classical music in the past, he links a decline in quality, signaled by the increased use of virtuosity, to a lack of a specific form of musical knowledge:

> Thus, in **former days**, an artist could be highly **appreciated** as a **master** of the particular **idiom** of his **gharānā**, while he **lacked** a **beautiful voice**. Nowadays, an artist with a **good voice** and **virtuoso techniques** will be **appreciated** even if he has a very **limited knowledge** of rāgas and no **distinct style** at all. (Van der Meer 1980: 136)

Analyzing historical transformations within Hindustani classical music, Van der Meer makes it a point to depict a "craze for virtuoso performance, fast techniques and novelties" (ibid.: 166) as

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[135] This concept is usually used to refer to (playing with) rhythm, for both soloists (vocal, instrumental) and tabla players.

newly emerging "musical values" (ibid.: 172). He emphasizes that "especially the stress on virtuoso techniques can almost be considered part of the present-day music culture of North India" (ibid.). He relates this alleged new stress on virtuosity to changes in "the raga concept" (ibid.: 174), which have been "most clearly stated in an article by Geeta Mayor" (ibid.). As this quote and its lengthy reproduction are telling for the discursive use of virtuosity within Hindustani classical (instrumental) music (studies), I reproduce Mayor's statement at length here:

> By the middle of the **twentieth century**, the **image** of the raag changed and **manifested different features**. Raag became a **melodic frame** where **intonation** and the **phrase by phrase construction** were **no longer** given their former and **traditional importance**. The **definition** of a **raag** as given in **musical theory**, now became one of the most important means of **identifying** one **raag** from another. The **Shastric formula** was taken literally, to contain the **totality** of the **raag**, and provided a **melodic field** within which the musician **improvised** freely and used **melody** according to his **ability**, with a stress on **ornamentation**, **rhythm** or **virtuosity**. The important factor in **determining** a **good performance** from a bad one was not whether the individual **character** or shakal of the **raag** had been expressed but whether the musician had succeeded in **keeping within** the **rules**, as it were, and yet **displayed skill** and **virtuosity** in **improvisation**. (Mayor 1966: 153–154, cited in Van der Meer 1980: 174)

Mayor points to the influences of Shastric music theory on changes in the norms of judging performances. She relates this directly to an emphasis on ornamentation, rhythm, or virtuosity as distinct from intonation and phrase-by-phrase construction of rāga that was "traditionally" practiced prior to the mid-twentieth century. Strict adherence to music theory, she suggests, disturbed and transformed traditional musical practice. This, in turn, resulted in a listening out for virtuosity instead of individual rāga expression. Her argument apparently contradicts Van der Meer's leveraging of the same theory in his negative writing about virtuosity. Published in 1963, Sharma's text indicates that virtuosity was not solely used to frame the music of instrumentalists such as Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan. It was already a discursive trope in musicological as well as public debates about musical practices of the time. Crucially, it was utilized in relation to several modes and sources of musical knowledge and listening.

Virtuosity is also part of Van der Meer's concluding words. He mulls over ideas about the allegedly endangered future of Hindustani classical music and rāga:

> It is understood that the **traditional musicians** and **music critics** are generally **averse** to **change**. Some authors are **pessimistic** about the **future**, which however seems **inappropriate** as constant **viability** is one of the greatest assets of **Indian music**.
>
> Many of the **recent changes** in Indian music are **adaptations** to the new **environment**, especially the **craze** for **virtuoso techniques**, which **appeal** to the **inexpert audiences**. Yet, it would be an illusion to think that these **audiences** can be **educated by** a **music** they do **not understand**. Only **creativity** can solve the **crisis**, although it would not have been the first in the long history of Indian music. Hopefully the **great achievement** of **rāga** is not **lost** in the process. (ibid.: 193)

The inclusion of the "craze for virtuoso technique" as an example of recent transformations within Hindustani classical music further illustrates the centrality of virtuosity in debates about (the future of) Hindustani classical music. While Van der Meer acknowledges in a footnote that pessimism about this music's future is a discursive trope that can be traced back at least two centuries, he still insists on the existence of a "crisis," which he locates in the relationship between musicians and the "inexpert audiences" who listen out for and respond to virtuosity, thus reproducing or even amplifying its popularity. The impossibility of educating these audiences "by a music they do not understand," reveals Van der Meer's normative notion of listening; only if audiences understand the music can they listen out for and appreciate, beyond virtuoso techniques, what truly matters: rāga. This implies, of course, that expert listeners like himself already know how to listen and can thus correctly recognize virtuosity for what it really is: simultaneously a cause and symptom of the crisis of Hindustani music.

Slawek, finally, while not explicitly using the concept of virtuosity, goes one step further in dramatizing this perceived crisis:

> Those who reach **extreme levels** of **intensity**, primarily by increasing **tempo** to the point of a **spatial blur** and/or **pushing** the **volume** of their tone production to their voice's or instrument's musical **limit** (and, in the case of some instrumentalists, beyond), are often singled out for **damaging** the **essence** of the tradition—**sacrificing** the **heart** of the **tradition**, **rāga**, at the **altar** of **speed**. Nevertheless, whether the **catharsis** is mild and sweet, possibly resulting from an exquisite rendition of the **subtleties** of a **rāga**, or **intense** and **exhausting**, the result of following complex **rhythmical gyrations** at **incredible tempos**, a **value** is certainly placed upon music's ability to provide an **elevating** experience for those who play or listen to it. (Slawek 1998: 339)

Slawek's text illustrates the many elements at play in this notion of "sacrificing" the rāga at the "altar" of speed. It is also an example of the leveraging of various topoi that resonate with notions explored in prior chapters: sweetness, musical complexity, essence or heart of

tradition, nuances of rāga, speed, blurring of pitch boundaries, dynamic energy, and rhythmic play. The strong metaphor of sacrifice that Slawek employs, finally, indicates the severity of the tensions surrounding such discussions. As I illustrate below, these anxieties are similarly severe within contemporary knowledge practices.

The discourses examined above exemplify the normative tone of debates about virtuosity within Hindustani classical music studies. Given the almost complete absence of virtuosity in most other literature on the topic, it can be deduced that such studies relate virtuosity to a perceived (absence of) specific forms of musical knowledge. On the one hand, it is used to sell, frame, and describe concerts and musicians. On the other hand, academics perform virtuosity as something that should be listened out for and valorized negatively, as a marker of lack of perceivably more authentic and in depth musical knowledge. Related to this, virtuosity is portrayed as a recent and popular phenomenon, and opposed to traditional and classical. Some authors describe the phenomenon as distinct from gesture, facial expression and (novel and fast) playing techniques, while others portray these aspects as part of the phenomenon. Virtuosity is understood as a musical object that can be displayed or expressed by artists to affect the audience. But while it is a core element in tensions over this music's aesthetic boundaries and content, the question of what, exactly, musicians are listening out as virtuosity remains unasked within Hindustani classical music studies. Instead, virtuosic (aspects of) music and musicians are dismissed as irrelevant for academic research.

So how to approach this complex phenomenon without reducing its intricacies to, and listening out in terms of, similar normative concepts? I don't want to introduce a new normative way of listening out for virtuosity. Instead, I rather do justice to its conceptual openness. Therefore, you seek to understand the multifarious ways that musicians themselves understand and deploy virtuosity in their practice, self-understandings, and discussions. In the following sections, I examine how Hindustani classical instrumental musicians attune to, interact with and shape virtuosity as (un)desirable in their musical knowledge practices. I seek to understand how—in performance, practice, or tālim—virtuosity is performed, which aspects musicians listen out for as virtuosity, and how they musically manipulate the listening practices of their audiences. I explore how virtuosity is done in multifarious ways, simultaneously becoming and allowing for the negotiation of (sonic) fields of tension.

"You have to be James Bond": Play with Boundaries of a Musical System

Chatterjee: **Virtuosity** in my book, is, is being **James Bond**, where, where, you know, if you can get the **job done**, and **save** who needs to be saved … does his thing, is **charming**, is wonderful, is uh, you know, is **powerful**, you know. He can fight with whoever he needs to fight with, but at the end of the day does **not disturb** the **environment** around him. … you **feel** his **presence** but **you don't**, that is **virtuosity**. Virtuosity is a **tool**, which enables you to do things **within** the **system** in a **smart**, efficient manner, and **effective manner**.

Eva-Maria: And could you translate that, into, uh, musical concepts, like. Or give an example of how you would do that then musically?

Chatterjee: Virtuosity is, virtuosity is when you can play a **tihai**, uh, which, uh comes after a phrase, and it seems like, you didn't know what the calculation was, **it just came**, but yet you don't. Virtuosity uh, is the ability to, virtuosity is the **ability** to, uh, **execute** it in a **manner** that is, and do not stutter or think or.

Eva-Maria: Make it sound like, one two three, "yes I made it!"

Chatterjee: Or playing a tān where it is easy. **Virtuosity is the ability to make it all look very easy, that is all it is …**

Eva-Maria: And so for you, it doesn't necessarily relate to speed, or approaches to a note, for example, these things? Or is that also included in there, or like, intricate bol patterns?

Chatterjee: You know that's, I, you know. These are questions which, I **would** rather **not answer**, because these are questions which are best left unanswered. These are, these are. Things which you use, when you have to use them, overall, it doesn't. If you ask me whether it is speed, then it is no, it is definitely not only speed, but it is **also speed**. If you ask me is it **lāya** only, no, it's, it's. **Virtuosity** is **not skill**, skill is a different thing. **Skill** is just **knowing** what to **do**, **virtuosity** is the ability to do it **smoothly**, and walk out of there, uh, like, you know, it was all very **easy**.

