A TEI Project

Interview of Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy

Contents

1. Transcript

1.1. TAPE NUMBER: I, Side One (September 24, 2006)

CATLIN

Today is September 24, and we're interviewing Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy about his life's work. The first thing I wanted to ask you—

JAIRAZBHOY

We're recording this, you should also put. We are in Van Nuys, what is now called Valley Glen, at home.

CATLIN

The first thing I'd like to ask you is about your musical background before you actually began your scholarship and writing. Did you have a very musical life as a child growing up?

JAIRAZBHOY

I would say so, yes. I started learning music very early and my parents taught us, wanted us to learn western music initially, and all our brothers studied western music, at least how to play the violin. But I, unfortunately, got into a disagreement with my violin teacher, I was the youngest, and did something to offend him, and he refused to teach me after that. So I decided that since my mother [Khurshid Rajabally Jairazbhoy] was playing the sitar and I used to listen to her and enjoyed it, I decided I wanted to learn the sitar. So I asked if I could learn it, and since we had a teacher who lived in our grounds, it was easy to get lessons. But she said, "We'll consult the stars and see whether it's appropriate, when's the appropriate time to start." It turned out it was about a month later, and that period, I think, of wanting to learn the sitar badly, that feeling of wanting grew and grew and grew until that day when it came, somehow or the other I found the sitar was so easy to play that I couldn't believe that I hadn't touched it till that moment. But I felt as though, listening to my mother, imagining myself playing it and so on, that it came almost naturally. Then I played the sitar in school, in the school orchestra, and became leader of the school orchestra for a while and the house orchestra, and we did—most people, if they remember me at all, remember me for my musical involvement.

CATLIN

At the Doon School they remember you principally for that?

JAIRAZBHOY

That's correct.

CATLIN

And your mother's brother [Yacoob Rajabally (Qawwal)] was also involved in music?

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes, my mother's brother was a singer, and he was a very strange, unusual member in our family because he was very mystically inclined and was not at all involved in what was considered normal in our family, to become a businessman or to do something in a kind of practical manner. But instead, he wanted to go off and start singing devotional religious songs, qawwalis, much to the disturbance of our family in so many different ways by this unorthodox and at that time very unacceptable behavior. I remember as a child that there were times when he was ostracized or at least partly ostracized by everyone.

CATLIN

You mean by the Jairazbhoys [father's family name] or the Rajaballys [mother's family name]?

JAIRAZBHOY

Well, I can only speak from my view, which was as a son of my mother and my father. My father passed away when I was very young, so it was the Rajabally

family that was my influence, I was influenced by. Yes, the Rajabally family, including my mother and her mother, they all resented it somewhat, even though my grandmother was also mystically inclined and had donned yellow robes and had decided to become a swami, I mean a sadhu. But in spite of that, to become a singer of religious music, and a singer who would get paid for doing it, in other words there was the professionalism of it, which is what was most upsetting to the family. It was one thing to do things, as my mother did, to play the sitar, but the thought of doing it and earning money from it, that level of professionalism is what was reserved to the lower-caste people generally and the lower classes of people. Upper castes would not dream of doing that for money. We have in the history of Indian music a lot of musicians who are amateur, gifted amateur musicians, but those upper-class people who are gifted amateurs were quite a step apart from the professionals who are considered to be very low in the social system of the country.

CATLIN

So your mother appreciated musicians and she actually filmed some of the entertainers who came to your house, the snake charmers and kathputli puppets?

JAIRAZBHOY

No, she didn't ever do the kathputli puppets. All I could remember, two or three films, and they were nothing to do with music. There was a snake and a mongoose fight, not a snake charmer. I have no idea what the snake charmer looked like. It was a real fight between a snake and a mongoose, probably set up by a snake charmer. But she was not interested in that. When I was a kid, I know my father had some 78 rpm records of vocal music, which he liked, which I don't think my mother liked very much. She was very much more interested in instrumental music. My father used to accommodate her and got a teacher [Madhav Lal of Mathura] for her who many times in our lives he lived within the grounds, our grounds, where there was a small house given to him.

CATLIN

When you were at the Doon School is when you heard the music of Tagore and you actually met Arnold Bake, who came to sing?

JAIRAZBHOY

I didn't meet him. I must say that he did perform there. It was only afterwards, a long time afterwards, that I remembered having seen him perform in our school, and that would have been right around early forties, maybe '41, '42, something like that, because the Bakes were there and you couldn't go back during the war years either, so they were there till perhaps '45 or so, I think, in India.

CATLIN

In all of your studies, you had notations given to you by Madhav Lal of the gats,[compositions] in raag-s, but did he ever mention anything about the that-s?

JAIRAZBHOY

No, let's correct that, even, because he didn't give any notations. The notations were done by my mother and my mother's sister, Hameida Khala. So my mother, Khurshidbai, and Hameidabai were the ones who took lessons and made notations of the exercises he gave. He did not give any notations himself. I can't remember whether he even mentioned the names of rags, when he taught us. But they are there in the notebooks under the names of rags, compositions called gats. The gats are notated there by my mother and her sister. So there are two books that are preserved from— I guess they must have been doing it since 1930 or '32 or something like that. So they go back a long time. But the compositions are interesting sometimes, too, when it comes to what was going on at that time, what do the rags sound like, because some of the renderings of rags in those days are not the same as they are now.

CATLIN

And you still have some of those notebooks?

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes, those two notebooks are still with me.

CATLIN

Did you ever make notations of your own compositions, the ones that you wrote for the school orchestra?

JAIRAZBHOY

No, never. Just taught them by rote.

CATLIN

After you left the Doon School, you entered the University of Washington eventually, and did you continue your music in Seattle?

JAIRAZBHOY

No, in Seattle, I had no sitar, but I did start to learn to play the guitar and, of course, I used to fool around on the piano and I used to compose music in a sort of pseudo-western style. But I also sang folksongs. I learned a lot of western folksongs from different parts of the world, some including Persian songs and all kinds of different songs that appealed to me. Many of them were western folksongs, and I used to occasionally sing them in the YMCA or YWCA, actually, in functions, and so on. But no sitar, because I didn't have one. It was at least four years after I got to Seattle that I got a sitar. My sister-in-law brought me one. It was not a very good sitar from a sitar standpoint, but it was something. I guess I'd forgotten more than I could imagine of my playing technique and all that, and I never played seriously anyway when I was going to school, so I never had a really great technique from the beginning.

CATLIN

But it was in Seattle that you experimented with improvising in front of paintings in galleries, you were asked to interpret paintings with the sitar?

JAIRAZBHOY

At a certain stage of my life, actually, I ran out of money and got all kinds of jobs, you know, being busboy and amazing things like painting and so on, just anything to keep going. I worked in a picture frame gallery, which had quite an impact on me because it got me started into painting and inspired me to paint. Also one day, I mean, I was offered a job for five dollars an evening if I would sit around for two or three hours with my sitar in front of paintings and interpret them in whatever way I wanted to. It was for me, just a— It was a gimmick and it was not really very serious, but it got me five dollars, so it was worth it for me.

CATLIN

Then you went back to India in 1951 and had some sitar studies?

JAIRAZBHOY

That was kind of before. Was it before? Yes, it was definitely before that happened, before my playing in gallery, because in 1951 I went back to India for about year and I started taking lessons. I took some lessons in tabla, and I had a whole bunch of notations of qaidas and so on and so forth. One day, to my horror, my nephew had torn my book to shreds and thrown it out of the window, all the pages one by one, seeing them floating down from fourth floor. I guess that was such an unnerving experience, I gave up the tabla, although I'd studied it for some time there. I also started learning the sarangi and my teacher was Ramzan Khan. By the way, my tabla teacher was named Kumthekar, and this is Bombay [Mumbai]. Sarangi teacher was Ramzan Kha n, and he was very good. My original teacher of sitar, Madhav Lal, unfortunately had disappeared during the Partition. That means right about 1947, somewhere around there. Nobody knew what had happened to him. So when I came back to India in '51, I tried to locate him, but I found that he had a son, and his son was also playing the sitar. So I decided to study sitar with him.

CATLIN

That was Yashvant Rao?

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes, Yashvant Rao, yes. The situation was he just not even a patch on his father, sensitivity-wise, he was nothing like his father. He had a little bit of technique, but he didn't play with any beauty or anything and was not a good teacher. Then a few days later, after having a few lessons, he one day absconded with my tambura and the pair of tabla and disappeared. I never found him again. So that was a very bad experience with music all around, because the tabla period ended. Anyway, at that time I was more interested in

trying to develop a profession, which was to be architecture, and I worked as an architectural assistant. Schwartz, S-c-h-w-a-r-t-z, was Czech, I think. He had an architectural office in Bombay, and I worked with him, didn't get paid for it, but was like an apprentice.

CATLIN

Then you returned to Seattle. Was it in 1953?

JAIRAZBHOY

No, '52. [Probably 1951 – ed.] I was only there in Bombay for nine or ten months, I think, with my first wife, American girl. I just casually asked— I went to the American Embassy and asked, "What's the situation? I was there previously with a student visa, so this time I was not allowed to work" and so. But I just casually asked what it was like to get a visa, and I was told, "Oh, visas. You got the visa because you have an American wife. There's no problem. But it's difficult to find ships that are going to America, but as it so happens, we have one leaving three days from now, and there's a space in it if you and your wife want to go."So, suddenly without any preparation, I made up that I would go, because they said, "We don't know when the next ship or availability will come about."So I left and returned to America about nine, ten months later. Originally I had gotten a degree from the University of Washington in geography, but, of course, there was absolutely no opening for geographers in India, nothing at all, so it just turned out to be a fizzle when I tried to find out about it. I couldn't even pay to get to work in the government office in geography. So that was an end to that. So I returned to America, and I had returned to America having made some financial arrangements with our family affairs, enough to get like the equivalent of three thousand dollars a year, which would cover my tuition, living for a year, and it might have been just about enough except that government regulations and the red tape was so bad that even though my half-brother also would apply to remit that three thousand dollars, he applied six months early, and they wouldn't grant it for eight months. This went on every year when this time for getting money from India would come, it was just not forthcoming until I was pretty desperate once. On one occasion, I borrowed from every friend that I had, knowing it was going to come, but it didn't come and was put off and so on. It was pretty desperate times. So I was obliged to take a job, drop out of school and take a job, and that's when I did all kinds of jobs that you can think of, and finally ended up working in a drafting office, which was pleasant, except that they asked me to do the most impossible job, which was designing a circular staircase up a dam five hundred feet high or something, and had to open out into certain openings, which is on different levels, and all these regulations of how high the risers could be and how wide this step must be and how deep the landings must be and so on and so forth. It's a job that none of the other people

in the drafting office wanted to have anything to do with, and I was forced to try and design it myself, and I did a very bad job. One day the foreman, when they were building this staircase in the shop, the foreman of the shop came stomping in and said, "What is this?" He said, "The ends don't meet." My design of this thing, because they have to be done in twenty-foot stretches going up five hundred feet, and finally the ends, he found that the section that I designed didn't meet. There was an absolute stunned silence in that office, I remember. I said, "But, but, but, I don't know." I'd been to every one of the other members of the office for help and no help had been forthcoming. Well, the next result of it was that shortly after that, the head of the company in that office— It wasn't a big office, it was like ten, twelve people working in the drafting office and the shop, he came and said, "Well, we're running out of work now. I'm afraid we can't fire you because you belong to the union, but we can offer you a position in the shop until we get some more work," because I didn't realize at that time that was a polite way of saying, you know— getting rid of me. Because the next thing I knew was that I was transported to the shop where I spent a lot of time sweeping the shop and doing all kinds of menial things like that.

CATLIN

So was it before this that Richard Waterman invited you to lecture on Indian music in his class on primitive music at the University of Washington?

JAIRAZBHOY

No, it was after this, because after about one year of absolute torture doing manual labor in this steel factory and then being transferred from that steel factory to Leckenbee Steel, which is an even bigger factory on the other side of town, which is south near the airport, and it was the airport in Seattle, which is like driving five o'clock in the morning, like, and getting there, and then the cold and miserable weather that Seattle sometimes has, sometimes, it was really a very trying experience. Then one day I decided that that was enough. That was it, you know, and it so happened it coincided with one of those times when I got money eventually from India, and so I decided, okay, I was going to now do what I really wanted to do, and that was to paint. Now, I don't know where the origin of this painting interest came from, but I guess it may not have been anything in my family or anything. It was just that I must have met a few people who were rather interesting types, who really weren't doing conventional type of paintings. They were experimenting with colors and things like that, and that appealed to me. I was very into experimentation, even in those days, so I started doing things, like wax, putting wax and painting with and then washing the wax off, painting. There would be streaks of color left behind where your wax isn't covered, experimenting just with abstract colors and so on. I found that I was enjoying it and, curiously enough, it was turning

out to be, people were encouraging me by saying good things about those paintings. So I decided that, okay, I'm going to become a painter now. At the same time, I was offered this job in a picture frame shop. Now, I had now given up completely on the manual labor side of things, and I went in and worked in this picture framing, which I learned how to do somewhat and it influenced me a lot because I was framing pictures by at least one or two very famous painters. One of them was Mark Tobey. I remember this large painting which he was framing, and I was asked to do the framing and to measure and to lay it out, the frame. So the painting was put on this flat table, and it must have been like eight feet long or something and maybe five feet wide, I don't know, something like that. Then glass was laid over it, and I had to measure it and so I had to virtually sit on this painting and crawl all over the painting, on the glass of the painting, and I could look at the details and I was so fascinated by the details of subtleties that he introduced into his paintings, whether by accident or intent, I don't know. But this was the time when Jackson Pollock was in vogue and Morris Graves and Mark Tobey and others, and I think that influenced me a great deal at that time.

CATLIN

Mark Tobey is the founder of Abstract Expressionism.

JAIRAZBHOY

Abstract Expressionism in the Northwest. So I'm not sure what the situation was. His popularity was mostly limited to the Northwest in those days, anyway.

CATLIN

It was during that time that somehow Richard Waterman heard about your sitar playing and asked you to deliver a lecture?

JAIRAZBHOY

Well, I don't think he heard about it, even. Actually, he just came to look at the paintings of the gallery. Then I was sitting there and playing the sitar, and he struck up a conversation and he said, "Well, how about coming and giving a few lectures in the University of Washington in my class on primitive music?" I said, "All right. I don't mind." I mean, anything for money, you know, in those days. Money was a big factor in my life, and I think he promised some nominal amount, which is more than I was getting otherwise. Besides which, it was interesting to me. Only problem was I hadn't a clue about Indian music. I mean, I played the sitar, but mostly, you know, popular— I mean not popular in the sense of— But I played tunes like Samp ki pungi, which is a snake charmer's tune, and always my teacher or his father had composed, and some Rabindranath Tagore songs and little bits of classical music, you know, but I was not ever into being a professional musician, and I knew nothing about the theory. I may have heard about thats and rags and so on, and I knew the names of some of the pieces I was playing by the name of rag, like khamaj, rag

khamaj, and then I would know the tune to play. But I had no concept whatever of how to talk about it. So I went to the library and there I encountered books like Danielou's book on scales or whatever it was, and rags and talking about srutis and microtones and things which I'd never heard of. In fact, I gave a series of talks there which were completely bogus, you know. I mean, they're not as bad as some talks I've heard, but they were pretty bad, in my opinion. Okay. Then what happened is that a few months later or so, at the University of Washington they recorded the talks, and the Richard Waterman asked, "Do I mind if they put it into a record?" I said, "No." He said, "They'll pay you two hundred dollars." I said, "Hey, what a great deal." So I said, "Sure, go ahead." And believe it or not, that record has been— This was in fifties, early fifties.

CATLIN

'54.

JAIRAZBHOY

'54, and that's still haunting me because the Smithsonian [Institution] has just released a CD of it with the original notes and everything else. The sad thing about it is that in putting it together, they put at least one wrong item, musical item, and one of the rags which is said to be such-and-such turns out to be a different rag. But anyway, it's wrong there, too. I mean it's right there, but it's wrong in the recording.

CATLIN

Gurjari Todi, something Gurjari Todi. From one of the commercial examples.

JAIRAZBHOY

Is that what it says there?

CATLIN

Yes. Wrong example used for Gurjari Todi.

JAIRAZBHOY

Gurjari Todi. They use the wrong example. Anyway, the whole thing is— Everything gets perpetuated now.

CATLIN

But you give the ten thaats groups.

JAIRAZBHOY

Thaats, yes.

CATLIN

Did you read about those in Clements or Fox-Strangways when you were in the library?

JAIRAZBHOY

No, Clements and Fox-Strangways don't talk about thaats. Oh, Fox-Strangways does talk about thaats, but incidentally. They were talking about primarily about srutis and so on.

CATLIN

And Danielou, did he discuss thaats?

JAIRAZBHOY

No. Danielou would not.

CATLIN

I wonder where you got that.

JAIRAZBHOY

Well, I mean I've been to India, back to India and studied and did music in '51, '52, and, yes, thaats were part of my understanding and knowledge. I must have heard of those thaats anyway in childhood probably sometime.

CATLIN

So then you left Seattle in 1954 and first went to England and then to Pakistan, where you stayed until '55 and had a month in India. In Pakistan, you studied with the son of Ustad Bundu Khan.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes, when I arrived there, Bundu Khansab was sick, and so he couldn't teach me, but he said he would send his son to teach me, and Umrao Bundu Khan taught me very graciously for six months. I also studied surbahar with Fateh Ali Khan, and I had a surbahar which is very interesting, because the resonator was not of gourd, it was a flat, wooden kind of resonator with sharp edges. But it was otherwise, couldn't do much meend, you know, pulling too many notes, you know, minor third, fourth at the most. What is interesting by the way at this point, you know, was that my mother used to tell me, "Nobody ever pulls meend more than a minor third." So you know, even when I was a kid I used to want to pull more than that and to make slides bigger than that, but she said, "No, no one does that." She would discourage me from doing it. Well, in this surbahar it was just like that, you couldn't pull more than that. Now, I didn't study sarangi anymore after that.

CATLIN

You said that Umrao Bundu Khan talked about thaats but did not perform the ten thaats, only seven of the thaats.

JAIRAZBHOY

Six of them. Actually, the six that are the same as the six modes, not the B mode, apart from the B mode. In other words, six thaats were Kalyan, Bilaval, Khamaj, Kafi, Asavri, and Bhairavi. Those six thaats were what he said their gharana recognized. They didn't recognize Marva and Purvi and Todi as thaats. Bhairav was a bit obscure, but he didn't regard it in the same light as the other thaats. So one of the things I did with him was, since he was a sarangiya and a singer, and I was mostly a sitarist, I did have a vocal teacher, and I did have Fateh Ali Khan who taught me the surbahar, in addition to Umrao Khansahib. So I had a very intensive eight, nine months of studying Indian music. During that time, Umrao Khansahib recorded for me little extracts of rags to illustrate

the basic features of the rags, and he did it by thaat, okay. So for them it was perfectly understandable. The thaats were on seven, not the whole ten thaats, although they sang in all of them, but they didn't recognize them as thaats, the other ones, which kind of was interesting, because it's clear that the six thaats were much older, you know, and they can be traced back to the jati system, you know, the modal system. But the remaining thaats must have arisen after that. There is Marva, Purvi, Todi, and Bhairav must have been written after the first six. At least it seemed like that to me. So I studied mostly vocal music with another teacher. Umrao Khan would demonstrate the rags, and I have recordings of maybe a hundred rags demonstrated by him. I don't remember exactly how many. Incidentally, some of them have been released now in the CD that accompanies my book on rags, and just as a comparison with Vilayat Khan's style of singing, of playing. Interesting that one of the pieces that I learned vocally was in the rag Hindol. That was very unusual, because Hindol is not a very common rag, but the text was entirely in Persian. This is, of course, when I'm learning in Pakistan, and the teacher sang classical music, but there were some pieces that he sang that were in Persian, and this is one of them, so he taught me that.

CATLIN

Do you remember the vocal teacher's name?

JAIRAZBHOY

No, I do not. I've thought about it, you know, a lot, but I do not remember his name. He didn't teach me for that long anyway, and wasn't too impressive.

CATLIN

But you didn't record that vocal composition in Hindol, did you?

JAIRAZBHOY

No. (sings) Nobaya rubam gulzar, shudam re guzari. All I can remember of it, but I did not record it. I did record my surbahar teacher, and very nice. I wanted to make some records of him. You know, in those days there were 78 rpm records, so that I recorded some small pieces of three minutes length, you know, so that it could be put into a 78 rpm. But then by the time I got back to other parts of the world, it turns out that 78 rpm records were obsolete anyway.

CATLIN

But you did use some recordings from Pakistan radio, some machines from Pakistan radio, EMI machines.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. What happened was that my mother had remarried when she went to Pakistan, and the gentleman who she married, Mr. Ansari, he was a lover of the arts, poetry and music and so on, and he wanted very much for me to accept him as my father, so he went out of his way a lot to do things for me. He told me— I mean, he sent a message to me in America that he was making

recordings of Bundu Khan in order for me, when I came to Pakistan to visit my mother, that she'd have all these nice recordings for me and so on. So when I came there, he came with these tapes one day and said, "Here are these recordings that I made for you." I didn't know much about it. I had a tape recorder that I'd taken there specifically to record Umrao Khan— I mean, I didn't know who I was going to record, but I did record him. But when I saw these tapes I was kind of taken aback, because they were full-tracked recordings, and that means that there were a lot of tapes and they took up a huge amount of space. Now, one of the considerations we had in those days was space, you know, and weight. When you were traveling it was really difficult. So I, without realizing what I was doing, said, "Oh, thank you so much, but you know what? I can't take all these tapes back. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll record them on my half-track machine, so that there'll be half as many to take back." So he arranged for me to get the full-track recorder, and from that I copied them onto my half-track machine. The full-track recorder was an EMI and one that you can record that was easily portable. The machine I brought was pretty big. It was Vortexion, very heavy, like sixty pounds or something, had to have power supply, no battery power. But it was something that I'd brought with me, and lots of tapes, you know, quite a few tapes, which tapes I still have, and still seem to work all right without much echo or pre-echo or anything of that sort.

CATLIN

They're being digitized right now at UCLA.

JAIRAZBHOY

Well, they may be, yes, perhaps they are.

CATLIN

So you made live recordings as well as radio?

JAIRAZBHOY

The story of Bundu Khan recordings, though, that's really too sad because, you know, I left those originals there, back in Pakistan. Now, whether they were copies of others or they were originals, I never asked my stepfather, but he was very happy when I was very happy to listen to Bundu Khan's recording, because when I got to Pakistan he was not capable of playing anymore. So it's too bad, but only a few months earlier the last of his recordings he had made.

CATLIN

So these live recordings mentioned here were actually made by Mr. Ansari of Umrao Khan?

JAIRAZBHOY

No. Umrao Khan, all the recordings are live by me, it's Bundu Khan 's recordings.

CATLIN

And live recording of Salamat Ali Khan on flute?

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. He's not the same as the Salamat Ali Khan we know.

CATLIN

Fateh Ali Khan ?

JAIRAZBHOY

He was my surbahar player. Yes, those are live recordings also. They're made in '54, '55.

CATLIN

Ustad Bundu Khan ?

JAIRAZBHOY

That's all live by my stepfather. In other words, they're not radio recordings or anything, but they were live recordings, but not made by me.

CATLIN

Quite a few recordings.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes, there are quite a few tapes, but a lot of them are LP— I mean, not LP, the records, disks, you know, 78 rpm and so on.

CATLIN

Including music of koto, Tahiti, Tahiti. So when you recorded all of these musicians and then took the recordings back with you to England, you were preparing to study with Arnold Bake at the School of Oriental and African Studies.

JAIRAZBHOY

Well, here's what happened is that I got a letter from my brother Rafique, who was in London and had been there for some years, after having studied in the USA in Oregon and then in Columbia [University], and then he went to England and studied at School of Oriental and African Studies, studying languages and art, especially Islamic architecture and so on. He wrote to me and said, "What are you doing in Pakistan when the greatest scholar of Indian music is right here in London? You'd better come and study with him." That's the first introduction I had to Bake, and first thing I knew, and I guess I was getting restless because I had kind of a quiet time studying music, focusing on music, and not going out anywhere, doing anything else but music, and I guess it was rankling a little bit. Besides which, I had too much information, you know. I had all these rags recorded and all that, to study them. So it so happened that I took my brother's advice and came to England and met Bake, who was delighted to find someone who was interested in music. At that time Bake was a Dutch scholar who had spent fifteen years at least in India in his lifetime, and he finally got a job after the war. He was in India during the war years, and sometime during the period of the war years he had performed in

school, in my school, Doon School, which I didn't know at that time. But I went to see him, and he was just delighted to have someone who was interested in music, because he had now gotten a position in the School of Oriental and African Studies, the title R eader in Sanskrit, with special reference to Indian music. He used to lecture one lecture a week in that position, and then he would read with some scholars, you know, students, would read certain Sanskrit texts if they wished to. So I wanted to work with him, and he was very happy to have me. I went to see the department chair and said, "I would like to join, to become a student here." And he said, "No, no, but you don't have any language skills. You don't know Sanskrit, and Indian music is all based on Sanskrit." So Bake spoke up for me and said, "It's okay, I'll translate for him, and he'll learn the language as we go along."

CATLIN

You already had an Urdu background in school.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes, but Urdu, and I didn't even know the devnagari script, which Indian Sanskrit was written in, so I had knowledge of Urdu.

CATLIN

That was your Indian language at the Doon School.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes, right.

CATLIN

But that didn't—

JAIRAZBHOY

That was no good here, because there was not much literature in Urdu, and anyway what there was mostly an imitation of the Sanskrit writings. Anyway, so the chair of the department accepted me as a student and I studied with Bake. Every week I would go for two or three hours and he would—

1.2. TAPE NUMBER: I, Side Two (
September 24, 2006)

JAIRAZBHOY

—translate Natya Shastra for me, and meanwhile on my own I was learning the nagari script and Sanskrit and so on. But when I wrote my first article I knew little or nothing about Sanskrit, and it was entirely based on Bake's translations of the Natya Shastra.

CATLIN

That was in 1958, four years later.

JAIRAZBHOY

That's my first article, but I was working with him before that, in '56 or so, '55.

CATLIN

When did you become his assistant?

JAIRAZBHOY

After that article. What happened was - it's kind of embarrassing - the head of the department said, "We've never published an article written by a student, so we'd better appoint you as an assistant," or something like that. I can't remember the exact words. But that article was sort of erudite and very obscure and of not a great deal of consequence, but I guess it showed that I had some kind of scholarly aptitude, which I didn't know about either.

CATLIN

That was the article, "Bharata's Concept of Sadharana."

JAIRAZBHOY

That's correct, "Bharata's Concept of Sadharana," Sadharana being kind of an accidental or something that was used in addition to the regular scalar notes. The main thesis is that when Sarangadeva about a thousand years later writes about Indian music, he draws upon the old treatises, but he misunderstands them, and so it was my interpretation of what Bharata was saying, compared with Sarangadeva's interpretation a thousand years later. Mine is two thousand years later, his one thousand years later, or whatever, and that he had misinterpreted several things, so that he was repeating things which he didn't quite understand, which are very important, I thought, because it meant that by that time that old system, whatever it was that Bharata had written about, was completely lost and out of date, and now it's being reconstructed incorrectly in the treatise by Sarangadeva.

CATLIN

And this was the article that got you the—

JAIRAZBHOY

Assistantship, a research assistantship. So I became research assistant to Arnold Bake, and I remained that until '62, when I was appointed lecturer after I had written a couple of other articles, which were also based on Sanskrit treatises.

CATLIN

Did you attempt in the Sadharana article to relate it at all to contemporary practice, or was it entirely historical?

JAIRAZBHOY

No. No attempt to relate it to contemporary practice at all. That comes in the next article. I did try to relate some of the Sanskrit treatises to, well, particularly Sarangadeva's Sangita Ratnakara to present-day practice. That article was also published in the Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.

CATLIN

That's the article, "Svara Prastar in North Indian Classical Music." That's a longer article, and it discusses the method of permutations of scale passages.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. Sarangadeva did something very interesting, and that is he enumerated all the possibilities—I think you should pause a minute. So Sarangadeva had enumerated all the possible combinations of up to seven notes, so two notes, three notes, four notes, five notes, six notes, seven notes. The way he did it, because it's difficult to know— You have to have some method or some way to do it so that you don't repeat yourself. The seven notes come to five thousand and twenty or something like that permutations, and in his book, Sangita Ratnakara, he lists all these combinations. Now, what was interesting was the way he did it, the method by which he established these sequences, so that they didn't repeat. There's a method that apparently was not known in the West in the permutation of combinations, and in my article I had to try to explain what this method was. So I did a one-page chart for his forty pages of transcription, to summarize that method. Now, the interesting thing about his method is that he had devised a way that a person could calculate and work out individual sequences. So if someone said, "What is the 587th sequence in this series of seven notes?" you could do it. So he explained how to do it, and the way he explained how to do it is by drawing on the earth, that is, in sand or mud, whichever it might be, a shape which he called the mountain of squares, Khandameru. This is a series where you have seven on one side, and reducing to six, five, four, three, two, one, and numbers in each of those series. And he says, "Now, for 587th," this example, "you put a stone in this fifth column," or whatever it is, "down here. Then on the eighty-seven you put the stone in this next column." And then he said, "You add up those three, and each one tells you where each note is located," so you can construct from that the notes in that sequence, and also the reverse. So give me a sequence and I will tell you which number it is in my series. So I think you call it nashta and udishta or something like that. Anyway, whatever that was, but there were two ways of— That is, you give me the number and I will give you the series, or you give the series and I will give you the number. So these squares kept shifting up and down. Now, when I was studying with Fateh Ali Khan in Pakistan, Fateh Ali Khan insisted that I learn certain series of combinations. srgm rsgm sgrm gsrm rgsg grsm (sings in sargam). These sequences, and I didn't know why or what they were and so on, until I started reading Sarangadeva and I said, hey, these are the same sequences as occur in Sarangadeva's work. So I said, hey, this is incredible, this continuity. Then I remember saying, you know, "What is good for these?" So he had said that it was used in alap. Okay. Then I found— A friend of mine by the name William Coates had a recording of Vilayat Khan playing a very detailed alap in, I think, Puriya Kalyan. I listened to it and I said,

"Hey, look. This bears some resemblance to that Svara Prastar style." So I analyzed it and wrote an article about this continuity of that old tradition of Sarangadeva, which he wrote in the thirteenth century, so that to the sort of prastara which I was taught was now being called not sort of prastara, but Khandameru Merkhand as it was being called by my teacher, merkhand, and that merkhand included these combinations. So I wrote this article which then includes about seven or eight minutes of Vilayat Khan's alap, to show how he's extending the rag by using this step-by-step method, which is in the Swara Prastara of Sarangadeva. Then I said, well, what happens if you take a rag not like Puriya Kalyan? Puriya Kalyan is all seven notes, but what if we take another rag? And I remembered, okay, here's another rag, I think it was Shyam Kalyan. It was sung by Manik Varma in a khyal style. Is that right?

CATLIN

I have Manek.

JAIRAZBHOY

In khyal style, so there's note-by-note expansion. Well, what happens if, for instance, you're doing note-by-note expansion as in svar vistar style, but if you come into a rag like Shyam Kalyan and you can't go to the ga, you have to go from re to the ma; then what do you do when you go to the re? So I transcribed a bit of that to show how the rag takes precedence over the svara prastara. There's a lot of transcription in the article, and I doubt that anyone had transcribed anything live from recorded music up to that time.

CATLIN

This was a live performance recorded of Vilayat Khan?

