Spaces Betwixt and Between: Musical Borderlands and the Manganiyar Musicians of Rajasthan
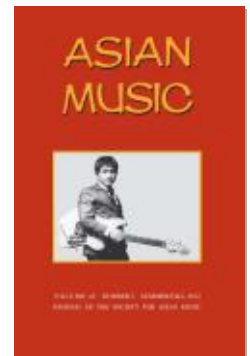
Shalini Ayyagari

Spaces Betwixt and Between: Musical Borderlands and the Manganiyar Musicians of Rajasthan[1]

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Abstract: *Scholars and musicians alike have described the music of the Manganiyar musician community almost entirely in terms of Hindustani classical music. As a result of the Manganiyar community's straddling of the India-Pakistan border, their lives inhabit a borderland in political space, religious belief, and cultural practice. Their music, while utilizing elements of Hindustani raga, also draws considerably on Sindhi surs, a body of musical/poetic texts more closely associated with Pakistani music. The Manganiyar meld these musical systems into their own practices in order to assert their borderland identities, and ultimately complicate broader dichotomies and binaries in South Asian contemporary music.*

> Borders in this sense are not natural outcomes of a natural or divine historical process in human history, but were created in the very constitution of the modern/colonial world. (Mignolo and Tlostanova 2006, 208)

> . . . The border is not a spatial fact with a sociological impact, but a sociological fact that shapes spatiality. (Simmel 1992, 697)

Introduction

Here is how the game is played: A Manganiyar musician sits in the middle of his patron's homestead, surrounded by members of the patron's family who are familiar with the musical repertory of the Manganiyar musical tradition. The musician has already hidden a trivial object in a hiding place somewhere on the premises. The musician then leads the patron to the hidden object in a sort of "hot-and-cold" game. However, the directions given to the patron are not communicated through the words "hotter" and "colder," but are instead conveyed through music. The musician uses the six ragas, or musical modes, customarily used in performance and considered to be indigenous by the Manganiyar—*Maru*, *Sorath*, *Dhani*, *Soobh*, *Megh Malhar*, and *Goond Malhar*—which in their conceptualization correspond to the four cardinal directions of north, south, east, west, along with upward and downward, respectively (fig. 1).[3] He uses these ragas to lead the patron to the place of the hidden object, changing the raga as the patron moves. In turn, the patron changes his direction based on the ragas being played by the musician. The patron does not receive a prize for finding
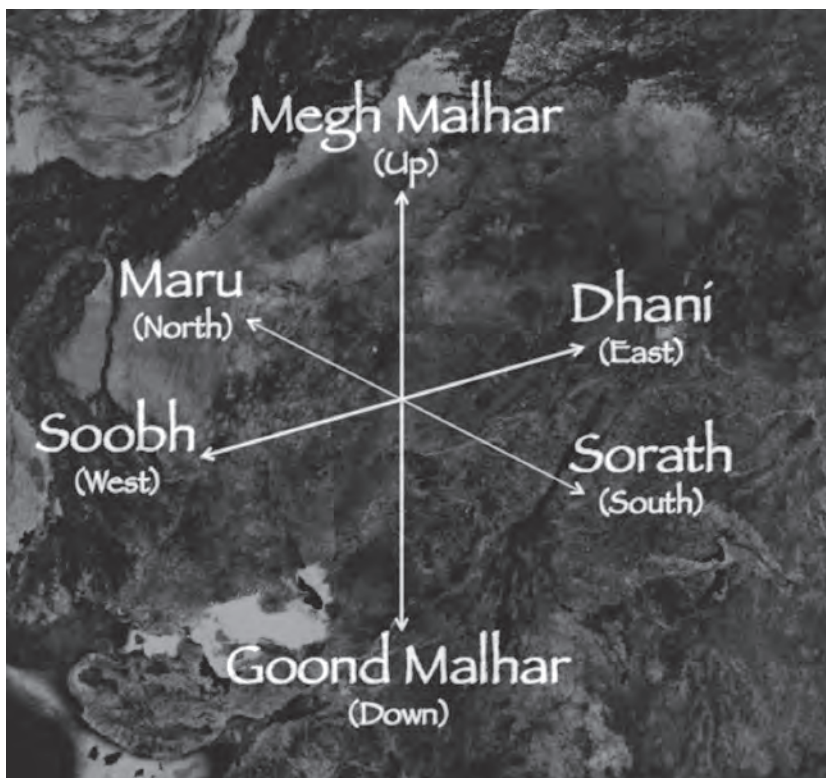
Figure 1. Spatialized directional ragas superimposed on
a geographical map of the Rajasthan region.

the object, but instead receives bragging rights, important in a culture that has historically nurtured musical literacy for musicians and listeners alike.

The game requires musical expertise on the parts of both the musician and his patron. The musician must not only know the six ragas intimately, but must be able to skillfully transition from one raga to the next as the patron moves in various directions in search of the hidden object. The patron must also have critical listening skills, being able to recognize the ragas being played, and translate them into the correct directions to follow in order to find the object. The game is called *Kakadi*, and is played at patron family functions such as weddings and birth ceremonies in western Rajasthan. It is played much less prevalently in contemporary western Rajasthan, however, due to a lessening of importance of musical expertise among patrons and a weakening of the bond between musician and patron. However, patrons do often make sure at least one older family member in attendance at the function understands the nuances of the Manganiyar musical tradition and could potentially play the game if called upon to do so.

I use the game of *Kakadi* as an introductory example to demonstrate the importance of spatialization of musical practices among the Manganiyar community, whose traditions are indebted to the poetics of a musical landscape mapping, both perceived and imagined. Each of the six ragas' conceptualizations is integrally enmeshed with the environment in which this musical tradition has been nurtured. Each relates to locations within the purview of surroundings of the Manganiyar community: *Maru* refers to the desert north of Jaisalmer City, *Sorath* refers to an area in Gujarat south of Jaisalmer, *Dhani* refers to the sun rising in the east, *Soobh* refers to the sun setting in the west, *Megh Malhar* refers to rain coming from clouds above, and *Goond Malhar* refers to the earth below.

Each raga is thus explored in the Manganiyar musical tradition as musical practice, an idiom of spatialization, and a symbol of a deeply rooted folkloric tradition. It is a game influenced by both ragas and a modal system indigenous to what is today Sindh, Pakistan, *surs* (to be discussed at length following). The game allows its players to literally spatialize the music and imagine the music being performed in terms of function and locality rather than just mode. This sense of locality, place, and belonging spatializes the community as a whole, giving the Manganiyar, whose lives necessarily involve border crossings (musical, geographical, religious, and theoretical) and rural isolation due to the desert landscape, a shared sense of community.

In this article, I claim that the division of the geopolitical nations of India and Pakistan has helped to "partition" perceptions of cultural practices. As a result of the Manganiyar community's locality, their musical life inhabits a borderland not only in geopolitical space and cultural and religious practices, but in the musical imagination as well. This article, then, is not so much about uncovering the oft-neglected hybridization of musical practices that constitutes Manganiyar music, as it is about denationalizing the widely accepted music scholarship that to this day establishes itself on the premise of nation-states. As Mignolo and Tlostanova suggest, borders are "not natural outcomes of a natural or divine historical process" (Mignolo and Tlostanova 2006, 208), and because as Simmel points out, they are "a sociological fact that shapes spatiality" (Simmel 1992, 697), it is important to examine these ruptures and continuities within a cultural context, asking the question, who is doing the breaking and crossing of borders and why?