Several aspects of Chatterjee's notion of virtuosity can be fleshed out here. First, there is Chatterjee's explicit refusal to put into words how he would musically define virtuosity. Afraid to be caught on tape pinpointing one version of this conflicted phenomenon, his silence denotes the tensions surrounding the (lack of) musical nuances listened out for as virtuosity. Second, to distinguish between virtuosity and technical skill, he portrays the former as created in complex relationships with the audience's listening experience. Whereas he describes skill as "knowing what to do," virtuosity is depicted the ability to make it look easy. As I illustrate in more detail below, he extends this notion to the sonic realm: making it sound easy. He manipulates both in interaction with each other. Crucially, however, making it look easy is only

part of the story; for Chatterjee, if virtuosity is to be effective as an aesthetic tool, there must be a listener who is able to recognize that the music that sounds so smooth and easy is actually extremely difficult to play. However, this only works if the audience is aware of and listens out for the "right" aspects of the performance. Chatterjee listens out for and negotiates this tension in his performance of virtuosity: between overt (sonic) display of the technical difficulty of playing and masking this difficulty to make the playing sound effortless. Navigating between these, then, is crucial in Chatterjee's performing of virtuosity.

His evocation of the secret service agent James Bond also needs some unpacking, as it indicates a second field of tension negotiated in his performance of virtuosity. This stands in a direct relationship to rāga. Chatterjee states that he considers Bond's qualities—charming, wonderful, and powerful—essential for (the sounds produced by) a virtuoso musician. He relates these characteristics to musical elements, and to the musician's relationship with the the audience through the rāga he performs:

Chatterjee:	The rāga, the **rāga** is like uh, like a **woman**, you **flirt** with it, until it allows you to. When it asks you to **stop**, you stop, it is your **judgment**, you have to **learn where** to **respect** the **rules**, and you, the **rāga** and your **audience**. These are the **three** things that are there, there is an audience that is watching. So, if you **flirt** with it, you **rape** the **rāga**, then your **audience** will not forgive you. At the same time, if you don't **play** with the **rāga**, welcome it little bit, treat it with love, then the **rāga** will not forgive. So, uh, you know, I don't know, everyone has their **own approach**, I.
Eva-Maria:	But I am asking about yours.
Chatterjee:	But **rigidity**, in my book, in my opinion, rigidity does **not**. See, a **rāga** is a **living thing**, a rāga is also, like a living, if you really think that a rāga is a living thing, then even a rāga cannot have the same **mood** every day. So, some days your darbāri kānada can be more **intense**, some days it can be a little playful, you know, sorrow.... But yes, **respect** for **rules**, is **another thing**.
Eva-Maria:	Yeah, but that's a different uh.
Chatterjee:	Yeah, you have to, only the **rules** are very **abstract**, so when you are going down that **path**, you have to make sure that you, **break** the **rules** in the **most**, **respectful manner**.
Eva-Maria:	Could you give an example of that, of how you would say, like the **basic rules**.
Chatterjee:	Well, what I would not do is [sound example 8.1], in darbāri [sound example 8.1], although the **notes** are the **same** but [sound example 8.1] I would do that, so little.
Eva-Maria:	You give a little fling of.
Chatterjee:	Yeah, it's like, you know, it's like a **little touch**.
Eva-Maria:	So you show, but then immediately afterwards, you show this Dha.

Chatterjee: Yeah, correct.

In the above interview excerpt, Chatterjee emphasizes a relationship between rāga rules, boundaries and virtuosity. For him, virtuosity is partly performed by the ability to play with a rāga's boundaries. Giving an example of darbāri kānada, Chatterjee sonically mobilizes one concept of note to illustrate the difference between virtuosic play with and crossing of musical boundaries. Both examples, when listened out for in structural terms, would be considered to defy the structural grammar of rāga darbāri. However, the difference between the two examples is what Chatterjee listens out for as the distinction between, on the one hand, virtuosic "flirting" with the rāga's boundaries and, on the other, "raping" it. Unpacking the implications of the frequent use of such violent and highly gendered metaphors in discussions about rāga lies outside of the scope of this book. However, it points to the high stakes of these debates, and it draws attention to the centrality of a notion of musical agency therein.

The first two phrases that Chatterjee plays exemplify what he listens out for as "raping" the rāga. He successively plays Dha Ni Sa Re Ma Dha Ma Re Ni, and repeating Ni Re Ma Dha Ma Re Ni, slight pause, Dha. Because these pitches are played on the frets, it suggests a listening out for a jump from one frequency to the next. The listener is presented with a particular order of stably pitched frequencies. Each tonal place is lingered on for an approximately equal amount of time and the dynamic energy of each is also relatively uniform, with the exception of a slightly softer shudh Ni. Perhaps due to a combination of the vibrations from the tāraf string tuned to Ga and the Ga emerging from the interfering overtones of the electronic tanpura, Ga has a slightly longer sustain than the other notes. While all these tonal places are allowed within the structural grammar of rāga Darbāri Kānada, this order does follow its standardized grammar. Listening out for this grammar, he conceptualizes these articulations as breaking the rules of the rāga. Beyond this structural grammar, furthermore, Darbāri Kānada is characterized by a specific melodic-dynamic-rhythmic curve towards, on, and around Dha and Ga, which Chatterjee listen out for as the rāga's essence. The exact dimensions of the "treatment" of these "notes" are the center of fierce debates. However, in the first example, such nuances do not sound out at all. This lack of those dimensions, which Chatterjee through his own musical knowledge practices has come to listen out for as the rules of the system, is a second factor that makes him categorize this phrase as disrupting the rāga's aesthetic boundaries.

Chatterjee presents the phrase-cluster that follows as a counterexample to this prior clear breach of the system's rules. While this example is outside of the structurally prescribed boundaries of the rāga, he listens out for this version as a virtuosic playing with, rather than breaking of, its boundaries. A first aspect that stands out is the difference between the duration of the respective musical ideas. The phrase is longer that the negative example, lasting a little over eleven seconds as compared to three seconds. However, more significant are the nuances articulated within these eleven seconds because they give insights into Chatterjee's notion of virtuosity as a form of playing with a musical system's boundaries. Namely, if you "show the original flavor … give the original flavor, then give a little color," (Chatterjee) you smoothly play with the boundaries of the musical system without disturbing the larger aesthetic-acoustic "environment."

The main difference between the presented musical ideas, I argue, lies with a listening out for the execution of several details involved in Chatterjee's moving towards, through, and away from these "notes" that are "the same" as those of the counterexamples. The first few notes are similarly played in relatively quick succession of clearly separate pitches. From the shudh Ma onwards, this version of note is replaced by a combination of meends, gamaks, and andolans. Shudh Ma is "taken from" Dha, followed by a Dha with a rapid movement to Pa and back. This is followed by approaching Ga from Ma, a note as dynamic-tonal relationship that is repeated with a difference: the second time its curve is steeper, and after having landed on Ga moves back to Ma. We then hear a very quick movement: ReSaReNiSaNi, a little rest on Ni, and back up to Re via a brief moment of lingering on Sa. Re is repeated three times: first with a lot of dynamic energy and a long sustain, then softer and shorter, before finishing with another strong stroke that is sustained slightly longer than the previous one. Following a short pause in the sounding out of the main tar, Ga is taken from Ni: Chatterjee briefly lingers on Ni before quickly moving up to Ga. Almost immediately after Ga sounds out, he moves away from this tonal place again, cutting the sound and descending to Re, moving back up to Ga, quickly up to Ma, back down to Ga and up to Ma again, followed by a GaReGa, and from there descending to Ni slightly slower. With slight nuances in curves, this phrase is mirrored one pitch lower: Ni GaReGaReGa, Ni, and a very slow meend to Dha.

In contrast to the first two phrases, Chatterjee emphasizes particular tonal places—and hence tonal order—through a combination of several sonic elements. First, he (repeatedly) lingers on these tonal places over time. In the case of Re, for example, the strong attacks on

the first and third Re result in a lot of dynamic energy. Especially because it is heard after the much softer Ma Ga relationship, this gives a strong dynamic contrast, enhanced by the way in which Re is presented before these pitched versions of note; because the melodic movement is coming from Ni, Re sounds out when part of the dynamic energy has already been lost. Chatterjee vocally repeats this last part of the phrase in sargam "NiRe" before continuing. This repetition attuned my ears to that part of the phrase, signaling that it contains important information about his notion of virtuosity—perhaps he listens out for those as outside of the melodic norms of darbāri kānada? The melodic context of the preceding strong Re, which he listens out as the rāga's vadi, and the slow mīnd towards Dha with a curve particular for darbāri, immediately provide the listener familiar with this rāga with an affirmation of its aesthetic boundaries. A hint of the sonically unfamiliar, a deviation from the norm, is preceded and followed by a clear sounding out of that norm.

This is just one example of the sonic nuances Chatterjee, performs, listens out for, and positively valorizes as virtuosity. His performance of rāga Hemant at the 59th Uttarpara Sangeet Chakra, a prominent music festival in the Kolkata vicinity, allows for an analysis of several other elements.[136] Because for Chatterjee the audience is a crucial element in virtuosity, the performance's location influences his perception of what constitutes the musical norms of the "system" that he has to "do things within" in order "to get the job done" without disturbing the "environment." Kolkata is one of the hubs of Hindustani classical music, with a long history of Brahmin elites classicizing Hindustani classical music, as briefly touched upon in the chapter "Historical Fragments." While certainly it is not possible to generalize to far regarding the audience's musical knowledge and expectancies, of importance here is that Chatterjee considers them a relatively knowledgeable but also traditional audience. However, the concert was also audio-visually recorded and uploaded to YouTube, making it available for a much larger audience. Aware of the potential impact such online exposure can have on his career, Chatterjee had to navigate his performance of virtuosity between what he perceived as the live audience's "traditional" expectations and the potential "modern" YouTube audiences he is also targeting. The latter, he suggested, are less interested in "traditionalist bullshit" of rigid adherence to rāga, instead listening out for virtuosity as a sonic spectacle of speed, dynamic intensity, and rhythmic complexity. This, I argue, required him to perform, and maneuver

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[136] The performance was audio-visually recorded and uploaded on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xK4q5FvhZMQ. Last visited 16.05.2017.

between, multiple virtuosities. Such musical navigation between modernity and tradition is representative of tensions at the heart of contemporary musical knowledge practices, as the following analysis of a performance illustrates.