JAIRAZBHOY

Vilayat Khan's recording was of a live performance. Manek Varma, I can't remember whether it was a record or whether it was live performance.

CATLIN

And later you recorded Zia Mohinuddin Dagar doing the same thing?

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. That was in '63, in '63, '64 when I went back there. You see, when I had gone to India after having— In the fifties when I went, gave the series of lectures in Washington, I kept coming across the word sruti. Sruti, sruti, sruti, everything was sruti. And I had never heard the word. When I went to India and Pakistan I asked all the musicians I could encounter, "What is sruti?" and nobody gave me any kind of a sensible answer. In fact, I became slightly known as a sruti wala, because I was constantly asking what sruti is. Well, like that when I went back to India some years afterwards, I asked some of the musicians whether they knew about merkhand, and, of course, they did, some of them. And one of them, Zia Mohinuddin Dagar, allowed me to record him reciting a number of sequences, not in just the beginning as I was doing, but

you know, much further down the line. That means like in the six or seven hundred series. I didn't record the whole 5,020, although he said he could have done it for me, but we recorded quite a few of them, like in over fifty, sixty series, and from here and from there, in part. Because this article was also being published in the Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, few scholars know about it.

CATLIN

And Zia Mohinuddin Dagar, when he did this recording for you, he actually acknowledged the svara prastar in his presentation, is that correct?

JAIRAZBHOY

I don't remember that. You can listen to it on my tape, because I know I must have recorded the interview, too, his comments.

CATLIN

So sruti-s, you finally began to encounter and confront these readings that you had done in Seattle, actually mostly from the public library. You said that you didn't find many books on Indian music in the university library, but it was in Seattle Public Library that you found them.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes, that's correct.

CATLIN

So it was in your next article, major article, that you really dug into the concept of sruti-s and intonation. That was 1962.

JAIRAZBHOY

I remember, you know, when I was reading Danielou's book in America, just prior to giving those talks in Seattle at University of Washington, I remember saying, my god, he knows it all. He's got such detailed analyses and everything. "This note has to be performed like this at such-and-such an interval, and then it gives a spread feeling of calm," and so on and so forth. And he said, "Everyone in the audience recognizes the difference between that and the slightly higher note which gives a feeling of restlessness," and so on. "And everyone in the audience knows and senses and are aware of that." I said, "My god, where have I been all my life? And besides which, if he's done all this study, there's no need to do any more research on Indian music." I remember saying that. So when I went to India and asked about srutis and I found nobody knew anything about srutis, or you know, one of them said, "Why are you talking about sruti? Why don't you concentrate on the svars, the notes? Why talk about the microtones? It's more important to sing the notes in tune than to sing microtones." That was said by Bade Ghulam Ali Khan by the way, one of the greatest singers of the last century in India. So I then started to say, this is ridiculous. I don't believe this could possibly be so right, so accurate, and so on. He talks about all of these srutis, and not one of the teachers, none of the people

that I've spoken to seems to know about it. And one very famous musician, Ali Akbar Khan came to England to perform, and I interviewed him, and asked him about srutis. And he said, "Oh, the srutis," and went [drrrrrrrr! imitates tones], playing about twenty-five tones or maybe fifty tones in an octave, just [imitates sound] like that. And he said, "There are your srutis." And then others said, you know, see here are the srutis, see, when we are playing this or singing this song, or this rag. Then when you get to this note, you see, you wave or you shake, and then the srutis are the deviations from the regular pitch, or in this particular rag we play it slightly flat. So then I said, well, if you play it slightly flatter than what? Then they must have a concept of, you know, a standard pitch, and then in certain cases they deviate from it. So basically, they have some kind of a basic standard from which they're comparing it. Well, this is a thought that I've not still gotten around to writing about, that the fact that they say they're singing it flatter means that they must have some standard which is not that flat. And what is that standard? It's a kind of twelve-semitone standard. So with the help of our technician at the School of Oriental and African Studies, Ron Stone, A.W. Stone, who was purely a technician, not involved in researched and not totally knowledgeable about Indian music, we set up a way in which to use electronic means of identification of pitches, and comparing them. So we had on the bottom line what is it, fifty-cycle tone or sixty cycles, I can't remember now which is which? England is fifty cycles, I think, and here it's sixty cycles, or vice versa. Anyway, it's on the base is a fifty-cycle tone with waveforms, and then against it putting the actual waveform of the pitches they were analyzing. So by comparing and counting how many in, say, fifty cycles per second, means in one second, and putting a line across from the waveform which is the standard power waveform, the waveform from the electricity in the wall as it were, then comparing it with that, with the waveform of the music example, which happened to be, say, 250 cycles per second, you would mark off one second and then count all the waves that go to make up the musical one. And sometimes if it varies, you cut it down also into, like, one-tenth of a second chunks, and measure and count them. During this study I counted not less than a million waveforms. I mean, you know, counted them over and over again to check them in terms of how many waves are there in a second. Like it's 250 cycles per second? This tone varies from 240 in the beginning to 242 cycles per second. Then I compared the performances of different musicians with their tonic or sa, and then the ga, the way they sang the ga, which is the third, major third. So, got the tonic and got the major third, measuring the vibrations, and then calculating how many cents was there between one and the other, and I found some very remarkable results. The musicians, firstly, extreme examples. Umrao Bundu Khan's ga in Rag Yaman was much flatter than that of, say, Pannalal Ghosh playing the flute in Bengali musician, very

famous also. I mean, the difference between them is like forty cents, which is like a quarter of, yes, half a semitone, almost. Half a semitone difference between them. Then when you start analyzing it further, you find the same musician varying in his performances, going up the scale, going down the scale. There's no consistency whatever, and that it was only a rough guide to say that this was a whole tone. What does a whole tone mean? It could vary from, you know, 186 cents or less to 220 cents, and nobody seemed to object to it. There was so much deviation that I said, it's absolutely impossible that Danielou could have said anything sensible, that he's just making it all up, the whole theoretical exercise that he's made it sound like in reality. But not only has he not measured, which he claims he's measured all these intervals, and then he says that even the audiences can appreciate differences of minor twenty-cent differences, or twenty-two-cents differences between on ga and another. It was all unbelievable. Needless to say, these articles had absolutely no impact on the scholarly world, and for at least thirty years more, people continued to talk about microtones in Indian music, and so on, and the precision of intonation and all that, when clearly nobody bothered to find out whether this was really true in practice, or was it just imaginary, and other factors...

CATLIN

Did you use recordings by Pannalal Ghosh, Ustad Bundu Khan, Umrao Khan, Ravi Shankar, Gangubai Hangal, and W.S. Deshpande?

JAIRAZBHOY

Can that be heard? You see, the microphone is pointing this way, so I'm not sure. So yes, I used recordings by all of those people, you know, Bundu Khan, Umrao Bundu Khan, Pannalal Ghosh, who else? Gangubai Hangal, Ravi Shankar, yes. Ravi Shankar is very interesting, that there's one spot when he plays, three times he plays the same note ga, and this is [sings] ga, ga, ga. Would you believe it? Each one is slightly different in intonation, not unpleasantly so. I mean, the whole point of this is to show that it doesn't matter, in fact, it may be even desirable to intone slightly differently for effect. Who knows? We don't know.

CATLIN

One was at 269 cycles, one was at 337, and one was 339.

JAIRAZBHOY

Two sixty-nine? No, something's wrong.

CATLIN

It says 269.

JAIRAZBHOY

Two sixty-nine cents.

CATLIN

Cycles per second, c.p.s.

JAIRAZBHOY

I don't know what that is.

CATLIN

That was the sa. I see. Wait. Then the observation is that ga was played three times, each varying slightly, duration too short to be conclusive.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. So it's a slight duration.

CATLIN

Between 390 and 400 cents.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. So anyway, it was definite. And then, of course, subsequently I had a student who did his whole M.A. thesis analyzing a lot more of these with more sophisticated equipment, not having to count all these waveforms as I had to, coming up with exactly the same conclusions, that there is no standardization.

CATLIN

That was Mark Levy's book. It was published as a book, Intonation in Present Day North Indian Classical Music. [should be Intonation in North Indian Music – ed.]

JAIRAZBHOY

Something like that. That's my article.

CATLIN

Yes, that's your article in Stone. You also discussed Bharata's Shadja grama and Madhyama grama in this article on sruti and intonation.

JAIRAZBHOY

Did I?

CATLIN

Yes. And the Sangita Ratnakara.

JAIRAZBHOY

Which article is this now?

CATLIN

This is in the intonation article. There's a general discussion on sruti and intonation, talking about Natya Shastra, Dattila, and Sangita Ratnakara, the two gramas, shadja grama and madhyama grama.

JAIRAZBHOY

I don't remember that, but I did write about those things later on.

CATLIN

Later. It comes in a later article.

JAIRAZBHOY

(whispers: "Can we stop now?")

CATLIN

Yes.

**1.3. TAPE NUMBER: II, Side One (
February 19, 2007)**

CATLIN

Today is the nineteenth of February, 2007). We're going to begin the second interview oral history with Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy. We're in Mumbai in the Cricket Club of India, Room 202, and we're picking up from the place we left off last time, which was when you were about to leave for England, and that was in 1954. So you decided to come to England from Seattle, and what did you decide about your music career at that time?

JAIRAZBHOY

Well, no, I actually had left Seattle and gone to Pakistan and India, [via England for some months – ed.] and in Pakistan I studied music with Fateh Ali Khan and Umrao Bundu Khan, vocalist and sarangi player, and surbahar with Fateh Ali Khan. Then I received this letter from my brother saying, "The best scholar of Indian music is here in London. Why don't you come and study with him if you're interested?" Meanwhile I had been asking questions in Pakistan, and people were beginning to know me as a sruti walla, because I kept asking about, how do srutis fit in? And so Rafique had known that I was interested in some of the theoretical aspects, so he said, "Come to England and study with Bake." So I went then from Pakistan, having spent about nine months there, I don't know exactly how many months, but—

CATLIN

And in Pakistan, could you talk a little bit more about that, that Bundu Khan didn't talk about the thaats….

JAIRAZBHOY

No, Bundu Khan was ill, and so I never really did study with him. I studied with his son, Umrao Bundu Khan, and Umrao Bundu Khan told me about the thaat system, that they recognized the six thaats. They didn't recognize Marva, Purvi, and Todi as thaats, but what we call the diatonic thaats, that is going from Kalyan, Bilaval, Khamaj, Kafi, Asavari, and Bhairavi. Those six thaats were recognized by them. He also said that his father had studied Sangit Ratnakara with someone, and that they had a manuscript also somewhere in Urdu, which I was very eager to see, but unfortunately Bundu Khan himself was sick when I was there, so it was not possible for me to get a look at that manuscript. And while I was there he actually died, Bundu Khan, so that was the end of Bundu Khan, but my relations with Umrao Khan was continued for a while longer.

CATLIN

You also studied surbahar?

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes, with Fateh Ali Khan, who was quite an amazing musician, because he was partially deaf, if not completely deaf, and he used to play with his teeth clamped around a peg, so that he was feeling the sensation of sound vibrations through his teeth.

CATLIN

On the tuning peg?

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes, on the tuning pegs for one of the sympathetic strings. Well, actually, I think it was not one of the sympathetic strings, but one of the chikari strings, the side strings.

CATLIN

And you learned a Persian vocal composition.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. Also I had a few vocal lessons from a very old man. I don't remember his name, unfortunately, only about two or three lessons, but he taught me a khyal in rag Hindol, which was in Persian, Bai~ya~ radrub gulzar shuddham rehe guzari [phonetic @ 3:50] was I think the text of it, something like that. I can still remember that one simple line, but I was surprised that it was in Persian.

CATLIN

Was that because of the attempt to establish a separate identity of Pakistani music from Indian music?

JAIRAZBHOY

In '54 I don't think they were too much concerned about that, but you know, there has always been some kind of a Persian influence from Amir Khusro and so on, so I shouldn't be surprised if this was an independent development. I know that they did talk about making compositions in Persian and Urdu, but I don't think they ever really did.

CATLIN

And it was Mr. Ansari who got Pakistan Radio to record Bundu Khan for you.

JAIRAZBHOY

That's correct. Yes, Mr. Ansari had married my mother and they had moved to Pakistan after partition, and he was an important customs official in Pakistan, and he had a lot of influence with—and he was very much fond of music. Of course, knowing that I was coming to Pakistan he was very keen to impress me, and so he got All India Radio to make recordings on this EMI recorder, which recorded full-track recordings, you know, on quarter-inch tape, a good quality recorder, and he recorded at least three, four concerts of Bundu Khan's before I came.

CATLIN

In private?

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes, in private gatherings. There were no public concerts in those days that I can recall, but certainly there were a lot of private sittings, mehfils. So he recorded those tapes. Now, unfortunately I came to Pakistan with a recorder called a Vortexion, which is a kind of relation to the Ferrograph, which is well known, but the Vortexion was the same mechanism, but it had a different electronic component in it, and was in some ways better than the—anyway, it was very heavy and I had a lot of tapes, but they sure ran out very quickly. So when Mr. Ansari gave me those tapes of Bundu Khan I said, "Oh, my god, I have to take full-track tapes back with me to England? I just can't afford the weight," you know, the excess baggage and so on. So I copied them onto half-track recordings and took the half-track back with me. Now, I have no idea what happened to the full-track recordings, but I gave them back to Mr. Ansari, and Mujeeb Ansari was the person, I guess he must have given it to someone else, or to Pakistani radio or something, and since, one of them at least has emerged as part of an LP recording. Anyway, I have several recordings of Bundu Khan recorded in private mehfils by Mr. Ansari.

CATLIN

So your recordings in Pakistan were from the radio, as well as live recordings?

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. Many live recordings. There were a few from radio, admittedly, but mostly they were live recordings of, say, Umrao Bundu Khan and Fateh Ali Khan and so on, my teachers mostly. And Umrao Khan demonstrated a lot of rags for me, and some of them have now been published in the back of my book, which has Vilayat Khan playing on one side, and Umrao Bundu Khan on the CD version. Umrao Bundu Khan performs some of the same rags. Interesting the comparison because, for instance, both of them performed Tilak Kamod, and one of them performs it without an E flat, and the other one performs it with an E flat, so it's really interesting.

CATLIN

So when they called you sruti walla, it's because you were trying to find some evidence for the sruti in current parlance.

JAIRAZBHOY

No, I was trying to find out what they were. I had no idea that there was such a thing as sruti when I started reading in Washington about Indian music. Then I came across Danielou's book is dominated by srutis, and I said, hey, I've been playing Indian music all my life and never heard the word sruti. So when I went to Pakistan I did inquire into the matter of srutis from a number of musicians, always receiving some kind of a blank, or some kind of a vague answer. And I continued my inquiries about srutis, you know, when I went back to England

and for at least a number of years after that. When musicians came like Ali Akbar Khan sahib and Ravi Shankar, I interviewed them and asked them about srutis, among other things, and Ali Akbar Khan even demonstrated the srutis once, you know, ‘du, du, du, du, du, du, du, du' [demonstrates sounds] up and down the scale, and it was impossible to count if there were twenty-two or two hundred, I don't know. Anyway, he told me, "You want srutis? Okay, I'll give you srutis," kind of an approach. But all of them say, "Yeah, in such-and-such a rag, this intonation is strange." But in Pakistan I didn't even get that response.

CATLIN

And that includes the musicians who must have come from India to Pakistan, as well as the ones who were born there.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. And when I asked Bade Ghulam Ali Khan about it some years later in Bombay, still again wondering about srutis, you know, because books all emphasized srutis, and nobody seemed to have an answer for it. Bade Ghulam Ali Khan's interview was actually in one of my BBC broadcasts where he says, you know, something like, "Srruti ko chor do!" Would you leave aside sruti? Concentrate on the notes, "Sur ko pakdo!" So he told me not to waste my time trying to search for srutis, but concentrate on the notes.

CATLIN

He called them the sur?

JAIRAZBHOY

Sur ko pakdo. Sur means note, .

CATLIN

So you recorded—

JAIRAZBHOY

And that little extract, that interview is on BBC tape.

CATLIN

Oh, the one for musical—

JAIRAZBHOY

No, BBC tape. Yes, Musical Journey tape I think it is. Musical Journey tape, yes, in Bombay.

CATLIN

Well, you also recorded some of the 78 rpm records, but the ones that you had collected in Pakistan you had to kind of...

JAIRAZBHOY

Firstly, no. What happened was I had first gone to India, well at least sometime after staying in Pakistan for a short time I went to India for two or three weeks, and while I was in India I collected a whole bunch of 78 rpm records, and took them back to Pakistan. Unfortunately, when I got to the Customs there I declared, "I've got this for my mother, this for my daughter, this for—," and so

on and so forth. And the Customs official said, "And what have you got for me?" And I was idiotic enough to say, "Nothing." I knew exactly what he wanted me to—but I was very conscious about not bribing anyone, you know, so I said, "Nothing." He said, "Oh, I see." And then I had to sit in that Customs shed or structure for ten hours, and finally they took all my records, 78 rpm records, and I never saw them again. He confiscated them. And in spite of Mr. Ansari being a Customs official, an important Customs official, I could never get those records back.

CATLIN

Did you make any live recordings in India as well?

JAIRAZBHOY

No, not in those two weeks that I was there. I don't think I did, because I don't think I took my tape recorder there for just a short time, being a very heavy instrument. It weighed about sixty pounds.

CATLIN

So at that point or soon after, you decided to leave Pakistan at your brother Rafique's invitation?

JAIRAZBHOY

Right. Not an invitation, but suggestion. He didn't invite me to come and stay with him or anything. But I went to London and rented a small flat, and went to see Bake. Bake was wonderfully cooperative and very excited in order to have a person who comes specifically from Pakistan or India to study with him, and he was very happy to take me on. But when I went to the head of the department, which was Brough, Professor Brough was very doubtful about all this. He says, "Well, if you don't know Sanskrit, how can you possibly study Indian music?" So Bake said, "But wait, I'll translate for him, and I'm sure he'll pick up Sanskrit in no time." So that's what happened is that finally Brough agreed to have me as an occasional student.

CATLIN

Your language in school until then had been Urdu?

JAIRAZBHOY

Urdu, yes, not Hindi.

CATLIN

At the Doon School.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. And so my, as it were, foreign language started out to be French, and then the headmaster said, "No, you have to learn an Indian language," for which I'm eternally grateful, but at that time I decided on Urdu, since in North India that was much more considered to be a refined language, in those days anyway. So I had studied Urdu there, and I could not even read the devanagari script at that time. So studying with Bake meant also learning devanagari script, and

learning Sanskrit grammar on my own, and so on. So not only—I did attend a few classes, and then I did discuss things with various scholars about language and so on. But basically I'm self-taught as far as Sanskrit is concerned.

CATLIN

And you did produce translations sitting with Bake, of a number of treatises?

JAIRAZBHOY

Right. We went through the Natya Shastra, which was the musical chapters particularly, and then later on Sangit Ratnakara, not the whole of it, but quite a lot of it, and then on other treatises like Sangita Parijat, and Bake's special area was Sangit Darpaan -- his Ph.D. dissertation was based on a translation of the Sangeet Darpana.

CATLIN

Into Dutch?

JAIRAZBHOY

Dutch, no. It was done into English, not into Dutch. So his translation was in English. He had come to SOAS, also, to study Bengali, you know, with his wife, before they went to India. His languages, he was a very good linguist. He even knew Arabic, and at one stage he was going to go and become an Arabic scholar, until Professor Sylvain Levy I think it was suggested that with his interest in music, why didn't he study Indian music instead? You know, that he could satisfy his language skills, and so he started studying Sanskrit there. Then he went with his wife, both of them went to SOAS in London from Holland, and studied Bengali, because there was no one to teach music there. Then, of course, Bake had gone to India, and that's another whole story. But I continued working with Bake from about '55, studying with him I guess until the end of his life, which was '63, although in the meanwhile I had a couple of years when I'd written a paper based on interpreting one of the forty sections in the Natya Shastra about sadharana, which means the way notes—it's about some kind of an accidental that was introduced into the modal system in the past, and it's kind of difficult to sort it out. I don't know how important it was, but at least I wrote a paper on it, because I thought I had a way to interpret some of that. Well, I guess this impressed Professor Brough sufficiently so he offered me a research assistantship, for which I was very grateful, because I wasn't very well off financially in England. Anyway, that led to another paper, and one I was determined to do on the srutis led to a paper, I think the Svara Prastar paper, which is dealing with the Sangita Ratnakara's -- of the permutation and combination of notes. Now, when I read that Sangita Ratnakara section I said, "Wait a minute, wait a minute. When I was studying in Pakistan with this Fateh Ali Khan, he made me learn these combinations sa re ga ma re ga ma sa - sa re ga ma re sa ga ma [etc.] and find the exact same combinations for all the notes occurring in the Sangita Ratnakara treatise." So I wrote this paper about

comparing the two, and then I tried to analyze, to see whether it was actually existing in musical practice, or what remnant there was of it, and so I gave a couple of examples. One was a recording which was made I guess by Bill Coates. I don't know whether he actually made it, but he gave me a copy of this recording of Vilayat Khan playing a rag called Puriya Kalyan, in which he does this note-by-note extension, which is characteristic of Sangita Ratnakara. So I transcribed about five or seven minutes of this in this paper, and I also transcribed a singer singing Shyam Kalyan - if I remember right. Oh, gosh, her name escapes me at the moment, but it'll probably occur to me in a few minutes. Anyway, singing a khyal, a bara khyal, in which again they use this note-by-note extension, focusing on different notes. So this paper, of course very few people ever read it, but I guess it was an important step in my eventually being appointed lecturer, but I think the reason, the final thing was the writing of this paper which was on intonation in Indian music, because by now I was determined to look for srutis, and so working with a technician at the school, Ron Stone, A.W. Stone, we analyzed a whole bunch of—well, he helped me technically while I did all the other stuff, which is measuring intervals. In those days what we could do, we didn't have any device, was to count waves. So you have the main cycle, fifty cycles per second coming out of the wall, against which you put the waves of the singer's tones or whatever it is, after suitably filtering them and so on. And I actually sat and counted waves to see how many waves went for each second of the time cycle. You see, if it's 250 cycles per second I had to count 250 waves for each second, so it was a very tedious process, and in the process I counted at least half a million waveforms. I had to double check it, and sometimes I'd checked the wrong tones, and we'd divided them into, you know, half-second sections, and then I would see a half-second variation and one-second variations. The results are astonishing. There was absolutely no standardization in the intonation of one of the most popular, well-known rags, Yaman Kalyan, or Yaman. And in that rag, Yaman, the ga, the major third, varied all over the place. I mean, Ravi Shankar was more or less in the middle, Pannalal Ghosh was much too sharp according to my ears, but acceptable according to people's ears. Bundu Khan's and [Amara?] Khan's ga was very low. But the difference between the highest and lowest of these was like fifty cents, you know, a quarter of a tone. How could there be any concept of srutis, which are based on microtones? How do you know which microtone you're using? And if you look at this, look at the way Danielou deals with it. He says that a difference of twenty-two cents, he says, makes a difference between the ga which has this kind of mood, and ga which has this kind of mood, which is found in Bilaval and not in Kalyan, and all that. He's saying all these things, and he says he does it, he has measured these intervals, and he's got everyone in the audience appreciates this difference

between, and here I'm finding that there's such a fluctuation of intonation even by one person, even that one person fluctuates intonation going up the scale, down the scale, and various, and nobody seems to notice it. So what's the point of even thinking in terms of srutis? Well, this article, I don't know if anyone really read it, but except Garfias is the only one I can remember who commented on it, and he confronted Danielou with it, and Danielou made some kind of a comment like, "You know, this happens when you're analyzing, but in actual performance this stuff happens," something like that, you know. It was not at all convincing. This was in India when there was a conference, an Indian music conference, and that would have been in '63 or '64, I think it was. So anyway, now what had happened was that having written these three papers, I guess Brough, when I went there to ask the editor for a copy of the paper they said, "Well, we always give copies to faculty people who write papers, I mean publish in our journal, but there's no evidence of research assistants being given copies of their papers." So she said, "Well, we'll talk about it and I don't know, I'll have to go see Brough." In the meanwhile, Brough had instituted, already was convinced that I ought to be on the staff, and so in about '61 or something like that he had offered me a lectureship, but the only opening was in Hindi. And I said, "Hindi? I don't know Hindi at all. I mean, I know Urdu and I just learned how to read devanagari and I know a little bit of Sanskrit, but I don't know Hindi. How can I teach Hindi?" He said, "No, no. That's only in the name, you know." And I said, "No, I can't accept that," much as I would like to have accepted a position, and so that's the way that ended. Then when I'd written this other paper, finally I guess Brough got the senate to approve a special position for me, which was a lecturer in Indian music. Now, Bake was not a lecturer in Indian music. He was a reader, actually, first as a lecturer and then became reader in Sanskrit, with special reference to Indian music. So they had to create a position in Indian music which was nonexistent, and I guess he managed to do it. And that position, when I left there in 1969, was advertised, and they hired Jayasree Bannerjee, who was a disaster as it turned out, and anyway she died not much later. Then that position was advertised again, and Richard Widdess finally got the position, and the whole subject of Indian music has gone from strength to strength.

CATLIN

So until that point you were studying with Bake, and became his assistant and a lecturer along with him, and most of your writings concerned classical music, and your research. But under Bake you began to see some of his research materials that he had collected during his many years—

JAIRAZBHOY

See, as his assistant, we didn't have any technician to help us or anything like that. As assistant it was my responsibility to put on the illustrations for his

lectures, so when he had a lecture in which was required a particular music example, it would be my job to have prepared this musical example on tape, and put it on in the class at the appropriate moment, or take a film of his, cut out a little bit that he wanted to show, and put it on a blank film disk and show it at the right time. I didn't know, of course, that that was the original that I was cutting up, as a result of which Bake's films are very badly chopped up. But Bake's recordings were on this unusual machine called a Tefiphon [actually, the Teficord made the recordings, the Tefiphon played them back. – ed.], which was made in Germany and had wonderful—was an amazing invention. It recorded on the length of a 35mm film, of film that is used for shooting pictures. But it had a gelatin on it, and the needle that was on this Tefiphon [Tefocord – ed.] cut a groove in the length of the film, all the way along it, and would go around and round until it came back to that same point, then would shift to the next groove. So it was continuous grooving along this length. Now, the length of this reel was variable, so he had films that varied from two meters to, I think, fifty meters. So a fifty-meter film meant, you know, it had to be wound over and over again with the exact number of twists to be put onto this thing, and it was very complicated doing it. But the result was that he could record a whole hour of recording, music, without break. Now, nobody else could do that in India at that time, because they were all using either wax cylinders or—India and the world, as a matter of fact, wax cylinders, which have a five-, six-minute maximum, or disks, 78 rpm disks, even though they were ten- and twelve-inch disks that didn't have more than five minutes at a time. But Bake was able to record quite long stretches of music.

CATLIN

These recordings were mostly of the non-classical items?

JAIRAZBHOY

He had recorded some classical music. When he went to study for his Ph.D. he went to Shantiniketan, where Rabindranath Tagore had started a school, Visvabharati, and so Bake was very much influenced by Tagore's notions about everything. Of course, he learned Tagore's songs and he transcribed some of them into Western notation, and published them, and translated some of them, because he knew Bengali very well, too. But mostly, the important thing was that Tagore himself was very fascinated by two aspects of folk culture. One of them was, of course, the Baul singers, and the mystical songs that they sang, which united all kinds of religions. They were a very, very fascinating world that they opened up for Tagore. The other thing that fascinated him were the boatmen songs that were being sung on the rivers in Bengal. So these too, the bhatiyali songs, were particularly fascinating. Then he also was fascinated by some of the tribes, and he would bring the Santals Shantiniketan, and they would do some dancing and performances and so on and so forth. Now, I

wasn't there personally for this. The only reason I know this is from Bake. So Bake was exposed to a whole lot of non-classical music as well. Of course while he was in Shantinikelan he also studied classical music, and quite a lot of kirtan singing, you know, the devotional songs, kirtans. In fact, he used to say that occasionally he would be a leader in a kirtan group, so he would be the lead singer, not the whole evening but for particular songs. Now, kirtan was especially interesting, because I remember something like, vaguely—you know, I'm going back many, many years—rhythms which are very complex, like something like choto dash-koshi [in Bengali - phonetic] which is a name that just comes into mind, and I don't exactly remember how many matras or time units it had, but it was very long, fifty-six time units or something, and it was very different from classical-style singing, where, you know, our longest is usually sixteen or something like that time counts. But this was very complex. He also talked about some of these rhythmic patterns where they get narrower. What's the one of the Sanskrit, the tail, what's it called, the gopuccha—

CATLIN

Gopuccha yati.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. He would talk about those things as happening in kirtan as well. So he had a versatile exposure to music in Shantiniketan itself. But after that he decided to go and do some fieldwork, and one of the field trips I know he went to in Kenduli, where they had this big festival of the Bauls, because he took his camera there with him. It's not clear exactly which year, but it was probably 1932 or so that he went there, and we have some films of, silent films, of course, of some dancing and so on by the Bauls. Then he decided to go, I'm sure, to South India as well. Now, in 1932 I don't know what he recorded exactly, because they were all on cylinders, wax cylinders, which have been transferred to tape I think in the Phonogram Archiv in Berlin. But the copy that I have doesn't really make too much sense, so they said that they made a better copy than that since then, but I haven't received it. But anyway, he had gone and made some trip there. Now, this is very crucial, because in a subsequent visit to India in 1938-39, Bake went on a bigger field trip to some of the places that he had visited earlier in South India, and did a long field trip which extended all the way from the bottom tip of South India to Ladakh in the mountains, in the Himalayan mountains. Then he had to suspend the trip which wasn't completed, but it still had lasted fifteen months, being on the road in a van, or actually a car, like a station wagon adapted for his purpose, with a generator in the back, and he was now using this Tefiphon [Teficord – ed.] recorder, Tefi recorder. This Tefi recorder was an amazing machine, and I never actually handled the recorder part. But it had two components. One was a recording unit, and the other was a playback unit, and the playback unit was

saved, but the recording unit went through a lot of strange experiences. Like once Bake says in one of his letters that it caught fire, and they had to put sand on it to put out the flames and everything, so you can imagine a tape recorder of modern times that went up in flames and then you cover it with sand. Do you expect it to work after that? Anyway, it did work for a long time, and he made some amazing recordings for at least, I would say all the way until he got to Karachi. That is for about eight months of his tour. Then it finally quit, the machine. Now, he sent it back to Germany to get it repaired. In the meanwhile, war was declared. This is now '39, so World War II has begun, and evidently Bake's machine was caught in it, was just exactly at the time when the war broke out, and he could not get that machine back again. So nobody knows what happened to that Tefiphon. Bake continued using a cylinder machine and another disk recorder, but those recordings are not really so impressive. Now, all this time Bake was an avid photographer. He did a lot of photography, and he traveled with his wife, but his wife Corry hardly ever did anything. I don't know if she ever even took a single photograph. So Bake did all the still photographs. This is films, the 16mm films that he used, and I think he used a Bolex camera if my memory is right, which I was familiar with at that time, because I was a bit interested in amateur cinema, cinematography. He used a Bolex, quite a good camera. But the Tefi itself required his fulltime attention, and I don't know how he managed to do all those things, and so obviously not at the same time. So unfortunately, we don't have the music exactly at the same time when he filmed. So what he must have done is he filmed first, and then he asked them afterwards, "Okay, now I want to do a recording of it," and then he must have asked them to repeat the songs, which they sometimes do fairly well, sometimes not exactly. Sometimes it might have been the next day that they'd get around to doing it, or two days later or so, so it's not possible to synch anything precisely. However, there's enough indications of what's going on. Bake had so many experiences, you know, in that, and most of what I got from him was his personal stories of his experiences in India and so on. I don't think he taught me very much. He did a lot of translation for me, but he never taught me anything about ethnomusicology. Mind you, at this time I probably learned as much about ethnomusicology from being invited to go to Holland by Jaap Kunst. Now, Jaap Kunst had an assistant, Felix van Lamsweerde, and, of course, Bake had me as an assistant. So what the two Dutch scholars did was to swap assistants. Now, actually it didn't work out quite like that, but I went to Holland and I stayed. On one occasion I stayed with Felix. Another occasion I stayed with Jaap Kunst for two weeks, and Katy Kunst. So I got to know them fairly well, but I got to know more about ethnomusicology, because he was starting in Amsterdam, the University of Amsterdam, a kind of a center which had a lot of photographs of musical instruments and so on. He knew that I was

interested in musical instruments at that time, so we swapped photographs and drawings. I'd made some drawings of instruments, and I gave copies of those to his archive, and he gave me a lot of stuff for my own personal research, copies of them. So I think that what I learned about ethnomusicology was really more from those two weeks with Jaap Kunst than from Bake, because one, when we talked about music we were actually talking about classical music and musical treatises and so on. We were not really talking much about ethnomusicology. We were talking about folk music and all, but not from the standpoint of analysis or anything like that, but just that this is interesting, and so he would show photographs, and his lectures were not very technical. As a matter of fact, he only used to lecture one hour a week on Indian music. Then for the rest of the time he would work with a few scholars like myself, and sit with them privately. But his one lecture a week was quite demanding, because he used to write his lectures completely from start to end, and every time, even though he'd given this lecture before, every time it was different. And towards the later part of his life he really enjoyed that a lot, and he would tell me, "Wait until you hear this. Wait until you hear this." And he would not let me see it until the time when it actually happened. So I was sitting there through all of his lectures, and it was fun because he made it an adventure listening to his lectures. They were not technical, and there were not many students. I mean, I can't remember more than twelve or thirteen students, or something like that at any one time, and there was no space for any more than that. All of this was taking place in the basement of a building in Woburne Square, which is damp infested, and, of course, now it's all been torn down and the whole square has been changed radically, and I think part of it's now become SOAS university [?] buildings. At that time the basement was a very interesting place, but my job as research assistant was entirely going there in the morning, and, of course, in the later part of his life after he'd had an accident I would escort him. I would go and pick him up in Kensington where he stayed. I'd go from Northwood where I lived, all the way to Kensington, and then from there to SOAS, which is, you know, quite a distance away, because he could hardly walk. He'd had two pins inserted in his legs, because he was a very big man anyway, and the tram accident that they had in Holland, you know, both he and his wife were seriously injured. That stayed with him till the end of his life, that problem. Anyway, it happened in '62 that I was promoted to a lecturer. Of course, Bake had a lot to say about that, and he was very pleased to let me know that he'd succeeded in getting me a lectureship. At that time he had also been commissioned to write a book about Indian music by Oxford University Press, and he wanted to make it a comprehensive book which dealt with folk music, musical treatises, and a lot of present-day classical music. He knew that he wasn't really that well up on present-day classical music. Most of his research

was based on Sanskrit treatises, and a certain amount on folk music, so he wrote about the Charlemagne story in India, and you know, about folk dances in India, and things like that, not specifically about technical issues of classical music. So he asked me to collaborate with him, and he asked John Marr, who's a specialist in Tamil and South Indian classical music, and so we three were to collaborate together in writing this book. In connection with that I was given a sabbatical in 1963-64, to go to India, and Bake and I, we sat and prepared a scheme of where I should travel, to places that he had not been, and collect some of the folk and devotional music of those spots. He had done some little bit in Gujarat. He'd done very little in Maharashtra, very little in Andhra Pradesh. He'd been further south in those places, mostly, and, of course, he had not been to Orissa, Bihar, and Bengal he knew very well, but U. P. not so well. So I focused in those areas, and I went to India with a van, a Volkswagen van which I had shipped out there. Now, the van had facilities for a minimal amount of heating up of food. It had a little cooker in the door, and it had sleeping facilities. It was a Volkswagen van.