I use an extended musical example to demonstrate this main argument. The music of the Manganiyar, while utilizing elements of Hindustani music theory, also draws considerably upon Sindhi *surs*, a musical and poetic classification system most closely associated with regional musical practices of what is today the Sindh province in eastern Pakistan. Sindhi *surs* is a system based on folktales, regional locations, and descriptions of nature and the local environment indigenous to western Rajasthan, India, and eastern Sindh, Pakistan. I suggest that the fusing of ragas and *surs* in Manganiyar musical practices is directly related

to the borderland location of the community, both geographically and culturally. By showing the continuity across a political border in musical practice among the Manganiyar, I posit that Manganiyar musicians are unsettling such national border-bound ways of labeling and characterizing musical practices.

Scholars of South Asian music and Manganiyar musicians themselves have not prevalently used the *surs* classification system to describe Manganiyar music for reasons to be discussed below. However, I assert that Manganiyar musicians meld elements of both Hindustani raga and Sindhi *surs* together to create a distinctly divergent musical practice. This melded modal system then signifies lived practice in a borderland region and helps the Manganiyar community create meaning and shape spatiality for themselves and their hereditary patrons as to what it means to live in a borderland region. As musicians create their own musical and cultural boundaries from the bottom up, defying those national boundaries determined from the top down, music is then symbolic of those struggles over defining geopolitical boundaries. In what follows, I hope to provide a more nuanced perspective and contextual framework through which to examine Manganiyar music, ultimately destabilizing broader common notions of national boundaries as defining lines for cultural and theoretical practices.

The Manganiyar in Context

The Manganiyar are a community of hereditary caste musicians straddling the India-Pakistan border and inhabiting both the western Rajasthan region of India and the eastern Sindh region of Pakistan. Customarily the Manganiyar have provided family genealogies and ceremonial music to their hereditary patrons for remuneration in kind for at least the past three centuries (Kothari 1994, 205). They have been affiliated not only with individual patron families, but entire family lineages over many generations through social and economic codependence. They perform at their patron families' life-cycle ceremonies such as births, weddings, and festivals (fig. 2), and sing mainly in the Marwari language.[4]

The Manganiyar self-identify as Sunni Muslim although, as is the case with many marginalized communities in South Asia, their religious practices are an amalgamation of aspects from both Hinduism and Islam.[5] According to Manganiyar oral histories, as a community, they were previously Hindu and converted to Islam during the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's reign (1658–1707).[6] Their conversion could have taken place for a variety of reasons. Some Manganiyars recounted to me a conversion to Islam to escape Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's tax on non-Muslim populations in north India (Sakar Khan Manganiyar, interview with the author, 2007), while others expressed a desire on the part of their ancestors to escape Hindu casteism (Manuel 1996, 122–3). One

Figure 2. Sakar Khan Manganiyar performing for his
patrons in Hamira Village (photo by author, 2003).

Manganiyar musician told a story of a Hindu ancestor who touched the animal
skin of a drum in a Hindu temple. As a result, he was banned from practicing
Hinduism in his village and converted to Islam (Ghewar Khan Manganiyar,
interview with the author, 2006).

Religious conversion, however, is usually never so distinct—one day a per-
son is Hindu, and the next s/he is Muslim. Instead, it is often only partial and/
or selective as communities continue their preconversion practices even after
conversion. As a result of the Manganiyars' conversion to Islam, their geographi-
cal border location, and the fact that the majority of Manganiyars' patrons are
Hindu, their cultural and musical traditions have persisted in embodying a
mixture of Hindu and Muslim traditions and musical repertory, devoted to
both Hindu and Muslim (most often Sufi-derived) devotional and mythologi-
cal themes.

Partition and Political Dichotomization

> This is not that long-looked-for break of day
> Not that clear dawn in quest of which those comrades
> Set out, believing that in heaven's wide void
> Somewhere must be the star's last halting place,
> Somewhere the verge of night's slow-washing tide,
> Somewhere an anchorage for the ship of heartache.
> (Faiz Ahmed Faiz, "Subh-e-azadi")[7]

Before Partition, the Manganiyar lived in the area that would, in 1947, become land straddling the India-Pakistan border.[8] However, today the majority of the Manganiyar community resides in India. Older musicians whom I interviewed remember an India past when there was no "this side" or "that side" of the border. Instead, Manganiyar families lived and traveled freely throughout the Thar Desert region, following a long-standing peripatetic lifestyle.[9] Some musicians related to me stories of traveling from Jaisalmer (in present-day India) to Hyderabad (in present-day Pakistan) to study classical music in the royal court there (Lakha Khan Manganiyar, interview with the author, 2005). Others had family, patrons, or instrument makers in Karachi (in present-day Pakistan), or various villages near Karachi that they would visit often. Thus, these musicians now residing in India had long-standing connections to places and people now in Pakistan.

The above examples demonstrate that Manganiyar musicians often had more personal, cultural, and musical ties to nearby present-day Pakistan than to other parts of present-day India. All of this changed however when India gained its independence. The date, August 15, 1947, not only marked India's independence from Great Britain, but also the violent and jolting partition of the Indian subcontinent and establishment of the two independent nations of India and Pakistan.[10] Tellingly, in conversation with Manganiyar musicians in western Rajasthan, most speak more dramatically about Partition than about India's independence. In the South Asian imagination, Partition is an event forever marked by trauma and catastrophe.[11] Faiz Ahmed Faiz lamented this in his poem, "Subh-e-azadi" (Freedom's dawn). In a similar fashion, Salmon Rushdie poignantly finds voice for this catastrophe through the allegorical body of his character, Saleem Sinai, in his novel *Midnight's Children*:

> I mean quite simply that I have begun to crack all over like an old jug—that my poor body, singular, unlovely, buffeted by too much history, subjected to drainage above and drainage below, mutilated by doors, brained by spittoons, has started coming apart at the seams. In short, I am literally disintegrating, slowly for the moment, although there are signs of an acceleration. (Rushdie 1980, 37)

Rushdie's description of Saleem Sinai's decrepit body symbolizes the strife in the South Asian subcontinent at the time and in the aftermath of Partition. There were massive populations exchanged between the two newly formed states, based mainly upon religious affiliation.[12] According to the 1951 Indian Census of Displaced Persons, approximately 14.5 million people crossed the new border in the months immediately following Partition (Visaria 1969, 323). Both newly formed governments were completely unequipped to deal with migrations of such unexpected and staggering magnitude or the massive violence and slaughter that occurred on both sides of the border. Hindus residing on the western side of this new line drawn in the sand were often forcefully evicted and sent to the eastern side; Muslims from the east were forced in the opposite direction. Those who attempted to remain in their homes often suffered consequences. Leading up to and as a result of Partition, hundreds of thousands of people were killed, uncounted numbers were raped and forcefully religiously converted, and millions more were uprooted, marking one of the largest mass migrations in history.

Although the portion of the India-Pakistan border separating Rajasthan and Sindh remained fairly peaceful compared to other areas on the border, the region still felt the effects of Partition. In this strife, many Manganiyar musician families followed their Hindu patrons, by either relocating from the Pakistani to the Indian side of the border, or remaining in the Muslim minority on the Indian side.[13] Often they were forced to sever ties with relatives, homes, and instrument makers in Pakistan. For a time after Partition, the portion of the India-Pakistan border of Rajasthan, India, and Sindh, Pakistan, was semipermeable. However, the Fourteen Day War between India and Pakistan, December 3–16, 1971, made the line definitive; all ties between Manganiyars in India and their lives on the other side of the border were cut off, and since then, both sides of the border are patrolled and army-controlled (Copland 1998).