A first aspect is Chatterjee's gesturing while performing on stage. Chatterjee had grown out his long wavy black hair because of the looks, and because he likes "the feeling of it on stage" (Chatterjee). Reminiscent of both nineteenth-century violin and 1980s rock-guitar virtuosos, his long hair is captured on the audio-visual recording of the Hemant alāp. Besides visually mimicking virtuoso looks as saved in the cultural memory of many listeners, the hair also emphasizes particular musical moments, suggesting to the audience that they should be listening out for certain sonic parameters as aesthetically relevant. At 08:27–8:50, for example, Chatterjee moves his head in relation to the melodic-rhythmic movements played by his left hand. This results in his hair waving back and forth to the rhythm of the music, emphasizing the elements he is playing and thus, I argue, suggesting a musical order to the audience. When analyzed within the performance's overall melodic structure, it becomes evident that Chatterjee performs the mīnd from shudh Dha to shudh Ni and back to shudh Dha, followed by a subsequent mīnd from shudh Dha to shudh Ni and back to shudh Dha and Pa (08:45–8:48), as an important tonal relationship within this rāga. He starts the performance by showing several dimensions of this note in the lower register, performing the specifics of these dimensions as characteristic of this rāga. He repeats it with slight difference throughout the performance: changing the dynamic qualities and playing techniques, moving towards this note from various starting points within the tonal space, and changing the melodic context part of this "note." This repetition with difference suggests to the listener that these are characterizing aspects of the rāga. Intentionally visually mimicking other virtuosos while sounding out this relationship, Chatterjee infuses this version of note with connotations of virtuosity. Combined, the visual and the sonic suggest: here, listen to those curves, they define this rāga, they are what constitutes the virtuosic beauty of my playing.

Chatterjee's seemingly casual and unconscious adjustment of his hair whilst letting the melody rest on shudh Ma (09:04–09:07), I argue, similarly suggest virtuosity. As I argue, this is exemplary of his navigating of several forms of virtuosity in his playing: speed and high dynamic energy immediately followed by curves performed as the heart of the rāga. The above analyzed Dha–Ni relationship is followed by a mīnd from Ga to Ma. The shudh Ma still reverberates while

Chatterjee adjusts his hair, its overtones intermingling with those of two forceful chikaris. This, I argue, is part of a subtle play with notions and performance of musical agency and control:

> You can say, that, oh you know we are friends, let's try to, find, you know, and take the rāga with you, **take it** by the **hand** and take it with you. Or **let** the **rāga** take you **by** its **hand**, that's also fine. Or follow it like a **servant**, where it, the **rāga completely ignores** you ... I think one thing I have to describe, as my specialty, I think it is **flirting** with melody within rhythm. Being **naughty** and **flirtatious within** a **structure**, is what defines me, never letting the [sic]. So, [sound example 8.2] always feel the rhythm [sound example 8.2] never [sound example 8.2] not like that, but if I flirt [sound example 8.2]. So, at every step you can feel, that there is the **rhythm** in the **rāga**, background, the **rāga** in the **background**, I am **not important**, but I am. So, I think, what I achieve, what I **strive towards**, what I try to always do, is to always give so much **importance**, to the **rhythm**, to the **rāga**, to the **melody**. But give the importance in a manner, where I am so **charming**, with the rhythm and the melody and whatever is going on, that I actually am the **boss**. ... So, you become the boss. But **without** blatantly **showing** that you are the **boss**, so it's a very **subtle game** that is **played**.

In the context of this tension between (discourses of) musical agency and control, his adjusting of his hair during such moments of resting in, and on, a particular tonal place within the melody must be understood as more than simply resting during a musically complex and technically difficult phrase. Namely, such pauses—not silences—in the main melodic line have a specific musical effect. Here the break provides a contrast with the prior quick succession of loud pitches ending with a sonic reproduction of what Chatterjee listens out for as the heart of the rāga. He gives the listener a moment to absorb what happened musically, emphasizing and performing its aesthetic importance. Adjusting his virtuosity-connoted hairdo in exactly this moment visually continues the quick and loud pitch successions that, as I illustrate in more detail below, Chatterjee also listens out for as virtuosic. But more importantly, it plays with a different connotation attached to virtuosity. This subtext is related to tension between agency and control: it retrospectively emphasizes that his hair had become messed up by his earlier, seemingly uncontrolled, physical movements. Was he emotionally grabbed by the music during his sounding out of that so defining tonal tension? Did the rāga indeed take control over him?

He plays this "subtle game" throughout the performance, employing various strategies that can be analyzed within the alāp. This includes a play with a fine balance between (audiovisually) overt control over the rāga and the suggestion of an (audiovisual) loss of control. During the first few seconds of the performance, for example, Chatterjee is sitting on the stage, his eyes closed, facing the ceiling as if opening himself up to whatever is there above him. His

right hand gives a chikari, after which his pinky fingernail brushes the subsequent tāraf strings tuned to the rāga of choice. Creating a rich overtone spectrum, this offers the listeners a first hint of what rāga might be played. But it also allows Chatterjee to perform his "tuning in" and giving himself over to the rāga. In contrast with the relatively large amount of listening skills necessary to be able to distinguish the subtle play with rāga boundaries, such audio-visually performed virtuosity is more easily recognizable for those not listening out for subtler musical nuances. Thereby, it is exemplary of his navigation between at times perceptibly conflicting forms of virtuosity.

Crucially, according to his own notion of virtuosity, he must make sure that listeners recognize the difficulty of his playing. To do this, he first leverages the commonly accepted relationship between playing skills and the speed clearly audible and visible in his performance.

Sangīt encounter: field notes

I am sitting in Chatterjee's living room. He has called me in the morning, telling me he is planning to practice with a tablā player. If I want, I can come and listen. When I arrive, the tablā player is not yet there but Chatterjee has started his own practice. I am trying to concentrate on what he is playing, attempting to recognize notes, patterns, repetition, and difference, but I am overwhelmed by the sheer speed of his practice. I recognize some palta patterns, one of which I practiced myself that morning. Now he switched to scales, going all the way up on the karaj and pancham strings and down on the main tar towards the higher Dha, practicing his sapat tāns. The dynamic intensity, high speed repetition, and Mumbai afternoon heat in the apartment make it very tempting to stop concentrating, to stop listening in terms of categories, notes, and melodic and rhythmic patterns, and instead let the wall of sounds wash over me. But this wall of sound also disturbs me; it is so loud and quick that its main melody blends with the overtone texture, to the extent that it is increasingly difficult to listen out for melody at all. Chatterjee's face is concentrated as he keeps the tempo going, his fingers moving seamlessly across the instrument's neck. I cannot allow myself to stop listening; I am a serious researcher and this is what I came all the way to India for. The real deal, being allowed to sit with a musician while he practices. I force myself to concentrate, listening out, attempting to categorize, to get to know those sounds I encounter, to get some sense of control, rather than being overtaken by its sheer dynamic power. All of a sudden, Chatterjee stops playing with a big right-hand gesture, and looks me in the eyes.

"Did you count?!" he asks, beaming.

I am taken aback. Counting the number of times he played the scale was not among the elements I listened out for.

"No, not really," I whisper, feeling incredibly inadequate for missing the aspect of this exercise that for him turned out to be so relevant.

"One hundred!"

Quantity and speed apparently do matter to Chatterjee. Playing a phrase at high tempo while keeping melodic clarity necessitates well-developed technical skills, and he knows that almost any audience will recognize this. The increased difficulty of executing the tāns not on the frets but, in the performance partially, through for the audience clearly visible and audible left hand playing techniques of mīnd and gamak (cf. 32:08–33:09), at this speed necessitates extreme micro-melodic precision and hence control over the right- and left-hand movements. These further evidence his technical abilities, both sonically and visually. However, in contrast to previous overt facial expressions, during this tān his face remains relatively expressionless. This, I argue, performs the effortlessness required for the audience to conceive of him as a virtuoso. All in all, this is a carefully orchestrated visual, sonic, and physical performance of virtuosity that capitalizes on and plays with several not necessarily coherent discourses and historically amplified performances of technical mastery, authenticity, and musical agency.

This tactic is not only deployed during above described tān. Throughout the performance there is a clear, at times contrasting and at others diverging, interplay between the visual and the audial. For example, when having temporarily "landed" on Sa (00:30–00:36, 00:55–01:03, 01:11–01:14) after a powerful da stroke, Chatterjee takes his right hand away from the strings, his thumb leaving its usual spot on the instrument's neck. The hand creates multiple circles in the air, the first one big, the second smaller. The muscles of his face seem to be cramping, his head is shaking slightly, both in time with—or perhaps, incited by the movement of—his stroke. Simultaneously, his right shoulder is raised in a high, cramped position, as if it is very tense. This performs the importance and centrality of that moment, physically mimicking the melodic tension before releasing it into one version of that central dimension of Hemant: moving back to Dha via Ni.

Another element that Chatterjee leverages as virtuosity is a play with harmonics. He mobilizes this element in a direct relationship to the musical authority of Nikhil Banerjee. After the first mohrā[137] within alāp, Chatterjee plays Ni Dha Ma relatively quickly, one after another. The overtones produced by the respective tārafs of the previously played pitch still resound relatively loudly when the next stroke on the main string sounds out a distinct pitch. This suggestion of harmonics is enhanced by playing the Ma on the jor tar instead of on the open baj tar, as the latter would have necessarily stopped the baj tar Dha from sounding out. This

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[137] This signals the start of a structurally new aspect of the alāp.

simultaneous sounding out of two main melodic strings affords a sense of harmony (2:40–2:44). This can be listened out for in several forms throughout the performance. During the bol improvisation in the gat, for example, instead of leaving the jor string open to sound out a Sa with each Da stroke, at 20:20 he places his left finger on the shudh Ma fret of the jor tar, while the main tar sounds out Dha, and Sa is coming from the *chikari*. This is followed by a combination of Ga of the jor tar and a Sa on the main tar. Presenting the next bol pattern, he switches from Sa to Ni on the main tar, keeping the jor Ga in place, and finally release the jor tar for the final stroke while playing Dha on the main tar, which sounds out along with the open jor Sa. Such shifts between a combination of distinct melodic lines provide a sense of playing of, with, and switching between, chords. It can also be listened out for during several moments, for example at 44:46, during the drut gat jhalla part of the performance. There, it performs the sonic spectacle with which several contemporary instrumentalists end their performances. At times, this form of harmonics is combined with an attack on (several) tāraf strings. At 20:15, for example, during the bol improvisation part of the gat, Chatterjee uses the long finger nail of his left-hand pink to stroke the Sa tuned tāraf, an additional textural layer that affords a distinct sense of rhythm as well as harmony.

