

Situating Generational Frictions in Musical Ethnography of South Asia

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(with thanks to REGULA BURCKHARDT QURESHI)

This special theme issue on “generational frictions in musical ethnography of South Asia” arose, although somewhat indirectly, from a workshop on “Women Performers as Agents of Change: Perspectives from India,” convened in Edmonton by Regula Qureshi at the University of Alberta in March 2010.¹ Regula’s work with and about the hereditary female performers of North India (including Qureshi 1990, 1995, 2001, 2006, in addition to numerous presentations) has woven together musical, historical, and ethnographic research in influential ways, and this workshop brought together South Asianist music and dance scholars from a range of regional perspectives and career stages. Although focusing closely on gendered performance practices, the workshop also grappled with issues of power, class, religion, embodiment, and memory, and the group vigorously discussed the ongoing engagement of female performers in India in agential strategies that challenge and subvert dominant power structures, marginalization, and erasure. Topics presented at the Edmonton workshop and subsequently in a refereed roundtable at the October 2010 Annual Conference on South Asia at University of Wisconsin-Madison included work exploring the practices of hereditary and non-hereditary female performers; dealing with agency as individual, social, performative, and strategic, but always embedded in historical change; and crucially questioning the effectiveness of agency, which often appeared fleeting, covert, paradoxical, or illusory.

Inextricable from the data and theories we presented and discussed, however, were our own subject positions as researchers, ethnographers, musicians, and dancers. Among the ethnographic memories that we shared at the Edmonton workshop was a particularly poignant account from Regula

about her 1984 experience filming a private performance by Zarina Parveen, the daughter of a Lucknawi courtesan.² In the intimacy of her home salon, even though her performance was especially arranged for Regula and took place during the afternoon (because of concerns over police harassment), Parveen nonetheless “held court,” communicating through song and gesture to the men in the room, which included her accompanists and Regula’s two male escorts. As Regula puts it: “The whole time, I never had any type of relationship with her. Zero. I could have been a rock!” About 25 years later, the two women met again, but Regula was still struck by how Parveen was clearly much more at ease speaking with men, particularly when conversing in a slightly flirtatious, bantering style that was surely an echo of the *koṭhā*³ or salon. It is perhaps a research situation many of us have been in, where, in spite of our best and sincerest intentions, differences in class, gender, generation, language, or economic level contrive to insert frictions into our relationships. These types of stories, however, often go untold, or at least, unpublished. As we move on to musical description or theoretical analysis, answering our research questions and thinking towards publication, these memories of unease, whether reflecting our own discomfort or the discomfort of others, can seem off-topic or self-indulgent.

We, the co-authors of this introduction, were participants in the “Women Performers as Agents of Change: Perspectives from India” workshop. The story of Regula’s experience with Zarina Parveen struck us both and led us to wonder about the many relational issues that arise from the often-intimate ethnographic work that continues to hold such a central place in the musical research of South Asia and its diasporas. Relationality was also a theme that arose repeatedly in our 2010 discussions, and the potential for rich autoethnographic work arising from a call for papers inviting researchers to reflect on how their subjectivity and positionality have intersected with those of their teachers, fellow musicians, and research consultants intrigued us. Scholarly interest in the performing arts of South Asia and its diasporas (broadly conceived) has been ongoing for hundreds of years. While approaches to research have changed immensely, ethnographic fieldwork and its relationships have long occupied a key position in South Asian music research, particularly as it has, in the 20th century, increasingly involved musical training through the intimate and intensive experience of *guru-shishya parampara* (master-disciple tradition). With the reflexive turn in the 1990s, as musical ethnographies became more attuned to the ways in which the complexity of human relations shapes the research process, scholars such as Carol Babiracki (1997) opened up the possibility of writing frankly about relational issues

in the field. Nevertheless, while this shift has encouraged more nuanced treatment of gender, class, and caste, few musical ethnographies have examined intersections between age groups. Our theme of “generational frictions” invited a broad range of approaches including considerations of youth and aging, lineages and legacies, generational cohorts, intimacies, and more. These papers reflect this range and, moreover, present the work of several generations of scholars representing changes in ethnographic and theoretical approaches through the papers themselves.