Beginning in the 1980s, historiography concerning Partition has been greatly influenced by the Subaltern Studies Group and their theoretical turn to the rewriting of such moments of struggle in history. No longer was Partition viewed as a single event from a single privileged perspective, but instead it was viewed as a chain of contingent events influenced and perceived by both the elite of South Asia as well as subaltern communities throughout the region. These historiographies stress that Partition was not merely a master narrative but rather a complex produced through forces and power relations, compounded by uncertainties, loss, and confusion.[14]

Borders are not natural outcomes of an organic or divine historical process. Although rooted in geographical mappings, borders have been socially created and used for political means. Classification and boundary making, both

tangible and epistemological, are at the heart of constructing identities. Modern nation-states are ideologically invested in imagining themselves to be territorially discrete and internally homogenous. Borderlands cannot be regarded as empty transitional zones, but are instead sites of creative cultural production and struggle. Here I draw on Doreen Massey's scholarly work on space and place. She points out that instead of "thinking of places as areas with boundaries around them, they can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings" (Massey 1994, 154). So too can music theory be imagined in relation to spatial formations and networks of social relations. The India-Pakistan border region of Rajasthan and Sindh can be analyzed as an imaginary yet very poignant line in the life of musical practice of the region. Understanding of the India-Pakistan border needs to continue to be remapped, not as a simple divide between here and there, but as social and cultural terrain that people inhabit, that inhabits people.

Therefore, an examination of the social production of borders allows us to identify relations of domination and subordination. The India-Pakistan border serves then as a mechanism by which difference and exclusion have been promulgated in terms of nationality and religious identity. Furthermore, the processes of differentiation and exclusion at the border can take place in relation to musical identity.

Manganiyar Music as *Desi* or *Marga*?

> *The psychological borderlands, the sexual borderlands, and the spiritual borderlands are not particular to the southwest [United States]. In fact, the borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where the lower, middle and upper classes touch.* (Anzaldúa 1987, [iii])

In relation to musical practices of the Manganiyar, there has been a proverbial border imposed in the dichotomization of "classical" and "folk" music, also referred to in scholarship as "great"/"little" and *marga/desi*.[15] The terms "great" and "little" were first used in anthropological scholarship in the 1950s in relation to traditions of Hinduism found in villages versus those found in the Sanskritic textual tradition (Marriott 1955; Redfield 1955, [1956] 1960; Singer 1959). Carol Babiracki, in her historical analysis of the scholarly treatment of tribal music in India, contextualizes the "great" traditions in relation to those practices "centered in geographically dispersed cities, palaces, schools, and temples . . . maintained by a relatively small, educated elite" (Babiracki 1991, 70). Contrastingly, she refers to the "little" traditions as "the many and diverse little traditions . . . localized in villages, maintained by a large, nonliterate or

semiliterate peasant class, unstandardized, and orally transmitted" (Babiracki 1991, 70). Joan Erdman found these terms especially relevant in the context of eastern Rajasthan's royal courts. According to Erdman, the great traditions (of the reflective few) and the little traditions (of the largely unreflective many) "inform each other, and partake of the same cultural structure" (Erdman 1985, 17).

These terms are still conceptually prevalent in contemporary scholarship and are also used in everyday language by the Manganiyar today. According to Regula Qureshi, "In the field of Indian music studies, the high-low divide has generally persisted. It has been reinforced by an institutional as well as conceptual separation between art and folk music, and by the legacy of the early twentieth-century reform movement to codify (in writing) Hindustani music" (Qureshi 2009, 181).

It is surprising then that although scholars and Manganiyars alike often categorize Manganiyar music as *desi* or "little," the music is described in scholarship and discussions with musicians almost entirely in terms of Hindustani classical raga theory.[16] This can be attributed to three factors. First, Manganiyar music has been influenced by Hindustani classical music in many ways (discussed below) and has garnered international exposure partly as a result of its supposed similarities to Hindustani classical music. Second, Manganiyar music is theorized in a similar fashion to Hindustani classical music (the second factor might be as a result of the first). Third, both South Asian and foreign scholars who have studied Manganiyar music have typically used Hindustani classical music as a reference point from which to examine Manganiyar music (Jairazbhoy 1980).

While theories from the "great" Hindustani classical musical tradition are imposed on Manganiyar music mainly for easy reference and comparison by both scholars and musicians, it is at the same time considered by most to be a "little" tradition. How then can the categorization of Manganiyar music as being both "great" and "little" be reconciled? Ethnomusicologists such as the late Nazir Jairazbhoy went so far as to call Manganiyar music an "embryo of classical music," implying that Manganiyar music provides a proverbial window looking into the roots of Hindustani classical music, as far back as 300 years ago (Jairazbhoy 1980). Jairazbhoy, while giving credit to Manganiyar music for its high level of theorization compared to other South Asian regional music traditions, articulated a teleology of music on an evolutionary scale, placing Manganiyar music as a precursor to present-day Hindustani classical performance practice. While Jairazbhoy's writing is indeed from an ethnomusicological and theoretical era past (most of his research in western Rajasthan was conducted in the early 1970s), it still reflects a prevalent perception by contemporary scholars and audiences of Manganiyar music.

Music in Pakistan, Music in India

Despite musical ambiguities and contradictions inherent in an effort to categorize permeable musical practices across the border, an arbitrary dichotomization was reinforced by the state interest of both postindependent India and Pakistan to promote and stifle certain musical practices in an effort to define distinct national subjectivities in relation to each other.

Hindustani classical music, and raga in particular, are concepts that have for the most part been associated with music from present-day North India despite their wide usage in contemporary Pakistan as well.[17] Strikingly, Alain Daniélou's well-cited and musically theoretically in-depth book, *The Ragas of Northern Indian Music*, includes a lengthy introductory chapter titled "The History of Indian Music," which outlines the origins of Hindustani classical music beginning with pre-Aryan Dravidian culture, yet only speaks to music of India. Further, the connections to a Hindu lineage are foregrounded. Daniélou only hints at Muslim influences in the genre in one sweeping sentence: "With the advent of foreign invasions musical theory quickly decays, although musical practice maintains its standards" (Daniélou 1980, 18).

More Islamic music traditions, including various Sufi religious music such as *qawwali*, are more generally associated with Pakistan, although they are prevalent throughout the northern part of the subcontinent as well as India. According to Yousuf Saeed, a prominent north Indian music scholar and independent filmmaker, this perceived demarcation on the Pakistan side of the border is indeed real. He explains that there was a conscious effort on the part of Pakistani government officials to distinguish what types of music should be officially allowed in Pakistan. He writes,

> This deliberate demarcation took its toll on a range of musical forms considered to be of Hindu origin—*dhrupad*, *dhamar*, *thumri*—while others, such as *khayal*, *tarana*, *qawwali*, and *ghazal* were suddenly favoured. In their efforts to "Islamise," some musicians decided to stop singing songs and ragas that referred to Hindu deities, and others decided to rename them for acceptability. The raga Shri Kaalyan, for instance, became Shab Kalyan. In a 2003 textbook for music students, Akhtar Shirazi writes new khayal and dhrupad compositions in polished Urdu, using Muslim devotional themes to replace the Hindu ones. (Saeed 2011, n.p.)