Such a play with harmonics is relatively unusual in instrumental performances by Maihar gharānā instrumentalists. The technique of playing tāraf strings with the left-hand pinky nail, for example, is mainly employed by Vilayat Khan style players. For a Maihar gharānā instrumentalist, this is a rather daring technique to include. That is, because listeners have come to relate this playing technique directly to Imdadkhani gharānā, Chatterjee runs the risk being accused of crossing gharānā boundaries if he deploys it: "Those Imdadkhani guys do that kind of thing. Just because they have to fill the silence, they don't even use tanpura, right? So, they go about doing that kind of virtuoso tricks, to make it sound good. Why does Purbayan have to do that?" (anonymous interlocutor). Chatterjee, on the other hand, leverages a distinct take on gharānā boundaries in his legitimation of such crossing of its historically standardized aesthetic boundaries:

> Every **sentence** you say has to be **your own** and for that, you have to **learn**, **listen** to him [Nikhil Banerjee], but you listen to fifty **other** people. So, one phrase, I might be saying like him, the next phrase I might be saying like Vilayat Khansaheb, like [sound example 8.3] this is Vilayat Khan. So, you, then, you form your own language, you know … I think I hate the whole **attitude** that this, you know, "this **gharāna**, that gharāna." "Play Sa Re Ga Ma for five years." All that bullshit. Complete **bullshit**. "Do not move your hand."

> Whatever works for you, do it, just **as long as you can play**. If you can't play, none of this shit means anything. And if people don't like what you are doing, then just to say: "my **hand** moves like this," and to say that "oh look at the **purity**, oooh," if nobody is **recognizing** the **purity**, then what's the point? You know, you can have a big diamond in the house, you know. If you really are in the business of, you know, stone cutting, and you cut, you know, then there is no point in saying that oh, this is the perfect way to cut it, and then there is no glitter. As long as it **glitters** it's good. If you can bring the same glitter with uh, glass, cut it in a matter where it looks, then it doesn't matter, it's fine. (Chatterjee)

As long as you can play, he suggests, the boundaries imposed by gharānā tradition can be safely crossed without "fucking up" the system. However, the crucial question of what it means to be able to "play," to bring "glitter," remains unarticulated here.

Chatterjee's play with harmonics as examined in the above, I argue, can be taken as one example of such virtuosic glitter. Crucially, he legitimates this playing with aesthetic boundaries based on Nikhil Banerjee's use of such harmonics, as evidenced on several recordings. While this was a rare occurrence, and I am not aware of Banerjee's use of this technique in bol bant or jhalla, Chatterjee references such recordings as example of the normative musical system. Namely, if Banerjee, whose recordings have become canonized as characteristic of the Maihar gharānā, used such harmonics every once in a while, using it slightly more frequently and at several places within the overall structure of the performance can be listened out for as a play with those norms. For him, the virtuosity lies exactly with the balance between a pushing and crossing of those boundaries. But as his defensive tone also indicates, this is a very conflicted practice.

As already touched upon, speed moreover plays a crucial role in Chatterjee's listening out for virtuosity:

> You can't be **myopic** in your vision. Indian music is not um, some **white-haired guy** sitting there with an instrument, saying you know, this Sa, you know, play at **exactly** this **frequency** and keep holding it for two minutes. No, it's not like that. … you can have a rāga Shree, and **take** the **notes**, and **play** with **it**, you know, and do something which is **fun** and **exciting**. (Chatterjee)

The fun and excitement caused by the dynamic intensity, speed, and rhythmic play within the abovementioned jhalla, is one aspect of his enjoyment of virtuosity. However, such speed is also a matter of debate. The series of subsequently prolonged tāns immediately following a long tablā solo, as described in the prior chapter, is an example thereof. During the last repetition of this chakradar, the melody is almost completely silenced by the dynamically

louder overtone spectrum emerging from his hitting the tāraf strings with his ra stroke, combined with a lack of time to remain on the tonal places long enough for their pitch to fully sound out. Here is where the parameter of clarity becomes listened out for in relation to speed, and (de)valorized in terms of virtuosity:

Interlocutor: Phrases that, have some **surprise** to them, something that you [sic]. Maybe an unexpected **jump**, or a nice **mīnd**, that goes in Yaman, from Ni to tivra Ma. Uh, or slipping to Re with something else.… But uhm, **nowadays** I am finding it very difficult to find anybody I **like** to **listen** to. Only Nikhil Banerjee and Guruji and Asad Ali Khan and Ali Akbar Khan and Aashish, you know, and Amjad. But you know, **younger people**. Like I heard Purbayan, I thought he is pretty good, but then **listen** more and more and, then… They are all doing this, sort of **playing** to the **audience**, and doing stuff that **doesn't appeal** to me.

Eva-Maria: In what ways? What do you mean with playing to the audience?

Interlocutor: Uh, there is this **new** thing that they are doing with the **tablā** players that just sort of. Starting a **tān** and driving it **faster** and faster and, to this, you know, like **loud ugly climax** and **stop**, and the tablā player stops, and then they start again and, you know. You are just **breaking** the **aesthetic** of the **performance**. It **sounds** like **noise**, you are both playing noise. And you think you are both doing something great, and it's a bunch of **crap**, and I **don't like** it.

Eva-Maria: So because it is so fast, that you can't actually distinguish any.

Interlocutor: Yeah, **it's just a bunch of noise**. And you know, playing to the audience, that is not. Go **listen**, go **learn again**, or something. **Listen** to **old recordings** of, **Ravi Shankar**, and **Nikhil Banerjee**, and **Annapurna**, and **Ali Akbar**, and Mushtak Ali Khan and, so, and Debu Chaudhuri. At least he **maintains** the **rāga** and **tāla**, and is in **tune**. It may not be the most **interesting** player, but at least you have **solid rāga knowledge**, and **tunefulness**, and **sweet hand**.

This Illustrates the leveraging of recordings of canonized musicians as authoritative sources that can be mined for several forms of musical knowledge through careful listening. But more important for this chapter's argument, the subject of above interlocutor's negative description, that "new thing that they are doing," is exactly what can be listened out for in the abovementioned accumulation of tāns into a rhythmic and dynamic climax. This interlocutor does not like it; he listens out for these elements as "just a bunch of noise" and "playing to the audience," which he juxtaposes with "solid rāga knowledge," "tunefulness, and sweet hand." Chatterjee, however, listens out for such climaxes as his defining sound: "a very emphatic

statement, where you cannot ignore me. If I am making, you know, a sound, you cannot ignore me." Certainly, ignoring him was impossible during that moment in the concert. Chatterjee's standards of "the system," this illustrates, are radically different from those of my interlocutor. This results in their listening out for and (de)valorizing of disparate sonic parameters as virtuosity.

Due to space limitations, I only analyze a few elements of Chatterjee's performance of virtuosities. Other relevant elements are a play include rhythmic tension and release, especially in close relationship to (a lack of) bodily movements, and the playing of elaborate and quick gamaks and mīnds on the pancham and khāraj tar in the jor part (14:31–16:10)—another example of risky play with normative aesthetic boundaries. However, an thorough examination of all his strategies of performing virtuosity was not the goal of this section. Instead, I have argued that Chatterjee's performance of his music as virtuosic includes a carefully orchestrated manipulation of several tensions: between playing with and breaking the aesthetic boundaries of the gharānā system; between "flirting with" and "raping" the sonic nuances of rāga; between maintaining control over or losing oneself to the rāga; between speed and melodic clarity; and between modernity and tradition. I also illustrated that some other listeners negatively valorize his navigation between these tension, based on different listening norms. This section, then, presented some first insights into elements listened out for and simultaneously performed as virtuosity within Hindustani instrumental classical music. The next section examines partially overlapping, but largely diverging, per-auditives to illustrate the broad range of musical knowledge practices referenced by the notion of virtuosity.

"This level of depth he had achieved": Virtuosity, Depth, and Feeling

As indicated in the above critique of allegedly modern musicians like Chatterjee, musicians adhering to (a purity of gharānā) tradition listen out for and valorize musical elements as virtuosity that partially contrast those Chatterjee does. Nityanand Haldipur, for example, as his online biography illustrates, does use this category in his narrative of his musical self. He is also aware that some of the elements that Chatterjee and others listen out for and positively valorize as virtuosity are absent in, or even clash with, aspects he argues to be characteristic of

his musical style. Hence, he needs to capitalize on different musical elements in his listening out for and performance of virtuosity.

Eva-Maria:	In the **vilambit gat** you also do some **fast tāns**, **normally**, right?
Haldipur:	Yeah, but that, I am counting that as the different **varieties** of **jor**. Jor, I am finishing the jor, one two three one two three. So, in that progression I am going, [sound example 8.4] so that I am doing.
Eva-Maria:	Ok, so these are the … Ok, ok, ok, so then it's more **part** of the **fast jor**, than that it is really a **separate tān**?[138]
Haldipur:	Right.
Eva-Maria:	Ok, ok, ok.
Haldipur:	And **previously**, they used to say, in our **oral**, uh **tradition**. The tān, **speed** of the **tān**, fast tān, you be able to utter that bol [sound example 8.4]. That should be the lāya, not exceed this. [sound example 8.4] Like that.
Eva-Maria:	Hm, ok, so it shouldn't become.
Haldipur:	Yeah, but **now**. To show their **specialty**, something special, about, **better** than you, something, **different** than you. I have to **establish myself** no? … In my definition of **virtuosity** is that, you have total **control** of your **instrument**. You can do incredible things with your instrument, at the same time, you maintain the **purity** of the **rāga**. And that is **virtuosity**.
Eva-Maria:	So it has not anything to do with speed or?
Haldipur:	Rāga, **rāga**, should not go according to your **fingers**, **fingers** should go according to the **rāga**. When you show your **virtuosity** in that, whatever speed you want to achieve you do according to the rāga, and no "rāga should go according to your fingers." Because **rāga** is **not just notes** and that, playing just notes and [sound example 8.4] that is not a rāga.