Ages, Lineages, and Cohorts

Our focus on “generation” can also be viewed as an extension of interest in the ethnomusicology of time and the history of ethnomusicology over the New Millennium.⁴ From festschrifts and memoirs to case studies in historical and applied ethnomusicology, musical ethnographers have increasingly explored how time shapes musical knowledge and experience. Despite this “temporal turn,” scholars have rarely approached music through the critical lens of “generation.”⁵ While much has been written about gender, class, nationality, and race/ethnicity, there are few works that engage explicitly with music and age. This is ironic when we consider that musical transmission – often understood as learning a tradition from elders – is an evergreen theme. Moreover, few social locations in musical life are as intimately constrained and empowered by relationships with time as age-based groups.

In the musical study of some cultural areas, however, scholarly attention to generation through kinship analysis and genealogical descent has significantly shaped the field. For example, as our title suggests, generation is a pervasive, if undertheorized, frame in the ethnomusicology of South Asia. The centrality of intergenerational relations as method, context, and narrative is well illustrated by the cover art for Regula Qureshi’s book, *Master Musicians of India* (2007). Representing three generations of hereditary art musicians, the image features a poised Ustad Sabri Khan, seated with his *sarangi* in the top right corner. Sitting below the Ustad, his son (Kamal) and grandson (Suhail) pose in the same position with smiling frontal gazes, their forms tracing a line of descent to the bottom foreground (see Fig. 1). It is difficult to imagine a more iconic visualization of the Urdu (Hindi) phrase, *sīna ba sīna*, from father to son [lit. from chest to chest] (Qureshi 2009: 167). An expression with wide currency among hereditary musicians in North India and Pakistan, the phrase captures the patrilineal discipular training and mapping of descent that many have considered a rite of passage in a distinctly South Asianist intellectual tradition

in ethnomusicology (Kippen 2008). We can trace the rise of this tradition and its methods to Daniel Neuman's classic 20th-century monograph, *The Social Life of Music in North India* ([1980] 1990), arguably the most influential work on intergenerational relations in the ethnomusicology of South Asia. The use of genealogical methods and formal training with hereditary masters clearly advanced the significance of generation as a heuristic in the wider field. As Prasad and Roy discuss in their contribution in this issue, learning to perform these methods also became a hallmark of legitimacy for successive generations of South Asianists.

Meanwhile, some scholars have challenged the overrepresentation of father-son relations in musical genealogies. In addition to groundbreaking studies of maternal lineages of hereditary professional women performers by feminist historians and ethnomusicologists (Oldenburg 1990; Qureshi 2006; Maciszewski 2006; Soneji 2012; Morcom 2013), research in cultural studies has widened the scope for critiquing patriarchal and heteronormative constraints in transnational South Asian contexts. For example, Gayatri Gopinath shows how *bhangra*, a popular genre fashioned in the UK out of

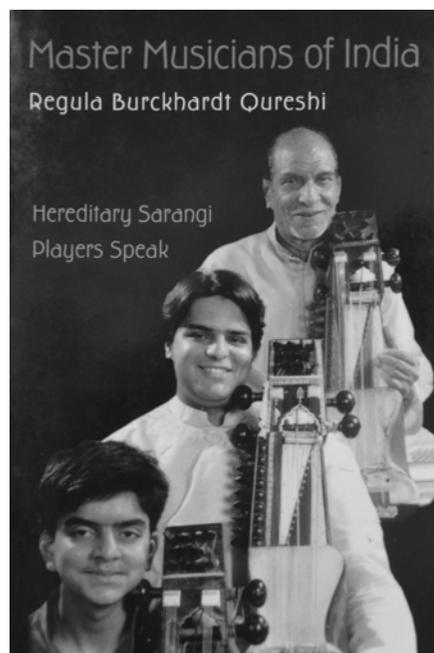


Fig. 1. A photograph of the late Ustad Sabri Khan, with his son, Kamal, and grandson, Suhail (Delhi 2001) on the cover of Regula Burckhardt Qureshi's book, *Master Musicians of India: Hereditary Sarangi Players Speak* (2007).