Saeed goes on to recount a decline of public interest in Hindustani classical music in postindependent Pakistan, especially after the 1971 war with India, and attributes this to the rise of anti-India sentiments. Despite support from government institutions, musicians were not able to earn a good living playing Hindustani classical music. "Classical musicians, such as those migrating from the Indian Punjab who settled in Multan and Sindh, learned local folk genres such as Sindhi Kafi, and tried to blend the two styles . . . Some musicians, such

as vocalist Salamat-Nazakat Ali, were able to survive only by going on occasional concert tours in the West" (Saeed 2011, n.p.).

While many genres of classical music were stifled on the Pakistan side of the border, other musical practices were promoted by the government and public institutions, such as *ghazal* and *qawwali*, in part due to their associations with Islamic culture. According to Saeed, the lessening of popularity of Hindustani classical music among the middle classes in urban Pakistan allowed *qawwali* to flourish. No longer was it just performed in local Sufi shrines, but it was brought to the concert stage, and eventually has become one of the main cultural symbols of contemporary Pakistan.

Conceptualizations and Superimpositions of Raga

Although raga is a concept used in music found all over South Asia as well as in South Asian diasporic music, it can mean many different things in different practices. While Hindustani music theory is used as a framework to describe Manganiyar music, the actualization of raga in practice is very different between the two.

Contemporary Hindustani ragas are categorized by scale type and pitch selection, and are defined by many other conceptual frameworks, including pitch ascent/descent patterns, melodic shapes of phrasing, the musical context in which specific pitches occur, intonation, use of microtones, time of day, season, and an overall sense of mood, to name a few (Bagchee 1998).[18] Contrastingly, Manganiyars conceptualize raga not so much in relation to musical mode as they do in relation to short musical motifs. As will be discussed below, these musical motifs also correspond to well-known folktales from the region.

While the *rasa*, or feeling, in Hindustani music is conveyed through the rendition of a particular raga, in Manganiyar music *rasa* is conveyed literally through the *dohas*, poetic couplets that are typically sung at the beginning of a performance.[19] When these *dohas* are put to melodies and are sung in raga, they are referred to as *chello*. Typically, certain *chello* are associated with corresponding ragas. Many Manganiyar musicians whom I interviewed had difficulty conceptualizing raga in the abstract; when asked to sing/play the melodic scale of a particular raga, most Manganiyars had difficulty without referencing particular songs, *dohas*, or stories that in their minds are inseparable from the raga itself. This inherent correspondence led me to believe that there were other musical influences contributing to the conceptualization and actualization of Manganiyar music in addition to just Hindustani raga, which will be discussed in the next section.

There are ragas used in the Manganiyar tradition that do not exist in practice in the Hindustani system. There are ragas that are musically the same in

both systems but have different names in each. In addition, there are ragas that have the same names in both systems but are musically different.[20] Because of these differences, it is possible that in the Manganiyar tradition, raga could be a concept adapted from other musical practices, including but not exclusively Hindustani classical music.[21]

It is my contention that Manganiyar musicians are ingenious cultural politicians. They are skilled at adapting and converting foreign elements into their own repertory, as evidenced by their contemporary incorporation of Hindi film music, international popular music, and other Rajasthani communities' music into their own. Furthermore, these adaptations on the part of the Manganiyar community are not just a recent phenomenon. Historical records show that Manganiyar musicians and Hindustani musicians encountered one another frequently at royal courts, suggesting that interactions between Hindustani classical musicians and Manganiyar musicians are not merely a recent phenomenon seen in contemporary performance and album collaborations.[22]

Jaisalmer City royal court documents verify that the court maintained a regular "Department of Music and Arts," termed *Alamkhana* in which one particular hereditary family of Manganiyars has been consistently employed at the court for at least the past 3 centuries for ceremony, festival, familial, and court entertainment (Imamddin Khan Manganiyar, interview with the author, 2007).[23] This same family is still employed by the royal family of Jaisalmer, although over the years since Independence and Partition, their importance in the court has waned (fig. 3).[24]

Visiting Hindustani classical musicians were historically invited to perform in Jaisalmer from other cities and royal courts.[25] We can only assume that there were constant flows of musicians between courts in Rajasthan, Sindh, and probably other neighboring areas such as Delhi, Punjab, and Gujarat. In postindependent India, Manganiyars were also employed at All India Radio as well as its local affiliates in Rajasthani cities including Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Barmer. Anwar Khan Manganiyar recounted to me performing alongside Hindustani classical musicians in these settings (Anwar Khan Manganiyar, interview with the author, 2007). Whether the term and concept of raga is indigenous to Manganiyar vocabulary, has been synthesized from their exposure to Hindustani classical music, or has entered their purview as a result of musicologists superimposing it into their music for decades and perhaps centuries, one can only speculate. Most Manganiyars I spoke with attribute their knowledge of Hindustani classical music to these interactions with Hindustani classical musicians, although they claim their use of the term raga is an indigenous one.

Based on fieldwork conducted in western Rajasthan (by myself and other scholars), it seems that Manganiyar musicians indeed have a knowledge of Hindustani raga theory, but one must surmise that the musicians interviewed

Figure 3. Alamkhana musicians performing outside the Jaisalmer royal palace during the annual Dusshera Festival (photo by author, 2007).

were often chosen by scholars for that very reason—because they had a working knowledge of raga, had previously been exposed to it, and were then able to theorize raga in interviews and recording sessions.[26] It is difficult to surmise to what extent all Manganiyar musicians are familiar with raga theory.

From my own fieldwork in Rajasthan, it is clear that raga conceptualization among the Manganiyar is not standardized. The corpus of ragas varies greatly from one musician to the next (even in the same immediate family), and often by one musician when asked at different times.[27] This is an area in which more research could benefit in order to better understand the history, incorporation, and conceptualization of raga among the Manganiyar community.

Manganiyar Musical Forms

Manganiyars have been considered by scholars as well as their hereditary patrons as the bearers of knowledge and tradition, receptacles of folk knowledge. For this reason, they are thought to hold an essentialized sense of history through their music, genealogy-keeping, and performances. This essentialization associated with the Manganiyar community inevitably influences the way Manganiyar music is conceptualized in relation to Hindustani classical music.

Among others, the ethnomusicologist Nazir Jairazbhoy's description of Manganiyar music as an "embryo of Hindustani classical music" from 1980 is most likely based upon an initial perception that Manganiyar music indeed resembles Hindustani classical music in its structural framework (Jairazbhoy 1980). Here, I compare Manganiyar vocal performances with Hindustani vocal performances, most notably the Hindustani vocal genre *khayal*.[28] I have done this, in part, because both vocal and instrumental Manganiyar music are based on sung poetry and vocal traditions. Although vocal music is still the most prevalent genre in Manganiyar repertory (a solo singer with melodic and rhythmic accompaniment), in recent decades solo instrumental performances have become popular.[29]

In terms of a musical timeline, a Hindustani *khayal* performance generally begins with a short *alap* section. This section is an improvised prelude in free time in which the melodic characteristics of the raga being performed are clearly established and developed, including the ascending and descending scales, the emphasis on certain pitches, the ways in which certain pitches are approached, and a more general mood of the raga. This introductory *alap* sometimes contains subsections divided by increasing rhythmic density, melodic range, and sung rhythm. By the end of the *alap* section, the raga has clearly been established and the performance is on the verge of becoming rhythmically regular. The performer then launches into the *chiz*, or composition, accompanied by a drum (usually the *tabla*), and based on fixed poetry that is then improvised on.[30]