Like Chatterjee, Haldipur distinguishes a sheer display of technical ability through speed, regardless of the rāga and control over the instrument, from virtuosity. Instead, for him, virtuosity is connected to maintaining what he terms the purity of the rāga. This leveraging of the complex trope of rāga purity must be understood in the light of the prevailing canonization of his guru, Annapurna Devi, in terms of, among other things, teaching rāga in its purest form, as explored in chapter five. Haldipur leverages these connotations in relation to virtuosity.

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[138] In concerts, Haldipur often does not play jor after alāp. Instead, he immediately starts the (usually ektāl) vilambit gat. Within this gat, he plays what he describes as alāp vistars, followed by jor vistar. Because the meta-meter of such twelve-beat cycles is slow (it might take a minute to conclude one cycle of twelve beats), he listens out for this as "feeling alāp and jor-like," even though it officially has meter because it is accompanied by tablā and hence does not fit the traditional dhrupad-derived alāp jor jhalla structure and standard categorization of jor. However, this does not stop Haldipur from listening out for this part of his own musical practice as jor, and hence applying what he conceives of as its rules. As the above quote indicates, this allows him to include quick tāns within the vilambit gat.

Portraying himself as one of Devi's senior disciples in his publicity material, he has demonstrated his dedication to his guru through his well-documented "sacrifice" (anonymous disciple of Annapurna Devi) of taking care of her at Akash Ganga. Such acts, in turn, invest his musical articulations with a sense of tradition, making his claims of adhering to the purity of the rāga more believable. That is, these suggestions of tradition mutually reinforce each other.

A related aspect at play in Haldipur's version of virtuosity is the notion of speed. Here, he mentions it in relation to the allegedly proper aesthetic function and place of tāns within his overall performance. He distinguishes between the aesthetic principles determining the speed of a tān in terms of the past and the present: "previously," the maximum speed of a tān was determined by the speed with which one could recite it. "Now," however, musicians just use speed as a way to distinguish themselves, to make a name for themselves. Without making it explicit, he implies that he values the past approach over the present. For him, however, speed is not per se a characteristic of virtuosity. In contrast with Chatterjee, Haldipur suggests that in a virtuoso performance, it is the rāga, not the fingers (and by extension, the musician) that should ultimately be in control. Navigating the tension between musical agency and control over music in a manner distinct from Chatterjee, Haldipur constructs a true virtuoso as only playing at high speed when the character of the rāga demands it: virtuosity means respecting the rāga instead of trying to control it. Related to this, Haldipur claims that strictly remaining within the rāga's boundaries is central to virtuosity. Sounding out a version of notes as distinct from rapid jumps between pitches, he concludes his argument by suggesting that "a rāga is not just notes."

Arguing that total control of the instrument is central to virtuosity while simultaneously suggesting that the rāga must be in control of the fingers, how does Haldipur perform his version of virtuosity through his musical knowledge practices? Like Chatterjee, Haldipur utilizes his physical presence on stage in his performance of virtuosity, but in a diametrically opposed manner. Throughout performances, Haldipur sits still, his eyes closed, his visible bodily movements restricted to his fingers and a light heaving of his chest as he breathes. This visually performs his exclusive dedication to the rāga: he is tuning in to and concentrating on the music, allowing the rāga to take control of his fingers. This stands in explicit contrast to the bodily movements of musicians he constructs as superficially showing their technical skills through speed, playing just notes. Such an absence of bodily movements works together with his distinctive performance of note, examined in the previous chapter. Namely, as the reader might

recall, Haldipur portrays making a seemingly simple single "note" attractive while remaining within the boundaries of the rāga as the most difficult aspect of this music. The technical difficulty of executing the minute nuances involved in this process is increased by the fact that half of his face is paralyzed. This makes the control of the amount of air he is blowing into the flute extremely difficult.

<u>**Sangīt encounter: innocent questions?**</u>

How was Nityanand's performance, Eva? Because, you know, I have **only heard** him many **years ago**, so I don't know now, but then... He just couldn't make the sound come out of the **flute**, because, you know, of his face and all. It was just really **embarrassing**, at some point he was **crying**, because he just **couldn't get** the **right sound**.

Haldipur furthermore emphasized that the bansuri has holes that can be played either open or closed. To create a gradual shift in frequency rather than a jump, the player must have extreme control over breath and fingering techniques. The production of a curve specific to a rāga, then, is challenging to master in and of itself. Absolute control over the instrument as central to his notion of virtuosity, then, can be sounded out through the minute details of a single note he listens out for as specific for that rāga.

This guru-specific notion of virtuosity, then, resides in a listening out for what musicians often refer to as the "depth" of a note. According to Haldipur, the ability to listen out for, catch, and reproduce these intricacies makes a musician a virtuoso. These nuances have several dimensions, which Haldipur positively valorizes as "emoting":

Haldipur: **Intricacy**.

Eva-Maria: Ha, ha. And what would the intricacy be, then?

Haldipur: This is phrase [sound example 8.5], this is phrase, Bilawal. So, I tell him, the student will go, according to this, [sound example 8.5] I will tell him [sound example 8.5] so he will go [sound example 8.5]. Ok, so now, I have to put, **framings**, **intricacies** [sound example 8.5]. Like that … they don't have the **balance**, they don't have the **curves**, each **rāga** has **curves**, very **typical curves**. …

Eva-Maria: I also noticed that dynamics are also very important in your playing, right, so the volume of your uhm?

Haldipur: Yeah, that is what you call **bukar**, or, uh, **emoting**.

Eva-Maria: Emoting?

Haldipur:	Emotions, put emotions, very **important**. Like now [sound example 8.6]. Like it cannot be heard. [sound example 8.6]. I may be doing the same **intricacies**, but with the same **volume**.
Eva-Maria:	Yeah, everything is very loud, and same.
Haldipur:	[sound example 8.6]. So, then, more **directions** I am doing, **sound**, all that.

These examples illustrate the importance of the previously examined balance and curves as characteristic of virtuosic notes . The relative speed of the shift in frequency over time, the amount of time spent lingering on a particular tonal space, and the latter's similarity or difference to curves of other tonal places are some of these nuances. As with Chatterjee, dynamics play a crucial role in Haldipur's performance of virtuosity. But in contrast with Chatterjee's listening out for a dynamic-rhythmic "statement" that "cannot be ignored," Haldipur listens out for slight dynamic nuances that influence how curves sound out as characteristic of the feeling of rāga. These are some of the virtuosic intricacies, the dimensions that "put emotion."

This notion of emotion or "feeling" the rāga, is also at the heart of elements that sarodiya Tejendra Narayan Majumdar listens out for as virtuosic musical knowledge practices. That is, this Kolkata-based senior disciple of Bahadur Khan and Ali Akbar Khan listens out for distinct versions of virtuosity to (de)valorize certain musical elements as (not) "the real essence of the music":

The **right kind** of **music**. And also, with the **touch** of **heart**. One can be very, very, you know, uh, what, **with** a **lot** of **virtuosities**. But that is **not the way**. **Virtuosity** is the, is **one instrument** with which **actually** one can, uh, **bring** out **the real essence** of the **music**. (Majumdar)

Majumdar mobilizes two concepts of virtuosity here. The first, a "lot of virtuosities," refers to the inclusion of a lot of high-speed tāns and long and complicated tihais. This resonates the negatively connoted concept of showmanship that lacks in-depth musical knowledge. Like Haldipur, Majumdar contrasts such superficiality with the ability of a musician to bring out what he calls the "real essence of the music." He listens out for this essence in similar terms to Haldipur:

Majumdar:	Like, the [sound example 8.7]. And **pause**, pause is very **important**, in **our style**. Pause is very important. How much pause you are going to take. It's not like putting all the phrases, this is one by one, one by one, memorizing all the phrases. The improvisation

	just goes on like that. So, that, when I used to learn from Baba, Khansaheb. He used to teach ten minutes, and then he used to ask me, for next ten minutes, not repeating any of the phrases. And that is the most, hardest part.
Eva-Maria:	Not repeating, so? …
Majumdar:	So like, like, [sound example 8.8] Behag. So [sound example 8.8]. **Taking** the **nuance** of **Ga**, Gandhar, how many times, **how** many **patterns you can take there**, **phrases**, to come back on Ga.… And the **amplitude** of the sound is very important.
Eva-Maria:	Amplitude means?
Majumdar:	Amplitude means the **intensity** of the **sound**, the **volume** of the sound.
Eva-Maria:	The volume, ok, ok.
Majumdar:	Yeah, that sound **dynamics** is very important, so that could be [sound example 8.9]. So, the **right hand**, **left hand movement**. Uh, right hand left hand combination, how much **pressure** you have to put, on the left hand, so that these **effects** should be there till end.
Eva-Maria:	Yeah, yeah, instead of very soft and then you don't hear it any more.
Majumdar:	Yeah, yeah, one is to **give** the **time**, to **take** that **pause**, so that this phrase has, make a beautiful **impact** on the audience.… You have to **feel** that **real essence** of the **rāga**. Because our rāga **structure**, not only confide with the, with the, with the uh, melodic structures, but also, uh, the **emotive power**, the **emotive essence** of that **particular rāga**.… How you are going to, share the **effect**, the **impact** … and that you can create by, **dynamics**, and **pauses**, and also by, … the **speed** of the left-hand movement.

Rāga, Majumdar asserts, is not only about playing the right melodic structure; it includes the nuances that constitute the emotive essence of the rāga. This emotive essence, he suggests, one has to feel. It involves an intricate combination of places and lengths of pauses, play with dynamics, and the melodic curves created by the speed of the left-hand movement. While Majumdar here directly refers to dynamics produced by the movement of the left hand on the main playing strings, this is not all he listens out for in terms of dynamics; he also listens out for the dynamic-rhythmic-timbral effect of the type and pressure of the stroke chosen, the relationships with dynamic qualities of the proceeding and following curves, the pauses of the main melody, and the dynamic energy of the chikaris framing the phrase, of the *tanpura*, and of the tāraf strings.

He links his own ability to bring out this essence to the specifics of his instrument. Framing himself in terms of tradition, he claims his instrument is similar to those played by his canonized gurus, Bahadur Khan and Ali Akbar Khan.