Punjabi regional and global musical elements in the 1980s, deployed ideologies of patrilineality and heterosexuality to effectively silence "other" diasporic voices (2005). She turns her attention instead to *giddha*, a similar, yet lesser-known Punjabi musical form associated with all-women spaces, to "give us a way of imagining and hearing diaspora differently, outside heteronormative paradigms of biological inheritance, oedipality, and blood-based affiliation" (2005: 34). While generation is an intriguing theme for interdisciplinary music studies anywhere, the special attention to normative, and more recently non-normative, lines of descent, coupled with the weight of the master-disciple paradigm, make South Asia an ideal gateway to consider the socio-musical dynamics of generational belonging.

Offering an alternative approach to thinking about generation as descent, some South Asianists have implicitly examined the intersection of generation and music from an age-based cohort perspective. For sociologists, the term generation refers to broader kin relations with genealogical lineages that span several decades, whereas age cohorts refer to a more limited age group with a shared common experience “defined by interaction with historical events that affect the life course development of the group” (Hareven 1994: 438). The age-based cohort approach has the advantage of narrowing the focus on music cultures associated with life stages. One obvious example is the study of South Asian youth cultures, specifically the emergence of musical practices associated with new media, globalization, and the aspirational consumer lifestyles of middle-class young adults in South Asia’s cosmopolitan cities and diasporas (Greene 2001; Saldanha 2002; Maira 2002). Others have analyzed how corporate India uses film musical styles associated with specific eras of Bollywood to activate the cultural memory of generational cohorts (Beaster-Jones 2011). Demonstrating yet another approach, Groesbeck draws on his fieldwork with a cohort of student temple drummers at the Kerala Kalamandalam (university of art and culture) to examine how *intragenerational* peer-group immersion in pedagogical settings complicates the hierarchical ideal of *intergenerational* master-disciple training (2009). Lastly, some scholars have shown how historical events like the anti-colonial struggle for independence created ideological climates that favoured the ascendance of one cohort at the expense of others, as in the North Indian case of marginalized generations of hereditary Muslim classical musicians and the simultaneous rise of non-hereditary Hindu performers who replaced them as cultural nation-builders in modern music schools (Kippen 2006; Katz 2012). Thus a range of perspectives on musical experience in age-based cohorts have expanded the scope for thinking about how generation intersects with other categories of belonging.

While both descent-based and cohort-based approaches open up generational lines of inquiry, ethnomusicologists have rarely viewed age-based affinity as a primary lens. Hence the articles in this special issue all start from the premise that generation should matter more than it currently seems to in musical ethnographies. Contributors thus have drawn on regionally specific experiences and a shared South Asian framework to build on implicit generational thinking in the literature, for instance by looking at how intergenerational relations can reveal the many ways musical subjectivities shape and are shaped by broader socio-economic changes (Cole and Durham 2006). To further illustrate what we mean by this we turn to our own experiences in the field, beginning with a short vignette from



Kaley's work on music and social mobility in the South Indian Malayalam-speaking state of Kerala (see Map).

On February 19, 2016, Kaley met with Athira, a twenty-something English teacher and singer, and her spouse, Shaji, at the 14th-century Mananjira Square in Kozhikode (formerly Calicut) at dusk. An oasis of flowers and tropical vegetation winding around a giant pond in the city centre, the Square is where people escape from the tropical heat, fumes, and raucousness of traffic for morning and evening walks. Athira's elegant black sari highlighted the sparkle of her *thāli*, an auspicious gold necklace symbolizing married status and respectability (see Fig. 2). It had been 13 years since she and Kaley met at her family home in her village by the Arabian Sea in northern Kerala. She was an aspiring young singer in her early teens at the time, but had since accumulated an impressive series of musical accomplishments, including a competitive run as a contestant on Kerala's most popular reality music television show in 2008. She was now

settling into newly married life and the stability of a teaching career. After some lighthearted banter over aging appearances, a conversation began about her moment in the spotlight.