Contrastingly, the Manganiyar generally theorize their repertory into two distinct categories: "out of raga" and "in raga." Those contexts that call for music "out of raga" are processions, ceremonies, and festivals and the songs sung on these occasions are called *chhota git*, or small songs. *Chhota git* are generally simple in structure and are functional, relating directly to the event at hand. *Mota git*, or large songs, are considered to be "in raga," and are generally performed at *kacheri*, or intimate connoisseur listening sessions, either for patrons or for other Manganiyar musicians (fig. 4).[31]

Mota git, discussed at length below, are most relevant for this article because of their structural connections to Hindustani classical music.[32] This category of repertoire has been described by various Manganiyar musicians as praise songs for a patron, a god, or the raga being performed. In *mota git* there is a similar overarching structure to that found in Hindustani *alap*.[33] While the term *alap* is not used in common practice to describe the beginning section of a Manganiyar performance, the section is similar in that the sung phrases are improvised in free time, explore the melodic contours and characteristics of the raga, and are unaccompanied by a rhythmic instrument (usually the double-headed *dholak* drum in contemporary practice).[34] In terms of instrumentation, while the number of performers (vocalists and instrumentalists) in Manganiyar *mota git* performances may vary from one performance to the next and also may depend on

Figure 4. Manganiyar musicians performing in a
kacheri session (photo by author, 2006).

the context in which the music is performed, a soloist is generally accompanied by a drone-keeping instrument (often played by a stringed instrument such as the *sarangi* or *kamaicha*, or by the *harmonium*). This is similar to Hindustani classical music where the instrumentation for the *alap* section consists of a soloist accompanied also by a drone-keeping instrument (e.g., *tanpura*, *harmonium*, *sruti* box).

While the distinguishing feature of Manganiyar *mota git* is that they are "in raga," only the first part of the performance is considered to be "in raga." This is the case even though the remainder of the song is indeed melodically and emotionally in the same raga as the first part. *Mota git* begin with *dohas*, or rhyming couplets sung without the accompaniment of the *dholak* drum. The texts of the *dohas* usually relate to the sentiment of the raga used for the piece, often telling the story of or praising the raga. Although these *dohas* are generally fixed, they have a degree of improvisation. The singer usually knows a number of stanzas for each *doha*, and can mix and match these stanzas in varying ways to create certain moods, elicit responses from the audience, and shorten or lengthen this section of the performance depending on the context. The sung melody, although conforming to the raga, is improvised, and the singer may go back and forth between recitation and melodic improvisation in this section of the performance.

Following this introductory section of *dohas* in a *mota git* performance, the actual *git*, or song, begins. This section is not considered to be "in raga." During

a number of recording sessions with senior Manganiyar musicians, I asked them which raga the *git* was sung in. All of the musicians were puzzled by this question and responded by clarifying that it was a *git* and not "in raga." This section is characterized by highly stylized improvisation and rapid passages with virtuosic flourish. The *git* section of a Manganiyar performance is thus akin to the Hindustani *khayal chiz* section in that it occurs after an *alap*-like section and has rhythmic accompaniment (on the *dholak* as opposed to the *tabla* in *khayal*).

To summarize, the following similarities exist between Manganiyar *mota git* and Hindustani *khayal* vocal performance:

(1) There is no rhythmic accompaniment in the first section, which is sung in free meter, followed by a second section that is accompanied by a drum and has consistent meter.
(2) The first section is theorized to be in a particular raga.
(3) Both improvisation and composition are present.
(4) Characteristic melodic patterns are used to explore the pitches of the raga.
(5) The instrumental roles (solo melody, drone, and rhythmic accompaniment) are similar.

In contrast, Manganiyar performance practice differs from Hindustani *khayal* performance practice in the following ways:

(1) *Khayal alap* is mostly improvised while the beginning section of Manganiyar *mota git* are minimally improvised and based on textual *dohas*.
(2) A *khayal* piece is performed entirely in one raga while only the introductory section in a *mota git* is considered to be "in raga."
(3) *Khayal alap* uses sung vocables while *mota git* uses poetic texts.

I have thus far demonstrated a number of similarities between Hindustani classical music (especially Hindustani *khayal*) and Manganiyar *mota git*. However, the above differences led me to search elsewhere for further musical influences on the Manganiyar tradition. I turned to a musical practice found in present-day eastern Pakistan, just on the other side of the border from the areas where the Manganiyar reside in western Rajasthan, India. What follows is a discussion of this musical system, Sindhi *surs*, in relation to Manganiyar musical practices.

Surs as Pitch or a Musical System?

Borderlands is a metaphor for processes of many
things, psychological, physical, and mental.
A metaphor that does not apply specifically
to one thing but can be applied to many things.
(Anzaldúa and Keating 2000, 176)

Just before my first extended interview with the renowned *kamaicha* player and singer, Hakam Khan Manganiyar in 2007, it became apparent to me that there were other influences on Manganiyar music beside Hindustani classical music. I therefore turned to Rajasthan's neighboring region on the other side of the India-Pakistan border, Sindh, and the indigenous Sufi music practices of that region in an effort to create a more three-dimensional picture of these musical influences. In the course of my research, I discovered the scholarly work of H. T. Sorley, a former Indian Civil Service agent in the Bombay Presidency of India before Independence and Partition.[35] Sorley's in-depth work (based on decades of experiential work in Sindh) concerning the Sindhi Sufi saint and mystic Shah Abdul Latif was of central interest in my research. Sorley's book, *Shah Abdul Latif of Bhit: His Poetry, Life and Times* ([1940] 1967), details the Sufi saint's life and discusses Shah Abdul Latif's standardization of a musical system known as Sindhi *surs*. I brought the information I gleaned from this source to my interviews with Manganiyar musicians.

In my interview with Hakam Khan Manganiyar, I broached the subject of *sur*. I already knew about his familial connections to Sindh (his mother was born there) and his unusual number of Sindhi Muslim patrons, who often ask him to sing of Sufi-related themes and in the Sindhi language (instead of the more common Marwari).[36] I therefore presumed that he would have a better knowledge of the concept of *sur* than other Manganiyar musicians.

Hakam Khan was at first surprised by my question, commenting that I, as an ethnomusicologist, should know what *sur* means. Further in our conversation, he explained that when I had first asked my question about *sur*, he had assumed that I was referring to its usage in Hindustani classical music, where *sur* means "pitch" or "tone," and refers to the discrete pitches that make up the scale of a raga (Erdman 1985, 88–9). As Hakam Khan then discerned that I was not referring to this usage of *sur*, his surprise turned to pleasure, and he noted that he was not used to talking about Sindhi *surs* with scholars, referring to it as "little-known" in Hindi. He led us into a long discussion about the influence of Shah Abdul Latif and the Sindhi *surs* system on Manganiyar music. This first interaction concerning the *surs* system opened up a new chapter in my fieldwork, and I continued to have similar discussions with elder Manganiyar musicians throughout my fieldwork period.

Sindhi *Surs* Defined

The region of Sindh now in eastern Pakistan has always been renowned for its Sufi traditions, epitomized by the Sufi saint, Shah Abdul Latif. Sindhi Sufi poetry is customarily performed within the musical system of Sindhi *surs*. This system dates back at least to Shah Abdul's lifetime (1689–1752), although it is probably

a much older musical system. Shah Abdul Latif is most renowned for his work, *Shah-jo-Risalo* (The message of the Shah), put to written word posthumously by his disciples (Ajwani 1970; Schimmel 1976).