1.4. TAPE NUMBER: II, Side Two (
February 19, 2007)

JAIRAZBHOY

So I had the van shipped to India, and all kinds of complications arose with that van, but finally we went back to England with the van intact, and managed to sell it. That van was purchased by me personally, not by the university, but the university did provide me with tape and so on, and I already had a Nagra recorder at that time, so somehow we managed with that. Now, soon after I got to India, like a month later, I got a telegram from Corry Bake saying that Bake had passed away. That was shattering, because everything was so far geared to working with him, and now I have to think about how to proceed on my own, and it was very difficult because I hadn't even thought of what I'm going to do and so on, you know. What would be the point of my going to do this research in the field if we didn't have the complementary materials of Bake's? Of course I knew something about them, but not that much, and I'd heard most of the recordings, but still there was a lot that he knew that I had no knowledge of. Of course it was language, Bengali in this area. He knew Bengal very well. Anyway, so I was about to give up my trip until Mrs. Bake sent me a telegram saying, "Please continue. Bake would have wanted you to continue." So finally I got over it and I started my field trip. The first part of it was a disaster, because the car, the engine froze, and it's only now two, three thousand miles on the engine. It was near Ahmedabad, not exactly near but in that area, and who can fix it, because there were no Volkswagens in India at that time. There

were Volkswagens in Pakistan, but not in India. India was going about this policy of not allowing importing of cars, so at that time the only cars you could get were ones made in India, especially the Morris Oxford and things like that, which still you see on the roads here. Anyway, they were about the only thing you could find, and older machines that somehow had got there even long before the Partition. Somehow I managed to get a man who took my engine apart, and he managed to fix the broken piston rings. He replaced them with something he said he got from an old Studebaker. Now, how the heck that fit a Volkswagen I don't know, because you know, piston rings have to be a precise size. And he said, "Look. The piston has a crack in it. I advise you not to travel more than 500 miles or so before you get this piston replaced." Well, it was good enough for two or three days in Ahmedabad area, and we were on the road back to Bombay, where I spent one month trying to get a new piston. It was absurd, because firstly, when I wrote to the people who I had bought the Volkswagen from in London, they said that, "Sorry. We cannot send you a piston, because we're not allowed to re-export anything we buy, import. If you import something you can't re-export that, so we can't do that." And I tried Germany. In those times the exchange restrictions made it impossible for me to get anything in Germany, so I could not get—you know, I couldn't persuade them to accept money in pounds. Then I tried Pakistan, and of course, that was absolutely absurd, because the relations between India and Pakistan were not permitting any kind of exchange of goods or anything, so I was stuck. Then I finally said, "All right, I'm just going to take a chance and hope that the piston holds out." And it did. I went on this trip and must have done at least ten, twelve thousand miles more on that car, and had no piston problems. Only once it got stopped and stuck in Orissa, in the coast of Orissa, which was a very dusty and sandy place, and I think what happened was the carburetor got choked up, and I had to get someone from Bhuvaneswar to come. It was on the highway; I mean, what highway? It was not even a highway, because somebody had told us to take a shortcut, and so it was a mud road, dirt road where we stuck. But anyway, we managed to get the driver, who was there with me, who was not the driver actually, he was there to help me drive, and I drove almost all the way round India, 15,000 miles. We managed to get him to go to Bhuvaneswar and bring a mechanic back, and the mechanic cleaned out the carburetor and we were on our way. It was very interesting. It actually turned out every accident that happens, always something good happens, because it turned out that we stopped there in this strange car that nobody had seen, and that was enough to attract people anyway in those days. But I'd hung up all these instruments that I got from the tribal areas, and so anyone passing by would see the instruments, and of course, we would ask them, "Is there any music around?" and so on. And during the time we were stuck there I was able

to record several groups of musicians, very fascinating groups of musicians, too, which I've written about, a little bit about. So anyway, the trip finally had to come to an end sooner than it was intended to. It was about eight, nine months, instead of the whole year, because my wife in England was sick, and so the doctor said that, "You'd better come home." So I cut short the last part of the trip.

CATLIN

So you were continuing in the methodology of Bake in trying to fill in the gaps in his musical survey, documentation survey, mostly non-classical, but actually all of the music, including classical. But when you had started out in England you were mostly interested in classical music, and eventually you brought a sitar, or how did you get your sitar to England, and what were you doing with a sitar during those years?

JAIRAZBHOY

Well, I had a sitar in England. It was in America when I first went to America that I did not have a sitar for several years, so that my sister-in-law brought for me from India. But in England, I went to England from Pakistan, where I had my instruments there, also had a surbahar, and I had taken both of those to England with me.

CATLIN

But the sitar was Amma's black sitar?

JAIRAZBHOY

Oh, gosh, I had several sitars. One of them was a black one, yes. I don't think that's the one I took there. Anyway, most of the time I was practicing on the surbahar, and I did spend one summer in a coastal town called Seaford, when I did nothing but just practice all day long for about two, three months.

CATLIN

With the sitar or surbahar?

JAIRAZBHOY

Surbahar. When I got to England I had known nothing about folk music, no interest in folk music, and didn't expect that I would be interested in folk music and folk traditions, didn't know much about Indian folklore either. So I think it was incidental, but I would never have known anything, I mean, wouldn't even be interested if it had not been for Bake's recordings and materials, his lectures, in which he argued and talked about hobby-horse dances and stick dances and all these things which I now take for granted, but I didn't even know about the existence of those things.

CATLIN

You did have an experience of kathputli.

JAIRAZBHOY

Oh, that's as a child. But you know, once as a child, what used to happen was occasionally you'd have wandering mendicants and musicians. Once an acrobat came along. He claimed he could, you know, fly in the air or something, and so we persuaded our parents to let him come into the garden and perform for us, and he set up this elaborate kind of stretched sheet about two or three feet high. It must have been at least twenty feet long, and he proceeded to jump over it, but while he was jumping he was doing the scissors movement, so he was saying that that's what he was doing, this scissors movement that helped him to fly over this twenty feet or so. It was really just a long jump. Anyway, one of the other things that I can remember from childhood is there were lots of snake charmers. I remember my mother filming a snake-charmer scene, which actually was more than a snake-charmer scene, it was a fight between a snake and a mongoose, and she filmed that whole thing. I remember seeing it again and again, but unfortunately that film is no longer, along with her other films. It disappeared. So we used to have occasional performances in our garden, just entertainment, nothing to make an issue about.

CATLIN

Including the puppetry and the kathputli.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. Puppetry was one of the things that I did see and vaguely remember a smoking puppet. That's about it. I don't remember much more about it.

CATLIN

There was no story that you could follow?

JAIRAZBHOY

Oh no, I wouldn't. I was too young, probably, for that anyway.

CATLIN

So it was Jaap Kunst's influence you think that helped you to work more with musical instruments and other aspects of ethnomusicology?

JAIRAZBHOY

I suppose, yes. Certainly Jaap Kunst was an influence, because he was very interested in collecting photographs of musical instruments, and had a big collection in those days, to which I was able to add a little bit, but mostly it was his collections, and they were quite remarkable for those days. Of course, he had been to various places in Indonesia, and had films from sculptures in Java and other small places. I can't remember too many details.

CATLIN

Flores?

JAIRAZBHOY

Flores.

CATLIN

So even though Bake had traveled with Tagore to Indonesia, he wasn't particularly interested in those types of music, he was entirely dedicated to India. Is that right?

JAIRAZBHOY

No, I don't think that's quite right, but I don't think he did any deep research in it, but he was certainly knowledgeable about some of it, gamelans in music and things like that. Whereas Jaap Kunst, because, he went to this violin and played everywhere, you know, and tried out all kinds of music and so on, while Bake was a singer, and so he didn't, I don't suppose, get to any details with Indonesian music, besides which I don't think he was in Indonesia more than a few weeks, just organizing Tagore's tour, since this was a Dutch colony in those days, and Bake was Dutch, and knew the language and so on. So he helped just to organize the tour.

CATLIN

So as a singer Bake took part also in, as you said, the kirtan. But he also traveled around India with his wife, the pianist, to give programs of European classical music and some of the Tagore songs.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. What happened was that, of course, he was in India during World War II, and finally he found himself stuck. He couldn't go back home. He had a grant from Oxford, I think, or was it Cambridge? Brasenose College, well, had given him a grant, but that grant didn't last very long, so he found himself in India with no funds at a certain time, so he accepted jobs. One kind of job was at a radio station being program advisor or something for Western music at one time, and he also gave concerts at schools and at churches and things like that, with his wife playing piano. And in those he sang both Western and Indian songs. And I remember later on, I remember that he had come to my school, the Doon School, and had also given a concert there, and my memories of it are virtually, hardly existent except to know that they were huge people. Bake was very tall, six-three or so, and very well built, and Corry was very tall for a woman, you know, for an Indian woman. I would say she must be close to five-ten, five-eleven, something like that, so they're big people. That's about my memory, and that his rendering of Tagore's songs was strange but pleasant, but strange. I'd become familiar with Tagore's songs because our schoolteacher then, Mr. Shirodkar, music teacher, although he was a South Indian [Maharashtrian –ed.] obviously, he had studied Tagore's songs, Rabindra Sangeet, and he taught us a number of those songs, and since I was in the school orchestra I used to play them, and I'd also play the sitar or dilruba, you know, in the orchestra. So yes, I'd become familiar with Tagore's songs, but it was a bit strange to hear them sung by a Westerner. It was nice, though. But I didn't remember that until long afterwards that we were talking that he had

been to Doon School and had performed, and then it clicked suddenly, many years afterwards, that I must have seen him. I had seen him.

CATLIN

So after your own musical journey in India to complete Bake's survey, you returned to England. How did you pick up the pieces?

JAIRAZBHOY

Well, firstly, I was no longer in favor. That's the first thing I found, you see. The scene was now dominated by John Marr, who's South Indian, who had been Bake's student at one time also a little bit, not as full-fledged, and Brough, and they cut me out of a lot of things, so that if you look at the obituary written by Marr, there's no mention even of me being his assistant, or being a lecturer in Indian music, or anything like that, completely ignored my being. Then when I got back there, I found that Bake's materials, a lot of them had been put away, and put into boxes, his letters and papers and notes and things, which I'd been familiar with, all tucked away. Recordings were just put in stacks and things like that, and Mrs. Bake was so shattered by the experience of her husband dying that she really never became quite normal after that, I think. I don't know what that means exactly, but anyway, so I found myself quite isolated. I had that position, of course. I didn't lose that position or anything, but my activities within the school were very, very seriously circumscribed until a few years later, when it so happened a curious thing. The director of our school was a gentleman by the name of Phillips at that time. There was a cricket match, believe it or not, a cricket match between students and staff, and I played, of course, for the staff team, and I guess I scored fifty runs or something like that. One of the people in the audience was Professor Phillips, and he didn't even know who I was, because I was very junior. But then the next day he asked me to come and visit him, and then we sat and talked for a little while, and he was impressed by what I was doing and the Bake materials and so on, so forth, and he formed a committee for music, and he asked me to chair this committee. This must have horrified people like Marr and all, because they were certainly more senior to me and all. But Marr was more interested in language, and most of the scholars there, I mean, Father Jones, he was there in African music, but he was not really an administrative type of person, which Phillips decided that maybe I could organize something connected with music. So I became suddenly again, you know, became noticed, and then I managed to get a grant, and I decided I was going to do something about Bake's materials, his recordings which had been sitting in the basement and so on, except for one or two tape copies that I'd made, you know. So I got a grant from the university senate research committee there at University of London, and also a grant from UCLA, by chance. I didn't know anything about UCLA, but happened to meet the archivist at that time. They both gave a grant,

and it was possible for me to get all of these recordings copied by one of my assistants, Alastair Dick. He copied all these tapes, and we worked out how it was the machines of Tefi could be improved, and how the films, which were getting very stiff, you know—part of the problem was the damage to the films themselves, you know, when they're sitting around in all kinds of conditions, they become stiff and not pliable, which is essential for this machine, because they have to go and spin around, and go in curious shapes and so on. But if they're stiff they make a lot of noise, and sometimes they repeat tracks, and so on. So it took a lot of time and trouble to get that all copied onto tape. Then later on conditions were such that we agreed to give UCLA a copy of these tapes, not knowing that someday I was going to end up in UCLA and have a chance to use those same copies, same materials. So then the next thing of importance, because all this time I'm teaching not only Indian music theory, but I'm also teaching performance: sitar, sitar performance. So I still occasionally get word from students who were studying with me in those days. So everything was proceeding fairly normally until we were having our occasional meeting of our committee on music, and we thought that, you know, it's funny that there was no way to communicate, because we had somebody who was in Arabic music, somebody in African music, you know, and we had a couple of other scholars who were involved in Southeast Asian music, not fulltime. Christie was there, and Mundy was there involved in Turkish music, and recording a little bit and so on, and, of course, African music, Father Jones, Tony somebody, I've forgotten the name; I can see his face now. And Rylands was there for South African music. So we talked about the possibility of combining these, and Bake had already proposed many years ago that there be a music center at SOAS. I mean, I don't know that it was even considered. But what happened at this time was that I said, "Well, we don't know what's going on in the rest of the world in ethnomusicology," so I got a grant to go to tour the USA, to go to the main centers for ethnomusicology, and see what's going on. Of course, it wasn't a big grant, so I was happy that two or three places offered to pay me to give a talk on Indian music in those days. So I went to Wesleyan University, and I went to University of Washington, Michigan, and, of course, UCLA, where they still haven't paid me by the way, because they have no facilities unless you have the right type of visa for paying anyone, so they said. Anyway, so then I went back and wrote a report and proposed a center be created. In the meanwhile, a professor from Canada, John Spellman from University of Windsor, came to England to see me, as far as I know he came specifically for that purpose, to invite me to come to Windsor, to leave my job at SOAS, because he said he wants to start in Canada an ethnomusicology program that is comparable to Wesleyan University's program, and offered me a fairly substantial increase in salary and so on. And I

went to SOAS, to the chair. At that time it was T.W. Clarke, who's a Bengali expert, chair of our department. He said, "Oh yes. As soon as any funds become available, I will definitely recommend you for a readership." But not knowing what that "soon as funding becomes available," you know, it could be years, who knows? So I finally decided to accept the position in Canada, and in '69 I moved, and I think had I not moved, we might have had a chance for having a center there much sooner. As it was, it was about fifteen years later, or twenty years later that the center has materialized in SOAS. But when I left, there wasn't anyone to sort of take over from me, and the person who got that position, Jayasree Bannerjee, she was not really interested in any—she was more interested in Tagore songs and singing and giving concerts, not really interested in academia too much. So nothing happened there, and meanwhile I went off to Canada.

CATLIN

When you first went to the States, was it Robert Garfias who helped you through the JDR-3 fund perhaps to attend the SEM meeting for the first time, the Ethnomusicology Society, and to visit those departments where you met people like Robert Brown at Wesleyan, and T. Viswanathan and Jon Higgins, where you discussed their dissertations with them and progress being made, and Charles Seeger and Ann Briegleb at UCLA, and even Mantle Hood there briefly, very briefly, and, of course, Garfias in Seattle?

JAIRAZBHOY

And Bill Malm in Michigan, and Judith Becker. Yes. When I went to America to look at ethnomusicology programs I also attended the ethnomusicology, S.E.M., Society for Ethnomusicology meeting, and also visited these places. Garfias was the one person who did get funding for me to cover my travel expense, that is from England to America. But then apart from that, going from place to place was covered by a University of London grant, just you know, a barely minimum sort of thing. Yes, it was very interesting to see the program at UCLA, which was incredible at that time, how well developed it was, and meet the faculty.

CATLIN

And during those years in London you said things were going along normally in the sense that, well, you had published that article with Stone on intonation. Then there were a few articles, one on Vedic chant, which was published in French in the French encyclopedia of sacred music, and the article on Islam in India and Pakistan, and the music. So those were the main publications.

JAIRAZBHOY

And the BBC talks.

CATLIN

Yes. Those were not published, but that's what you were keeping busy with, making sense out of your field trip, and writing your book.

JAIRAZBHOY

The book on rags, which was actually published in '71, but it was completed in '68 before I left for Canada.

CATLIN

And one of the recordings, the Orissa recordings were released also, the folk music of India, Orissa, on Lyrichord. Then you had a few pseudonym recordings released as a sitarist on Curried Jazz, for instance. You were playing with some of the pop groups in England on the sitar.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes.

CATLIN

Why did you publish as a pseudonym, Dev Kumar?

JAIRAZBHOY

Well, I didn't know how it would be regarded by SOAS, you know, if I'm doing what is called moonlighting, and I didn't want to do it except that I needed the money badly. Salaries were incredibly poor in those days for faculty lecturers, so I was moonlighting, because I had a family to support and all that.

CATLIN

What were some of the bands you played with?

JAIRAZBHOY

Gosh. Incredible String Band, yes. I did one recording with the Rolling Stones, but I never saw them. And there were a few sessions like that, programmes for television I did the sound for.

CATLIN

What about the film with Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton?

JAIRAZBHOY

Oh, that, yes. That was called Boom! and the shooting was in Sardinia, so I had two weeks' expenses paid trip to Sardinia, which was very nice. The film was a complete flop. Most of the recording that I did for it they cut out in the final film, so you won't hear much of what we played. Only one or two shots in there show me and Viram Jasani.

CATLIN

You and Viram Jasani, who was another sitarist, your student?

JAIRAZBHOY

He was my student, yes. He did is M.A. under me.

CATLIN

So this was the sixties, and Indian music was coming in because of the Beatles. The sitar was becoming so popular, and that was another way that you used the

music that you knew as a performer. But you also performed purely classical in concerts, or did you give programs?

JAIRAZBHOY

Not really concerts, more demonstrations.

CATLIN

But you recorded other artists during that time. That's when the interest was really booming, beginning to boom for Indian artists to come to England, and that's how you recorded people like Imrat and Vilayat Khan, Ali Akbar Khan, and Ravi Shankar. And you interviewed them as well, so that became part of your collection of recordings, the NI series from '64 to '69, and photographs are there as well, and the photographs and film that you made in '63-64 were also archived at SOAS.

1.5. TAPE NUMBER: III, Side One (
February 19, 2007)

CATLIN

—2007), interview with Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy by Amy Catlin Jairazbhoy in CCI, Room 202, Mumbai, India. It was during that time in London that you wrote your dissertation, which was published as a book. Can you tell us about how you started that book, how you conceived of the design of it, and what you think the most important elements of the book are?

JAIRAZBHOY

Well, it started out by my once going to Professor Brough and saying, "I would like to do a Ph.D. dissertation, submit and do a Ph.D." And he said, "Well, you don't need to do a Ph.D. You've got a permanent position, and there's no need for you to have a Ph.D." I said, "No, nevertheless I'd like to get a Ph.D." So I submitted a proposal to do a Ph.D. on the writings of Bhatkhande. Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande was, of course, the main scholar of Indian music at the beginning and in the early part of the last century. Bhatkhande had written various volumes in Marathi, and these had been translated into Hindi. Now, I unfortunately did not know Marathi well, but I had now become familiar with Hindi, at least the script, a Devanagari script, was studying it and, of course, Sanskrit. So I decided that I was going to read his four volumes, amounting to possibly 2,000 pages, in the Sangit Shastra series. He has two series. One has about six or seven volumes, which is concerned with, actually, the compositions that he had recorded and notated. So he had not recorded on tape, but from oral transmission he had transcribed these songs, and he has numerous volumes of songs, compositions like khyal, dhrupad and so on, which he had notated in this series of six or seven volumes called Kramik Pustak Maliha, or KPM. But that's easy to read because there's only a one-half page description of

each rag, you know, concerning the main characteristics of its ascending line, descending line, which scale type it belongs to, and so on. And then the compositions themselves, which are written in this transcription system, the notation system which is mostly syllabic, and his emphasis really on the notes rather than the subtleties of rhythm, although the rhythm indications are there, and sometimes he would use commas, which we don't really know why, what they mean exactly. But my concern was that my dissertation proposal was about Bhatkhande's contribution to Indian music, and so that I'd submitted and it had been approved. So I started this task of reading the Sangit Shastra, his books, which had been translated into Hindi, and I had been told that there was a very reasonable translation of the original Marathi. Anyway, so all my work was based on the Hindi, and not the original Marathi. Well, I started reading these books and I found them fascinating absolutely, and there were so many hints of things which he never developed, never developed any ideas on. One of the main things that he had contributed was that Indian classical, North Indian classical music was based on ten basic skill types called thaat. Now, no clear definition of what a thaat is, but he does attempt to give a definition, according to which I found there are thirty-two possible scales if you follow his definition, but only ten of those became recognized as thaats. The others either did not exist, or maybe one or two did exist, but they were not important in terms of numbers of rags, so I found that these ten thaats of his had several rags in each one of those scale types, whereas in the remainders I discovered if there were any rags, there would be only a single solitary rag in that, so it was single-scale-based rag. The other thing I discovered was that those ten thaats are the most consonant, had the most number of consonances of all of fourths and fifths. The others, the remaining twenty-two, had fewer consonances and dissonances, I mean fewer consonances. So there were two good reasons, but still it was interesting to find out how these might have evolved. Now, Bhatkhande does not discuss evolution, hardly at all. His notion is that, oh, if something that he reads in his treatises, and this is one of his strong points is that he's constantly discussing music based on treatises written in Sanskrit, because he was, after all, a pundit, that means he's a Brahmin, but also a lawyer, and both elements show up very strongly in his work. He's very erudite, so he was able to read these treatises and discover that, oh, there had been differences, that modern-day music didn't really fit exactly the old traditions; not in old traditions, 200 years ago, treatises weren't exactly the same. Now, he did not say that that must have been a case of these rags evolving to the present stage, but he said, oh, that must be in a different tradition. So he finally came to the conclusion that there was no treatise that dealt exactly with modern-day practice. So he did something very sharp, and this is his legal mind. He composed one in Sanskrit, and writing it purposely in slightly archaic language,

called Srimal Lakshya Sangitam. This work, of course, was based on modern-day practice, but nobody knew that, and he did not claim that he had written it. In fact, he said, "The author was Chatura Pandit." Chatura means clever. Chatura Pandit would mean clever scholar, so this work is written by a clever scholar. Several years later somebody confronted him with this and said, "Look. Are you not the author of this?" and he had to admit finally. But in initial stages he said, "No. I found this manuscript, and this manuscript deals exactly with modern-day music." And so he describes all the rags and so on, based on modern-day practice. Earlier treatises, all the treatises like Pandit Ahobala's Sangit Parijat, and Ragatarangini, which is by Locana Kavi, these works, although only two or three hundred years ago, and Maan Kautahal [SP?], which is a Hindi treatise written in Jaipur, but you know, and Man Singh Tonwar's, in his reign, all of those showed differences between that period and this period. So he concluded that, well, there must have been different traditions. He did not see any—think of evolution. The reason, of course understood, is because in Indian music you learn so closely, exactly what your teacher teaches you that the idea is that the tradition won't change. But when I looked at these rags and saw some of his conclusions, and how each rag he says, "Now, in such-and-such a book 200 years ago, 300 years ago, this was the scale, and then in this book 200 years ago, if this was the scale, and now it is, it's this scale." I began to see patterns of evolution, that the changes were coming gradually. By, one period after another, one note would be different only, and it seemed like, golly, there's got to be a reason for this change, and that this must be evolution, that in spite of everything, you know, the feeling that they were replicating exactly what their teacher had done, they were expanding somehow or the other in areas which was not noticeable, so in one generation you would not notice that, oh, okay, this note is getting more, more, more frequent, but not to the exclusion of the other until the next generation. So in several generations it would happen, and then the note would change gradually from one to the other. Then, of course, the thing to do is to say, why was this going on, and I started thinking about it and I found, well, the first important thing is that there's a tritone in all diatonic scales, and going back to ancient times we've had this basic diatonic modal system called jati. Reflections of those jatis are still in six of the ten thaats. These are diatonic-type scales, which means that there's no interval bigger than a full tone. The two intervals in the scales are whole tones and semi-tones, whole tones and semi-tones, whatever order they might be in. There was no such thing as what we would now call a chromatic scale [actually, ‘Arabian scale' – ed.], which is a tone and a half, and a semi-tone, making up a third. Now, this did not occur in ancient India, and so where did this begin? That's the first problem that came up. Then when I started to study this I found that somehow there were two

possibilities. One was that this interval is brought into India, this augmented-second interval was brought into India from Arabic countries, and there was a rag which is called Hejuji in South India, which had been equated with Hejaz, the place in their republic that probably was the origin of this. This Hejuji, very interestingly I found that this scale was a chromatic scale [actually, ‘Arabian scale' – ed.]. Now, interestingly enough there was a work that I found out by Adil Shah the second, in Bijapur. I think he called it Kitab-i-navras, in which he himself composed texts of songs, and indicates which rag they're to be sung in. So these songs are very interesting, because some of them are to Muslim saints, and others of them are dedicated to Hindu deities, so he's, although a Muslim himself, he was very much into both traditions, both religions. So these compositions are particularly interesting to me, because four manuscripts had been found of these Kitab-i-navras. In the four manuscripts one particular, this Hejuji rag, this composition says it's to be sung in Hejuji. Same composition is said to be sung in rag Bhairav in another manuscript, so two manuscripts said it's to be sung in rag Hejuji, and two other manuscripts said it was supposed to be sung in Bhairav. Now, Bhairav, I find, has exactly this augmented second in it. Hejuji in South India had the same augmented second in it, and there was also in North India a Hejaz, which also had an augmented second. So the theory, and this was not my own notion, because Bake had proposed that Bhairav had been introduced into India from Hejaz. Well, that was one possibility. But this didn't account for certain other phenomena. One of them is that rag Bhairavi—now, this did not have an augmented second. It was the E mode, which has flat second, flat third, sixth and seventh all flat. This E mode, somehow the rag Bhairavi, you see, was originally at that time called Todi. So Todi, the rag Todi, was in this Bhairavi mode which we now call Bhairavi, but at that time it was called Todi. Present-day Todi, however, has not that scale, but has two different notes. It's gone from the natural fourth, which has now become the sharp fourth, and the flat seventh has become the natural seventh, two different notes. Now, I was building up a theory of evolution. Evolution meant changing of one note at a time, so one rag would gradually change one note, and then it would become another scale type, and so I had been organizing these scale types in terms of one-note differences, and now here we have a case where this rag Todi, which was in Bhairavi thaat, E mode, now becoming a different scale with this augmented-second interval. Okay. Now in South India this Todi still maintains that scale that was in two or three hundred years ago in North India, but somehow in North India, it had changed to this day. Now, I wondered what was behind it, and then I started thinking more and more about it, and then I realized that one-note change would have made it into what is called the equivalent of the B mode. Now, the B mode is the one which has always in Western music been regarded as diabolus in musica, that is, the

devil in music, because the B, the tonic of that scale, does not have a fifth. It has a diminished fifth. So it was one of those modes that was decried. In Western music nobody would perform it. It was there just to complete the series, and looked like this was a parallel to that occurring in North India, that the scale that would have been in the middle of the two would have been the equivalent of the B mode. Subsequently I have even found that probably the B mode may have been known in ancient India, too, because that we called the jati Dhaivati, and is described as having the most horrible effects. See, it's used for horror and horripilation and bhayanika and fear, fear and horror. Those effects were created by using this mode, so we don't know whether it was ever used, but if it was okay, because in drama they may have needed that sentiment, so they would use it. Now, what happens is that then I said, look, okay. We have this scale, Bhairavi, and we have now this new rag Todi scale. In between there must have been another scale. So I started looking at more modern works between two hundred years and the present time, in other words a hundred, hundred and fifty years ago, and sure enough I found a rag called Marg Todi, which had that scale. Now, that scale is the B mode. It is very, very erratic. It's very unstable, and because it, for instance, has a leading note to the fifth, not a leading note to the tonic, so it's a flat seventh going to the tonic, with a sharp fourth going to the fifth, so it would tend to shift its tonic anyway. It would not be a stable rag to perform. So the hypothesis is that it existed, but it had evolved beyond that in a very short time, because it was not a stable scale. Now I found that going on from Todi, now some of the rags, even today, called Bhopal Todi and Vilas Khani Todi, still have that same Bhairavi scale; that means of the E mode. But going to the Todi scale now are other rags like Gurjari Tod, Miyan ki Todi, and Multani, have this other scale, so it's become a legitimate thaat since then, even though – in other words, this suggests that on the one hand we have this idea of the augmented interval coming into Todi for the first time. Now, looking at it from the other side, that is, going to the F mode, which is Kalyan thaat, now there's an equivalent interesting problem, because theoretically Kalyan thaat, how does that evolve, and where does it evolve into? On the one side it was into Bilaval, which we know, and goes in a sort of a circle. But on the other side, see, we've got a rag called Yaman Kalyan, which has major seconds and sharp fourths, major intervals plus a sharp fourth, and Puriya Kalyan. Now, Puriya Kalyan is interesting because it has a flat second and a sharp fourth. Obviously the Kalyan suggests a connection, see? Yaman Kalyan and Puriya Kalyan, so there must have been a connection, and the connection is that there's only one note difference, and that is this flat second, okay. It's the only difference. Now, if you look at that scale type, which Bhatkhande named Marva thaat, not Kalyan or Puriya Kalyan thaat but Marva thaat, and you look at the next scale, Marva itself, I mean the rag