Majumdar:	My instrument is almost **like** Bahadur Khansahebs or **Ali Akbar Khansahebs**, I have not changed anything. Because I am little bit (laughs) **traditional**, and also I am very, very satisfied with the **sound** actually, that I am trying to get. But my sarod is, you must have noticed, my sarod is little **special** because this sarod has got a very **sweet** sound, the **round robust** and, the **dynamics** are there.
Eva-Maria:	Yeah, extreme dynamics.
Majumdar:	Yeah, so really **soft**, and also you can get the **round sound** with the **mīnds** and it, also **enlarges**
Eva-Maria:	Enlarges? Meaning?
Majumdar:	Enlarges meaning, the, the, the **picture**, of the **rāga**, or, like. You are, I am playing like, uh, Shree. So, from khāraj reshab to pancham, Re Pa is very **important** for Shree. So, when I am performing, I, I am performing from Re to Pa, with one glide, but usually should be, usually, uh, it can be, uh, it can be understood that uh, that the sound, the **resonance**, will be lesser. But in our case, it is exactly the opposite.
Eva-Maria:	It will grow?
Majumdar:	Yes, this Khansaheb, **Khansaheb style** also. Khansaheb used to do that.
Eva-Maria:	hmmm, and how how?
Majumdar:	[sound example 8.10] Like that. So, it is also possible with the **touch** and **feeling**, especially touch, **touching** the **strings**, how we are going to touch the strings, with the **proper place** of the **tips**, and the, and the **flesh part** [sound example 8.10]. Something like that, it is possible … from Re to Pa, that that, dimension of that Re Pa sarsangati, that is really **huge**.… So, there's there are so many uh, things, you know, very, uh, **subtle nuances**, which is to be, which is to be, uh, **felt first**, and **then try** to, **produced from** the instrument.…… You have to **internalize**, the, the **feeling**, first to, first of all, and that, could, that could be. I, I, in my believe, actually, it. It's definitely it has to be, it has to be **taught**, but one has to **feel** it **inside**, otherwise it is **not possible**.

Majumdar portrays canonized Maihar gharānā sarodiyas as his musical norm. Simultaneously, he constructs their—"our"—sound as afforded by the dynamic possibilities of the sarod, as deviant from a larger norm: "should be, usually … the sound, the resonance, will be lesser. But in our case, it is exactly the opposite." Majumdar exemplifies this "opposite" sound of "our case" by vocally sounding out the intricacies of a movement between tonal places signified as Reshab and Pancham. He listens out for this as a curve crucial for rāga Shree. This is neither a singular nor a straight movement between these two places, nor is a transformation in frequency the only dimension of the phrase that changes and is constitutive of the nuances of the curve. Instead, the effect that Majumdar listens out for as the Shree feeling, he points out, is influenced by: the use of specific playing techniques and the effect they have on sustain and

timbre; a play with dynamics; and something he calls the sweet robust sound of his instrument. All of these constitute the "enlargement" of that Re-Pa dimension that he listens out for as Shree. We might call it its essence. What did Majumdar say again about virtuosity and bringing out the music's real essence?

When asked how he might achieve that effect, he answered by singing. This illustrates his reluctance to reduce the complex combination of these and other musical nuances to music(ologic)al categories. Instead, he emphasized the need to learn how to feel such very subtle nuances. Listening to, recognizing, and performing the type of virtuosity that is musically valuable, Majumdar seems to suggest, is more a matter of feeling than abstract analytical listening to a rāga's melodic structure. Thus leveraging embodied musical knowledge over the abstract forms of structural listening privileged by musicologists and music critics, he capitalizes on this form of musical knowledge as the ultimate authority on virtuosity—among other things, in his own teaching. [sound example 8.11] Throughout this teaching session, Majumdar and his student listen out for sonorous nuances in both their own and the other's playing that create that allegedly virtuosic "essence" of Shree. When a musical boundary is broken, Majumdar clearly signals this. He, for example, immediately critiques the disciple's sounding out of a movement from Re to Pa. He suggests that the student should listen out for the changes in speed of the left-hand movement and the tonal effect this should have on the phrase: a passing through rather than a sitting on the notes. Having made this listening suggestion, he plays this phrase on his instrument with an emphasis on the notes' specificity. Throughout the tālim, Majumdar makes subtle corrections by repeating details that the student either did not repeat or repeated differently. [sound example 8.12] For example, he corrects differences between micro-melodic curves, the amount of strength behind the strokes, and their effect on the timbral quality and dynamic energy of the phrase. He also corrects the amount of time between a stroke on the main string and a stroke on the chikari, the dynamic energy of that chikari in relation to that of the previous and following phrases on the main strings, and krintons. In combination with verbally correcting, then, Majumdar makes listening suggestions through his playing: listen to this quick micro-melodic movement at the end of that curve constituting that first note, which should end slightly sooner; listen out for the effect of a slightly shorter pause than the one you gave; listen out for the subtle difference between those two almost similar melodic curves sounding out after each other; listen to the tonal tension created by that krinton at the end of the phrase and its effect on the timbre and sustain on that complex multiplicity

of sonic elements I listen out for as note—these are some of the many nuances you should listen out for as the "essence" of Shree. Without these nuances, he seems to suggest, one might play the right notes, but it will not be Shree.

Crucially, Majumdar did not make such listening suggestions solely for his student. Whenever I listened to Majumdar performing and teaching, or when I was talking and gossiping with him about other musicians, Majumdar always made sure that I listened out for those parameters that resonated with and emphasized his performance of/as virtuosity.

<u>Sangīt encounter: listening exercise</u>

[sound example 8.13] Majumdar is explaining the difference between two phrases. The movement from Re to Pa is played with the da stroke, whereas the movement from pa to re is played with the ra stroke. He articulates this difference in terms of dynamics, and then he plays it. He first makes explicit he is elaborating on Pa ("dekho, Pa ko, Pa ko station bana raha ho" ["look, Pa is the 'station' you are playing"]), and then Re ("mai abhi Reshab ko station karoonga" ["now I will go to Re"]).

Please listen to the different effects (dynamics, timbre, sustain-release, the sound of the actual attack of the coconut plectrum on the strings) the strokes have, and what differences you can listen out for between the phrases where Pa is the "station" and where Re is the "station." How is the emphasis on a tonal place created? Do you hear specific curves, and are they the same for both stations? Does he linger in specific places, creating a rhythm within a single phrase? Is there a change in speed of the frequency that changes the tonal relations? Do you hear the tāraf strings respond at certain moments? How does the presence and the volume of the electronic tanpura influence your perception of tonal centers and tonal tension? Can you hear whether one or both players are playing in sur at all times? If not, then how did you hear the besur? How does the dynamic energy of the chikari relate to the energy produced by the attack on the main strings? Do you hear pauses at particular moments, and what do these pauses sound like? How do they relate to the previous and following phrase?

Majumdar closes this section of the tālim with a sentence he translates for me: "Shree is a very difficult rāga."

Aware of the canonizing power that musicological publications can have, he manipulated my listening practices. Emphasizing the difficulty of correctly sounding out the intricacies characteristic for this rāga, he musically amplified his version of rāga Shree as aesthetically pleasing and virtuosic. And it worked. Nowadays, whatever Shree I listen to, without necessarily being able to categorize its intricacies in musicological categories, I want to feel the combinations of nuances he so often sounded out as Shree. Through my many encounters with

his versions of Shree, these nuances have become my sonic yardstick, based on which I measure other performance's aesthetic value and a performer's value as a (virtuoso) musician.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I examined tensions between several forms of (listening out for) virtuosity within contemporary Hindustani classical instrumental musical knowledge practices. Perhaps capitalizing on the partially positive connotations or the familiarity as a European art music concept, the label of virtuoso has been used in reviews of, and to sell, concerts in India and beyond since at least independence. Academic texts, however, if they attend to virtuosity at all, usually simply dismiss it as a modern phenomenon that is symptomatic of a larger crisis within Hindustani classical music. They listen out for and scorn it as extreme speed and dynamic energy lacking in melodic clarity; it is merely a display of physical extravaganza, a sonic display of non-improvised rhythmic intricacies. These elements, such studies claim, are a means to please unknowledgeable audiences—those who do not know how to listen structurally. Conversely, perhaps it is precisely because virtuosity cannot be grasped through the structural listening on which such scholars base their authority that it is usually portrayed as unworthy of musicological attention.

However, while some sonic elements indeed mimic other versions of virtuosity, it became evident to me that musicians listen out for and valorize different musical nuances as virtuosity, at times navigating between those within the same performance. This necessitate a listening beyond those comfortably familiar parameters offered to us by structural listening. I analyzed how Chatterjee steers his way through several fields of tension in his audiovisual performance of virtuosity, wherein he plays with the normative boundaries of a musical system. Because his notion of virtuosity includes the listener's recognition of the difficulty of his actions, what those boundaries are and how he manipulates them, depend on his imagined audience. His strategies include a physical mimicking of North Atlantic virtuosi, a dynamic-textural-rhythmic building and release of tension, an inclusion of harmonic elements legitimized by Banerjee's use thereof, and a "flirting" with the micro-melodic boundaries of rāga. Haldipur and Majumdar, by contrast, perform other elements as virtuosity, arguing that depth, feeling, and emotion are crucial. Haldipur claims a strict adherence to rāga purity as virtuosity,

emphasizing the importance of pauses, a play with dynamics, and the ability to adhere to the specificity of a note's curve. Majumdar, while in his performances also capitalizing on "a lot of virtuosities" like speed and dynamic-textural-rhythmic building and release of tension, similarly emphasizes that "real" virtuosity is the ability to sound out the essence of the rāga. Capitalizing on the sound of his guru's sarod as saved in the collective memory of listeners, he suggests that his instrument similarly allows for a "robust" and "round" sound that "enlarges." Such a response from the instrument—so that the sound becomes bigger when playing in sur—then, leverages elements examined in the chapters on sound and notes.

The intricacies that musicians listen out for and claim as virtuosity, it seems, cannot be separated from issues examined in the prior chapters. In their efforts to perform several, at times conflicting and at others resonating, virtuosities, they build on, navigate between, and manipulate complexly connoted discourses, ideologies, and materialities. Perhaps, then, it is time to broaden our listening out for virtuosities as multiple to Hindustani classical instrumental music at large?