The text of the *Risalo* is purely poetic and does not include any sort of musical notation, although scholars are fairly certain that the text was to be set to musical accompaniment (Sorley [1940] 1991). The work was narrated and written in vernacular Sindhi language, which was out of the ordinary in a time when the majority of written texts were done so in Persian, the language of the courts. Sindhi language was used instead, so that the texts could be accessed (read or at least understood) by a more general public and especially a rural population that did not have mastery over the Persian language (Sorley [1940] 1967). The *Risalo*'s poetry is organized into chapters called *surs*, referring to the specific musical modes in which the poems were to be sung (Ajwani 1970). Ajwani defines s*urs* as fixed melodies. However, in practice, as demonstrated to me by Hakam Khan Manganiyar, they are often subjected to musical elaboration within a particular musical mode.

While today *sur* music is often played on instruments, the original *surs* were strictly vocal and were categorized according to their poetry; each *sur* had a different poetic, musical, and emotional nature that distinguished it from other *surs* (Qureshi 1987, 239). While Sufi music performance has indeed changed since Latif's lifetime, the *Risalo* as a source is unequaled in its demonstration of contemporary musical modes of the 1700s.

The most important aspect of *sur* music for the present inquiry and its overlap with Manganiyar music lies in *surs*' rootedness in the lore of locality and geohistorical settings of Sindh. In the poetry of *Shah-jo-Risalo*, Latif describes the conditions in which the people live—women fetching water at the wells, nomadic herders with their camels and goats roaming the dunes, and the flora so distinctive in the Thar Desert—as depicted in their social, cultural, and environmental settings (Jotwani 1975). Thus, each *sur* has come to be associated with the artistic narration of a specific theme, detailing the living conditions and physical attributes of place, and delineating a bounded spatial region, which these characteristics inhabit (Baloch 1988; Burton [1877] 2009). As demonstrated in the opening of this article, the Manganiyars' game of *Kakadi* shows this rootedness in the landscape, so central to Sindhi *surs*, which is found in Manganiyar music traditions as well. Thus, unlike ragas, *surs* are more associated with place-based imagery and invocations of nature and the surrounding environment as well as local folklore. Manganiyar music too centers on these invocations and feelings of nature as well as a lived environmental spatiality.

An example that reflects this sensitivity to cultural space is a story of central importance to Manganiyar musical repertory, *Umar Marui*. This story is

considered by most Manganiyar musicians to be a story of Sindhi origin; the various locations described in the story are those found in contemporary Sindh, Pakistan. The story is also central to one of Shah Abdul Latif's *surs*, *Marui*. The story is sung in the Manganiyar raga Maru (one of the ragas associated with the northern cardinal direction in the *Kakadi* game). Below is a synopsis of the story of *Umar Marui* told to me by Hakam Khan Manganiyar.

> Marui was the daughter of a goat herder who lived in a village near Jaisalmer (in what is today western Rajasthan, India). She was betrothed to a boy named Khet at a young age. But a servant of her father's named Phog had fallen in love with her and was overcome with jealousy when he learned that she was already betrothed to Khet. In a mad desire of jealous revenge, Phog traveled to Umarkot and went to the court of Umarkot's leader, Umar Sumri.[37] He told Umar Sumri about the lovely Marui and convinced Umar, who was known to have several beautiful wives, that Umar had to have her as a wife. Umar traveled back to the village with Phog. On the outskirts of the village, Phog pointed Marui out from a group of women drawing water from the well. Umar approached Marui and asked her for a drink of water, feigning thirst. When she approached his camel with a clay pot full of water, he forcefully abducted Marui and carried her back to Umarkot. There, he locked her in his palace.
>
> Marui would not marry Umar as he requested, but was made to promise that if her relatives did not rescue her within one year, she would consent to the marriage. Meanwhile, Phog had returned to the village and told Marui's family that she had been killed. Therefore, her family did not go looking for her. During her year of confinement in Umarkot, Marui dreamed of her village. Though she lived in great luxury in Umar's palace, she missed the simplicity of her modest village, the desert landscape, and the local flora and fauna. She sang songs depicting her village's landscape.
>
> At the end of a year, Umar approached Marui and asked her to become his wife. She still refused, telling him that she could not marry him because he was her brother. She then recounted to him the story of their parents. Umar's father was traveling through the Thar Desert in the winter season on his way to Umarkot, where his wife and son, Umar, lived. Near Marui's village just outside of Jaisalmer, he lost his way and fell ill. Without food or water in the cold desert, he fell off his camel. A woman found him almost frozen and unconscious. In order to warm and revive him, she had sex with him. Out of this physical encounter, Marui was conceived. After hearing this story, Umar was so touched by Marui's dedication to her homeland that he sent her back to her village where she was reunited with her people and her land again.[38]

The poems and songs of the *Umar Marui sur* describe the feeling of Marui while she was locked in the palace in Umarkot—the environment, land, and people she missed. According to Hakam Khan Manganiyar, by singing the following short *doha*, he would be able to bring to the audience's mind the entire

story of *Umar Marui*. Below is an English translation of Hakam Khan's Hindi/ Marwari translation of a *doha* sung by him in the Sindhi language:

> In my mind's eye, I saw myself fetching water in the dunes of the desert.
> Even though there was heat and it burned blisters on my legs, I was happy.
> To me, the mansion where I sit is just like a prison and my heart sinks.
> (Hakam Khan Manganiyar, interview with the author, 2007)

The above *doha* evokes the romantic image of the desert and Marui's longing for her homeland. Even though the conditions in the desert were harsh and difficult, she would have rather been there than in the Umar Sumri's elegant palace in Umarkot where she was held captive. Through this one *doha*, Hakam Khan is able to express cultural pride of Sindh and the Thar Desert that could not be articulated in a politically (India versus Pakistan) or religiously (Hindu versus Muslim) dichotomizing sense. In our interview, Hakam Khan Manganiyar claimed that just by reciting one *doha* in the Sindhi language that does not mention a single name or place, the listener is able to determine the *sur* as well as the entire story, from only this small token reference. Thus, *sur* evokes a feeling of both lived space and lived folklore in the listener.

This example of *Umar Marui* is one of many song themes that are used by the Manganiyar in their everyday musical performances which demonstrate the influence of Sindhi *sur* on Manganiyar music. Many of the *dohas* sung at the beginning of performances come from the poetry of Shah Abdul Latif, and often depict landscape and the environment as a metaphor evoking a sense of place and homeland. Thus, while Manganiyar music shares musical, structural, and theoretical characteristics with Hindustani classical music, it also shares many characteristics with the Sindhi *surs* system. However this similarity is less apparent and not often mentioned by musicians or scholars.

Sindhi *Surs* in Conversation with Manganiyar Musicians

In my interviews and discussions with Manganiyar musicians, the region of Sindh and Sindhi *surs* rarely came up unless I broached the subject first. I attribute this to three reasons. First, some elder Manganiyar musicians told me that they associate Sindh with a homeland of sorts. Partition can be a difficult and painful topic for Manganiyars to speak about, especially those who are older and have previously had contact with the Sindh region now in Pakistan. Many Manganiyars thus choose not to talk about Sindhi *surs*.[39] Second, Manganiyars' lack of discussion of Sindh and Sindhi musical practices could be related to a feeling of consistent "othering" by mainly Hindu Indians in western Rajasthan. This sense of "othering" felt and expressed to me by many Manganiyar musicians

became particularly pronounced after the 1971 war between India and Pakistan. One Manganiyar musician expressed to me his feeling of marginalization in western Rajasthan mainly due to his Pakistani birth and Muslim religious identity. He told me that because of his personal, national, and religious background, he does not speak openly about Pakistan and that musical repertory which embodies a more Muslim identity, choosing instead to align himself more with his Indian Hindu patrons.[40] Third, many younger Manganiyar musicians, born in postcolonial India, who do not have direct connections to, or memories of the Sindh region of Pakistan are not as familiar with the Sindhi *surs* musical system. Instead, they only associate the term in the context of Hindustani classical music, meaning "pitch." I attribute this phenomenon to the fact that younger Manganiyar musicians living in India are more disconnected from those musical practices found on the other side of the border in Pakistan.