Marva. The rag Marva is hexatonic. It only has six notes, and has no pa, no fifth. Now, if you look at the scale of Marva, the scale itself, the scale type, the thaat, you find that the pa has no perfect fourth, right? It has an augmented fourth going downwards to re flat, or up a diminished fifth, going up from pa to re flat. It does not have a proper fifth. Now, what is the choice? By definition you cannot flatten or sharpen the sa and the pa. The sa and pa are regarded as immovable notes. You can't make a flat pa out of it; that's not permissible. So what options are there? The only option is to leave out the pa completely. Once you leave out the pa, it also affects the sa, because the sa then no longer has a fifth. When that happens you have to leave out the sa, too. Very strange that three of the most prominent rags in this Marva thaat all leave out the pa, and Marva is thought to begin (sings up: dha ni re ga ma dha; down: dha ma ga re ni dha; dha- ni re—sa). Sa only appears at the end, whole long passages without either the sa or pa. So it's very interesting that somehow this augmented interval also appeared in Marva thaat, connected from Kalyan. Now, you have Todi thaat on one side, you have Marva thaat, and the difference between the two is just one note, two notes, sorry, two notes, and that suggested there must be another scale in between, and that, of course, is Purvi thaat, the other thaat. So if you now added from Marva thaat to Purvi thaat, to Todi thaat, to this hypothetical Marg Todi and Bhairavi, and Asavari, and Kafi, Khamaj, Bilaval, Yaman, and then to Marva, you found a complete circle in which only one note changes each time. Nine of these in the circle constitute nine of the thaats. The tenth one is Bhairav, which we know from Bake's suggestion and other evidence, too, that was introduced into India and does not belong to the circle of thaats. An exact parallel for this occurs in the Western key system. Now, we have a Western key system in which you have a circle also there, which is very similar to the circle here, with some minor differences. The Gypsy scale does not fit into the key system either, and the Gypsy scale is like, for instance, the whole-tone scale of Western music. In other words I realized that, okay, so this is external to the system, yet it is close enough to interact with the circle, and the point at which it interacts is Purvi and Bhairav, only one note difference between them. So Bhairav, although it does not fit into the circle, is connected to it by a kind of a tangent, and could well have come to existence. So here's what, to boil this down to something short. I found that there was some kind of a logic in the reason for these ten thaats being chosen as ten thaats, and I played around with these scale types a lot to see what other patterns I could find, and so on. It's interesting that I have a diagram of a structure I constructed, a three-dimensional structure in which if you look at it, the ten thaats are all on the outside edge, because they are the most consonant. Others are all in the middle, including Bhairav thaat is not one of the most consonant ones, so it's interesting that these scales are the most prominent, and the reason for the B mode not

occurring, Marg Todi, is because it in itself is like the B mode, unstable, and so it just evolves. Now, it meant that somehow this tritone has to be perceived at some level or the other. In Western music when you have harmony you can immediately see a tritone, because it doesn't have a consonant fourth or fifth. You know, it'll sound discordant. So how is the tritone to be perceived in Indian music? I came up with this notion that you not only perceive intervals when this is performed together, but memory of a series of intervals lodges in the mind, and this is being replicated on a tetrachordal level in the first place. So in other words, if you have a phrase, for instance, (sings ˆpa dha ma ga--), you will have a corresponding phrase likely to come up with (sings re ga sa ni--) as a perfect symmetrical unit. Now, that meant that, okay, rags now were being structured into patterns. Now, these patterns initially probably were very simple, that is, direct imitations. But you have to understand that Indian music has been going a long time, and like Western music, you know, what used to be considered discordant ages ago in Western music is no longer considered discordant now, and whole jazz series are based on diminished fifth chords and things like that, which are dependent on what perception, a changing perception as we grow and get more used to certain things. So the first thought I had was that, okay, initially maybe it was all very simple symmetries. But I mean, the mind can see here relationships. Most important thing about rags is that the phrases, the nuclear phrases with which it was composed, have to be related to each other. Otherwise you'd feel like you're jumping from one mode or mood to another. They have somehow to be in a consistent fashion, and the whole idea of a rag carrying a certain mood, that implied that these phrases that are nuclear phrases of the rag are in some way connected to each other. Now, not that I have discovered, or I discovered all the types of connections, but I knew that looking at just the simple, obvious connection was not going to be satisfactory, and I found that over and over again in rags we have a simple symmetry, and yet something very complex would be used more commonly in that rag. So I thought, well, what kinds of symmetry? And here I've taken a leaf from the twelve-tone book, you know, but I knew nothing about the twelve-tone system or anything at that time when I was writing this book, and I said, okay, well, can we recognize other forms of symmetry, like reverse symmetry or inverted symmetry? Then I found that, hey, so many examples of inverted symmetry occur in North Indian music, so that if you're looking for simple patterns then you're misunderstanding. Okay, there are a few simple rags that are consistently not made more complex, but nearly every rag which has simple symmetry also has some complex formulations which are related to it, and so it does have not the simplest patterns. The obvious is not always desirable, and so it becomes more complicated but more interesting. The thesis is that there is a connection between the various nuclear phrases in the rag. You see, definitions of rag, you

say, well, it's not a tune and it's not a scale. But what we want to see is really what it is. It is something that's composed of patterns of notes, and these patterns are related in some way to each other, to create some kind of a unifying whole. So if you're listening to a rag, someone hits a wrong note you immediately realize that this is out of that pattern. You don't even have to understand it intellectually, because these patterns are related internally. Okay, now, going away from all of this for a minute, I was now, having read Bhatkhande's works completely twice, I went through it rather painfully, because some of it is very Brahmanical language, it's not commonly spoken kind of language, even in the translation it's very pedantic sometimes, but it's very clever and he is really a genius in this respect, that any time he comes across something that he thinks might be controversial, the format that he uses in presenting all of this is that it's a student and he is a teacher, and the student is asking questions. So when there's an awkward spot where the obvious thing is such-and-such, he would get the student to say, "Are you trying to say that this is what you're saying?" And he would say, "In a way, yes," but you know from the way he's written it that that's what he's leading up to. There is no student asking this question. He is trying to put that idea across, but not saying it out straight so that it can be criticized. So it's very cleverly written. However, my feeling was that, hey, I want to not just write about Bhatkhande. I want to go beyond Bhatkhande, because I'm discovering things from Bhatkhande's work which is taking me way away from that dissertation topic of Bhatkhande's contribution to North Indian music. I found that the circle of thaats that I discovered, and patterns of symmetry and relationship, and evolution, proof that rags had evolved, and all except for two rags, I could explain evolution. Those two rags you probably know are Sri rag, which differs quite radically from olden times to present-day times, and Hindol, which in South India is like Malkauns, but here is exactly the opposite scale. So now for some reason those two seem to have evolved in a different way than all the other examples I could find, and all of the other examples seem to go from one step to another on the circle, except for those two. So I said, well, there may be a different reason for that. It's like a semi-tonal shift of the tonic somehow. How, I don't know, but if you did it, all the notes would change from flats to natural, and so on. So something like that may have accounted for it. Now, I then began writing all my thoughts down. One of the chapters is dealing with, firstly, you know, no clarification about what is an ascending note, or what's an ascending line, to try and clarify what is meant by that, and to develop clear definitions of technical terms. That was a very important thing I had to start with. Then, of course, scales, the theory of scales, and how there could be thirty-two, but only ten are meaningful, and why they're meaningful, and then to go on from there to talk about how evolution proves this circle, which incidentally nobody bothers to

read, or nobody has commented on. Then how does change come about? In a situation like this where you have to do exactly what your teacher said, how then does change come about when you have to sing exactly the same way as he sings? It must come about so subtly that it is hardly noticed, or it is barely noticed, not unacceptably noticed. So it may take more than one generation for a note to go through this process of being from a natural to a flat. So it might be that in one stage the flat would appear as an accidental, just a little use, and then that accidental use would grow more and more, and then it'll be used in the descending line as well, and gradually it turns out that the natural becomes an accidental, and the flat becomes a regular note. So the emphasis shift from a natural to a flat may not be sudden; it's probably not. It's probably gradually done. The other thing is that there are many different traditions in North India, they called gharanas and so on. Why is it that they almost always are similar, not exactly the same, but very similar? There's something going on here which is an internal mechanism for change, which is operating in all of them. It's not that one is influenced directly by the other, but there must be some weaknesses within a scale type that would manifest itself here in Calcutta, and here in Bombay, and there in Agra, in the same general way. Then you start thinking about this. Hey, maybe there's evidence of change existing now. That is, if you look at one tradition you might find that one tradition has a flat in it, and another tradition does not. For instance, the rag Tilak Kamod has only an E natural according to Vilayat Khan's tradition, but according to Bundu Khan's tradition it has an E flat as well. So you can say that there's a process of evolution going on there right now in the present time. Of course in India they had a very big conference, international conference I think, I mean national conference in North India on Indian music I think in 1918 or something, in which one of the biggest issues was, should Tilak Kamod have a flat seventh or not? Which is the right way? Instead of asking why there should be this, both versions, which is the right one? Because the motive there was to try and standardize things so it'd be easier to teach in schools and colleges, and that's one of the purposes of Bhatkhande, to try and simplify things so that it will be possible to teach, so he tries his best to smooth out differences between different gharanas and so on. But even now you can see that there are generation differences that show that there are more, that change is going on even now. Then I went on, trying to locate—what is the interesting thing is that North Indian music is thought to have no harmony, I mean Indian music, because there's a consistent drone in a piece. But now, one of the interesting things is that, say the tonic and the fifth are the most commonly used drones. So how do you rest sometimes on a note which is not the tonic or the fifth? In fact, in almost every rag there has to be some other resting point as well, if not more than one, as though resting on the tonic and the fifth is boring. I mean,

that's there, the drone, so what's the fun of that? We want to challenge that. And so I started looking for a reason to challenge this static sa-pa drone, tonic-fifth drone. Now, what are the dynamics of the rag? So I started thinking in terms of two criteria. One is this static influence, which is sa and pa, and the other is the dynamic melodic movement that takes one—what is the logic that takes oneto a note other than the sa and the pa? Why do you sometimes in some rags end on the re? Because certain patterns are repeating, and if you repeat a pattern like [sings descending] la, la, la, la; la, la, la, la; la – la -- but re is where you ended up because of pattern repetitions. So what happens is that the dynamics of the rag often challenge the static elements of the drone, and so you get this contrast between the two, and this is a kind of harmony that we're talking about wherein other notes, other than the sa and the pa, are brought into emphasis against the sa and the pa. So you may have sa, re, pa occurring, and sa, ga, pa, and various other combinations, even ni, natural ni, which is considered dissonance, and the worst dissonance, the most leading note. That is used as a terminal note in several rags. Why and how? How does the rag structure itself? So now I'm discovering that, okay, part of the beauty is harmony in Indian music, that is, against that static you introduce another note that produces, or other notes, that produce different harmonic structures within that scheme. Like the beauty of it is how this melody takes you to another point than the drone, and when you sing that a little while, then the static elements of the drone take over, and so you've got (sings re--), because the re wears out. But the reason for you coming to re wears out, the logic wears out, and then the drone logic takes over, so the drone ends and begins your music, but it is not the end-all of the music. The end-all of the music is how you play with that drone, how you produce this new harmony element, a new type of element which contrasts the dynamic motions with the static motions. This is actually where I had got up to, you know, discovering at the end of the book that, my god, there's a whole book ahead to be written, but I can't continue it all endlessly, you know. So this is what happened, was that in my personal life I had a wife and an early daughter, and adopted three children as stepchildren, and my wife's parents, and I was supporting them all in this house, and there was so much confusion and chaos, and I had a basement to myself, and I used to go down to the basement regularly every day, every evening, and write for two or three hours until the middle of the night almost, and did all sorts of interesting things, like produce my Conch Shell Suite, which is a kind of, what do we call it, a music-concrète type of thing, playing around with tape recorders and doing multi-tracking and so on, and slowing speeds and all.

CATLIN

We call it musique-concrète now, but you didn't know about musiq-concrète at that time.

JAIRAZBHOY

No, not when I was doing it, no. At that time I had no idea. It was just a game for me.

CATLIN

Using one of your field recordings, from Orissa, from the Musical Journey.

JAIRAZBHOY

Right. So this amazing recording of a man playing two conch shells at the same time, and producing dissonances and discords. And then he said that his father used to play five conch shells, and I couldn't imagine what would happen, so I started playing around with different conch-shell sounds, and found myself doing multi-tracking and things like that just for the fun of it, and I'm talking now about in the sixties, '66, somewhere around there, or '65. Then I was writing this book, of course, and the book was finished in '67. Then I was very lucky, because I had submitted it to Faber & Faber. Faber Music was kind of well known then, and I happened to know one of the editors in Faber Music, and when I talked to him he said, "Why don't you submit it to us? We'll see." And they approved it. Okay, and now I went through a tedious time where he sat with me, virtually going through every line, and he said, "Well, what exactly do you mean by that? Is this the best way to express it?" and so on. His name is Martin Kingsbury, and I am grateful to him because in a sense, you know, he taught me how to think clearly, and to say things more clearly than ever before, you know, because I was dealing anyway with musical ideas and thoughts that had never been expressed before, so it was already an exploration. But if I couldn't communicate to Martin Kingsbury, he wasn't going to accept it, so I would have to rewrite. And so it took about two years of rewriting, you know, before it would sat…—

1.6. TAPE NUMBER: III, Side Two (
February 19, 2007)

CATLIN

Two years of rewriting, meeting every week with Martin Kingsbury.

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes, right. And, you know, he did his homework and he read it carefully, and he would question this sentence here and this sentence there, and say, "What do you mean by that?" And, of course, he knew Western music, so he was open to ideas and so on.

CATLIN

But none of the faculty in the university were involved in the writing or the rewriting process?

JAIRAZBHOY

No, no one at all.

CATLIN

What would Bake have thought of it, do you think?

JAIRAZBHOY

I can't even imagine. He liked some of my ideas about present-day North Indian classical music. In fact, one of his articles I contributed—anonymously of course; he didn't credit me with it—my thoughts on thaats. He put it in one of his German articles where he uses those ideas, so I think he would have probably approved of it. Anyway, he was already gone several years, I mean dead, you know. So anyway, the thing was that now became the problem, they needed to find a publisher in America to support it, because they said they can't really pay for it all just from publishing in England, so they needed a joint publisher in America, and it was submitted to the University of California Press, who turned it down. The reviews were, one of them was like this. "Why is there no discussion of taals? Why is it only about rags?" I mean, that's what the book is about. "Why no discussion of rhythm?" Because I mean, that's not the purpose of it. Finally they turned it down because they said that, "This would be not of sufficient interest to the people," so they would not find a market for it, the book. Then it was submitted after that to Wesleyan University Press, who accepted it, and they did the joint publication. They had no objection with it, because they were developing ethnomusicology anyway, in a big way at Wesleyan University. University of California Press is at Berkeley. They had nothing going there in ethnomusicology. UCLA did, but that's not part of UCLA's province, you know. University of California Press is Berkeley. So anyway, Wesleyan University Press did accept it.

CATLIN

And then how was the book received when it came out, and how was it received at the university when you submitted it for your dissertation?

JAIRAZBHOY

Now, then came the next step. You see, I was wondering, you know, I'm not going to finish my dissertation on Bhatkhande, I mean his contribution, because I've gone so far away from that point of view, you know. And then someone suggested, "Well, why don't you submit your book?" And in 1971 the book was finally published, okay, "So why don't you submit that as your dissertation?" So before it was published I proposed a change of topic, and gave my present-day topic, I mean rags in North Indian music, their structure and evolution, as a new title, and gave a synopsis of the book and so on, which they accepted. Then interestingly enough, the regulations state that you can submit a book as a dissertation, a published book as a dissertation. So I submitted it and in '71 I went to England, already had moved to Canada, went back to England to defend the dissertation, and that was a harrowing experience because I guess all

of the faculty there resented the fact that I had deserted England to go to Canada, or to the New World. But they gave me a really difficult time at moments, because one of them, John Burton Page says, "I always said that a good book does not make a good dissertation, nor a good dissertation make a good book." Silence after that, and then he says, "However, I may say that this may be an exception." And so it was approved. No major criticisms came out, very tiny ones like, why didn't I spell ragini with a dot under the N, instead of ragini as it is pronounced in modern times. After all, that's a Sanskritic way of spelling it. But nowadays we don't say ragiNi, we say ragini with a natural N, but this was criticized. That kind of level of criticism only, in the transliteration. But otherwise, it was thought to have sufficient merit to deliver a Ph.D. Now, in all of this Ph.D. process I never had to take any examinations or anything, never had to do language tests or anything like that. The fact that I had written this book, and that it had enough proof of all of that, meant that I did not need to do any special coursework or anything for a Ph.D. Besides which I'd been teaching in SOAS anyway.

CATLIN

Then what was the general reception to the book beyond the dissertation committee and the publishers? Were there other reviews that appeared, and so forth?

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes. One review appeared in London in the Times literary supplement, which started out by accusing me of deserting England and going abroad, called it the brain drain, without realizing the fact that it was already the brain drain because I'd come from India to England, and I wasn't an English person anyway. But I mean other than that, you know, emphasizing things rather than what the subject matter of the book was, which I found on several occasions, like one reviewer said, "Why do only nine scales fit into the ten thaats? Why not all ten? And why doesn't Bhairav fit into the circle of thaats?" as though—and giving me no chance to respond to that, because I said, "Look. Read it because it's there, the B mode. It's exactly, an explanation is given there, and I've given proof that it did evolve through that scale." But no mention of those things.

CATLIN

What year was that, do you remember?

JAIRAZBHOY

Yes, I do, but I'm not giving names here if you don't mind. No, I don't think that'd be fair. So yes, there were one or two favorable reviews, too, and I think that I can say Bruno Nettl once apparently thought very highly of that book, and a person told me that he'd been a student, said that he'd commented on it being the best ethnomusicology book of the decade. So I don't know whether that was true, but that's what that student communicated to me. So I think that

there was definitely a kind of—some people were bewildered by it, and some people did appreciate it. I would say that in Illinois there was more tendency to appreciate it than in other parts, and, of course, Charles Capwell as well, he wrote a very good review, very considered review. But basically, it went by the boards with hardly any notice, and to this day that book is seldom referred to by scholars, not even in India. Of course, what's happened in India is that Indian musicology is really Western-derived Indian musicology, and most of the Indian musicologists or musicologists dealing with Indian music are Westerners. So in a sense it's been dominated, in a sense, like views from the outside, views that they wish to see in the music, rather than what Bhatkhande saw and what I saw. Those were kind of internal views, even though I'm not 100 percent internal Indian, but I grew up playing Indian music as a child, and I guess I've always felt, you know, studying Sanskrit treatises and studying Hindi and so on, and studying Bhatkhande's system, singing all those songs, because I went through all of his songs at least twice or thrice, noted where accidentals would go from one gharana to another, and correlated them in one or two pages in my book. So I sort of felt like an insider, and Westerners have a different view about Indian music, and that Western view is dominating Indian music theory. In an article I'm just writing I call it Indo-Orientalism [changed later to Indo-Occidentalism], and that is the way foreigners see in Indian music what they want to see, not necessarily what is really there. For instance, the emphasis on microtones, and there's a big history about that, I don't want to go into it here, but they are fascinated by microtones, and underneath is rankling the fact that Western music went into a tempered semitone system, and dropped all the microtones that would have appeared if they'd stayed with just intonation and intone, you know, [?] temperaments. So they went through different phases, and finally they got rid of all of those subtleties, and in Indian music they find, ah, there are still some intonational differences, intonational subtleties. But they don't want to accept the fact that still North Indian music is also based on a twelve-semitone system, and these microtonal variations only occur in specific places in specific rags, and you can correlate those with, say for instance, the tritone. When a note has no supporting note, it seems like it wavers or it's made too flat or too sharp or something, but that's not the system itself. The system is basically—however, more words have been written about microtones in Indian music, which are called srutis, than any other word in Indian music, and for the whole of the last century Westerners have emphasized all the microtonal aspects of Indian music, therefore not interested whatever in scales, in heptatonic scales or, you know, based on twelve semitones, which is what Bhatkhande's theory and my theories are based on. There's the other thing which seems to be—they feel that thaats are not useful for classification of rags, because accidentals occur and it's difficult to decide which thaat it belongs

to. But what happens is the accidentals always link to the neighboring thaat, so it's something between two thaats, neighboring thaats. They feel that rags are to be classified in terms of families. Now, families are like Kanhra group, that is, rags like Malhar, Kanhra, of groups that are based on a particular phrase or characteristic type of phrase, which is reflected in different ways in different rags. Now, how did these grow? Well, we know, for instance, taking Malhars, that there was a Malhar. Then we do have other Malhars, like Mirabai ki Malhar. Now, a rag made up Malhar, created by Mirabai. Ram Dassi Malhar created by Ram Dass. What it seems like is that these musicians put their own stamp on these rags, and made a new variation. Now, there's no system behind it. It is absolutely whatever one feels like doing. Many of these rags are unpopular. There might be umpteen Sarangs there, fifteen Sarangs, out of which only three or four are well known. The rest are, you know, for erudite musicians, they play around with those things. So to use that as a classification system, it's firstly just a matter of random growth, so I a musician sing a particular phrase, and I thought, hey, I can make another parallel that has not been made by someone else, and so I do that and call it by my own name, or give it a different name, and so if it's accepted by someone, my students might accept it, then it perpetuates in that particular little niche. But it doesn't mean anything, because it's not a systematic, orderly way of development. Sometimes also these change scales. Sometimes, you know, Sarang, which has no ga in it, for instance, suddenly you have Gaur Sarang where ga is the most prominent. So you get even there something evolving in such a way, and somebody creating it and giving it a name. I don't know whether you could talk about families, when families are just random and not orderly productions, you know, not like scale types, which are shown to be systematically defensible.

1.7. TAPE NUMBER: IV, Side One (
August 13, 2007)

CATLIN

—interview with Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy in Valley Glen, California.

JAIRAZBHOY

This section is going to be dealing with my sojourn in Canada. In London everything was going well at the university. My financial problems with bringing up a family were getting worse and worse, because the salary was very poor. So I was obliged to earn extra money through doing talks for BBC, and playing with pop groups, and so on. Then suddenly when I received a grant to go to various ethnomusicological sites in America, I think it was in 1968, and I toured, I went to various places. I went to Wesleyan, and I went to Washington, I went to, I think, Michigan, but certainly went to UCLA, Los Angeles, and

wrote a report and suggested, proposed a center for ethnomusicology be created in the School of Oriental and African Studies, but, of course, knowing very well that they would have no funds to create any such thing. Anyway, everything was going well. I was giving many talks and I was getting on well, but it was a hectic life, and it was very demanding, because I would be giving lessons in the evening to pop musicians and so on, and even jazz musicians, in order to earn enough to keep going, and I was getting steadily further and further into debt, because the salary as a lecturer in those days was really very poor. Then on this trip to USA I encountered a gentleman who had come specifically to see me, I think in Los Angeles. His name was John Spellman, and he was the chair of the Department of Asian Studies in University of Windsor, and he said he was very interested in starting a program at University of Windsor to compete with the program at Wesleyan University. Well, I didn't say anything about that, but he said, "Before you go, why don't you come and give a lecture in Windsor on your way back?", which I did, and it was a miserable lecture because it was freezing cold and bitter and so, and so I didn't think too much about it and went back home, back to England. Then a few months later he came to England with a concrete offer of an appointment of associate professor. He said, "Look. We've got to raise millions of dollars, and make a program that'll compete with Wesleyan, and you'll be the head of that. What's the point of staying in SOAS when there's really no future in it? You know, they have no money," and so on and so forth. Now, I was at that time very happy with certain aspects of the academic world. I was not teaching too much, I was not under a great deal of pressure. I had a lot of good students. I was able to teach M.A. and potential Ph.D. students, and so on, as well as some undergraduate youngsters, so it was really a perfect situation, in fact. But the financial pressures and the temptation of money, which was not anyway going to be more than I was earning with all the extra doings I was doing, extra lectures I was giving or whatever, performances, playing in pop groups and everything else, but that was driving me crazy, and here was this potential that he said, "Okay, I'm going to pay you that much money, and you won't have to do those extra lectures and so on." Well, I don't know. It was a big mistake I think now, but in those days it seemed like an escape from the horrendous problems of financial problems that I was facing, because I knew the only way I could get out of those problems was to sell our house, and that was the only security I had. And by the time we moved to Canada, the whole family, there was no money left over. We were just down to fairly rock bottom. Anyway, we established ourselves in Canada in Windsor, and I started. I was horrified to see, firstly, the University of Windsor, wait a minute, they offered me a place to teach which was a tiny little house that was near the campus. They said, "You can teach here." It had a floor where I could have an office, and downstairs in

what was a living room I would teach sitar and so on, and a place I had to go across a couple of streets and go to give lectures in a university lecture hall. Well, it was fine, you know, and it was good because I had a chance to give a lot of talks in schools in Canada, and Windsor especially, but not only in Windsor. I went to other places, London, Ontario, and various others, occasionally traveling and giving talks, and so on and so forth. I think the program started to develop nicely, but then I had the shocking news that, okay, if I wanted a program to compete with Wesleyan, I would have to raise the money. The university, no, Spellman, no, no department is going to raise any money for me. So I said, "Heck, I don't know how to raise money, and I don't want to. I don't want to spend my time raising money." But I did build up good rapport with a lot of young students, and I found Canada was really an interesting place, fascinating. The only thing that was really awful, well, two things. The weather was—I found it very difficult to bear, because it was just a suburb of Detroit, which the temperatures would go down and there would be sometimes floods and so on. We bought a nice house which occasionally got flooded, and had a sump pump in the basement and so on. So that aspect of it was one of the problems. The other problem was the fact that the department had absolutely no concept of democracy. It was completely a dictatorship, and the dictator was one who took likings to people, and took dislikes to people, and it seemed like he took a dislike to me after about two or three years, after which he started hounding me at every excuse, you know, every opportunity. Well, that's a difficult thing to go into. But one example. Finally with my students felt that, okay, I talked to them, I said, "Why don't we have a project in India, a summer project?" And so I proposed a course in India. Now, most of these kids were just young and didn't have too much financial support, so I gave a number of concerts and lectures and so on, raising money for that, for them. Okay. Everything was fine. I went to the dean and so on, bypassing the chair of the department, and finally when the chair of the department heard about it, he got into a stormy mood and he said, "Not going to allow you to have credit for this," etc., etc. and did the best he could. But the dean stood up for me and said, "No, no, it's fine. It's good. We have faith in you, and we know that you're going to do alright, and the kids are going to be fine and taken care of," and so on. Finally we ended up with about fifteen students, mostly Canadian but one or two Americans from Detroit area. We took them to India in 1974. Luckily—you know, it's difficult to take a group like that without a place to stay. Luckily my family had a sanatarium in Pune, and my brother was so kind enough to arrange it that the whole sanatarium was given over to our students for about six weeks. He put in even Western toilets and everything else, you know. So we went there, and in Pune there was a minimum cost, so that the whole trip after subsidies and all, travel, stay for six weeks, concerts

and everything else, didn't cost more than $700 for any student. That's Canadian dollars. Anyway, it was a very exciting experience, because we managed to get a lot of musicians to come and perform in the sanatarium, among them Abdul Halim Jaffar Khan, my uncle Yacoob Qawwal, V.S. Deshpande and his son, a lot of good—and, of course, R. C. Mehta who came there and gave talks, who's a very famous scholar and head of what's now called JIMS, the Journal of the Indian Musicological Society for many, many years. So they came and gave talks, and then we took the students to various places like the Gandharva Vidyalaya had, one of its residences was in Miraj, so we took the students there and they put on a show of many different performances and so on, of folk traditions. Then we also took the students to villages, including a village called Ambarved and what's the famous one that we went to? Mordari, yes, Mordari village, which is situated right at the base of this mountain on which is the fort of Shivaji. This village, which we have since visited, laid out open arms, you know, gave us all the help we would need. They fed us, they looked after us. We traveled in milk trucks and it was in the monsoon season, so we had to walk a little bit to get out of the—because even vehicles like milk trucks didn't get all the way. Anyway, the day we spent there was a fascinating experience, so that was only one of the things. In the six weeks, every single day, virtually, firstly we had music lessons, vocal, sitar, and tabla, every day. Then virtually every evening we had some kind of performance. Sometimes it was devotional singers, bhajans. Sometimes there were qawwalis. Anyway, the students can't even have imagined what life in India was like. Even I had quite a few experiences which were unexpected. Anyway, the six weeks, and in the final end of the course we divided up and I said, "Look. You can come with me. We're going to go into a tribal area." And others decided, no, they would rather go to the monuments and see the caves at Ajanta and Ellora, see the paintings, which is all right because we had about five people going with us, two with me to the tribal areas. Now, this tribal areas is another story, and I can't go into it in any depth here, but this tribal area the truck, the vehicle we had, which was kind of a station-wagon type of vehicle, broke down and got into the water, because this was the monsoon season. We had to cross water, you know, a swollen river, and we were told this was a narrow place to cross, and we didn't make it, so we were stuck in the middle of the water of this river, and then we were pulled on by a hundred people, many of them tribal people, and had to stay for about three days while the truck was being fixed, and amazingly we found an incredible technician who had retired from working in one of the major cities, because he had a game leg and he wanted to retire. But he knew about cars, and he managed to put a gasket from a Studebaker on our Volkswagen van; not Volkswagen van, but it was an Indian van. So anyway it was a very amazing experience. Eventually we got