"The very intricate things … of presenting the rāga"
Concluding remarks

So, these are the very **intricate things** that, **inner things** of **presenting** the **rāga** … like Yaman, when we learn … thāt, is **kalyan thāt** [sound example 9.1]. **But** the **rāga**, when it comes in, as rāga, Yaman [sound example 9.1] and also, the, **phrases**, are begin, uh, we captured, **taking the notes**, taking the, taking the notes **in a particular pace**, like [sound example 9.1] so the gliding, the **mīnds**, also there are lots of **places** of that, **of the taking the mīnds**, when [sound example 9.1] … there is also [sound example 9.1].… So there are so **many layers**, just **taking**, just to, just to illustrate **one phrase**, you are taking **so many layers of the notes**. That's what I meant with it [sound example 9.1].… So, one, student, when he learns from his teacher, first of all, one should be **exposed** to this **music**, just the **skeleton** of the **scale** [sound example 9.1]. So, these are the, this is one phrase, but in **advance stage** [sound example 9.1]. So, just only **three four notes**, you will **get to know** this is Yaman. So gradually, gradually, it takes, uh, much more **matured shape** of the rāga, you know, the **rāga** is the **same**, but, that's why actually, you can **listen**, one rāga, for thousand million times … **alāp** is **not very easy**, alāp is quite **mature** thing at **advanced** stage. So, first of all, you need to know the **passages** and the, and, and the, **movements**, of the rā [sic], of the notes, **through** the **compositions**. That is why, all the **great masters**, they used to follow, **we** also **learned** the, **great**, **old**, **dhrupad bandishes**, **compositions**. From **one composition, you will get to know** the, the **whole chalan** of the **rāga**, and then, with the, with that **note combinations**, **paltas**, **tāns**, you **practice** in the beginning. And then, one **impression** definitely will be here, or here. So that, if you want to play something else, it will tend, **it will tend you to stop**, not taking the phrases, which are not included in this **rāga structure**.… So automatically, by **instinct**, by **reflex**, you will be able to, **able to get to know**, that this, **this way it shouldn't be proceeded**.

In this book, I have sought to learn something from, rather than about, tensions over sonic nuances within contemporary Hindustani classical instrumental musical knowledge practices. I have unpacked several elements involved, and at stake, in what I have referred to as a double existence of listening. In its twofold presence, I have argued, listening plays crucial but academically largely neglected roles in negotiations of this music's normative aesthetic-and-academic boundaries. First, selective knowledge practices can be manipulated, both musically and otherwise. Second, through multilayered historical processes, several forms of listening have become discursive tropes within this field of tension. That is, specific modes of listening have been historically privileged and invested with authority as providing academically and/or aesthetically legitimate musical knowledge and knowledge about music. Wondering how these

complex dynamics of (musical) knowledge and power might best be approached, I analyzed sangīt encounters.

Significantly, the dual presence of listening implies a long history of silencing other musical details, deeming them not worthy of listening out for. Such selective and normative listening out has, however, long been represented as neutral and objective. Recent studies have emphasized the political dimensions of such—far from neutral—constructions of musical knowledge and authority, underlining that they were instruments in the construction of unequal power relations. As I analyzed, the goals and arguments of such texts at times conflict. Nevertheless, several tropes and points of tension travel through these texts, though they are sometimes transformed in their recurrence.

First, forms of musical knowledge (representation) were debated within pre-independence orientalist and nationalist texts. Writers often ascribed authority to, and simultaneously derived the legitimacy of their argument from, their ability to reproduce theories from (mostly Sanskrit) treatises. By contrast, the embodied knowledge of mainly Muslim musicians was usually portrayed as less valuable because they supposedly lacked the rational theoretical knowledge these scholars sought to confirm. Instead, musicians were depicted at best as source material from whom raw data—which should, however, fit the musical standards provided by the treatises—could be mined. In other writings, music was reduced to mere evidence that a once valuable Hindu art music was now in decline, its high form destroyed by Muslim rule. Because music was portrayed as a domain of science, it needed to be compared, structured, notated, and standardized. Through such reduction, it could be consumed more easily by the envisioned European readership or students at the rapidly sprouting musical colleges around India. Because the music of that time did not fit the theory-based blueprints that these writers sought to confirm, listening was not considered a useful method of collecting and comparing. That is, it could not provide scholars with the structural, comparative data they valued—and sought to order as—musical knowledge. Instead, it constructed a highly reductive version of Hindustani classical music as aesthetically and academically relevant: one that allowed categorization in terms of note orders that were representative of rāga.

These melodic structural elements became the basis for normatively listening out, and musical value was increasingly ascribed based on an adhering to such—in the process standardized—macro-melodic structures. The absence of writing about many other sonic

details resulted in the silencing of those nuances as aesthetically and academically irrelevant, as not worthy of listening out for. Thereby, these fragmented but interrelated writings, I argued, became aesthetic yardsticks that influenced how, and on the basis of which norms, music was, and still is, listened out for. In intricate interaction with other forms of musical knowledge, such texts are used as building blocks of musical authority in the present, and the tropes they deploy are instrumental in the naturalizing of musical hierarchies and hierarchies of music. Macro-melodic structure was standardized as the most significant element to listen out for as Hindustani classical music, and it was portrayed as an ancient classical art form worthy of aesthetic appreciation and scholarly attention.

To understand how these challenging building-blocks of authority are made to resonate in the present, I analyzed in what forms these fragments have been carried forward into post-independence academic studies. I suggested that this field often ignored—and still ignores—its problematic historical connotations. Thereby, it continues to overlook the many issues of power at stake in contemporary musical knowledge practices. Instead, studies convivially reproduce notions of this music as an ancient art form as proven by rāga's melodic complexity and its Hindu historicity. If sound is dealt with at all, listening is highly normative and selective, focusing on a categorizing of structural elements such as note orders in terms of rāga grammar. It is characterized by a tendency to fix music into an object and to describe it in terms of, or in comparison to, European art music. Musicians are at times portrayed as an authoritative source of knowledge on rāga grammar, which is often paired with music theory based on Sanskrit treatises. An inclination to write one's own guru into an emerging canon of Hindustani classical music also continues to characterize the discipline; this legitimates the embodied musical knowledge such scholars gather by training with these gharānā musicians. Related to this, a music's relevance for academic study is justified in terms of its melodic-structural complexity. The correct unfolding of rāga in performance, analyzed in terms of visual representations of its macro-melodic structure, is used to illustrate the mastery of the guru-musicians. These modes of structural listening, I suggested, might best be understood as problematically connoted remnants of colonialism that sustain several unequal power structures. That is, in their attempts to acknowledge difference, such studies reinforce rather than deconstruct colonially connoted distinctions between East and West, embodied and notated musical knowledge, tradition and modernity.

This tendency is not unique to Hindustani classical music studies. I drew parallels between this field of study and the mechanisms Subotnik critically identified as a mode of "structural listening" (1995) present within historical musicology. While the musical topics, ideologies, tools of canonization, and historical contexts differ, the roles of listening within mechanisms of musical knowledge and power are rather similar. In both cases, the resulting master narratives continue to establish their own musical hierarchies and canons, and they continue to perform ontologies of (Hindustani classical) music. Thus, the elements academics-and-musicians listen out for and represent as valuable musical knowledge are neither naturally given nor neutral depictions. Instead, I argued for an understanding of listening as acts of selectively relating to complex sound events. Both these listening practices as well as these sound events can be manipulated. Analogous to Bohlman's statement that thinking music is always an attempt to control it (1999), I proposed that listening is a tool of control, of claiming sonic events as one's own. But it does not only claim them, it takes part in their very formation: listening is performative. And these performative acts are always informed, but not fully determined, by echoes of past encounters.

The recent convivial consumption of "de-colonizing the ears" within music studies, I argued, is not a solution to this postcolonial dilemma. The "intellectual masturbation" (Rodríguez 2017) inherent in listening out for and categorizing rāgas as academically and aesthetically valuable—in the name of celebrating difference, art music, and tradition— reproduces rather than undermines the power-knowledge structures at stake. The challenge inherent in and constitutive of the double existence of listening is how to listen out beyond structural parameters while critically acknowledging their resonances within contemporary practices. As I suggested, several authors have recently pointed to listening's potential as a strategy of resisting hegemonic narratives of (musical) mastery. Calls for listening for the silences, the details that have escaped analysis or which refuse clear categorizing, have mushroomed during the last ten years of music studies. However, I pointed out that because of listening's twofold presence within Hindustani classical (instrumental) music, such listening out for sonic nuances beyond the rāga's structural grammar cannot simply be considered a strategy of intervention. Namely, as the interview excerpt presented at the beginning of this chapter illustrates once more, musicians leverage (the ability to listen out for) specific musical nuances within their musical knowledge practices. An understanding of the complexity of the

severe tensions and debates over these "very intricate things … of presenting a rāga" central to this book, needs to acknowledge that this complexity.

In contrast to Neuman's (2004) attempt to let the musician speak in this epistemological conflict, I therefore refrained from presenting alternative modes of listening as ultimate counternarratives. Namely, although they are based on a listening out for (combinations of) different musical parameters, such alternative master narratives problematically leave intact the underlying mechanisms of power and knowledge I have sought to critique here. Instead, I suggested that it is time to critically denaturalize—not reject—the taken-for-granted epistemological assumptions and authorities that are simultaneously constitutive of and at stake in Hindustani classical music (studies). We need to distance ourselves from singularizing, celebratory modes of listening out for this music as high art that ignore the pain, structural inequalities, and abuse inflicted upon people in its name. This includes the need to denaturalize the musical authority of both the structurally listening academic as well as that of the canonized master gharānā musician listening out for nuances, feeling, and details. Instead, I suggested listening out for the severe anxieties over musical details as indicative of the violation of musical norms. I proposed a mode of listening out for such moments of musical conflict as potentially disruptive of academic master narratives produced through structural listening, instead examining how boundaries emerge and fade out through contemporary listening practices that include, rather than is examined by, academia. Exactly because they are outside of these conventional boundariesm, a listening out for tensions over sonic nuances that have escaped structural examinations can sensitize me to their naturalized status.