I thus suggest that it is through music that Manganiyars are able to openly express a desire for the region across the border in Pakistan that cannot often be more openly articulated in the political, religious, or everyday realms of discourse. Because of these unspoken cultural links with transborder territory, songs, stories, and cultural imaginings are a way that Manganiyars articulate a relationship to a borderland for themselves and their patrons as well. Thus, they address the proximity of Sindh in a manner quite different from the way in which official narratives have chosen to do so. Music allows Manganiyar musicians to actively and creatively maintain the cultural continuity that has been arbitrarily divided, marked, and nationalized since Partition.

However, music does not allow all Manganiyar musicians to express their sense of belonging. On the Pakistan side of the border, a small portion of the Manganiyar community has for the most part abandoned music making as a profession altogether (Sakar Khan Manganiyar, interview with the author, 2007). I suggest three reasons for this abandonment. First, the majority of Manganiyars' patrons are Hindu and after Partition most of them either remained in or migrated to the India side of the border. This left those Manganiyars in Pakistan without their patrons and thus their livelihood; many took on other professions to make a living. Second, governmental cultural policies differ between Sindh, Pakistan, and Rajasthan, India. In recent years, both the Indian national and Rajasthan state governments have invested large amounts of money and support into promotion of the arts of Rajasthan (Planning Commission, Government of India 2006, 109; Saeed 2011); some Manganiyar musicians base their incomes solely on this government support. This has not been the case in Pakistan (Richter and Richter 1985; Jenkins and Henry 1982). Third and related to the second reason, cultural tourism is promoted in India more than in Pakistan. In western Rajasthan, the Manganiyar have become one of the major attractions

drawing tourists to the region. While performance practice inevitably changes when the audience is less knowledgeable about the music, instrumentation, musical forms, and language, there is a certain amount of cultural preservation and/ or revival that takes place in cultural tourism contexts.[41]

Thus, the *Risalo* demonstrates *surs'* connections to the concept of raga found in the Hindustani classical system. The *Risalo* also shows the unique synthesis of poetry, music, and lived environment, which can be observed clearly in the Manganiyar music tradition.

Conclusion

Shouts of "Long live India-Pakistan friendship!" rang out in the cold desert morning air. It was February 2006. I had traveled to the Munabao Train Station, near the India-Pakistan border with a group of Manganiyar musicians, who were to serenade passengers on one of the first trains crossing the border between Rajasthan and Sindh, a border not traversed by train since the 1965 India-Pakistan War.[42] That border thus delineates a line not only in the imaginary spatialization of inhabitants of the Thar Desert, but also in economic, political, intellectual, and cultural everyday realities in which people live. This first border traversing brought to my mind the idea of nation-states as deeply influencing the development of contemporary life in India and Pakistan.

Unsurprisingly, in South Asian modes of reconstructing the past, the idea of the nation has occupied a privileged position and Partition holds a unique status as a "defining moment" in this division. Both scholars and musicians themselves have thus defined Manganiyar music along political borders in their use of the concept of raga and lack of use of the concept of *surs* to describe their music. The India-Pakistan border is indeed an important defining line in the lives of the Manganiyar community. However, while it has definitively affected musical practices, it has not divided them. Manganiyars persist in drawing these connections through rhetoric surrounding their music and through musical practice itself. The continuity across the India-Pakistan border of musical practices among the Manganiyar is not a postindependence phenomenon. I have shown that cross-border connections have been a lived and historical reality of the Manganiyar community for as long as they have been making music. At the same time, their foregrounding of these connections in a postindependent and post-Partition India demonstrate their cultural ingenuity. By analyzing Manganiyar music as an amalgam of various musical practices, it becomes its own entity, eluding boundaries that have previously defined it.

Just as the arms of a compass come together at a fixed location of a hidden object in the game of *Kakadi*, so too do they mark the nexus in a culture where political borders, varied musical traditions, and the theories and perceptions that

differentiate them intersect. They locate the coordinates of a place and tell the story of a community whose life has been bisected by a border, creating lasting effects on the cultivation of its musical practices.

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Notes

[1] Research for this article was carried out from 2005 to 2007, 2008, and 2009. The author conducted her research in Jaisalmer City and surrounding villages, all in India. The musicians with whom she conducted her research are all Indian citizens, although many of them were born and/or raised in Pakistan and have traveled there in recent years. This article is based on interactions with approximately 50 Manganiyar musicians over extended periods of time. These interactions consisted of formal interviews, informal conversations and interactions, recording sessions, and music lessons.

[2] The author wishes to thank Bonnie Wade, Marié Abe, Andrew Weintraub, and two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on this article.

[3] While some Manganiyar musicians have named different ragas corresponding to directions, the majority of those musicians with whom I worked named these specific six ragas. Musicians such as Ghewar Khan and Lakha Khan Manganiyar have said that while Manganiyars use many other ragas in performance practice, these six ragas are indigenous to the Manganiyar community (unlike other ragas supposedly borrowed from the Hindustani classical tradition).

[4] Although Marwari is the predominant language in which Manganiyars communicate and sing, the sung language depends greatly on the patron's native language. For example, Hakam Khan Manganiyar is very skilled at singing in the Sindhi language because many of his patrons are Sindhi language speakers.

[5] See Mayaram (1997) for a detailed description of historical religious identity, practiced devotion, and syncretism among communities in Rajasthan.

[6] See Richards (1993).

[7] Kiernan ([1971] 2000, 123).

[8] In South Asian scholarly literature, the common noun partition has been given proper noun status as Partition, referring specifically to the 1947 division of the South Asian subcontinent into Pakistan (both Eastern and Western) and India.

[9] Manganiyars have often been misrepresented as nomadic. On the contrary, they generally have settled homesteads with both immediate and extended families. The male musician members of the community do however travel to visit their hereditary patrons who are often spread out over various villages in the region. In more recent years, they also travel to various locations in India and abroad for concert performances. One particular Manganiyar musician recounted to me a story of while on tour in England, visiting a patron family who had since resettled there.

[10] Pakistan dates its independence from August 14, 1947. Although Bengal in the eastern part of South Asia saw just as much strife in Partition, here I focus on the western theater of Partition. Later, after 1971, this eastern section of Pakistan would become the nation-state of Bangladesh.

[11] For history and analysis of Partition and its aftermath, see Ahmad (1997); Guha (1998); Hasan (1994); Hodson ([1969] 1993); Jalal (1994, 1996); Khosla ([1949] 1989); Kumar (1998); Low and Brasted (1998); Moon ([1961] 1998); Mosley (1961); Pandey (2001); and Singh (1999) to name a few.

[12] This happened despite India's designation as a secular state. Pakistan was established as a Muslim state.

[13] Just after Partition, many Hindus living on the western side of the border in the Sindh region of Pakistan expected to stay there without any problems, and at first they were able to do so. However, as relations became more strained between Hindus and Muslims as a result of Partition, conditions worsened. As more Muslims poured into Sindh, they began to loot the homes of the Sindhi Hindus. As a result, many of these Hindus were forced to leave their homes and businesses behind and relocate to India in the years after Partition. The same happened to Muslims in India just after Partition.