out of that place and the trip ended very successfully. Students were thrilled, except I believe a lot of them were smoking ganja, and none of them, of course, in front of me, so I didn't know what they were doing. But to this day they remember that, and they call themselves the Punesians. Now, that was 1974, and to this day they've had meetings in the last few years, every year a meeting of the Punesians. The last meeting was in Toronto, I believe, last year. The same group of students, as many of them as they cared to, and remember, and, of course, then gave me invitations and so on. I have not been able to attend those. But that was a really momentous and wonderful experience, because firstly there were all these performance groups and all this activity going on every single day. Secondly, these kids were really fantastic. I must say, they're wonderful, wonderful kids, some kids that I would like to have as friends forever, only I'm far away from them so I don't keep in touch as much as I should. On the other side of it was that having gone to the Society for Ethnomusicology meetings in '68 and become known there a little bit for whatever reason I don't know, but then when I came back, when I came to Canada I was able to attend meetings, and to my amazement at one of these meetings like perhaps '73 or '72, they elected me as second vice president of the society. Mind you, I had no knowledge of the existence of the society more than four or five years previously, but somehow—okay, I was already involved with the ICTM, which was called the IFMC, International (mistakenly said ‘Indian' – ed.) Folk Music Council, which is now the Indian Council for Cultural Traditions (incorrect: he meant to say ‘International Council for Traditional Music' – ed.), and being on the executive board for some years. But now this SEM played a more important part in my life than I had expected, since being elected to become a board member. Then I was managing to continue my research and so on, and I wrote two or three articles. Firstly I should say that, okay, my book had been completed in 1967, book on rags had been completed in 1967, but it took an awfully long time for it to get published. It was finally published in 1971, when I was in Windsor, and an interesting situation was that while I was in SOAS, before I left for Windsor, I had gone to the head of the department, said, "Look. I want to do a Ph.D.," you know. And he said, "Why do you need a Ph.D.? You've got a position, it's a tenured position. Why do you need a Ph.D.?" I said, "No, I'd like to do it anyway." And I had given a subject which was, you know, Bhatkhande's contribution to Indian music. That was the original title. Subsequently, somebody else has given that title, very different from my approach to it. So now when I left England, of course, there wasn't the same incentive to carry out research, but my book was hanging in the balance. Then somebody told me that, "You can submit your book as a dissertation." So I did do that, and then in 1971 after it was published I did submit my book, and I had to go to England to defend my

dissertation, and that was another interesting thing, but it went very well finally, and I got my Ph.D., went back to Canada to teach. Then my involvement with the SEM and so on was growing faster and faster, and finally as my tensions with the department were growing I found that my involvement with academia was still very strong, maybe even stronger, although in Canada teaching was extraordinary. I only taught undergraduates, and most of them were interested in playing the sitar, or playing the tabla, and not even that interested, but that's all I could do, nothing about anything intellectual. One or two students seemed to be more interested, and one of them, Gordon Thompson, has achieved great recognition. Another one, Tim Maher, got his Ph.D. in psychology, and did awfully good research—he's a sitar student of mine—good research, and I collaborated with him on a couple of papers he wrote, dealing with Indian music. So even though they were only young, beginning students, there was still some kind of a spark there which I very much appreciated in Canada. Now, the pressures on the other hand, within the department, plus the fact that the climate was not really to my liking, forced me to think about the possibility of moving somewhere, and I really would not have done anything about it except that UCLA advertised a position, professor of Asian music. Now, what had happened there was that Mantle Hood had started this Institute of Ethnomusicology, and after some years he had become distressed because they were not getting the funding as an institute, and he was not able to control the teaching schedule, because an institute is primarily concerned with research, not with teaching students, so he had been arguing and fighting for a department of ethnomusicology. Finally, he came up with an ultimatum, and it was something like this, as I hear. There was either he has a department, or he will leave, and it turned out that there were a lot of people very much against him, which was really awful because he did an amazing job. And he left. The position was advertised in 1978 internationally. Now, I said, well, who do I know? So I contacted Professor Bill Malm in Michigan and I said, "Look. Here's this position in UCLA. Should I apply for it?" He said, "Oh, my god! Do not do any such thing. This is a viper's nest." He had got his Ph.D. from UCLA, so he knew a lot about it, but he knew about what was going on, and, of course, Mantle Hood was obviously associated with—I mean, he was obviously associated with Mantle Hood, and must have felt that Mantle Hood had been unfairly treated, which I think, too, was right. So he said, "Don't do it." But you know, I saw that my predicament in the department was awful, because this chair was constantly doing horrible things, and I don't want to mention any of those, that made my life very unpleasant. I had tenure, of course, but that still didn't stop him from making my life miserable in many ways. So I applied. I came to UCLA, gave a talk, and to my amazement, got the job. Everyone must have heard there was a viper's nest, so very few good

applicants applied, and so I was offered the position. Now, at the same time, developments in the Society for Ethnomusicology, they were promoting me for being president of the society. I hardly knew anything about scholarly societies, except for the fact that I'd been second vice president, but I know that it was somewhat cooked up, because the committee selects the candidates for president, and they selected a very weak candidate to run against me, and so I think that that's really why I was elected. Hardly anyone knew anything about me, because I was not even living in the USA, but in 1975 at the Wesleyan University conference, I was elected president of the Society for Ethnomusicology. And following that, not long after that I moved with my family to California, and that was a major step. You can imagine all kinds of anxious moments, because I was entering into what was called a viper's nest as a full professor, but nevertheless I knew that there was a lot of prejudice against non-Western music, so if it hadn't been for Mantle Hood's position, which was a regular tenure-track position, probably they would have tried to close down ethnomusicology. As it was, I arrived in this ethnomusicology world, and people were saying, "You have to be the new messiah!" I thought, what, I have to? I mean, I don't know how this system works. I don't know how anything works. Here I am thrown into being president of the Society for Ethnomusicology, and I didn't know anything about the Society for Ethnomusicology except for a little contact through occasional attendances at conferences as second vice president. Anyway, those two years as president were probably the most unpleasant of my whole life, because nearly everything that happened, I mean every proposal I made was voted down by the board unanimously. Needless to say, some of those ideas that I presented are now very commonly recognized, but at that time it was no comfort. One of the worst experiences in the SEM was when we had—at that time South Africa was an apartheid country, and we had had an advertisement from a university in South Africa for a job position. Now, at one of these meetings some of the members, mostly black I should mention, initiating it, were very upset about the fact that we were accepting advertisements from a country which was discriminating against blacks, and so they proposed that we should stop that completely, no accepting. I said, "Look. Wait a minute." And I was then chair of that session, you know. This was a general, open meeting. I would have said, "Okay." Lots of people dying to speak, including one guy who walked off the street and was a drunk I didn't know, and I recognized him and he rambled for a few minutes, and I didn't know what to do. Anyway, the worst came about when one of my ex-, not students, but he was my assistant in Windsor, who had now moved to BYU, he said, "Mr. Chairman, we know your views on this subject. Why don't you express them here?" I said, oh, my god, I'm on the spot here, and so I had to express my thoughts, which is that because other people discriminate, we

mustn't discriminate. Besides, our creed is, we do not discriminate against anyone on the basis of color or creed, whatever it is, no discrimination. Now, if you say we will not accept advertisements from people who discriminate, then where do we draw the line? Are we going to discriminate against Arabs, who will discriminate against women, or where does it, at what will it end, you know? Where does it begin? This is what I'm saying to myself, and there I was for two or three minutes, trying to express my views in public, with hooting and shouting and screaming, and I think of the 600 people or so that were there, because it was a very important SEM meeting, it was 1976, which was the anniversary of America's independence, so it was a big meeting. And they all got so worked up, they were screaming and shouting, and finally it so happened that a couple of Canadians who were there dragged me out of the back of this hotel room and took me away from there, from that hotel. But I forgot to mention that before that there was also much excitement and so on, because when we first decided to hold this meeting in Philadelphia and have a big show and so on, then two weeks or four weeks before the meetings they came up with Legionnaire's disease in that same hotel that we booked in. Now, I am faced with a situation where we've already made all these commitments, and this Legionnaire's disease is really very dangerous and so on, and people are dying from it. So what to do? And I as president had to make the decision, and I made the decision to go ahead at the last minute, virtually, and fortunately the Legionnaire's disease scare ended just before that. So there I was on the first night, you know, very pleased with myself. I had made the right decision, and so on. On that same night in the middle of the night there was a fire in that hotel, and we all had to evacuate and go down to the nearest school, and stay there in pajamas and all that. So it was a chastening experience already, but what came after that was horrendous. I eventually wrote expressing my views, and I didn't know how to solve the dilemma as president, because here was a resolution that we do not accept any advertisements from any country that discriminates. So I made the decision that, okay, there's no way to solve this, because if we do discriminate against them then we could be sued eventually. So I said, "Okay, we will stop all advertisements," and that's what happened for the rest of my tenure. No more advertisements were accepted for any positions. But it was a very chastening experience, because the things I suggested, like saying we should have a lecture called a Seeger lecture, which, you know, features every year a senior member to present a major paper. It was booed, and the board turned it down. Three or four years later, of course, they accepted this idea. Nobody remembered that it was my proposal. What is worse is that a few years later I was asked to be the Seeger lecturer. Anyway, there were a lot of other suggestions I made which were not appreciated, and some of them were accepted, and some of them were not. Not all ideas are good, but exploring.

Another aspect of my research was the fact that I think initially in 1973 I got three weeks leave of absence in what was really the winter, the break, to go to India after many years. From 1964 I had not been to India, so in '73 I went there, and I think it was at that time that Ralph Rinzler at the Smithsonian heard about me going to India, and at that time they were planning a big, big festival for celebrating 1976, the 200-year anniversary of independence in USA (said ‘India' by mistake – ed.), and so he said, "Why don't you do us a favor, and just go and talk with the government departments? You're going there, so just on our behalf." And I guess I must have done something like that. Some of the other—they used me more and more, because I kept going to India after that in my vacations, and in '75 I guess it was, they were in the final stages of planning for the festival. They needed a group to come from India. They needed a group to come from Pakistan. And since I was going abroad they said, "Why don't you find us a group to come?" And I did. I went to various places like Manipur, which is way out of reach. That's because the government of India at that time, Kapila Vatsyayan was a very important Manipuri lover and so on, fascinating music, but not really relevant to this particularly festival, I thought, because there were so few Manipuris in America. The idea was to connect old India with Indians in America. Then I had to go to Pakistan. Now, that was a big problem, because Pakistani government did not accept me—at that time I had an Indian passport. Now, I had lived in Canada for six years, so I said, "In that case I'd better just get a Canadian passport." So I got a Canadian passport and had to relinquish my Indian passport, much to my regret. I was then able to go to Pakistan to choose a group. They also sent me to very weird places like the Hindu Kush Mountains and so on, but they're fascinating experiences, looking for groups and so on, musicians and performance. So then at that time after that I was also involved in trying to connect the Americans with the Indians who were going to come from India to America, with the Indians living in America, people of Indian descent, and who could perform the same thing. And then, of course, I had the job of collating both sides of the country, the East and the West, and I couldn't possibly do it myself, so I had two assistants, and Amy Catlin was to do the East Coast for India, Gordon Thompson the East Coast for Pakistan. And between us we all three put together I think two weeks of the most amazing, fantastic performances that have ever been seen in Smithsonian. Everywhere, I mean on the Mall, every concert was treated with such incredible enthusiasm. Some of these things I managed to videotape, some of these events, and perhaps Smithsonian may have done the same, but I've not seen any of that footage. Anyway, it was a great success, whatever it was. But it was another distraction from research, from teaching, and everything else.

**1.8. TAPE NUMBER: V, Side One (
September 6, 2007)**

CATLIN

September 6th, 2007).

JAIRAZBHOY

I'm beginning now with the—I felt I had to leave Windsor, and the primary reason was not just the fact that I was having a bad time with the chairman of the department, but because I felt that I'd been in Windsor for so many years now, five, six years, and I had made no progress with graduate students, only having undergraduate students, good as they were, and I mean, how much I enjoyed them, a great deal, but still I wanted to go deeper, to have students who could go deeper. So when I heard that UCLA was advertising a position in ethnomusicology, a full professorship—by now in Windsor I was an associate professor, so I decided to apply, although I was advised against it, and told by a leading ethnomusicologist that it was a den of vipers. But anyway I applied, because I was having a hard time also with the chairman of the department, who was having—well, I won't mention all of it, but he was not at all supportive after my successful trip to India with the students, and the way they appreciated it and everything. Nothing went wrong, and I think he was very disappointed that nothing went wrong. Anyway, I applied and I was surprised, because I guess the word had gone around that UCLA was a den of vipers, and there were relatively few applicants and very few really good applicants. So probably because of that, or one of the reasons, I was one of the three finalists. They invited me to come and give a lecture in '75 I guess, early '75, and I did. I went there. Of course, there was a problem. They paid for my travel, but they said they would also give me an honorarium of $100, which I have to admit to this date I have not received. Anyway, the talk I gave was, I played the sitar partly, and demonstrated something or the other, and one of the students there, an undergraduate student, went into raptures over it. He wrote a letter to the chairperson, and I guess that was very influential in my being chosen as the final candidate, and so I received a letter appointing me as full professor at, of course, the lowest salary rate, but still a full professor. Now, the problem was my family and all were in Windsor, and in many ways it was a very wonderful environment, but there were problems about the academic life and so on. Students were great. I made some very good friends, some of whom I still keep in contact with. Anyway, so the time came, okay, I accepted the appointment, salary was good, not great but good, and I accepted the appointment, and when the day came in summer of 1975 I packed all my stuff. It was decided that my family would follow later, my wife and kids would follow later, and I would go ahead and find a place to stay and so on. So I got into my car with as much as I

could carry, luggage, and got to the Detroit border and crossed the bridge, and got to Detroit border, and Immigration stopped me and said, "We can't accept this. You don't have a proper visa. We can't accept you to go there." And before I knew it they sent me back to Windsor. So my first attempt to get to the USA to accept this appointment, in spite of the fact that I told them that I had this appointment and so on—then I phoned the chancellor's office, and they must have done something to ease it so that they said, "Okay." Next day I went back to Immigration and they had received some information. So at that point I left Detroit, and I was now one day late. I mean, people were expecting me in Los Angeles, especially the Brieglebs, Ann Briegleb, who was the archivist and so on. So I virtually drove all night and day, stopping only briefly, and made it from Detroit to Los Angeles in an absurdly short time like twenty-two hours or some ridiculous time. I can't remember exactly, but it was absurd. Anyway, I got there and I remember arriving in Los Angeles and being confounded by this freeway system. Now, of course, I had experienced a little of the freeway system in Detroit, but I lived in Windsor, which had nothing like it, and so to find my way, you know, groggy and so on, to the Briegleb's home, where they set me up for a couple of days, and then to an apartment, was really a hard time. Now, everything finally went okay. Alongside all of this is the fact that I received notification that I had been elected president of the Society for Ethnomusicology. I had no idea what that meant, but I knew that it was going to be a problem. I was due to take office in October or whenever it was that the next meeting was taking place. So I arrived in Los Angeles. I had a couple of months to prepare courses, to get accustomed to the environment, to set up an apartment, to bring my family here, and then before I knew, bang. Everything arrived on my head all at the same time. Coursework, I didn't know the American system at all, except that I had taught some summer school in Michigan and Illinois before that, and Michigan, well, Northwestern and University of Michigan, but that's different from being a regular faculty member. Now, the next few years I can remember academically, all I can remember is the crazy situation that went on in the department. What had happened, as I gleaned, was that we had had, ethnomusicology had had an Institute for Ethnomusicology, created by Charles Young, the chancellor. Charles Young had been very enthusiastic about setting Mantle Hood up in an Institute for Ethnomusicology. Now, I discovered that he'd given a lot of appointments and so on, performance groups and so on, but running ethnomusicology was really strong, yet Mantle Hood was frustrated because all the teaching was based on Western academic thoughts, so that if you wanted to study Chinese music, first you had to study Western music in order to be able to understand Chinese music, which didn't make any sense to me at all because that is the only way to not understand Chinese music. If you want to study

Chinese music, study it for its own sake, then compare it with other traditions if you want to. Anyway, I had absolutely no success in conveying my thoughts to this department, because, now, Mantle Hood had asked for a department of ethnomusicology so he could control this kind of situation, where he could make a graduate program which was really valid and relevant to modern society in the modern world. He finally got to the stage, I am told, when he said, "Okay, you give me a department of ethnomusicology. You had this institute, but an institute is only a research group intended to do cross-cultural type of research, or cross-disciplinary research. It's not designed to specialize in one area, nor to provide academic—," no control of academic—all the degrees and all were controlled by the department in which ethnomusicology was housed. So he'd demanded a department, he said, "Or else I will leave." Now, I can't imagine what happened exactly, except for a few clues, but there was all kinds of backbiting and so on, and there were a lot of people who were actually jealous of Mantle, and the result was that the chancellor denied the department. Well, the chancellor doesn't have that—but it was denied by the academic council, so no department of ethnomusicology. Mantle Hood left, and that was the position that was advertised and which I applied for. And when I arrived in UCLA, people wanted me to be the new messiah, as it were, because after Mantle left there was a gap of a year, and ethnomusicology was rudderless. Well, without a rudder it's difficult to steer a program. But anyway, I wasn't capable of doing any controlling of a program. I tried my best. In department meetings I used to stand up and, you know, say, "This is ridiculous. You're being so discriminatory. Look, you've got a course of undergraduate, a course of Western music for four years based on music history and theory. Why don't you let me give one lecture out of this whole four years on non-Western music?" And invariably the answer was, "No, no. We have no time. We cannot spare even one lecture for anything so irrelevant, because already we're cutting out so many things from the history and theory of Western music that we cannot spare one lecture in four years," because history and theory was like ten hours a week, and you know, for four years, and they could not spare one? That wasn't absolutely the worst. The worst was that, you know, we still had ethnomusicology courses, and we had a terrific performance program, and everything was functioning. But there was no support from the department. Whenever a faculty person had to resign or go from ethnomusicology, they would take that position and put it into musicology or historical musicology and so on. Not only that, there was also a problem between historical musicology and musicology, or music I should say, the music department, because historical musicology when I got there was the dominant group, old scholars and important scholars in their own field, of European music, elderly ones. I won't mention names because anyone can find out if they're interested,

but they dominated the scene. But gradually in the next few years that followed, as one chairman retired and the elderly historical musicologists gradually retired, the scene became dominated by younger music teachers and scholars, but especially concerned with the performance of music. So the scene shifted, but there had always been conflict between the two, and that conflict continued until the end of the breakup of the department. As far as we're concerned, I was terribly frustrated because I thought that we were being shortchanged. Our students and faculty were being—it wasn't really obvious that we were not getting promotions or anything like that, but it was in like getting T.A.-ships. We had a course which was by default part of ethnomusicology, called "Jazz, the History of Jazz." Now, that history of jazz was drawing in 500 students a quarter, and believe it or not the professor who was teaching it was not even given a single T.A., not even a teaching assistantship to help him to teach 500, and he would teach that course three times in three quarters, all three quarters. Then finally I remember one year that they came to discuss summer courses, and they said, "Oh, you must have this jazz course, because it draws such nice numbers." Now, this poor professor who'd been teaching three full courses of jazz, history of jazz, and having 500 students, now was also prevailed upon to teach that course in summer. The ignominy of this is that the next year he came up for tenure and the department voted against him, because he had not written enough, he had insufficient publications. Now, how on earth can you go crazy teaching such huge numbers of students without any support from the department, and the department holds it against you? Well, that was one of the problems. I thought it was really, utterly unfair. And being only a—we went through this state where we were in the department. At one time they called us a council of the department, and another time they called us a division of the department. Both of these were to say, you know, oh, not much, meaning you don't have any say in anything, because the most important things are decided by the department as a whole, not as a council. So the council might put forward an idea, but if the whole department is prejudiced against you, there's nothing you can do. So the greatest concern I had was over the fact that, golly, we were not getting all the T.A.-ships that we were earning. I had already been chair of the council for its two, three years that the normal period was, and when it became a division I'd already been chair of the division of ethnomusicology, and then as such I found that I could not do anything. I mean when they allocated a budget for the whole department, they would allocate x amount of dollars for the divisions and so on. One year I remember the chairman calling me up and saying, "Well, I'm sorry to tell you that we have allocated zero dollars for your division this year, because we have to give all the money we've got towards an electronic music studio," which is like $70,000. They could not spare $100 for ethnomusicology.

But he said, "Oh, but don't worry. Next year we'll make up for it." And next year he sure did. He gave $100 for ethnomusicology, the rest for the other departments. Now, that's not even enough to invite one scholar to come and visit us. The other thing that I found so horrifying is that we were not getting any of the T.A.-ships and support, student support that we're supposed to get from having x number of students in our classes, and that was really awful, because it really turned out to be so bad that when suddenly when we had a change of dean, and Dean [Robert] Blocker came on, I went to see him and talk to him, and told him about the situation in ethnomusicology. At that time I think probably I was chair of the division or something, and told him that it's very unfair, why doesn't he look into the matter. So he did assign someone to look into the matter, and this person did a complete job of research on all the earnings of each division, not only in music but in the whole of the school of the arts and architecture. I can't remember whether it was just school of arts in those days, but anyway. He found that the only one division or department that was not getting sufficient credit was ethnomusicology. Every other department was getting more T.A.'s than they were earning, in terms of x number of students is equal to one quarter of a T.A., or whatever it is. We were the only one. We were earning something like five-point-six T.A.'s, and getting two. That means that the students were not getting a fair share of what they depend upon as help during this excessive—when they have to pay their financial support, and this is the way of learning also, this T.A. So as soon a Blocker realized that these problems—and at the same time that I was going to Blocker, I guess music or musicology now, musicology being sort of turfed out of the top positions in the department, now they started going to Blocker and saying, "Look. We don't want to be part of this department. This department is based like a conservatory. It's not even a proper academic department." And to some extent I agreed with that, too, but here it was. Anyway, finally Blocker decided that the department has to be split, and so the department was split, and I became the first chair of the department. That's another story, because it's at the same time that a whole lot of other things happened in my life, in my academic life. But the department then, when it broke up I discovered that it was not so easy to break up and create a new department, because as a new department we had to write our own programs, our graduate program, our M.A. programs, Ph.D. program. None of these was going to be the same as it had been before. So on the one hand I spent so much time rewriting the graduate M.A. and Ph.D., and for this I'm so grateful to Sue DeVale, one of our faculty members then, who later did not get tenure for whatever reason, but had it not been for her, I think that I could have not been able to do what I had to do. A worse problem was that I was determined that in order for us to develop our ethnomusicology program in UCLA properly, we had to have an undergraduate

degree. No such thing was existing anywhere in America, so I had nothing to base my ideas on, and I prepared a syllabus and all that for an undergraduate degree, and I'm glad to say the undergraduate degree is still flourishing and doing extremely well. But at that time that was not all that was going on in my life, because on the other hand I was prevailed upon to accept the position of chair of the university research committee, which allocated funds for all the faculty on the campus for doing research, and I suddenly became chair of this. Previously I had been on the committee for a year or so, and now it so happened that there was no one else who could do it apparently, or so they said. So I was already committed on this department side, and then I also had this chairmanship of this. And not only that, earlier, at the beginning of this period I was also determined that jazz should be an important part of music studies, and there was nothing going on in jazz. So I started a jazz committee. I wrote letters to everyone I could find on the campus who was interested in jazz, and, of course, I was made chair of this jazz committee, so I've got these three jobs going concurrently, and at the same time—so with all these pressures it was not surprising, I think, that I resigned from the chairmanship of the department as soon as I could, and left it to grow on its own. But other activities had also occupied my other time before. In '75 when I was elected president of the Society for Ethnomusicology I went through many traumatic experiences, which probably I deserved to go through, but I did not want to be president, and I was again prevailed upon to become, and to accept it. Again, the system in America is such that a committee recommends two people as possible presidents, and somebody who wants to elect A will choose a very weak B to go with him, and that was the case against me, that nobody had known about me, because I'd been teaching in Canada and England before that. But because B was so weak, I guess I got elected as chair. I am completely undeserving of it, and I wish it had never happened, but it did. I don't think I gained from it, but I had the most extraordinary experiences, because the ideas I had were, I guess, very naïve when it came to Western [unclear]. I discovered that, you know, in America there were so many things going on that were sort of alien to my concepts of pure research and so on. We had to think about money. We had to think about things like getting money to have student numbers. Numbers were everything, numbers game. I felt, you know, that Society for Ethnomusicology, it should be a privilege to become a member. But you know what? Anyone who paid the dues could become a member. Then it occurred to me that if the Beatles wanted to take over the society, they only needed like $10,000 and they could take over the whole society, appoint their own faculty, I mean their own president and secretary and everyone else, and that there was no—the idea, for instance, in England, where anthropology or geography, at least you had to be recommended by three members in good standing, and well

recognized before you got elected. It was a formal issue, not just the paying of your dues. Well, a lot of these things I discovered in America, and I'd accustomed myself to them when I became president, and the result of which, virtually every suggestion I made, or proposal I made in meetings of our council, as it was called, in ethnomusicology council, every suggestion was turned down. I only had one out of nine members ever voting in favor of me, what I suggested, only once or twice. Everyone else voted against, which meant that I was completely out of synch with everything. Then it so happened by absolute chance, '75 was when I was appointed, '76 happened to be the big year for America's 200th year, its anniversary. And everyone, the program committee recommended a very strong and very luxurious program in one of the top hotels in Philadelphia, so that program's going to have all these visiting musicians coming, and so on. It was really a lavish kind of attempt, and I was, of course, obliged, I mean I wasn't in a position to make decisions, but I felt always uncertain about all of this going on, you know. Why make such a big show of it? Okay, it's our 200th anniversary and all, but anniversary what? That's always a question. So anyway, I was just carried along with the flow. Then two weeks or so before the meetings were to take place in Philadelphia, we have got thousands of people coming to those meetings, and actually I think they decided to bring a joint meeting with the Musicological Society, which has even larger numbers of members than we had. In Philadelphia every hotel was booked tight and solid and everything. Two weeks before that, Legionnaire's disease broke out in Philadelphia in that very hotel. Now, I didn't know anything about Legionnaire's disease, and I got frantic phone calls from everyone saying, "My god, what are we going to do? What are we going to do?" And I just stalled, and I stalled and stalled. Well, maybe this was a month before. I don't know exactly how long before. Anyway, finally it came down to it and I said, "Let's go ahead with it." And there I was, you know, uncertain because I'd made this decision, and then what happens, you know? The meetings take place, Legionnaire's disease is solved or whatever it was. Well, it was in the air-conditioning ducts of this hotel or whatever, and everything is resolved. I go to Philadelphia to my presidential suite and so on. I'm feeling all proud of myself for having made the right decision, and that very night a fire breaks out in that hotel, on the same floor as I and many others were located, in the middle of the night. We had to be deployed into a school grounds.

1.9. TAPE NUMBER: V, Side Two (
September 6, 2007)

JAIRAZBHOY

So there I was, one minute I was so pleased with myself, thinking that I had made the right decision, and then the next thing was I didn't know what the heck was going on. Finally when the fire was put out and we went back to bed, I was feeling very uncertain about myself. Anyway, but the worst is still to come, because on the last day of the meetings, Sunday, I said, "Let's have an open forum, and let's have students and faculty, whoever's in the audience, our members tell us what they feel about the society, what we can do to improve it." And that started something that I can't imagine or believe, because a black lady got up, a student, a good friend of mine actually; no, she was a faculty person. Well, maybe, one of the two. Anyway, and said, "Mr. President, I see that in our newsletter we have an announcement of a position in South Africa, and we are accepting an advertisement from a place which practices apartheid and discriminates against blacks? We should not do that anymore. We've got to stop, not accepting ads from places which practice discrimination." Well, because I was chair I had to concede, and suddenly I knew. I looked around me. There were at least a thousand people in the audience there, and there must have been at least a hundred hands raised. Everyone wanted to talk and express themselves on this view, and I chose one or two at random. How can you decide which one? And one of the people I chose happened to be, by absolute absurd chance, a drunk who had just walked in from the street outside, and he got up and started mumbling about something or the other, and I tell you, I didn't know how to stop him, because it was ten full minutes of his rambling about, not completely incoherent, but nothing to do with real issues of concern. Okay, well that part then. In the meanwhile, the furor was getting more and more intense, because everyone wanted us to stop taking advertisements from any country that practiced discrimination, and they passed a resolution—I didn't even know what the impact of a resolution was in those days, and I still don't really understand it—but that I should not accept any ads. Then while this was going on, one of my ex-student T.A.'s, whatever you like to call them, in Windsor, who is now at Brigham Young University, he lifted up his hand and said, "Mr. President, I know your views on this subject. Would you express them?" And then I was put right on the spot because I said, "Look. If other people practice discrimination, that doesn't mean we should practice discrimination also against them. We have to treat everyone equal. That's what it says in our constitution of the Society of Ethnomusicology. We will not discriminate against anyone on the basis of religion, creed, or anything, basis of culture or anything. So race, nothing. So we can't discriminate against it." Now, that was so maddening to people that they started shouting, and I've never seen it in any academic meeting, and they were actually threatening me, and if it hadn't been for two Canadian, elderly Canadian couple who were there, who came and took me through the back door, I don't know what might have

happened, but it certainly was an extremely violent type of experience. Of course, I tried to explain my ideas in the newsletter, in the next published newsletter, but in the meanwhile I was faced with this resolution, which is, we may not accept ads from any country that discriminates. I said, "My god, does that include all of the Arabic-Muslim world countries, because they discriminate against women, and do we have to go around checking to see who is acceptable and who's not acceptable for this if I follow this resolution?" I said, "No. There's only one solution. No more ads accepted." So after that, during my tenure we did not have any ads for positions, and I think it's a real unfortunate thing because, you know, if the ad in South Africa, an ethnomusicologist had gone there, it might have helped the situation, helped the apartheid situation. So anyway, whatever. Well, my tenure as president went off after that relatively harmlessly, but I don't think I covered myself with glory in any way, and for myself I found it an extraordinarily painful experience, and not being a society-trained person I just felt wouldn't it be wonderful to have cut through all of the red tape and the meetings and all that. Anyway, that aspect of the work was going on, and then on the other hand more things were going on in my life, too. That is, in 1974 or 1975, I think it was '74, I was about to go—or even '73—I was about to go to India in December of '73 to do some field work for a few weeks, and the Smithsonian heard that I was going to go there, and so I was contacted by Ralph Rinzler and he said, "If you're going there, why don't you just go and see the cultural czar," as they used to call her, "Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan, and talk to her, because we want to have a big, big show in 1976, our 200th-year anniversary, and we want to have a big festival of the world's music in America, related to America, and we want a big contingent from India, and we want a big contingent from Pakistan," and all that. So I guess I must have gone to see her in '74 or whatever it is, and then in '75, I guess, when I had all of this other thing going on, I did get to go to India to do field work for a short while in India, to try and collect musicians to come to Washington and perform. The idea was to show America's connections with the Old World, as it were. So I had to choose—we had to firstly find performers, people who could sing or perform or do something in America, and find their relatives or related peoples in India, and bring them and combine them together. Now, at this stage it was impossible for me to find people all over America to—performers from India and Pakistan and so on. So I had help from Amy Catlin, who was then a Ph.D. student in Brown University, and Gordon Thompson, who was a Ph.D.student in UCLA. Gordon did the Pakistan side of it, and Amy did the East Coast, East part of the world, East and central part of America. So I only concentrated on the West Coast and the Indians in the West Coast. Then finally I went to India and saw the cultural department there in India, and discussed with them how we can connect the two, the Indians in