My inclusion of academically unconventional elements, which I flagged as sangīt encounters in the book, had several intersecting goals. First, I sought to perform this potential of listening as a denaturalizing tool by including academically unconventional stories, listening assignments, anonymized quotes, and sound recordings. Seeking to turn potential annoyances over such play with academic conventions into a learning process, I asked the reader to reflect on what such irritations might reveal about their own naturalized norms and assumptions about academic production and representation of musical knowledge. Second, as my interlocutors often explicitly prohibited me from writing about such moments of anxiety, I faced the challenge of not being allowed to reproduce the moments most telling of the tensions central in the book. My response to this ethical dilemma was to include sangīt encouters. Third, mirroring the necessarily fragmentary nature of these encounters themselves, as well as my

knowledge about these encounters, I sought to stimulate the reader to make connections between the elements I presented: to think about what was not said, which elements might have been silenced in the process—because this is exactly how such elements work within the mechanisms of knowledge and power I examined.

Perhaps best thought of as distinct but intertwined historical fragments, I argued that the names of Ali Akbar Khan, Nikhil Banerjee, and Annapurna Devi have become invested with specific versions of musical authority. The dynamics of their canonization, I argued, can therefore be understood as intertwined tactics of selective preserving musical knowledge and knowledge about music. Inquiring into the parameters of these guru-dependent tactics of canon building, I argued that such elements have become invested with, and hence can be leveraged as, guru-specific musical authority. Ali Akbar Khan's canonization is documented as the embodied knowledge of the large number of his disciples. This is combined with thousands of hours of recordings and notations of him teaching, performing, and even practicing. It is also performed by several scholarly publications and uncountable anecdotes about his legendary concerts and teaching sessions. His disciples mobilize ideologies such as artistic freedom, creativity, genius, uniqueness, and the perfection of imperfection to claim his place in the canon. In contrast, different terms, ideologies, and materialities are drawn on to perform Annapurna Devi as a canonical musician. Because her musical knowledge practices have been limited to teaching a select few within her home in Mumbai since the 1950s, the material evidence of her allegedly extra-ordinary musical skills is rather limited. Instead, the embodied musical knowledge of her disciples and orally transmitted anecdotes evidence her genius. Her disciples combine listening out for specific musical approaches with ideologies such as musical depth, rāga purity, strict adherence to tradition, and musical individuality. Distinct from Devi and Khan, Nikhil Banerjee died before he taught anybody. A number of recordings of his performances exist, while the anecdotes circulating about him are limited to several stories emphasizing his dedication to practice. He is remembered mainly in terms of musical feeling and emotion, strict practice regimes and adherence to rāga boundaries, his strong hand, the specific sound of his sitar, and particular playing techniques. In their strategies of musical inclusion and exclusion, I argued, my interlocutors leverage the elements of their gurus' (or in the case of Banerjee, their influence's) canonization. Or better, they play with and leverage the authority with which these elements have become invested. Their disciples utilize and

manipulate these terms of their gurus' remembrance as tools to inscribe themselves into this transforming canon.

In the chapter on sound, the fragmented-but-relational nature of the mechanisms involved in the double existence of listening became especially apparent. While sound does play a role in academic representations of the topic, such studies usually limit themselves to a reiteration of the music theory and philosophies as found in treatises. However, I argued that the elements listened out for and valued in terms of "sound" are highly varied. The rich overtone spectrum caused by tāraf and jāvāri, for example, has become saved in the cultural memory of listeners as a sonic signifier of Indianness. During a Doverlane concert, my listening out for tāraf response in a cello resulted in my devalorizing of a musician based on specific sonic nuances. These were combined with a listening out for elements such as a gradual transformation in dynamic qualities, the ability to acoustically fill a large space, and a partial timbral blending with the tanpura. Sound is also listened out for in direct relation to deceased Maihar gharānā sitariyas. Increasingly, I argued, acoustic norms of these rememberings are mediated by recordings with highly varied sound qualities. Manipulating one's instrument in attempts to adhere to these increasingly flexible and broad acoustic norms of "good sound" in terms of these musicians, I suggested, is one of many elements in sonic claims of musical relationships. Tāraf also plays roles in the disciplining of the listener's ear in relation to tonal places. Simultaneously, this haptic form of listening is a trope leveraged in negotiations over musical authority. Thereby, tāraf creates musical order: its response tells the disciplined listener something about sur, while it simultaneously disciplines listeners into recognizing a particular combination of sonic elements as sur. These dimensions (de)valorized and listened out for as "sound," so I argued, play a role in the "feeling of rāga."

Another element listened out for as feeling is note. While several versions of this phenomenon circulate in academic texts, the question of what elements musicians listen out for and thereby perform as note remains unanswered. Often portrayed as a synonym or translation of svāra, note as pitch is often listened out for to create musical order. Thereby, it has been instrumental in the authorization of structural listening within academia. However, like "sound," a broad range of (combinations of) musical elements are listened out for and (de)valorized as notes within contemporary knowledge practices. I listened out for note as a play with dynamic contrast and/or gradual dynamic transformations. It emerged as a combination of the specific speed of a frequency change, tonal tensions and relations, and also stable pitches with a clear

attack and quick decay. Note emerged as sounds that are difficult to categorize in terms of pitch sounds, whilst dynamically loud and with a large overtone spectrum. These dimensions all played a role in the listening out for a (lack of) bringing out the feeling of a rāga.

In the final chapter, I listened out for performances of virtuosity. I pointed out that academics either simply ignore virtuosity or dismiss it as a modern phenomenon symptomatic of a larger crisis within Hindustani classical music. They listen out for and scorn virtuosity as extreme speed and dynamic energy, a lack of melodic clarity, a display of physical extravaganza, and an overt sonic display of non-improvised rhythmic intricacies. These elements are characterized as a means to please unknowledgeable audiences—those who do not know how to listen structurally—and are therefore unworthy of musicological attention. Examining how musicians navigate through this field of tension in and through their knowledge practices, I illustrated how they listen out for and valorize distinct combinations of musical nuances as virtuosity—at times navigating between these versions within a single performance. This, I argued, once again illustrated the necessity of listening beyond those comfortably familiar parameters of structural listening. An audiovisual play with the normative boundaries of a musical system, I argued, is one way in which virtuosity is performed. Strategies include a visual mimicking of North Atlantic rock guitar virtuosi, a dynamic-textural-rhythmic building and release of tension, an inclusion of harmonic elements, and a conflicted "flirting" with the micro-melodic boundaries of rāga. At the other end of the virtuosity spectrum, I argued, claims of strictly adhering to rāga purity, an emphasis on the importance of and relative length of pauses, a play with dynamics, and the ability to adhere to the specificity of a note's curve, is listened out for as indicative of virtuosity. Virtuosity is also performed as feeling or essence of the rāga. The intricacies that musicians listen out for and claim as virtuosity, as the final chapter illustrated, cannot be separated from issues examined in the prior chapters. They build on, navigate between, and manipulate complexly connoted discourses, ideologies, canonized master musicians, and materialities in their performing multiple virtuosities. When listening out for how musicians manipulate sonic nuances during moments of tension, "sound," "note," and "virtuosity" sound out as multiple. Hindustani classical instrumental music multiplies.

My foregrounding how the boundaries and content of this music are performed in and through listening practices was a strategic attempt to move beyond thinking about music as a passive object of ancient art, its intricate melodic structure waiting to be masterfully unfolded by the gharānā musician and analyzed by the structurally listening musicologist. Instead of

treating music as a singular, knowable object, I listened out for it as multiple. Thereby, I examined the complexity of the double existence of listening out for sonic nuances within, and as, contemporary Hindustani classical instrumental musical knowledge practices.

Certainly, this exploration was selective, leaving out more elements than I could include in these pages. For example, I have not attended to questions regarding a listening out for musical form, structure, genre, style, improvisation, composition, and rhythmic details. Several elements would benefit from exploration in further research. First, as Neuman (2004) has illustrated for earlier periods, the advent of recording had an importance influence on the audience's listening expectations and norms. Of the many potential influences of (the possibility of) sound recording on the dynamics I examined, I have only attended to a few. The knowledge practice of learning from and listening to (old) recordings from now deceased master musicians has taken on new dimensions in the digital age, and (especially combined with the increased use of social networking sites such as YouTube and Facebook and communication software such as Skype) provides us with challenges regarding norms of listening. How do these technologies play a role in and shape aesthetic norms, notions of rāga boundaries and concepts of musical originality, ownership, liveness, and value?

Another aspect that I touched upon all too briefly is the question of gender. Women are not mentioned in the historical fragments I examined, and with the notable exception of Annapurna Devi (present through her silence), the field of Hindustani classical instrumental music is almost completely male-dominated. Devi herself is often narrated and remembered in terms of her relationship with male musicians rather than on her own terms: the daughter of Allauddin Khan, the sister of Ali Akbar Khan, the (ex-)wife of Ravi Shankar. Combining this lack of (historical) attention with the, at times violent, physical and/or gendered metaphors such as "raping the melody" or a "male sound," raises questions regarding instrumental music's role in constructions of gender.

Finally, my research focused solely on a relatively small part of gharānā instrumental musical practices. Examining these dynamics within other instrumental gharānās, within dhrupad or khayāl gharānās, and within the still growing non-gharānā musical practices such as music schools and universities, and the music's growing popularity within middle class (Hindu) (diaspora), remains another job for another person, another time. As the dynamics of musical knowledge and power are certainly not limited to Hindustani classical music, furthermore, there is a comparative potential inherent in this study. How are these mechanisms at work in

European art musical practices, for example, and in which aspects might these dynamics differ from those explored in this study? Out of the often difficult but rich experiences I had during the research, furthermore, only a fraction has found its way onto these pages. However, this necessarily patchy nature reflects my approach: knowledge is something that is done in practice. The value of this book lies with the process of listening out for encounters, rather than in the results thereof. In offering you those elements, you can patch together your own version of the many possible narratives these pages afford. This is my attempt to move beyond the challenges posed by the double existence of listening: to not assume authority over those encounters but to allow them to enter into relations with readers, and thereby to continue to perform Hindustani classical instrumental music in ways as yet unheard of.

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