[14] See Alam and Sharma (1998), Butalia (1993), Chakrabarty (1992), Chatterjee (1994), Gilmartin (1988), Guha (1998), Jalal (1994), Mayaram (1997), and Waseem (1999) for recent interpretations of Partition to name a few.

[15] See Allen (1998) and Babiracki (1991) for a discussion of this dichotomy, its origins, shifting meanings, and analysis.

[16] See the following for various descriptions of Hindustani raga theory: Bor (1999), Jairazbhoy ([1971] 1995), Kaufmann (1968), and Wade (1979) to name a few.

[17] For example, see Clayton (2001), Daniélou (1980), Jairazbhoy ([1971] 1995), Kaufmann (1968), and Ruckert (2004).

[18] The Hindustani classical music system is not a hard and fast system, but it is always in flux. It not only influences other musical traditions such as those of the Manganiyar, but it is also influenced *by* various other musical traditions.

[19] Manganiyar musicians told me that even when they perform an instrumental piece with no sung vocals, they keep the *dohas* of that particular raga in their heads throughout the performance.

[20] See tables 7 and 8 (pp. 96–8) in Neuman, Chaudhuri, with Kothari ([2006] 2007), for a comparison of ragas in the two musical systems.

[21] See Neuman, Chaudhuri, with Kothari ([2006] 2007, 105–11) for a discussion of the introduction of raga into Manganiyar musical traditions.

[22] Here, I refer to the Hindustani classical slide guitar (Mohan Veena) player, Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, and his collaborations with a number of Manganiyar musicians (Bhatt 2006). See Bharucha (2003) for a description of a group of Manganiyar musicians sharing a program billing with Ravi Shankar.

[23] Of the two urban centers in which the Manganiyar have historically lived, Jaisalmer is the only one with a court. The other, Barmer, has never had a royal court, having previously been part of the Jodhpur kingdom. Barmer District was not formed until 1949, when the larger Jodhpur State merged with the United State of Greater Rajasthan (Shekhavat 1993, x). What was previously called Malani was consolidated into the present day Barmer District, centering around Barmer City.

[24] The family has been historically broken down into four functional divisions: *Dagga* (who performed battle and bravery songs), *Gela* (who performed the *nagara* instrument

at festivals), *Dedhada* (who were considered court comedians/jesters), and *Kaalet* (who performed the *dhol* instrument in the court). See Ayyagari (2009) for details.

[25] With the lessening of importance of the royal courts throughout north India (and especially in Rajasthan) toward the end of the nineteenth century and even more so after Independence (1947), courts were, for the most part, unable to consistently employ musicians. As a result musicians were often brought in only for special occasions. A sort of music circuit was formed in which musicians traveled to various courts to perform (Erdman 1985, 116–7). In this way, musicians were exposed to various other locations in north India and also to other musical styles and traditions.

[26] Various scholars have conducted musical research in western Rajasthan. Here, I mention Rustom Bharucha, Shubha Chaudhuri, Nazir Jairazbhoy, Komal Kothari, and Daniel Neuman.

[27] See Neuman, Chaudhuri, with Kothari [2006] 2007, 96–102 for examples.

[28] See Raja (2009) and Wade (1985).

[29] I hypothesize two reasons for this shift from vocal to instrumental music. First, Hindustani classical instrumental music has influenced Manganiyar music, and many Manganiyar musicians have performed with Hindustani instrumentalists in recent years (Ravi Shankar, Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Sultan Khan, etc.). Second, in recent decades Manganiyar musicians have expanded their audiences and are performing in other parts of South Asia and internationally. In general their new audiences do not understand song texts sung in the Marwari language; as a result of this, there is more of an international demand for instrumental music. Instruments such as the *kamaicha* have begun to be used in performance as solo virtuosic instruments in their own right. Sakar Khan Manganiyar, a senior *kamaicha* player, has been an innovator in the solo *kamaicha* playing tradition (fig. 2).

[30] Please note that all of the above descriptions of a Hindustani classical music performance are based on generalizations. Some performers do not adhere to these sections as strictly as others do.

[31] In modern performance practice, as much Manganiyar repertory moves from patronage functions to the concert stage (nationally and internationally), the distinction between *chhota git* and *mota git* is blurring and in some cases musicians combine the two genres within one song. Various Manganiyar musicians have told me that when performing for international audiences, they tend to perform a *mota git* introduction, followed by a *chhota git* song.

[32] *Mota git* could also easily be compared to other genres of devotional music found in the region, such as *qawwali*, Sikh *shabad*, and *bhajan*.

[33] As more Manganiyar musicians are exposed to modern Hindustani musical performance practice (through recordings and/or joint performances and collaborations with Hindustani performers), some tend to follow the *alap-chiz khayal* composition structure of Hindustani vocal music more closely. Others tend to use these terms to categorize and to verbalize what they are performing and, I claim, to present themselves as knowledgeable about their music in a theoretical way, on par with Hindustani classical musicians. And yet others choose to disregard the Hindustani classical system all together when describing their music.

[34] According to various Manganiyar musicians, this was not always the case and, until the 1960s, the larger double-headed *dhol* drum was more often used as the accompanying instrument of choice among the Manganiyar (Chanan Khan Manganiyar, interview with the author, 2008).

[35] Sorley (1893–1963) worked as a collector in various districts of the Sindh region (today Pakistan), and was in charge of the Census of India in Sindh in 1931. In 1955, the Pakistan government assigned Sorley the job of writing the *Gazetteer of Sindh*. Throughout his years working under the British in the Sindh region, he became fluent in Sindhi language and culture, and was especially interested in Sufi religious practices of the region.

[36] The majority of the Manganiyars' patrons are Hindu by religion and Rajput by community or caste. Because of this, Manganiyars typically communicate with and sing in the Marwari language. Their music usually pertains to Hindu religious themes or Rajput-specific attributes and customs. Hakam Khan Manganiyar's case is a bit different and for various reasons (including Muslim migrations to India from Pakistan after the 1971 war between the two nations) has a number of Sindhi Muslim patrons. He is therefore fluent in the Sindhi language, has a working knowledge of Sindhi Muslim customs, and sings/plays a repertoire specific for these patrons.

[37] Umar Sumri is said to have ruled Umarkot (in present-day Pakistan) from 1355 to 1390.

[38] Hakam Khan Manganiyar related this version of the Sindhi folktale *Umar Marui* to the author in March 2007. The story was narrated in a mixture of Marwari/Hindi and translated into English by the author.

[39] This is not so much the case for younger Manganiyar musicians living in Rajasthan, India, most of who have not been to Pakistan and do not feel connections or allegiances with Pakistan or the Sindh region.

[40] This is not always the case. In recent years, Sufi music has become popular on concert stages in India and abroad. Many Manganiyars who specialize in Muslim Sufi musical practices are garnering performance success specifically because of this repertory. As a result, many Manganiyars have earned a reputable name for themselves in the community as distinctly Muslim Sufi musicians (Hakam Khan Manganiyar is one of these). In addition, due to the increasing Islamization in western Rajasthan (a topic for another scholarly investigation), especially younger Manganiyar musicians are not only feeling more comfortable but are foregrounding their Muslim identity. This religious identity plays out in their dress, more Muslim names among the younger generation, diet (only eating *halal* meat while traveling abroad), and so on.

[41] See Ayyagari (2009) for a discussion of the maintenance and change of musical practice in the cultural tourism context in western Rajasthan.

[42] In February 2006, the railway line called the Thar Express that passes through the Rajasthan town of Munabao and across into Sindh, Pakistan, was reopened.

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