America with the Indians, performers in India. We chose groups, and I had to travel various places to get enough material about those groups, and incredibly enough they even sent me to, or gave me permission to go to Manipur, which is on the extreme eastern side of India, on the border of Burma, which was for foreigners completely out, not permitted at all, but for this particular project. Then about this time—also I should mention that the Smithsonian wanted me to go to Pakistan. Now, the Pakistani government was not about to give me a visa, since I was at that time an Indian citizen. I'm still in Canada, and I said, "Look. Okay, the only way I can do this is if I change to Canadian citizenship," and I'd been there just long enough to get a Canadian passport. So I changed, and unfortunately I had to relinquish my Indian passport, but anyway, so it enabled me to go to Pakistan as well. So another hectic trip to Pakistan. So in India I went to a number of places like Manipur, but also places that I knew, like Rajasthan and so on, and we had chosen a group of performers to come to Washington, D.C. in the following year. The same thing happened in Pakistan. I had to go traveling from north, extreme north into the Hindu Kush Mountains on the border of Afghanistan, all the way down to Karachi and to the deserts of the Thar, and chose performers and made recordings, so the whole purpose was so that we could have some knowledge of what was going to be coming. So mostly what we recommended was accepted by the Indian and the Pakistani government. So in the summer of '76 we had a most incredible, most incredible festival, which not only involved India and Pakistan, but India and Pakistan were definitely among the most popular of the groups that came. Wonderful performance musicians. We had tremendous friendships. I had close contact with Amy Catlin and Gordon Thompson, and we presented so many of the items ourselves on the stage, and they were a hit, they were a complete hit. And interviewed performers later in the evening in Georgetown, and it was a terrific experience. Well, after this climactic moment I was invited to go to conduct field work in India, in places like Rajasthan and so on, places that I hadn't really visited properly in my earlier field trips, and did extensive field work in Rajasthan for three months and so on. Well, 1976 saw the beginning of a series of field trips I made to India. In those field trips, of course, I stayed a fairly long time in Rajasthan, three months and so on, but I was always concerned about the fact that my teacher, Arnold Bake in the School of Oriental and African Studies, had done a lot of field work, and that as his first-year student and his research assistant, then his teaching assistant, T.A. or the equivalent of it, that I was asked to put on the recordings that he'd made, and to organize the materials, and cut films and paste films, and do edits for his lectures and so on. During the course of all that I became so fascinated by the many different varieties of music that you encountered, and the fact that these recordings and so on were sitting in the basement in Woburn Square, which no longer exists,

or at least the basement no longer exists, and in a damp environment, and they'd been sitting there before that probably in Calcutta for years, and so on. His recordings, such valuable things, made on what was called the Tefiphon (actually, the Teficord made recordings; the Tefiphon played them back). And what was going to happen to them, what was the future of all this? Nothing was left in India, and I felt very badly about that, even in the early eighties. I felt, you know, all the foreign scholars that have come and made recordings, like Bake and Deben Bhattacharya and others, you know, my gosh, what had happened to the recordings? Had they left even a copy of a recording in India? And then who would they leave it with? At that time, I don't want to be critical of the Indian government or anything like that, but the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the government institution was really not well equipped or had the knowledge of archival preservation, and so very few scholars gave copies to the Sangeet Natak Akademi, knowing that, of course, if you give it to Sangeet Natak Akademi, anyone could copy it and use it for whatever purpose. So it was just not an archive situation. I tried to propose to the Indian government that they form an archive, a special archive so that we could put in recordings made by foreign scholars, and I said I'd raise the money to try and bring those recordings back to India so that they could be looked at, but they should be in a proper, systematic manner preserved. Actually, one meeting, I was in the same town where they were when they had this meeting, and they didn't invite me to the meeting. All I heard was, "No, they decided Sangeet Natak Akademi was quite good enough." Now, I realize and mention that I'd had experience at Sangeet Natak Academy which is disturbing to put it mildly, because once I asked, "Well, where's the photograph or documentation for this item of music?" And they said, "Oh, I think I must have left it at home. I'll get it next week," or something. And that was it, and it was really very distressing to me. That is not the way an archive should be organized. So I decided since the Indian government was not going to do it, I would try to do it on my own, and I approached various organizations and was rebuffed by JDR Foundation was it, Rockefeller Foundation? They rebuffed me and said, "No, it's not part of our guidelines, so we can't fund it." But somehow Smithsonian now had a lot of funds that had been in PL 480 or whatever they called it, funds that had been loaned to India during the war and were now being repaid, but had to be used in India, so Smithsonian agreed, and then I got Ford Foundation to give some amount as well, and the Asian Cultural Council. Anyway, Smithsonian said, "Okay, we will fund it if you can form a committee, and the committee should be under the auspices of the American Institute of Indian Studies," a collaboration of American universities. So I talked to scholars, and I remember talking to Vishwanathan in 1981, Professor Vishwanathan. Oh, my gosh, such a lovely man, and so on. But when I talked to him about it he said, "Absolutely

no impact." He had no concern at all, no interest in creating an archive to return recordings made in the past to India, and other scholars. But finally I had to make a committee, otherwise the Smithsonian would not fund it. So I made a committee and the project got funded, and it was amazing that two venues were chosen, because initially I thought that the best venue would be to be close to where people could deposit their recordings before they left the country, not just—scholars would. So scholars, before they leave India, should be easily able to give copies. And I argued, said, "You know, if they gave copies there will be protection for them, because in case something happens they have a copy, and they can get full copies of it." So many scholars would agree to do that. So they rent an office in Delhi which is actually in a house in Defence Colony, and then they wanted to use, the AIIS had wanted to use this very lovely location in Pune, you know, on the Deccan College campus. That campus had this very lovely looking old building, and they'd been using it for language classes in summer, but in the rest of the year it was not being used at all, so they were happy to suggest that we should use that as our main location. I said, "But look, how can people drop copies here? So you have to have a linking station in Delhi or someplace like that." They agreed, and for a while there were two locations. Finally they decided, I guess, after my chairmanship ended—well, as usual, I resigned the archives, but before I resigned I tried to communicate one of the effective ways that an archive could be used, by taking archival material now, which is actually Arnold Bake's materials, which had been transferred to the ARCE as it was called, the Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology of the American Institute of Indian Studies. So they had this whole collection of the Bake's recordings that I'd received funding for to transfer, to send to India copies, and now in India I had decided when we started this archive that we would have a digital archive. Now, in '83 or whatever it was, there was no such thing as a digital archive, but I had the notion that everything was going to eventually go digital, so I was kind of adamant that we should put all of his recordings into a digital format. So this is what happened in the archives. Staff there had been developed. By now about five, six people were working there. They transferred all that data into digital formats. Anyone dropping anything off, it was put into digital formats. Now, firstly it was I think Sony PCM-F1 on half-inch tape, but it was digital anyway, and I guess this digital format made it the first archive in the whole world to adopt a digital format base. Very difficult now for archives which have analog materials to transfer. It costs so much in hours an all to convert them to a digital format. But we were lucky, because we could do it right from the beginning. We decided that we would do one project which would show how the archives could be used. Now, what is the purpose of an archive? One of the purposes of the archive is to preserve materials so that future generations have a chance to

study what happened in the past, and we had a perfect example of Arnold Bake's materials, which he had recorded in the '38 or '39 area and region, and these recordings were now in ARCE, and I at that time proposed a project with Amy Catlin, because Bake had traveled with his wife. I had to travel with a lady, so it would be parallel. So we decided to go to all the same places, if we could. By the way, since by then Amy Catlin was my wife, so it worked out very well. Then we went to the same places that Bake had been to, and we played back Bake's recordings and re-recorded their comments, and if possible a version of the same piece. And we found amazing things. Now, in the three months of this research tour of going through umpteen different places—mind you, Bake has spent fifteen months touring in 1938, '39, but we took only the South Indian portion and three months. It was kind of an adventure to try and find places where Bake had recorded, because some of the place names were changed. I mean, as today, Bombay becomes Mumbai, you know. Who knows where Bombay was after fifty years? So small villages disappeared, and there were new names given, and some of them incorporated big cities, so it was kind of a detective hunt to try and find the locations. But what we did find was astonishing, because we found that although one part of India was progressing very fast and rapidly and so on, there was still enough culture, background left that people are preserving the past, and we have so many examples of people singing exactly the same song in the same way nearly fifty years later and more, because we've been back to do re-studies later as well. So the other aspect of archive is not only just to preserve the materials of the past, but to put them into use in the present. So the way to do that is publication, so we did publish a Bake Restudy and numerous other publications which were video. Our Bake Restudy was video and a monograph of 170 pages, and in that we showed the past as it had been about this time, and what it was in our time when we reviewed it. We tried to pin down what kinds of changes were taking place, or how to designate the types of changes, and we came up with notions that may be antiquated, but at least it was an attempt to see what's going on in the present. Now, the recent research we've done shows, and I say recently, going back only a few years, I mean still after 2000 years, that means after 2000 A.D., that means sixty years later, shows that some things are still being preserved. There's a lot of outcry against many of the things, because they reflect kind of a past that nobody wants to admit or to accept, but they're still going on, some of these practices, and change is being forcibly imposed, sometimes even change that threatens the music. But anyway, we will talk about that later when we get into the next episode.

1.10. TAPE NUMBER: VI, Side One (
October 5, 2007)

CATLIN

It's October 5th, 2007), interview number six with Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy.

JAIRAZBHOY

After I had arrived in UCLA, although I found many more pressures than I had been accustomed to, I still continued elements of research, and the research took several directions. Some of it was a continuation of research that was not previously completed. One example was my work on the instrument called the shahnai, a type of oboe which exists in India and is very widespread all through India, both in North India and South India. I was always concerned about the fact that according to Kurt Sachs, and it's very good evidence that there were so many different countries which had adopted this instrument called shahnai, surnai, it was called suona, it was called zurna, it went to India and it was called shahnai, in Burma it has another name, hne but all of these names seemed to connect with the zurna, so he had argued that that instrument spread all through, from the Middle East all the way into China and Southeast Asia. In Indonesia it would be called surnai, but it was still closely resembling. One odd part of that was in South India where you connect this North Indian instrument with serunai, it's called shahnai, which means a large nai, which is fine, or the King's nai. But when it comes to South India, the instrument is called nagasvaram, which means the sound of the snake. Now, that seems to have absolutely no connection with serunai, suggesting that there was a completely independent tradition. But with my research I didn't have any reason to believe that, because svaram and sur are the same words as in North India and South India. Sur in North India is equal to svar in South India. And then nai and naga seem to be close enough to—then I looked into it and found that there were other groups called in South India nayandi melam and things like that, always involving the word nai. Now, that certainly connected in my mind with the surunai tradition. So I wrote this paper arguing etymologically that it was, in fact, the surunai tradition that spread into South India. The problem I had to face was that the nagasvaram is a much longer oboe than anything in North India we normally see. But as I tried to argue, as you go further south into South India, the oboe starts getting longer, and in Gujarat and Maharashtra the drone oboe sometimes is as long as two and a half, three feet, about the length of the nagasvaram. So I wrote this paper. Now, the reaction to this was one response, and it was written by my student Alastair Dick in England, and he argued that, look, the oboe was known in ancient India, well, not in ancient but in medieval India because this treatise Sangeeta Ratnakara and others of the thirteenth century and before, slightly before, describe an instrument similar to the oboe. There can be no denying that this oboe was existing in India, and they called it mohori, or mahuri. Well, I'd come across this instrument and you know, fine. I said, "Well, Sanskrit treatises, described it in instruments, it must

have existed." But that should not affect the argument that the shahnai was brought into India by wandering bands of musicians, and spread into South India. You see no connection whatever between nagasura and mohori, whereas we could see a linguistic connection between, although a bit farfetched, but still there was a linguistic connection. So I wrote a paper. It was called "The Oboe Reconsidered," in which I acknowledged that the oboe might well have been existing in India, but that didn't necessarily mean that this was the oboe that was in South India. Oh yes, this oboe exists in tribal areas in central India, and I'd recorded some of them, but you know, an existence of one [?] is type of instrument. Now, you talk about a type as being an instrument which has a double reed or a folded reed, a multiple reed, and you know, all instruments that have multiple reeds aren't always necessarily connected. Some of them might be connected, others might not, and because I could see no connection between the mohori and the nagasvara or the shahnai, so it seemed like it was an existing tradition that may have existed in India in the thirteenth century or earlier, and was confined to the tribal areas, and maybe a little bit into India, or into mainstream India. But the shahnai nevertheless, brought in probably by bands of musicians, seemed to have become very popular, and spread all throughout India in incredible fashion, including into South India. Well, all the evidence made me write another paper reconsidering this situation, and trying to put it in some kind of perspective. Again, no one has ever mentioned this in their writing. Another of my interests was provoked by my coming to UCLA, which had an incredible reputation, led by Mantle Hood of this electronic device for measuring intervals and displaying graphically sound, called the melograph. Now, when I got here and I found that this was kind of the dominant subject, had been for a long time, over the melograph, and it turned out to be a fizzle because it was huge, you know, a $100,000 project which occupied at least one whole wall of a room, and it took constant repair. It had to have an assistant all the time, fulltime working on it, and the Department of Music just was not prepared to support it any further, resulting in the fact that the melograph was now defunct and stored away somewhere. But the legacy of the melograph, intellectual legacy of the melograph was that here was a tool that would answer everything about music and human perception. I said, wait a minute. I mean, the electronic measurement of sound and all the characteristics of sound doesn't say too much about things that go on outside the physical realm. So I wrote a paper which was dealing with the objective and subjective views in music transcription, because the melograph was designed as a tool to assist transcription, but that was attempting to transcribe it objectively, the notion being that what the machine saw was really what we heard and what we processed in the mind. I tried to point out in this article that this was not the case, that there are so many other factors involved, and among them, I mean,

human conditioning, and also the interaction of sounds with sounds, because the melograph was actually a mono sound. It only could process one music melody line at a time. But what if there was a drone? There would be interactions between the drone and the melody, and produce all kinds of other effects, like summation tones and difference tones, and all kinds of other things it would produce. So I wrote this article to show that the melograph was not the ultimate tool for understanding what we perceive in musical sound. We also have conditioning, too, so we hear what we want to hear and what we're conditioned to hear. We do not hear objectively like a melograph or an electronic tool might. So this article has been republished once, and I don't know how many people have ever been influenced by it, but again nobody wrote anything about it. In connection with that, I wrote a couple of other things which might be related to it, like I tried to figure out ways to help music transcription, because we were writing music, and the only tool we had was we could slow down the tape recorder, or repeat the same item, you know. If you slow it down, we used to slow it down by half, so it'd be like [sings, demonstrates] and you know, everything would be elongated and so on. So I wrote articles to show what a device which I called the loop repeater, which enabled you to play back the last few seconds [?] of any recording repeated endlessly, and change it gradually to whatever pitch you like. But I was not able at that time to make a duration change by slowing it down without also slowing down the pitch. That facility was not available in those days, so it's been long since outdated all of that. But then I was also concerned about the fact that much of the research that has been done was based on melody. Nothing was being done about rhythm. Now, when you're dealing with rhythm, how do you measure intervals of time? Time is not exactly the same phenomenon as measuring intervals of melody or of sound, or tonal, so for tonal measurements the idea of using cents standards, so reducing everything logarithmically to a standard of a hundred cents, that the semitone would be represented by a hundred cents, and something slightly above or below it would be 102 cents or 98 cents, or 85 cents, whereas in real musical tones all these sounds are actually logarithmic [unclear]. So you have a sound which is three over two [3/2], and if you lower it a little bit, I mean that sound between the tonic and the fifth, for instance, is 3/2, and if it becomes slightly flatter, then it might become 2665/2664 or some such absurd ratio, and there was no way to measure those things. So I thought that it would be good to have the equivalent of cents measurement for time, so I came up with the notion of what I called NUTS, n-u-t-s, which stood for nominal units of time. This all began in a seminar, because in the seminar it was a graduate seminar called the main seminar in ethnomusicology, and the students said, "Why are we always talking about melody, and why can't we think about time, rhythm, and so on?" So I

started thinking about rhythm, and I thought that Western concepts of rhythm or time is that they're based on fractions. So you have a whole note, a quarter note, half note, eighth note, sixteenth note. These are all fractions. Now, they don't allow you to give any minute distinctions. So I thought that what we should do is have something comparable to that with melody. So I came up with the idea that, all right, we take a standard like, for instance, a whole note or a quarter note. Ascribe it a value of a hundred units, a hundred nominal units I should say. Then when you're analyzing something, if you find it slightly above or below, all you do is you find in time, real time, if it's like you've got this note lasting for one second, I mean if you find a note that is less than, say, your standard tone, which was a quarter note or whatever, and you can then actually calculate by seeing how long it is in comparison with the other, and reduce it to a standard of a hundred. So therefore you could express something as being eighty-eight units of time, instead of a hundred units of time. Then you know that it's less than a quarter note, and more than, say, a third note. Or if you know these basic units, then you can tell. Let's say, for instance, if a tone, and this often happens that musicians accelerate at certain points when they're performing when they get to intensity. So if they accelerate slightly, how do you express that? When it comes to fractions it's impossible, because you get into absurd fractions that are impossible to understand. But with this hundred-unit standard you could say that, okay, this eighth note is not fifty cents, not expressed as fifty units, but as fifty-five, because it's been accelerated a little bit. So you can see the acceleration of what's going on. The next beat might be fifty-seven, so you see a gradual increase of time, but not enough to register in terms of fractions. So some of my students did like the idea, and did write and did papers which were of interest and so on. But incidentally they called the NUTS, they called them Nazir's units of time behind my back, which of course I heard but didn't respond to. I should specifically mention Gordon Thompson, one of my students who was a tabla student, and had been my student since my visit to Canada, then followed me down to UCLA. He being a tabla student analyzed some very interested ritardando, and what do you call it, and accelerando patterns in tabla playing, very interesting ones in terms of NUTS. One of my continuing interests in research was in connection with the ancient Indian music, and the translations and interpretations of the Sanskrit treatises that described this music. Now, what was interesting about it was that nearly everyone who discussed and described it, and tried to interpret it, tried to interpret it in terms of Western ideas, especially of just intonation. They tried to relate the ancient twenty-two srutis to the concept of just intonation, and came up with, you know, fine calculations of the size of the microtone units, etc. Now, I was concerned about this because firstly there's no evidence that there was any kind of way to understand these microtonal intervals in ancient India.

They didn't use string lengths as were used in Arabic countries, although even those might have flaws. They didn't know anything about waveforms or anything like that. They didn't know that. What they did know was basic units, so how come—see, you can say that one microtone is ninety-two cents, and the other ninety cents, the other one is twenty-two cents, and the other one is seventy cents. How can one say that about those ancient Indian times? Maybe it applied to Western just-intonation system, but that Western just-intonation system is based on the concept that a major third was recognized as a consonance, but in ancient India it was not. It's based only on fourths and fifths. So I felt, you know, that this was completely misleading to use these concepts of the West in trying to interpret that music, so I tried to give my own interpretation of these things, based on what I thought was significant. Among them was the fact that the writer, the ancient writer Bharata, who writes ritually about the music, he says the music is taken from chanting, not from consonances, dissonances, and so on. But then he says that these chants are not in some places consonant, so it suggests that, you know, we have two traditions going on, one which is an instrumental tradition, which, of course, is natural, if you have harps as they apparently did, and lutes and so on, that you know about consonance or fifths and fourths or so on, because these are part of the harmonic series. But no evidence that he went beyond fifths and fourths. So Bharata says there seems to be a strange—I mean he doesn't say it, but what he says is that this note and this note are not consonant, in such-and-such a scale these are not consonant. Now, I put myself in the position of a musician and I say, hey, why the heck would I play a non-consonant note? Why would you play something dissonant? And it would be dissonant because there's a microtone off the real consonance. Then I tried to understand and construct a thesis based on the fact that, okay, there was an external reason for producing this non-consonant note. If you made it consonant, it'll be exactly like the Pythagorean system, which I'm sure existed in ancient India, because there were a lot of influences of Greek music and so on, and before that even musical instruments naturally gravitate towards pure fifths and pure fourths. But this one is specifying that there is a non-consonance here, and a non-consonance in that scale. Now, if you don't find an explanation why such a non-consonance should be acceptable or should be desirable, I thought, you know, it's no use trying to insert Western ideas of just intonation from about 2,000 years later, or 1500 years later on this system. So I said, well, okay, well what is the characteristic of chanting? And I noticed that yes, some of the notes seem to be just flattened more than normal, so that you didn't have just tones and semitones. You seem to have something like an—[?] and I tried to relate it to the principle of chanting. Well, I came up with a theory which may not be right, but anyway it was interesting that if you were chanting for hours and hours, and

you have a three-tone chant with a middle tone, an upper tone, and a lower tone, after a long time of chanting what's going to happen is that it takes energy to go up to the next note, and relaxation of energy to go down, so the tendency is that the lower note is going to be slightly higher than the upper note. Then on the basis of that I constructed a system which was showing that this will perhaps—and I measured to the best of my ability at that time, chanting of the Ayyar clan, you know, not everyone but the Ayyars, who have this three-note chanting system, and found consistently that was the case, that the upper note was smaller than the lower note. So then I said, supposing—and then I carried it further, because the Ayyar chant, the treatises say that you can extend this to make a full octave in Samaveda. So I said, well now, if you extend this and add a semitone to make up a fourth, which is the way they seemed to do it, you would end up with three different-sized tones. Now, how would you describe these three different-sized tones? You don't have any mathematics, you don't have any basic tools to measure the intervals or anything. So you would say, okay, the smallest tone let's say is one, represented by one, and the bigger tone is represented by two, which is roughly about twice the size. Then the middle tone is kind of one and a half, halfway between. Now, they didn't like to deal in fractions, so the easiest thing to do is to double it, two, three, and four, and this is how I suggested they came upon the idea of three different-sized tones, nothing to do with just-intonation methods and so on. Therefore when Bharata, the author, says, "I perceive the tones to be equal by saying, you know, exactly, tune this down to get one sruti and so on," he perceives that the tones are identical, and nothing to do with just intonation, twenty cents was the [?] ninety cents. Anyone would have noticed that. So this article again continues to show how that beginning results in only two possible scales, which are, in fact, the ones that are described in the ancient system, sa-grama and ma-grama. However, no one has ever responded to that either. Still, that was probably one of those things which [unclear] was bound to be controversial, and should be, but it's good that there's someone who thinks about these ideas, and it's a pity that no one even expresses those notions. Another direction which my research took me to was, of course, in connection with modern music, and I call that primarily melodic music. I had written this book on rags, and there were so many new ideas in that that virtually every page has something that had not been expressed before, whether right or wrong it needs to be discovered. But virtually none of those ideas have been taken into consideration. So my research continued because I was beginning to understand that rags, the idea of a rag or a melodic mode has to have some psychological, physiological, some kind of a melodic basis. Rags are not arbitrary. There must be something underlying them, patterns underlying them. Now, this took me in a couple of directions. One, one of my students, Tim Maher, we wrote a paper, joint paper

dealing with the need for resolution of melodic intervals in the static context, that is, against a drone. Now, in relation to the drone it's pretty obvious that a major seventh will want to resolve into the tonic. But then there's the other concept, which is the dynamic concept, where the melody makes the reverse effect happen, that the melody wants you to go from tonic to the seventh, to the leading note. Now, what on earth does that mean? How does melody influence your desire to do something? So we came up with various theories, and another article was written with Maher again, "The Effect of Melodic Symmetry on Need for Resolution Ratings for Musical Intervals." Again, these were done primarily as systematic musicological—these were based on experiments that he conducted about these views, and found evidence basically supportive of these theories. Later on, of course, one of my students, Kathryn Vaughn, also wrote such a dissertation based on that, which showed that most of my ideas had some validity. The point is that if you find that there are millions of combination sounds, and only a few are valid or regarded as being useful or meaningful, then there must be some reason behind why do they. And you know, it's fine to say, okay, in this rag this is an important note and that is an important note. But wait a minute, because every rag virtually has two drone notes going with it, the tonic and the fifth. Why aren't these the most important notes in all the rags? The answer you come up with is, sure they would be if you look at it in that sense, but if you look at it in the dynamic-melodic sense, the beauty of music is to deviate from the static contents, so that you expect the leading note to go to the tonic. But if you could construct a melody in such a way that the reverse happens, that the tonic goes to the leading note, and only satisfies you if it goes to a leading note, then melody is producing some kind of a fascinating interaction. Now, what kind of patterns are going on that are—so I wrote various papers about this also, and so one of the papers I had written was "Factors Underlying Important Notes in North Indian Music," which is, what constitutes an important note? You have this concept of vadi, which means either a basic tone, or what's the word for sonant? And then you have the concept of samvadi, which is consonant, and then anuvadi, which is assonant, and vivadi, which is dissonant, which applied in ancient India. Now, these terms don't apply in the same way in modern times, but we do have the concept of vadi, which is an important note, and samvadi, which is the second-most-important note. What constitutes an important note? If it's not the drone note and it's not the fifth, my theory was that, okay, they were important, but there was something else going on that made other notes important, and so this paper was trying to find out what is underlying those other ideas that might lead to important notes, and so on. Well, my more or less abiding interest in organology led to a couple of other research papers. One of them was to look into what history had to say about the subject of ethnomusicology and

organology. We know that many of the terms of organology which now we use as classification, four basic systems of membranophones, chordophones, idiophones, and aerophones didn't always pertain in Western Europe, so where did they begin, these ideas? I found that the beginning was in a phenomenon that was absolutely unbelievable in present-day music. A prince in India sent bunches of musical instruments to many different countries, we don't know how many, but many, and these instruments are not insignificant in size. They must have taken a huge part of the cargo. Well, one group of such instruments arrived in Belgium. Now, the curator of the museum there was faced with this huge collection of instruments, and he didn't know what to do with them, because they'd never been seen before, these instruments. I mean, Western music classified instruments in terms of wind, strings, and percussion, and percussion was so unimportant that it was dominated by wind and string instruments. Now, here comes this whole collection of instruments, and they don't seem to fit into the basic categories. So the curator hired a very astute musicologist, son of an instrument maker, to organize this collection. I think the collection amounted to about ninety-two or so instruments, and some of these instruments are four or five feet long, you know, with gourds that would easily crack and so on. Now, the appointed curator of this particular collection, Mahillon, he had access to books also that accompanied the collection, some of them in English, some of them in Sanskrit, and he discovered that ancient India had a way of classifying these instruments, and it was a little bit like the Western, but only more detailed. And so he adopted this system, the system now, instead of from strings and so on, went into what we now describe as chordophones, aerophones, idiophones, and membranophones, membranophones being drum-like, idiophones being instruments that sounded on being struck. That is, they were composed of materials that produced a sound when they were struck, like a gong. So if a gong was struck it would produce a [demonstrates] resonating tone. Chordophones and aerophones were, of course, similar to the Western idea, but nobody had ever thought of idiophones. So this fourfold classification has become the basis for classification of Western musical instruments, or ethnomusicological organology from that time to this. Well, this article pointed out that Mahillon got this idea from the Indians, and from this Indian treatise, and the way it is presented it suggests, and he suggests, that he was the one who invented the idea. Anyway, so he is now still regarded as the father of organology, Western organology, whereas actually the credit should have gone originally to the Natya Shastra, the 2000-year-old treatise. Going parallel to a lot of these research areas was my involvement with fieldwork, and it started really with this extensive fieldwork project that was initiated by Smithsonian Institution, who wanted me to carry out research on various subjects, to enable them to put

on festivals in Washington, especially the 1976 Bicentennial Festival of American Folklife. They heard that I was going to India in '74, and so they asked me to go out and discuss this matter as a representative, and to find out how to get a group of performers to come to Washington. They said, "Also, while you're there, why don't you also go to Pakistan and do the same?" Well, I did do that, and we put on the festival. Well, I shouldn't say I put on the festival, but I'd say that the research resulted in a number of musicians coming from India and Pakistan, and finally they were very successful on the Mall in the Festival of American Folklife. However, many important things happened during that time of that research, and I discovered that I had to go back to various places like Rajasthan, which I had planned to go to in '63, '64 when I'd been there, but had been forced to abbreviate that trip. Now, I was determined to go back to—among the musicians who had come from India were musicians from Rajasthan, who were very adamant that I should come and visit them in Rajasthan, and so when I had an opportunity I did go. And Amy Catlin, my assistant at the Festival of American Folklife, also happened to be in India at that time, and was doing her research for a Ph.D., and she joined me in much of the research on the Rajasthani musicians, as a result of which I wrote a few papers, one or two still unpublished, but you know, one about—it was called "Music in Western Rajasthan, Stability in Change," because what's happening is, of course, change, even in the 1970s. The major change was not what you'd expect as happened more recently, is not the media change, from media, but the fact that many of these musicians were patronized by rulers, kings and princes and heads of state, heads of villages and towns and so on and so forth, and now the whole kingdom idea had been disenfranchised by the Indians. Most of these musicians had no support left. How were they going to keep going as musicians? So the research there is still continuing, but I did write this article. And then another one talking about how—this is a very interesting area, because it was not fully folk music, which means unlettered completely; partly lettered and partly unlettered, and how this was kind of the embryo of a situation of what we might now call classical music. Then I got involved with a number of other projects. The Smithsonian wanted me to work on puppetry, also in Rajasthan, and I did some videotaping of puppetry traditions and folk musicians and folk performers, and published a number of these. But the fact is that Rajasthan was being studied by so many scholars, and had such excellent support in Rajasthan itself, with Komal Kothari, who was a leading folklorist, who devoted a lot of, all of his life probably, to research with them and to promoting their welfare, and put on incredible performances and projects involving musical instruments in huge scale, funded, of course, by Indian sources, which, of course, none of which were available to me, since I'm a foreigner. Anyway, as that happened I focused my mind less and less on

Rajasthan, and turned to other areas, but I continued my research on puppetry, because I had committed myself to making a film for Smithsonian, which we did, and then published a second film on my own, independently, to cover what I thought was what had been left out of the other film. And then finally a book which is just about to come out on puppetry. But then I personally moved more and more into field work, so now at this stage I have been at least twenty-six or twenty-seven times to India to conduct field work, sometimes only for three weeks, sometimes for a few months, so it's now twenty-six times, and now more recently my research has been in the southern part of Maharashtra in this area where we're dealing with goddess worship, and we're producing a film right now to deal with goddess worship. Before that we did work not in southern Maharashtra but in Gujarat, with—

1.11. TAPE NUMBER: VI, Side Two (
October 5, 2007)

JAIRAZBHOY

And before that we had been to Gujarat to study Sidis, communities of African Indians, people who had come to India many centuries ago, and settled in different parts of India. We did research with them, and carried out projects with them, and finally we produced a film about them, and how they came and what they are doing, and what people can do to help that community. I forgot to mention, of course, most importantly that much of my research was influenced by my mentor, Arnold Bake, who had spent many years in Shatiniketan in Bengal, and been influenced by Rabindranath Tagore, and gone beyond classical music to folk music, and had finally made recordings in South India and Western India, and even in what is now Pakistan, had gone way into the mountains in Ladakh and so on. Now, my guru, teacher, my guide, Arnold Bake, had left a huge legacy of materials which he had collected in India, in terms of recordings, audio recordings, even films, 16mm silent films, photographs, and these were all lying in the basement. As I'd been working with Bake since the sixties or even late fifties as his assistant, I was familiar with them, but I always felt very bad that, golly, these recordings which were precious, like, you know, heritage of the past lying in basements. What's going to happen to these things? And I realized that, you know, people like me, myself and others, gosh, we went to India and we made recordings and brought them back to whatever country we were living in, and what happens to it, because India itself wouldn't have a copy of it even. So I thought the best thing to do would be to start or to find an archive in India that would accept these recordings and materials, and initially I approached the Indian government to collaborate in making an archive or a sub-archive which would be based on

Western standards, so that they would be controlled by all kinds of copyright conditions and so on. What happens in India is if you give a copy to an archive, they'll give a copy to whoever wants it, and so much for that. Now, nobody wants to give copies of materials unless they have some kind of control over what happens, and I suggested such an archive to the Indian government, and after considering it they decided, no, they didn't need such an archive. So I decided that, well, the only thing to do was to take it into my own hands, and I approached Smithsonian Institution and Ford Foundation, and even Rockefeller, for funding to create such an archive in India, which would be primarily a repository of materials taken out of India by foreign scholars, and now to be returned, and for new foreign scholars to deposit copies there before they left the country, with whatever kind of regulations they wanted to impose, like if they wished to say that okay, twenty years, don't anyone copy it, or don't anyone use it, and so it would be preserved in this archive until someday it would be available for research and study and so on. This archive, I have to say now, was finally funded by the Smithsonian with PL 480 funds, which is money that was loaned by America to India during wartime, and was being repaid but only in rupees, so they had funding in rupees that had to be spent in India. Probably if it had not been for that, probably they would not have funded it. But Ford Foundation gave considerable amounts, and Asian Cultural Council gave money to have specific collections copied and sent there. The Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology is now a very viable part of the American Institute of Indian Studies, and has a big archive collection and is still going very strong. It has a powerful staff, and doesn't seem the slightest in danger of disappearing, so 1982, '83 when it was actually funded and formed; since then it's been going very strong. Now, since I was the one who initiated this project I was naturally the chair of the first committee of this archive. One of the projects I proposed was a restudy of Arnold Bake's recordings. Now, these were recordings we'd already sent now to ARCE. I arranged the funding for and copying of these materials to send to India, and now I was saying, "Let's find out what's happened," because Bake's recordings, some of them were—one collection was 1939. "What's happened to that? Now we're in '84, '85, '84. What's happened in the forty-odd years? Are there musical performances still continuing?" So with the help of ARCE and the staff and Amy Catlin, who was there and assisting in this project, we traveled, oh, three months to the same places Bake had been to, playing back and recording a whole number of things, and finding out what changes had taken place. Then finally we published a Bake Restudy, which showed the changes and what kind of forces might be acting towards change, not specifying too much on continuity, which the really extraordinary thing about it is that continuity is very important. What is the reason we have the continuity? Even now the

television and films and so on have penetrated to the deepest realms of villages and so on.

1.12. TAPE NUMBER: VII, Side One (November 16, 2007)

JAIRAZBHOY

The major change in my research directions came about because I moved from England initially to Canada, and then after that to UCLA. In England my position was that of lecturer in Indian music. I was expected to teach about Indian music, that was it. Nothing about ethnomusicology, nothing about Western music, and, of course, I knew nothing about Western music. Although everyone else in England, everyone else, the scholars around me all knew Western music, I didn't, and I wasn't expected to. When I got to Canada the situation was virtually the same. I was expected to teach about Indian music, and they extended that to courses on Asian music, that is including the Far East and Southeast Asia. Now, when I came to UCLA—in England I was lecturer in Indian music, and in Windsor, Ontario, I was associate professor of Asian music. Now I've come to UCLA and I'm appointed professor of music. Now, I'd had no idea what this entailed at this initial time, but everyone presumed that I like everyone else had been trained in Western music initially, and that my knowledge of Indian music was something that was planted on top of that Western music. In fact, my own personal experience was such that I had never taken a single course in any kind of music, Western or Indian. I had had private lessons from Indian teachers, but never a course of any kind, and here I was expected to teach—it was all right when it came to teaching Indian music, but I found that this department that I was in expected a lot more of me than just to teach Indian music. There are other courses that we had which we called, you know, seminar in ethnomusicology, transcription, other courses such as field work, field and lab, and there were courses in music analysis and so on. This was very strange and difficult for me because in the first place I could not imagine—you had students who were studying Chinese music and all kinds of things, specializing, and it didn't make any sense to me that in order to study Chinese music one had to first get an M.A. in Western classical music. I mean, to me that was like saying, "Okay, if you want to study Japanese literature through translations from Eskimo," where it's just as strange as that to study a culture through the visions of another culture, and not only that but a very solid, hard culture, which believes that it's absolutely the right way of going about it. For me it was very difficult, but I tried to understand, you know, that, look, everyone else there knew Western music; I did not. So it was hard for me to convey to anyone that this is not the right way of teaching ethnomusicology.

One of the results of that was, of course, this article of mine which is called "Ethnomusicology in an Indian Context," because I knew that the way we were teaching ethnomusicology in America would be absolutely useless in India. I mean, firstly you have to expect everyone to know Western notation. Now, Western notation has its flaws, everyone admits that. I mean, to me the Indian solfa, which is called sargam, was absolutely as good, as efficient as Western notation. Western notation has implications of fixed, tempered intonation, and all kinds of things which you can't do anything about. So for a start we knew that you'd have to start off with some kind of a notation system, if you wanted to notate, and I think it's valid that notation is a very important thing to do, because by notating music you not only understand the music, but also in a way you begin to do what we call transcription; I mean, not transcription, analysis. Now, imagine analysis. Western music has its own concepts of analysis, and they're patently wrong when it applies to the rest of the world. For instance, the concept of consonance and dissonance. What do you do when you go to Java, Bali? You find these dissonances there which are very desired, and in Western music it'll be just exactly the opposite. They'd say it's out of tune. Or, for instance, the concept of leading note, a leading note taking you to the tonic. Well, that doesn't apply everywhere. Sometimes a leading note is better left as a leading note, rather than as a step towards resolution. So there were a whole lot of concepts that I vaguely knew about, Western music concepts, that seemed to me to be absolutely unfitting for study of ethnomusicology, yet I was the only person in the department who could see things that way, and if I started to talk about these things they would think that, it's rubbish, you have to start with a Western basis to understand how to analyze, how to understand music, through Western images and Western concepts, and I found that very difficult. Now, when I started teaching some of these courses, for instance, transcription, I emphasized, no, we were not going to use Western transcriptions methods, although I was familiar with that, as you know. It's not that I didn't know how to transcribe, but not very well. But I said that, no, we're going to try and come up with our own concepts of transcription, and one of the problems we faced immediately was the fact that in so many music systems they do not use a tempered, equal-step system. Some intervals seem to be larger, and some intervals seem to be smaller. Now, the solution to this problem had been faced by Mantle Hood and his gang of scholars, who in the late fifties and early sixties had invented this machine called the melograph. Now, this did a graphic display of a melody, melody line, so that you could see how it deviated from, say, the tempered system, and so on. Now, the whole trouble with that was that it was based in this concept which is a purely mathematical concept initiated by Alexander Ellis, who decided that he divided the octave into twelve half steps, and each half step into one-hundredth part, and these one-hundredth parts he

called a cent. So now we have a system of twelve semitones each consisting of a hundred cents. The fact of the matter is that nobody could tell the difference between, say, an interval of sixty-seven cents and forty-eight cents. You can't hear the difference; it's too slight. One cent was insignificant, yet we were going ahead as though—and some of us scholars were doing, you know, ratios. Ratios would end up with like 67.489 cents, and this is quite acceptable at that time, that nobody could tell the difference what the heck are these decimal points of cents and so on for, so it was very distressing for me because everyone was going on in those days talking in terms of cents, and I knew that was silly because all the experiments we tried to do in the classes and so on showed that you can't distinguish between these small intervals anyway, unless there was something like beats involved. Now, that's if two intervals come very close together and then create a kind of disturbance, and you can sense that disturbance. But apart from that it was getting very silly that we were talking in terms of these minute intervals which made no sense at all, and had no practical application. Well, I did that with a couple of courses I taught, and we'd try experiments with different types of notations that used, you know, what do you call them, figures like Tibetan, the [unclear] and things like that. We tried putting notations using solfa syllables with symbols above them to show that this was a glide, or this was a slightly lower note, and so on and so forth, so we tried many different experiments, and I think one or two students did their master's theses, one I think in Japanese music, based on something like this. Then I went to still continue with my courses that I was teaching. When I was teaching about transcription it occurred to me that, look, we all, everyone is now focusing entirely on intervals, the precise size of an interval, whether it be sixty-seven cents or a hundred twelve point eight cents, everyone was concerned with that. Nobody was asking this question, "What if it were slightly different? Would it be serious?" And, of course, I found that in Indian music it was extremely prominent that everyone was talking in terms of srutis or microtones, and I said, "My gosh, what are these microtones? I don't even know these microtones, and I've been studying Indian music for a long time." So I started, and this started in England, where I actually started trying to measure some of the microtones, and found that there was no consistency, that Indian musicians would be intoning differently and it didn't seem to bother anyone. The greatest musicians in India, everyone said they're great, and yet they intone very differently the same piece. So when it came down to analyzing I said, "Well, wait a minute. We're ignoring a completely different parameter. We're talking about intervals, musical intervals, but we're not talking about special intervals, that is, the spaces between, say, rhythm or a beat." Everyone presumes that, okay, you have a rhythm and it goes regularly, a beat goes regularly like a pulse, but even more regularly than a pulse. But if you didn't,

and I started thinking about, you know, the different types of rhythms in which I discovered that by slowing slightly and increasing slightly, one was in the realm of artistic expression, although it was written as a quarter not or whatever it was, but in certain cases, maybe approaching the end of the bar or something, there would be a slight tendency to slow it down, or in other cases to speed it up. So I said, but, hey, nobody is studying the fact that, golly, expression, if you think in musical intervals and say that, okay, you make it slightly sharper for special effect, a note, you also can speed it up or slow it down a little bit for special effect. The problem was, how do you measure this? Now, if you measured it in real time, now imagine, and this we did, of course, but the problem became like, you know, okay, this quarter note is like .65 of four seconds long, and now the next one is .644 long, so in other words varying slightly. Now, what the heck? How can you make any sense of that? It's just a matter of point-something seconds, and it doesn't mean anything. So I thought of this scheme whereby you could reduce it in a way similar to that of cents, and we started calling it NUTS, Nominal Units of Time. That is, everything then became related to a, let's say, a quarter note of half a second, say, for instance, or now let's say .05 seconds, and then the next quarter note might be .04 seconds. Then you do the ratio of that and you find that the relationship between that is that it is .3 NUTS off. Now, because you see immediately from looking at the NUTS durations that it is definitely slowing down gradually, or speeding up gradually, and then you could even see that drummers, who are supposed to be playing, for instance, in Indian music regular beats, are not playing regular beats. Even the sub-beats are being syncopated often. The difference between a good musician and a bad musician, or a good musician and an ordinary musician is the fact that there's expression in every stroke, so I thought this was a great way to introduce a new way of looking at expression, artistic expression in music. It didn't really catch on, but it's there for scholars. Some students used it, and I think published one or two articles based on it. But this NUTS idea was I think very important, because we have to distinguish between what is intentional in music, and what is accidental in music. This is ultimately what we're going to be faced with is, is this musician doing this for special effect intentionally, or is it because he is not such a great musician, or because he's had too much to eat today, or whatever it might be. So somewhere artistic expression has to be thought about in the form of music, and this is an area which I don't think anyone has ever followed up. While this is going on I'm thinking in these terms, and we started this NUTS scheme, and I think there were two or three courses where students did follow through NUTS, and did that instead of just pure Western type of transcription. The other thing that was going on was the fieldwork. Now, we were expecting all our students to go out in the field to do field research. Of course that involves a lot of things. One, of

course, the practical elements of doing field work, which is manipulating your tools, which means tape recorders and cameras and data sheets or whatever it is, and the other thing is logging. That to me was the most important thing at that time was that anyone who did the course on field work was expected to maintain a daily log of everything that happened in connection with that course. So the idea was to train people into observing, firstly, and secondly, noting everything that might be of importance written down. I mean things like, for instance, I go back now and see sometimes, my gosh, you took a taxi for 200 miles in Bombay or somewhere there, and it only costs thirty-five cents? I mean, this is amazing kind of facts that certainly appear in my logs sometimes, so a lot of material there that someday can be used, but by whom I don't know. But anyway, it's very important, practical experience. The other thing, of course, is using equipment. Now, in those days equipment was not like it is now, which is more or less perfect. In those days when we had a tape recorder we had to be aware of wow and flutter and all kinds of things, and cleaning heads, and demagnetizing heads, and all the time you had to be very careful about how you did the recordings, how you saved the tapes, whether you stored the tapes vertically or horizontally. All of those things were considered factors in those days. Above and beyond that, of course, the moral issues that were involved. Now, here we are, we go abroad, theoretically to some country and do field work, and we record these people's heritage, the heritage of people who've lived and developed these arts, and bring it back here, and you write it up and maybe make a record, or maybe just write it up as a Ph.D. dissertation, and you get a Ph.D. and perhaps a job out of it, but what is it based on? Based on someone else's work, their lifetime, you know, generations of their tradition. What do we give back to them? This is one of the things that was so important to me right from the start was that, golly, we've got to figure out how to give back something. Of course we already give them back anyway a few things. For instance, just giving attention and just showing that we care about their music has an impact in itself, because it says, hey, you've got something of value. That in itself is meaningful to them, because here comes a foreigner who finds something meaningful. But not just that. Consider another area. Okay, so when you go out of the country and you go to your homeland, and you talk about this music, you are again giving more publicity to that music, so they're getting something general out of it. But that's just general. Just imagine, now, the person who you took the information from, maybe he was coming every day for an hour to be interviewed, and we would pay him—so the question was, here we are, paying this man fifty cents a day for coming and giving you this information, and eventually it's going to multiply in your pocket to hundreds of thousands of dollars. What can we do for them? How can they benefit? Now, my experience had been with Arnold Bake's materials, really that was one of

my starting points. Arnold Bake had spent a lot of years in India, and he made a lot of recordings, and he'd never thought about, you know, what about giving back anything to anyone. He brought all those materials with him to England, and Holland, wherever he was, and stored them in the basement, used them for his lectures, got promotions, advancements, wrote papers, articles and so on, but I never once heard him say anything that he owed anything to the people that he got the information from. Now mind you, he was always very respectful of them, but he never felt sort of as though that was really their property and not his property. He acted as though everything he recorded, everything he filmed was his own property. Now, at the end of our connection with Bake and myself before he died, I went on a long field trip to India to collect material, to continue the work that Bake had been doing, so I came up with a whole bunch of material as well as recording, and there's Bake's recordings and so on, all sitting in England in basements and so on, and I tried to figure out what to do, because those materials did not belong to us. They belong to the culture which had created them. So how to do, what to do about it. So I wrote a proposal. The proposal firstly was to the Indian government. I said, "Look, please. If we can prepare—." So the proposal for creating an archive was rejected by the government of India, but the U.S. government had a lot of money, funds there, and the Smithsonian decided to fund the project. But now even that was not really enough. I mean, you take the recordings and you put them in a central archive. It's like, you know, for a villager living 2,000 miles away in Southern India to have to go to Delhi to find out what his grandparents did was kind of an absurd situation. How would he ever get there? How would he afford it? So it was not enough to do that. So when we did our research, one of the things we tried to do was to give copies of all those recordings of Bake's and mine, ours, that were relevant to that particular community. So we gave copies to villages whose uncle had been recorded, and so on, in the hope that they can—and many were absolutely thrilled by it, as you can imagine, to hear your grandfather's voice or something of that sort. Even then, you see, that's still not enough. What we need, we collect material from A and put it into an archive in a remote place. Then you take it and you give it to some individuals—

[Interruption. Telephone rings.]

JAIRAZBHOY

—bad feeling, but everything is fine. There's no problems whatever.

DANIEL NEUMAN ON SPEAKERPHONE

That's good. Well, I know that you had agreed to undergo chemotherapy.

[Speakerphone conversation ends.]

JAIRAZBHOY

So it was my thought that it's just not enough to put recordings in an archive a distance away, or give copies of recordings to people that might have been

particularly interested. After all, much of this tradition is not just belonging to one family, but it's belonging to a whole tradition, that is a group of families that have developed these arts, and so I thought that there must be a way to get it even closer to people. Then I thought that, wait, it is really the responsibility of individuals who feel that, you know, like we do sometimes. We are concerned about our heritage, and that we write and we try to find out about where we came from, and who our ancestors were, and so on. So I thought, they should in India also do that. Individuals who care about their community should write about it, you know, and try to raise funds, and I could, of course, help to raise funds. So I came up with a slogan which says, "ACT Now," which meant Archive of Cultural Traditions Now, ACT Now. Unfortunately, it never really got going because Coorg, where I thought of this idea, is a really difficult place for anything to happen because of the excessive rain and the humidity and so on, and I could not get any youth involved in it. I wasn't there long enough to do it. But it still is a project that remains, I think, that we should all be involved in our heritage, and it shouldn't just be left to archives in remote places to look after everything. While all these ideas are going through my head about field work and about research, and about ethnomusicology and so on, still my primary concern was to find out what was happening in India musically, how it was being affected by change and by television and by newfangled films and all of these things that were affecting life. And, of course, we had this wonderful guide that Bake had left us all of this material on which to base our research. But since then I'd also done some research on my own in the sixties, and that itself also provided us another source where we could go to. So at every excuse I found a chance to go to India I did, went to do research, for instance in Rajasthan for three months on one occasion, another occasion another month or two, and then Pakistan, so I kept expanding my knowledge of Indian culture. Also we did some re-study and some research in Kacch, which is my family heritage place, and we found some very interesting materials there, and published a film called "Musical Instruments of Kacch and Its Neighbors." Then we did some more research with a community called Sidi, and Sidis are blacks, Africans who came to India and settled down hundreds of years ago, and still continue some of their traditions. We did some research with them, and made a film about them, "From Africa to India." Then we did another project with them, which was to resuscitate an instrument that was dying out, called a malunga, to revive it. So we held a camp which we organized and which we paid for personally without any funding, in a small place in Gujarat, and got the performers to come, I mean the older people to come and teach the younger kids how to do it. Very successful, and so successful that they keep asking us when are we going to have the next camp, but they didn't realize that, of course, it takes a lot of money to organize such a

camp, and we don't have any funds. So the structural unit behind all of our research was Bake's Restudy, the Restudy of Bake's material in 1984. Now, that involved quite a lot of work and quite a lot of research, and it was quite a number of years before it was actually published, the film, but it didn't stop us, because we knew that there was a lot more material that we could collect, and we did on several occasions. We went to Gujarat one year and interviewed two or three nonogenarians, who actually had known Bake, and it was amazing to hear what they had to say about Bake himself. In addition to that, of course, we got recordings made of things that he had recorded earlier. Then we also went to Kerala, the State of Kerala in 1991, and I think again in '93, where we recorded a lot of material that we had not been able to find previously. The difficulties of finding Bake's materials were really quite immense, because after fifty years the place names have changed. Even, I mean, Bombay is no longer called Bombay, it's called Mumbai. Now, if you go to a village you can imagine how many changes that might take place there. So we had a place called Muttutara. We thought it was a village that Bake had recorded in, as he said, but when we went to Trivandrum we found that there's no such village there. But then later on we discovered that it had become incorporated, and become kind of a little hamlet within the city. But things like that take time to do, and, of course, our research, time is always a criterion, because you can't spend too many hours or too many days doing research in one place. If you're following Bake's footsteps you have to keep moving as he did. Well, on the one hand I was doing all this research. It was very deadly serious. But I have a kind of a streak in me which is humorous and wants to make fun of things, and there's plenty of provocation in India itself. There are comedians all over the place, and ostensibly they're storytellers, they're educators. But what do they do? They make you laugh, and it while making you laugh that they impart their wisdom, whatever it is. So I started adopting that style, and one of them deals with two bards from Orissa. Now, these two bards are playfully interacting with each other on the stage, and one of them, they're telling a serious story of a—Puranic story of Satyavati or something. But behind it, you know, one of them is a comedian, and he's constantly interrupting the story with comments like, "Hey, did you look at that beautiful girl in the front seat?" or something completely irrelevant. Or, say, "Do you know what Shiva did when such-and-such a thing happened?" and bringing up episodes that were humorous. One of these episodes is a story about Shiva and Parvati, his wife. So they told the story of Shiva and Parvati, a humorous story in which Shiva is made to look a little bit silly, but you know, it's all very affectionate and not serious. I used that story as a pivot for one of my books that I wrote, which is a humorous one. It's called Hi-Tech Shiva and Other Apocryphal Stories, and in it there are episodes of scholars traveling in India as though they were research scholars, but were

behaving like gods and goddesses, because they had all this expensive equipment and so on. Nowadays this wouldn't go at all, because everyone has cameras and equipment, but in those days, like twenty years ago, cameras and all were just the preserve of rich scholars from outside. So anyway, it was a series of stories about how Western academicians went to research in India acting like gods and goddesses, collecting material and taking it back and publishing it, and so on and so forth, but all an academic allegory. Well, the book, you know at that time I was going through UCLA, being chair of our division, our council, and finally our department of ethnomusicology, and I was facing all kinds of real problems about discrimination, and also how tenure was so incredibly complex, based on such foolish thoughts like, you know, if you get an article published, it better be published by a reputable journal. Now, that strikes me as strange because reputable means Western. But wouldn't it be, if you wrote an article about India, be better to publish in an Indian journal which is reputable, rather than a Western journal? But if you did publish it in an Indian journal they would say, "Oh, it's not important," and so it would not receive any value. It's a question of, you know, how do you decide what is important? Never does it on its own merits, only by where it's published, what reviews have been written about it and so on, and not anyone ever having the courage to judge it on their own knowledge. So one of the things that I did was to dedicate that Hi-Tech Shiva to those scholars who were still striving for tenure. Well, even after the Gujarat and Kerala trips, we continued with our field work, and especially in Maharashtra, which is south of Bombay and Karnataka, where we worked on this film on music for a goddess. It took about seven years to complete, and now it's just completed. It's about three hours of footage put into, hopefully into kind of a pastiche which enables you to see not only the whole larger picture, but little details of lives of individuals involved, and I hope this is going to be successfully received. Since then Maharashtra and Karnataka, well, there's really no end to the amount of materials that we've got and we're going to work on. We're right now beginning a project on recordings we made in Kerala. The State of Kerala has so many amazing traditions, and some of them have been published and some of them have not been published. We were lucky enough to visit it on three occasions at least, and made recordings of amazing sights and sounds, which I hope that one of these days we will be able to work on and publish. The thing is that there is no end to what exists in India. There's no end to understanding the country. It is so complex, and it is so full of variety, and whatever you may say you can find someone to contradict everything. So it is a challenge to try and make something out of all the materials, and we have hundreds of hours of videotapes recorded in the field, something to do with them, something to make them available to the

public, even though it's not necessarily very good, at least available so people can benefit from it.

1.13. TAPE NUMBER: VIII, Side One (and TWO,
2008 (exact date not given)

CATLIN

This is the eighth interview with Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy, in Valley Glen, California.

JAIRAZBHOY

1975 was a very extraordinary year for me, and would have been for anyone. Not only was I elected as president of Society for Ethnomusicology, but I was involved in field work for Smithsonian Institution, which I had to do in India and Pakistan in order to prepare for a bicentennial in 1976, so there were two items, but then the third item was the fact that I was a new professor at UCLA, new courses to teach, different conditions, and the fact that we had graduate students now, whereas in Windsor I'd not had any graduate students, only intelligent and keen undergraduates, one of whom, incidentally, followed me to UCLA. My contact with Smithsonian began in, I think, 1974, when they heard that I was going to go to India for a field trip, and so they contacted me in Canada and said would I please go to see Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan, who was the cultural minister as it were, in India, and talk about the fact that they wanted to have a big bicentennial and would like to have a bunch of Indian musicians coming to the bicentennial. After that in 1975 Smithsonian funded me for a three-week trip to try and select groups that might be appropriate. One of those, when I went to see the Indian administrators who were involved with this, and Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan immediately said, "Oh, we should go to Manipur," that most-eastern part of India which abuts Burma, now Myanmar. He said, "You must take a group from there." I was very leery about that, although I relished the chance to go to Manipur, which has some fantastic musical traditions there. But the problem was that the idea of the Smithsonian project was to associate the musicians we found in India with people in America who might be able to relate directly to them, and collaborate or even perform with them. And since I knew that there were likely to be very few Manipuris in India, I thought this wouldn't have been the most obvious thing to do. Anyway, Dr. Vatsyayan sent me to Manipur for a week, and it was a very, very interesting experience for me. Nevertheless, when it came down to choosing a group I said, "We cannot include Manipuris, because there can be no collaboration, no involvement between Americans and Manipuris, because there aren't any Manipuris in America. The language is different," and so on. So no Manipuris finally came. [Yes they did-AC(Interviewer)] But we got other groups, and some of the

groups were from Rajasthan. Now, Rajasthan was an area I had unfortunately missed in my field research various times, just by chance, one accident after another. I had bypassed Rajasthan, so this was a chance to get to know some of the Rajasthani musicians, and I was glad that we were able to invite some of them. And, of course, also this quick trip to Rajasthan enabled me to get involved in a project which was going to take several years to complete, and that was in connection with this type of puppetry, marionette puppetry called kathputli, which finally resulted in the publication of my book just this year in 2008. Other musicians that came, performers that came were not necessarily chosen by me, but they knew finally what we wanted, and they did collaborate in a very fine way. But I was intrigued by Rajasthan and its possibilities, which I knew that some research had been done, and this was in '75, but that it seemed like there was a great deal more to do with the folk traditions, folk-music traditions of Rajasthan. So after this Smithsonian festival was over in 1976 I decided to go back to Rajasthan. In the meanwhile, part of my trip had been to Pakistan also, where I went from absolutely the northernmost places and parts in Chitral and so on, right in the top to right down to Karachi and to Baluchistan, I mean Baluchistani musicians at least if I didn't go to Baluchistan at that time, but Punjabi and Sindhi, and wonderful music traditions of Pakistan. I recorded them and most of them in collaboration with the Institute of Folk Heritage, which was called Lok Virsa, and Dr., Mr., Professor—I don't know how to title him—but Uxi Mufti was the director, and I think still is. Anyway, he collaborated very strongly with this whole project, and the Pakistani government agreed to send a troupe to the big festival in 1976 of bicentennial, which I think lasted about two months, the whole thing, in which one week was devoted to India, another week devoted to Pakistan, and then others devoted to other parts of the world which had substantial immigrants in the diaspora, in America. So they were concerned with trying to show how broad America's vision was. It was a fantastic experience. I'm going back now to 1976, when the big Festival of Folklife traditions of America was held, and where a group of performers from India, musicians and all kinds of other performers, including people who imitated other people, called bahurupayas from Rajasthan, and I was so fascinated by the variety of performance traditions. These bahurupayas were disguise artists. Musicians were fantastic musicians who played folk music in a style that was almost reminiscent of what classical music might have been in the past. Anyway, it was very, very sophisticated. So at the end of 1976 I made my return to Rajasthan, and two of the musicians who were there were these Langa musicians who really had invited me to come, and were very keen on me to come and do some research there. So I spent a few weeks there, and then the following year after 1976 several weeks in Rajasthan, and then in 1978 I spent three months on a three-

month field trip in summer. This was now when I could afford to take a little time off from the pressures of teaching, and the new courses and so on, and spent that time doing research in Rajasthan, a little bit in Pakistan. The important thing is that gave me a new look on Indian music. I had been aware of folk music through my teacher, but I never really had a chance to study it in any detail, and this was an opportunity for me to study Rajasthani folk music. It was called folk music, but it's a folk-classical music, whatever you like to call it, very highly sophisticated. In 1978 I was able to also take with me a video recorder. Well, I should say it was a two-unit thing, because the camera was separate. They didn't have any camcorders in those days, and the recorder itself was rather heavy. Still I took it and I made some video recordings, and I was able to record some fascinating things, and videotaped a lot of fascinating performance traditions as well. One of them, which resulted finally in my publication of "Folk Performers of India" included these bahurupayas, these disguise artists or however you like to call it. They were incredible guys who would dress up as something absolutely alien, maybe dress up as a police officer one day, another day they'll come dressed as the god Shiva. They would go around the countryside and harass the people sometimes, and sometimes tease them, and inevitably people were amused by it, and gave them some reparations for their efforts. It was a major part of this film that I did, and, of course, there were other aspects to it. There were magicians and so on in my film, which some of them were from Rajasthan, some of them from elsewhere in India. But the Rajasthani field trip focused in Jaisalmer, the city of Jaisalmer. Now, Jaisalmer is a fortress city which is kind of remote from the rest of Rajasthan, and yet has connections with Rajasthan, and, of course, is very close to Pakistan, so it also has connections with Pakistan in many ways. There used to be a kingdom here, a ruler, a rajah, and he had a court musician. The court musician was Arba Khan, who when he died in the late seventies his sons, by the way, two of them as far as I know, one of them, the older one, had already migrated to Pakistan, to the new country that had been created. The younger one was Akbar Khan. Akbar was a young kid when he was suddenly—you know, his father died, his brother had gone away, and he was left to take care of his family, his mother and children, and he was only in his teens, early teens. And he was theoretically the next hereditary musician, court musician, but unfortunately he could not study enough, because he had to earn some money, and he took on the most menial—he had to take on the task of working in a school as an attendant or how do you call it, we used to call them peons or something, who also served as a watchman and so on, and that was the way he supported his family, although he was kind of a descendant of a royal-court musician, and that was a very highly respected state. Now, I discovered a lot of very fascinating things in Rajasthan about this community called Manganiyar,

where Akbar was the titular head, a titular head but not having had the formal training of a musician that he should have had. Nevertheless, he had a big following, and I was fascinated by the whole structure of how this went on, and in my research I discovered that, my gosh, these Manganiyar musicians were so incredibly talented that they could sing in a style which was very, very, very extraordinarily skillful and sophisticated. It was almost what you would call a classical tradition rather than a folk tradition, which implies an unlearned tradition. But here these musicians didn't learn how to perform music; they grew up with it. Kids at the age of six and seven would be performing with their parents, and they grew up together learning this incredible music and this incredible technique of instrument playing and then vocalizations that were just unusual, unbelievable, so I wrote some papers about it. One was about "Tradition and Change in Western Rajasthan." What did I see? From what I had observed here, what could I see in the question of, what was change coming from, where it was coming, and what it was likely to do. I came to some conclusions that one of the communities, the dholis, were not likely to continue their traditions, whereas Manganiyars, who were more versatile in many ways, would. Whether that is true or not I don't know, but that was the hypothesis I'd come by. The other article that I came up with was, listening to the musicians I said, "My gosh, this could be an alternate musical tradition," because they sang the solfa, but not in the way of the solfa as we know it now. You see, the solfa then was like if there were five notes in the scale they'd be called saregama irrespective of whether they stretched over the octave or not, whereas we would call it sagamapani or something like that, which shows that there are omitted notes. But here they did not think in terms of that. Now, I don't know how widespread that was, but certainly one or two musicians sang in that style, and I recorded them and studied them. And then I said, well, how did classical music begin in India? What is the origin of it? And it has to be influenced by folk music. I mean, for instance, where did the drone come from? There was no drone in ancient India, as we know from the ancient treatises like the Natya Shastra and so on; there was no drone in that time. So where did it come from? And we know that the neighboring countries like Persia and so on, which influenced India, don't have that concept of drone that we have in India, which permeates so much of the music. So one of the things that I later focused on was the idea of the drone. Now, how many types of drones there are in India, folk traditions and classical traditions and so on, so many of them were different, from vocal drones to two flutes, one playing the drone and the other the melody, and so on, and many wind instruments doing that. So drone was so pervasive in Indian folk traditions, but I was sure that somehow the other—it was from these folk traditions that it was taken into classical music, although the evidence, of course, is not available. But you can see from the instruments

that are depicted in the sculptures and so on, that there were probably no drone instruments until at least after the tenth or eleventh century A.D. Then you begin to see instruments that could have been used for drones, string instruments for drone. This resulted in a paper that I wrote called "The Embryo of A Classical Music Tradition," which is published, unfortunately, without footnotes, but it was published. But I wrote other papers, too, which I haven't yet published. One of them is about the temple tradition called Bhattiyaniji temple. It is a goddess by the name of Bhattiyaniji, a Hindu goddess, yet the musicians, let's say the temple musicians are Muslim musicians, and they're the Manganiyars, a particular community of the Manganiyars. So after doing much research, and asking questions and so on, I came up with a hypothesis, and so I wrote about Bhattaniyaniji's musicians, which I haven't yet published but I hope to publish in the near future. Now, while this Rajasthani research was occupying a lot of my attention—incidentally I should say that Dr. Amy Catlin was collaborating with me in much of this research, not all of it, coming back home to UCLA and a new experience still of teaching courses that I'd never taught before, and facing graduate students and so on. I continued, of course, to teach Indian music, and I was happy to have some advanced students to discuss things with. But I also had to teach other courses then, and these courses included, like, music and fieldwork, how do you do fieldwork in ethnomusicology, how do you do transcription of the material you find and you collect, and especially the transcription was a big challenge for me. Field work I'd been doing, so I could handle it very easily, but transcription was an interesting problem. How on earth do you transcribe something, and what notation do you use, and what is the meaning of this transcription. When a person hears some sounds that are alien, you can notate them in whatever system you think is meaningful, but it's only meaningful to those people who have an understanding of that particular style of thinking. Well, UCLA had a wonderful background or tradition which involved the instrument called the melograph, which was a tool for analyzing sound in terms of graphic displays. Now, this originally was such an amazing development that I remember seeing a whole wall of instruments to do just that one thing, to transcribe sound into graphic displays, and it cost as I remember—Charles Young who was there and was then the chancellor was so fascinated by ethnomusicology that he had given Mantle Hood I think something like $100,000 at that time to develop this tool called the melograph. Now, the melograph had its terrific limitations, some of them which are still un-surmountable, un-surmounted, I should say, that it could only show one single melody line. If there were two instruments it would just get confused, so you had to get a display in a very special situation. Now, by the time I got to UCLA that melograph was no longer functional, because it required maintenance every single year, and it had been decided that it was not

going to succeed and it was going to cost too much to maintain it. But the memory of that melograph, and that everyone kept referring to that melograph, which was there in UCLA, tucked away in some other department, but led everyone to believe that the answer to understanding music lay in the analysis of this melograph display. And I said, now look. The melograph can't think the way we do, or hear music the way we do, because we are on the one hand influenced by our backgrounds, not to mention our hearing potential, which is, you know, we are limited by what our age is, what frequencies we can hear, etc., etc., and we have subjective listening. That is, if there's an airplane flying above and we listen to music, we have the ability to shut out the airplane, but the melograph doesn't have that facility. So I said, "The melograph will never be able to replace our own hearing." So I wrote a paper called "The Objective and Subjective in Musical Transcription," and this paper was reprinted a couple of times. The other thing that I decided was, one of the biggest problems we had in those days was that music is, of course, so fleeting that you don't know how to handle it properly. You could slow it down, but if you slowed it down, well, every time you had to rewind the tape recorder to get back to that point to repeat it, so I created with the help of the technician there, Hal Balyoz, a loop-repeater system, using two Revox tape recorders, and we did it in such a way that every time you wanted to hear a phrase back you just stopped the playback machine, and the recording machine would automatically turn into playback, so play back the last five seconds or ten seconds of what it's recording. So it was continually recording what is going on. So these two tape recorders are linked together with one set of controls, and as soon as you wanted to rehear anything you just pressed the stop button and the other machine would repeat that endlessly, in an endless loop. Well, for a while it was important. Some students used it and so on, but progress in electronics are such that that was completely left in the dark, and it's easier to do those things right now. Also what's easier to do is you can slow it down without changing the pitch, and that was something we could not do in that time. In '78 I'd made a lot of video recordings of Rajasthani music, and when I came back to UCLA in the early eighties I started editing those, and one of them was folk musicians of Rajasthan, an one-hour video that's probably the earliest attempt to show what music was like in those days, because films were too expensive for most people. The other thing is that going through all my recordings on Rajasthan and field trip, I noticed that a lot of the songs that were being sung by the Manganiyars, the male Manganiyars, were actually women's songs. Now, whatever women's songs means, because it means songs sung by women. But here they were being sung by men, so what made them women's songs? Well, what made them women's songs in my opinion was, firstly, the gender in which the language, the words were put, so if it said that "she," then I knew that it was referring to a woman, and if it said

"he," then it was masculine, and feminine gender is used in the songs. But not only that. We discovered further that the musicians were allowed into the private areas of the Rajput women, and that's something that was not allowed for any men, but only musicians could do it. That was very strange, and also discovered that the wives of these Manganiyar men also sang with the Rajput women, in fact, led them. So I got to understand that there must be some kind of an interesting link here. Women in Rajasthan, especially in these Rajput communities, the upper-class communities, are isolated from men and their own kin. But there's a way of communicating their thoughts and ideas across from women to men, and that is through the men singers of these songs, so that I wrote a paper which is about "Men Singers of Women's Songs," also another unpublished paper, but hopefully will be published one day. So my researches still continued, but sporadically because I was under much more pressure now, and field trips continued, and my research actually on puppetry began not long after, when the Smithsonian had this big puppetry festival in the early eighties, and I was asked to find a group of puppeteers. So I got involved in puppetry in a big way from early [unclear]. I had experience of kathputli puppetry as a child, but only just once, you know, when puppeteers came into my family courtyard and performed, but left an impression with me. Now, so on the one hand we were going on, my mind is going more and more towards folk music. On the other hand, my mind is trying to see what the relationship between folk and classical music might have been. Now, most studies of classical music suggest that classical music is something like above and beyond anything that goes on in India. It's in the cultural tradition. So I wondered, you know, how the classical tradition originated. Of course, Muslims invaded India, and when you find scholars who are in India, you know, not able to connect the present-day classical music with what was ancient Indian music, they ascribe it to Muslim influence. But the things that are going on in the Muslim countries are very unlike what's going on in India. One of the very unique things about the Indian music, classical as well as folk, is the phenomenon which I call counterophone, because I don't think there is any real term for it. Counterophone means it's like a counterophony, where a second melody line is put against the first melody line and comes to meet at a certain point in a kind of unison or harmonious position, but in the meanwhile it plays different things. Counterophony is something like that, and so I use that word counter because it does not go along with the melody, and it's a kind of secondary, semi-melody line. It's not necessarily a fully melody line, because you don't necessarily have to be able to ascribe notes to it. Sometimes it's [demonstrates, singing], and it does not actually fit any particular notes. But it is the rise and fall of a type of melody, but it's countering the rise and fall of the regular melody that is being sung. Now, in Indian music you always hear about Indian music is just melody

and rhythm, and everyone takes for granted the fact that firstly there has to be a drone; that's almost inevitable. Secondly, there is usually a counter melody in this counterophony manner. If you take away those things, the music sounds very dry. If you just have melody and rhythm it will be dull, and so these two elements are to be thought of as being essential to the whole audible framework of Indian music. That's classical, and it also occurs in folk traditions, and we've recorded many types of folk musicians in which this does occur. Now, my research in Rajasthan, I decided, you know, that by that time Rajasthan had become so well known, and it became a big tourist spot, and many scholars, music scholars, ethnomusicologists were going there, and Komal Kothari, the very famous folklorist who recently passed away, and received many awards before and after, he spent a lot of time with us as well as other musicologists. Western ethnomusicologists came there who wrote Ph.D.'s and so on, and I decided that, well, there must be other areas which are not quite so popular. Rajasthan is such a colorful and popular resort area for tourists and for scholars, too. So after that my research areas switched to something that had been always at the bottom of my mind, and that was the Bake materials that I'd been exposed to when I was in the School of Oriental and African Studies in the sixties. So that material still needed to be explored. I should mention for reminding you that that material was not—Bake was not very good at documenting his materials, because he depended on his memory, and so he knew exactly what the materials were about and so on, but nobody else could find out. Although I was his assistant for many years, and learned a little bit about those materials, I could not follow everything, and we decided that we would follow. When I say we it's because Dr. Amy Catlin joined me in this Bake Restudy tour in South India. Now, the idea was to go to these various places where Bake and his wife had traveled, and play back the recordings to people who were related, or who might know about the tradition, and ask them if they still knew those songs. Now, that was from 1938 to 1984, and we found many who did, and we managed to videotape a whole lot of these performance traditions. So for three months we toured, and went to these places in the southern states of Tamilnadu, Kerala, and Karnataka primarily. It was not a complete re-study, because there were many things that we could not find in the time allocated. You know, it's one thing to find musicians that are provided for you as they'd been for Dr. Bake. Bake was recommended by the British government at that time, and so he had all kinds of support, and musicians were collected in one place or another for him to record. Then to go back and find the villages they had come from was a very difficult proposition. Anyway, we did the best we could at that time, and published a videotape in 1984 which received an award from the American Anthropological Association. It was a treasure hunt, literally, as they say. It was trying to find, locate and see whether

those traditions occurred, and it's remarkable that nearly fifty years had elapsed, and still many of the traditions had remained unchanged, and still remain unchanged to this day, and we are talking in 2008 now, and we know since then, since the '84 trip we have been on three other Bake re-study field trips. That means going to different places, because in the first instance to find in two or three days the particular song that you want to find is extremely difficult. You don't have the time. And the point of it was to go to many places, as Bake had done, to get an overview of Indian music, folk and traditional music. It wasn't the idea to focus on one particular area, which is now the characteristic way of doing research is for a student to go and completely sit in and get immersed in one particular tradition for a year or two years, the longer considered the better. Well, if you do then you know about that tradition, but you don't know what's going on in the next village, and so Bake had decided that he was going to do something which was more comprehensive. So he had traveled for eighteen months in a vehicle, a converted Ford station wagon, through South India and along Western India into Pakistan, and all the way into northern, you know, Jammu in Kashmir. Well, we only followed the southern India part, and in that we kept finding things, new things. We still haven't published those, because it takes time to edit all that footage, and we have a lot of footage there. Then in the meanwhile we became involved in other projects, too, that came up. Dr. Bake had talked about this community of Africans, Sidis who in Hyderabad had been bodyguards for the Nizam of Hyderabad. He had obviously recorded them and so on, but I could not find any recordings of his. [1932 recordings now found] However, I had remembered that he had done that, and in my research in Pakistan for the Smithsonian in '75 I found the Sidis there, or I was taken to a group of Sidis there, African Indians who live there and perform there, and still have their African traditions after many centuries. And later on I became involved in the Sidis of India, in Gujarat especially, in the State of Gujarat. There are communities there, and the research we did there resulted in two videotapes, one on what you might say, From Africa to India, you know, to talk about how the Sidis might have come, and what they were doing there in India, and the other about a malunga project which we initiated, whereby, seeing initially that one of the instruments called a malunga was no longer being played by the younger generation, so we initiated a camp in a remote part of Gujarat. To that camp we invited a few teachers, and another twelve or thirteen students, younger Sidis, and said, "Okay, now you're going to learn from them," and we paid for their accommodation and food and so on, and gave them a little stipend to encourage them to come. That was kind of an interesting malunga project. Don't really know the full result of it, but we do know that some occasional people were very impressed by it, and it had a great impact on their lives. One of them, Salim, was very impoverished and worked

hours and hours in a factory, and had family and had to work. Then he decided that he was going to play the malunga and become what was traditionally known—I mean, they are like mendicants, or fakirs, and he became a fakir. Then he dropped his backbreaking job in the factory. We know that, but we don't know if it had an effect on many other people. Some of them occasionally play the malunga, but whether it's had a major impact or not I don't know. But at least they made them aware of this traditional instrument of their heritage. So the Sidi project took quite a few years of time, several research trips, and at the same time I was also influenced by another project that had been initiated earlier, many years ago. In 1963 when I had first gone to India to do some research on folk music, initiated by my guru, Arnold Bake, but sometimes I call him Bake because everyone else does, but Bake died in 1963, but he had left me the legacy that the folk traditions were very important, and I had been through many places in Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh, and Orissa, and Bihar, doing the research on folk traditions. One of these folk traditions, though I didn't realize it then, but it became a very important part of my life this time, was some wandering mendicant women, a woman with child and another man accompanying. These two called themselves Matangi, or at least she called herself Matangi, and the daughter was only I think probably about ten years old, or eleven years old. I recorded their song, and it was a song about a goddess called Renuka. The song just talked about, you know, "Let's go to the chal, chal jao, we go to the goddess Renuka." Beautifully sung, very lovely, and I guess the most important thing about it was that while she sang she was also playing this very strange-looking instrument which was called a plucked drum, but it's not a plucked drum. It's not a drum at all, except that the string which you pluck is attached through a skin.

[Tape Number VIII, Side Two was inadvertently not digitized. The audio for this session stops shortly before the end of the transcript.]

JAIRAZBHOY

—was unusual because it had the capacity to produce these rhythmic sounds, as well as what I've described as counterophonic sounds. And I said, maybe this type of instrument is the origin of this phenomenon, counterophonic phenomenon in classical music even. So when we had a chance to go back, I went to see the priestess of this temple of Renuka whom I'd met before, and she was so grateful and delighted to see us, you know, and said she would help us in all of our field work and research and so on, which she did off and on for the next few years, because we went back twice or thrice to do this project, which has just now been finally published as a DVD on Renuka. It's extraordinary how complex this whole musical tradition is, and how the performers, the

musicians are worshippers of this goddess, but she will know of this tradition in India in many places. The tradition usually they refer to is devadasis. Deva, god, male god, dasi is servant of, and so these were women who were dedicated to the male god, and would dress him and feed him and bathe him, and dance with him when necessary, and perform. Now, the difference here is that this was a case where we have devidasas, that is, goddesses and male devotees and servants, male servants for female goddesses. By devidasas we meant that the women folk did not dance. The women, dedicated women to the goddess did not dance. It was only the male or the trans-gendered humans, males, that danced, and there was a group of them that danced and performed for the goddess, but it was not the females that did it. Now, how long this has been going on for is not known, but at least at this time the goddess worshippers and the devotees would perform. Women might perform as performers, as instrumentalists, and males might perform as instrumentalists, but only males, trans-gender males danced to this tradition. For us the most interesting thing was the instruments that they played, and that was this chawandaga [plucked drum], which is very extraordinary and is featured in the film that we made, which has just been released on DVD, called "Music for a Goddess."

1.14. TAPE NUMBER: IX, Side One (
February 4, 2009

CATLIN

The date today is the fourth of February, 2009, in Mumbai [India].

JAIRAZBHOY

I'd like to talk about my mother, who must have had a very strong influence on me, sometimes in a negative way, but sometimes in a positive way too. I mean, she used to play the sitar, and that intrigued me and got me started learning on the sitar also. But there were also other areas in which she influenced me. One of them was in the question of humor. I know she used to tell me stories about Nasruddin Khan, you know, but I don't know whether she called him Nasruddin. But, anyway, these are stories about kind of idiotic behavior of this wandering mendicant who went from place to place and made silly decisions about this and that. They were cute stories. But, you know, what remains in my memory so strongly is this one thing that my mother laughed, my mother's laughter. When she got in the mood, she really roared with laughter. I can still hear that right now, and I can hear her laugh and see her sitting on her swing and laughing away like anything. And this reason for laughter? Well, that was so interesting. Because I would tell her the same joke over and over again, and she would laugh every time. I used to think, you know, that, oh, maybe because she was not too bright or not too—but no, now I think the reason was because

she wanted me—she knew that I expected her to laugh, so she laughed for that reason, not because that she had forgotten the joke. And the joke was so childish, but here it is. A man comes huffing and puffing into a train station and finds that the train is just leaving. So he goes to the porter and says, "How long will the next train be?" He says, "One engine and six trucks, sir." That caused a lot of laughter. Then, to continue, the man says, "Oh, you're smart, aren't you?" He says, "No, sir. Smart's gone for his lunch." And that caused another peal of laughter. Now, these two jokes would be repeated by me over and over again, and, you know, I just can see her right now sitting there and laughing at these jokes as though she'd never heard them before, but she had heard them over and over again. There were others, of course, also, but these two remain in my memory. Well, I think that must have had a big influence on my life, because laughter, humor, became an important part of my understanding of how to communicate. We communicate not by being serious, but by putting everything into such a light manner that people can't avoid listening to you. Underneath it, there comes a serious moment where you put whatever story it is. Now, I've seen this happen with bards all over India, who tell serious stories, harikatha and things like that, and you know, where they tell stories, ostensibly they're serious stories from the Puranas or something like that. But then what they do is put in jokes all the way through, and putting in jokes means that they—

[recorder turned off]

JAIRAZBHOY

There were these two bards in Orissa. I thought they were amazing. Also, they were speaking Orissi, so I didn't understand everything. But there were two of them. One was a comedian. One was the one who was the supporter, and his role was to interest the audience in what was being said, and he would do that in the most funny way. I mean, he would do things that you might find in a comedy program or something like that. Like, for instance, the comedian would say, "Hey, do you see that cute girl in the front row?" Says, "Come on. Stop that. I want to tell the story about Pushpamati," or whatever it is that he was talking about. So the funny guy would keep distracting everyone, and people would roar with laughter every time he broke in. Then, see, otherwise, if he hadn't done that, that narration would have gone on boring, boring, boring. Of course, it wasn't the only boring thing, because they broke into song every now and again. That's another diversion from the serious. So the way to do it is if you want to communicate something, you break it up with, (a), humor; (b), songs, music, dance, anything that will seem like, you know, that people will wake up and notice. Putting stuff down people's throats without some kind of diversion or so on seems, to me, impossible. So we find in India every storyteller having a gimmick. Either he looks at a parh, a scroll painting and points to these different episodes, many things about them, and his woman

partner always has a clever little response, musical response. Without that, the story of Pabuji and others probably would not have become so well known. In harikatha, the kirtankar will break into all kinds of languages, Sanskrit, Hindi, Gujarati, wherever he is located, English. I remember one kirtankar in Pune who gave a sermon mostly in Marathi, but then came the joke in English, which is: this question came up in a class, and he says, "Who can answer?" And Rama said, "I can, sir." And everyone roared into laughter by just that little thing, you know. "I can, sir," answer, "can, sir," and then Rama gives whatever the explanation is. But the point was, okay, people suddenly whose interest and involvement starts to flag, he goes into song or he goes into jokes, and these are all, you know, things that are designed to draw you back into the subject, rather than to take you away. It's the way or knack, it seems like he's saying something that is irrelevant, but is absolutely relevant to the way he's going. Now, I don't know, I have always been so involved in this element of expression, communication, and I've realized, and I always in my lectures I always make jokes. But apart from that, I said, "Well, look. This whole of academia is kind of a joke in itself. Here are we, pretending to know a lot about everything." We're like gods. We're like Shiva who comes and says, "The world is now deteriorating, and now it's time to destroy the darned world." So what would you do as a scholar? Say, "Okay. All right, we'll destroy it, but wait, why are we destroying it? What went wrong?" And that's where this whole series of stories called Hi-Tech Shiva and Other Apocryphal Stories came about. And in this particular story—have I mentioned this before? No. In this particular story, first particular story, is told by Orissan bards. It's about Shiva and Parvati. Now, Shiva, I mean, firstly the story starts out with a woodcutter. Now, a woodcutter gets old and he becomes blind and is childless, and finally his wife says, "Get out of this house. I don't want to see any more of you. Get out of it." So the poor guy totters out of the house and wanders around until finally, in kind of desperation, he finds himself in a temple and sitting there and wondering whatever he's wondering. People see him and see him suffering and so on, and they bring him food and drink and so on. He keeps sitting there and meditating and meditating and meditating. The power of his meditation is so great that the heavens begin to shake. Now, when the heavens begin to shake, something has got to be done because it's like being in an ocean with a storm raging. So the gods approach Shiva, who was then the head of the gods, "Go and do something about this. Go pacify this person who with his meditation is causing this earth to shake." So Shiva comes down to earth and asks him, "Well, please, you don't realize it, but you are disturbing our peace, and we would be very glad to make you happy if you will stop doing this. But, however, I've been instructed by the other gods that there's only one wish left in the budget for this year, so, please, you can ask for anything you want to as

long as there is only one wish." Okay. So the man said, "Well, I don't know what to wish for. How can I know? How do I know? I'm sitting here. All right, Shiva, please come back tomorrow. I'll think of something to wish for." So Shiva goes away, very pleased with everything, and comes back the next day and says to the woodcutter, "Have you decided on your wish?" He says, "Yes. I don't really want very much. I just want to see my son eating out of a gold plate." Shiva was relieved, because, you know, that didn't sound like a big demand. I mean, it's not like demanding a million dollars or whatever it was. It was just a tiny little deman, you know. So says, "Okay, you got it." Now, when he went back to heaven, Parvati was waiting at the door and said, "What an idiot you are. Look what you've done. You've granted him three wishes in the pretext of one. Firstly, he's blind, so he wants to see. Secondly, he has no son, and he wants to see his son. Third, he doesn't have a gold plate. So he's got three wishes he's asked you, and you've accepted them." Now, this caused a lot of consternation in heaven, and the gods finally had to have a special meeting, a budgetary meeting, and passed a supplementary budget in order to make it possible for Shiva's reputation to remain unsullied. Now, when I heard this story, I said, why, here's a story of Shiva coming on earth, firstly, for his own reasons, and that was interesting to me, because, okay, Shiva coming to earth means Shiva is the great god of destruction, means destruction is right around the corner. So Shiva comes here on earth, and he wants to document what is going on on earth and what went wrong so that when Brahma turns over the new page of creation, then Brahma will have some basis on which to decide on how to create the world. So I came up with a bunch of stories, some of them funny, some of them silly and so on, but some of them very tedious, I realize now, but I wanted to say certain things about certain issues, which probably I should have left out. But some of the stories were quite fun. Like the Temple of S-H-I-T, which stood for Sincerity, Honesty, Integrity, and Truth, not what you would probably conceive. But it was a temple that was never built, because the goddess who had that temple dedicated, would not accept money from anyone except if they were pure of mind and spirit and had acquired the money legitimately. There was this one occasion with the prime minister of this country had terrible back problems, and he had tried everything, going everywhere, and no one would be able to solve his problems. Finally, he came to this temple that was still to be built, was just a shell of a temple. He said, "Why am I coming here?" But the pujari there said, "Now, look, don't judge the goddess by the temple, because the goddess has very strong powers." So he said, "Okay. I'll worship here for tonight." Now, he worshipped, and that night the goddess chose to appear to him. Now, she doesn't appear to everyone. She must have had a reason. She must have had a motive for appearing suddenly for this prime minister with lots of money and wealth and everything else, but a

terrible back problem. And she says to him, "All right. Your back is cured." And he said, "What?" Then he straightened himself upright. By god, he had absolutely wonderful experiences in his back that he hadn't had for years. He went away. He's like, "My god, this goddess is wonderful, powerful. Now I have to do something for this temple and for her. I'm going to build her the most magnificent temple that's ever existed. I'm going to get marbles from Italy and things from remote places and memories from everywhere. I'm going to put them all in there, in this temple." Then he put together a team to build the temple, and the first day of building, everyone was so excited, thoroughly excited, the temple building was going so well. God, you could see already the beginnings of walls that would lead to the towers and everything that was beyond there. So nighttime came, and this temple-building process, everyone was celebrating, and the joy, the fact that everything's working out so well. Morning comes, and everything's reduced to rubble. The goddess would not accept anything unless it comes from a pure mind and without any bribery or corruption or something, and, of course, the prime minister was involved with that, all such things. That's where his source of income came from. He had no money if he didn't do that. So every day they tried to build this thing, and as the time went on, at night she would destroy it, and the morning would come, nothing was built. Nothing was built. Nothing was built. And every day they would try. He came and pleaded with the goddess. Goddess said, "No, I believe in S-H-I-T, and I will not sacrifice my principles for anything." So today, even today, this temple remains unbuilt, because the ones who donate money to temples are all besmirched with all kinds of corruption, and she won't accept that money. Now, another story I call "The Immaculate Deception." [recorder turned off]

JAIRAZBHOY

Well, I realize that somehow stories tell something about reality that a pure documentary doesn't do. If you narrate exactly what happened, where it went to, and who went there and so on and so forth, that doesn't tell you anything underlying it. So I started thinking about an idea, which is, let's make kind of a fiction out of the document. I'm not the first person, I'm sure, but this particular instance was really interesting, because I'd made a film on puppetry, Rajasthani kathputli puppetry for the Smithsonian Institution, and it went through a whole bunch of series, which is another story in itself. But, finally, they edited the film footage that I had shot. I mean, I didn't shoot it, it was with a camera crew in Delhi and Jodhpur and so on. The footage, they decided to edit it, and I didn't like their editing. So I sent them an edit myself. They didn't like that because, you know, I didn't have the real footage; I only had video footage. So finally, they decided, "Okay, if you don't like it, we'll take your name off it." Now, here I'd spent weeks, months, years trying to develop this, and they said, "Okay,

we'll take your name off it." So they published it, and my name only appears right at the end, right at the end in small letters, although it was my scheme. It was interesting, because even the reviewer said, "Who are these people that are interviewing the puppeteers and so on?" That's me and Komal Kothari standing up, and there's no mention of me or Komal Kothari. Anyway, whatever. It was a very staid, very—can I say unreal—maybe that's what documentaries really are. They set it up in such a way that it seems like it's natural, but it isn't. Let me give you an example. A man coming running, sloshing through water, and what the camera does is goes to his particular spot in the water where the person is going to come and run. Okay? So they say, "Okay, run from here to there, and we will shoot it." The camera is focusing on that slosh that he's going to step into, so they know that this is going to happen. It is not a natural documentary. In this documentary, too, there was a lot of conflict, because I said, "Look, this puppetry show should be seen in context with other performances, so let's stage a festival of other performances and show it in context." Well, we did that, but Smithsonian would not allow me to mention there was an artificial context that we set up. They didn't like my idea, so they put out their film, which has never been heard of, as far as I know. I, on the other hand, had been doing a lot of work on puppetry for many years. That means videotaping, interviewing puppeteers and so on. I had a lot of footage. I said, "Look, I don't mind. All right. Let them use their footage that we actually shot over two weeks in India. I've got all this footage. I'm going to make another edit." Now, what can I do? Amy and I, we conspired. We said, "Let's make it a joke documentary." So it starts with a nawab, a Muslim prince, who's shown by the puppeteers as coughing and smoking and coughing and doing all kinds of things. Then it occurred to us that what we should do is why not complain about the puppeteers. "Hey, why are the puppeteers making me, the nawab, smoke and drink and get stomach ulcers and all that? Why are they making me do it? Why don't they make a Hindu somebody or the other do it? Why does it have to be a nawab, a royal potentate like myself?" And I didn't mean personally myself, but I mean like the nawab. So that started off the film, and so the film is full of a kind of humor, where the nawab is criticizing and questioning the puppeteers' motives for doing what they do. Now, the puppeteers are Hindu puppeteers, but they're very partial to Muslims and they show absolutely no signs of discrimination. Except for one thing. They think the Muslims are easier to fool around with, as it were, than, you know, maharajahs and so on and Hindus. So they made jokes around the Muslims, but not in a bad way, but just, you know, in a humorous way. Anyway, the story, we continue in this fictitious documentary where nawab is berating the puppeteers, and then his consort—now, his consort died, if she ever lived, several hundred years ago, but her name is so famous today, even today. Her

name is Anarkali. She appears in the story and criticizes him for being prejudiced and so on, recognizes the prejudice and being limited in his approach, and he's very upset by this. This is this conflict between Anarkali, who's trying to set him right. But then, finally, in the video edit is the fictional character who is supposed to be a representative of the puppeteers. He comes to justify the puppeteers' actions, and so then at that time we see all the acts that the puppeteers do, you know, in humor, in jokes, and so on, and in serious response to issues that they bring up and so on. Then, finally, it ends with the nawab saying, "Okay. All right. You can make me cough and smoke, but, please, give me back my Rolls Royce," and that's the kind of the thing that we see, this spread of generations. So I've been writing humorous stories ever since, serious ideas couched in humorous situations. One of them written here in the CCI [Cricket Club of India, Mumbai] where I'm staying right now and talking— [recorder turned off]

JAIRAZBHOY

So, writing short stories and humorous ones but with serious intent. One of them was called "An Ass and I," a donkey, in other words, a donkey and I, "An Ass and I," and how I encountered this ass sitting on a barstool in the bar in the CCI club, and I recognized that he was an erudite musical scholar ass, because I'd read the story in the Panchatantra, which is about the fifth century A.D., about an ass, who knew all the details of musical theory and so on, and then how he had been persuaded by a clever fox to sing in the middle of the night in a farmer's field and then got beaten for his trouble. But the story was interesting because he knew, apparently, a lot about musical theory of that ancient time. Now, one of the things that I've been arguing all my life is that, golly, that music has changed so radically that it may not even have a link to that old time. So I decided to put it to the test, and so I started a conversation with this ass and talked about his musical ideas and so on, of the past and all musical ideas, and it turns out to be in a contest, become a contest, when the ass would say, "Okay, in those days, we used have this, that, and the other. What do you have in connection with that?" Then I would say, "Well, we don't think like that." So he says, "Okay, a point for us." So this went on until finally this debate ended because the bartender decided that the bar had to be closed, so until then we had a very interesting debate comparing ancient Indian music and modern Indian music. I can't say who won, but it was an interesting way to present the differences of ancient Indian music and present-day music. Another story I think I'll tell very quickly is called "The Nuttier Shastra." Now, the Natya Shastra is the name of a book and drama, which is so renowned, it's had such a profound influence on dance and music. I mean, musical thought, you know. It was written around about the beginning of the Christian era or maybe a hundred or two hundred years after that. But this dramatic tradition Natya

Shastra was performed by a group of people who were called nat. Now, it's interesting because, you see, nat is the word from which Naatya is derived, and this nat community of performers still exists to this day. So I decided to write a story in which I would call it "The Nuttier Shastra," because it's the shastra of the nats, and not "Natya Shastra," which gives it a more profound element. The story, I try to point out how the nats and so on have managed to create their own kind of world of drama and so on. I can think of other ones, like "The Immaculate Deception." In "The Immaculate Deception," the idea is that the creator of the universe, Vishwakarma, is thought to be a deceiver. I mean, he's found out because he creates surface symmetries, but underneath he creates, you know, chaos. Like, for instance, the human body, where you have symmetry on the external surfaces, but internally you find the liver went one way and the heart is one side and there are pipes and arteries and things running random there. The point is, what is the reason why he is making surface symmetries? Why is it, when comparing with architecture, where form and function, you know, are essential ideas that were elaborated, whereas this guy is saying, "Hide all the functions behind superficial forms." This is presented. It's presented as an investigation where Skanda, the god of all, in fact, I mean, the son of Shiva, no longer war is going on, so he decides to become an attorney, a prosecuting attorney, and he's prosecuting the god. Vishwakarma comes to the idea of physical symmetry, but looking at it musically, too, in terms of so many areas, you see an element of symmetry. But underneath it all, they are concepts which are so asymmetrical that they almost challenge, you know, defy the possibility of explanation and understanding. So this story actually I haven't finished yet. I've already written quite a few pages. Well, we'll end with how, you see, without symmetry, we cannot have an understanding of anything in life. It has to have patterns replicating, even if they don't replicate it. It's only in terms of the replications that we can understand the patterns.