Athira did most of the talking as she remembered her experience competing in *Idea Star Singer*, a reality television competition produced by Asianet and sponsored by Idea Cellular from 2006-2014. She described the auditions, her family's encouragement, the excitement on stage, the "grooming" sessions backstage, the varied repertoire, and the crushing episode when she was eliminated later in the season. An important theme throughout was the self-consciousness she felt about her social background, which she described as a "*pakka*" (real or true) village girl, and the feeling of being surrounded by more sophisticated urban middle-class and higher caste contestants. There were many emotional parts to this story, but none more so than her account of an invitation to perform in Kuwait after appearing on *Idea Star Singer*. Athira's voice grew increasingly animated when her narrative turned to this memorable opportunity:

Kaley: So was that the first time you travelled abroad?

Athira: Yeah, of course. The other thing is that my father was abroad.... He was in Abu Dhabi. But he was never able to take my mother abroad. I am the first one to take my mother abroad. So that makes me so happy. And I've been so proud because I made it possible for my mother to see inside the flight [experience flying]. Because she is a *pakka* [real, true] village mother ... so she was seeing and taking a flight for the first time, because of me. And when we reached, they were waiting for me and I felt like I was ... somebody.... They were waiting for us with garlands of flowers.

To appreciate the significance of this anecdote, two points require emphasis. First, it is important to know that Athira is from a historically disadvantaged caste of divine-medium performers and midwives. She is only two generations removed from a time when her caste was treated as untouchable, and members' movements were restricted to serving local landowning families (see Mason 2013). Accordingly, she inherited both an affinity for music and an ongoing struggle for social justice from her kin. Secondly, since the "Gulf Boom" began in the early 1970s, families in Kerala have pursued economic opportunities in the Arab states of the Persian Gulf. Throughout her childhood and young adult life, Athira's father worked in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. While there are many Malayali women work-



Fig. 2. Athira Shaji at Mananjira Square in Kozhikode (formerly Calicut), Kerala, February 19, 2016. Photo courtesy of Ullas Ragesh.

ing abroad in health care and education (see George 2005), for the most part men are the mobile ones in this transnational flow of labour. Workers in semi-skilled sectors of Middle Eastern economies in particular spend long periods away from home and rarely manage to bring their spouses or children for visits. This is why Athira was so thrilled to be the first person in her family to bring her mother abroad. Equipped with exceptional musicality rooted in vernacular song heritage and refined through classical training, she took advantage of a musical opportunity in her youth that led to a transformative mother-daughter experience. Athira's story demonstrates how intergenerational relations throw into relief "ways in which people ex-

perience the broader social and economic changes associated with globalization in their intimate lives" (Cole and Durham 2006: 2). Her account also shows how the interplay of age and wider historical processes is constitutive of new musical subjects as agents of change.

Vital Frictions: Reframing Discord as Dynamic Potential

While thinking about generation in terms of musical lineages and legacies may seem quite characteristically South Asian, increasing interest in how generationality manifests itself in ethnographic fieldwork reaches beyond any specific geographic area. Topics such as music and aging, the music cultures of age-specific groups, and generational identity as expressed through music all offer fertile avenues for research. For this issue, however, we move beyond the idea of correlating generations with geographically specific music cultures to think about intergenerational relations as shaped

by discrepancies of alignment, interest, and life experience that we call frictions. Drawing on anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's use of the term to examine global coalition building in activist movements engaged in the politics of deforestation in Indonesia, we encourage thinking about friction as dynamic and generative rather than as conflict *tout court*. Steering away from the overemphasis on friction as resistance or struggle in Marxist anthropology of the 1980s and 90s (Wolf 1990: 590), Tsing argues that the complexity of writing ethnographies of global connections requires a more nuanced understanding of friction to account for the energy created across uneven differences. In her words, the metaphor of friction reminds us that "rubbing two sticks together produces heat and light.... that heterogeneous and unequal encounters can lead to new arrangements of culture and power" (2005: 5). We submit that a dynamic concept of friction captures ways in which music and age "figure centrally in how families, communities, and social relationships regenerate in the contemporary moment" (Cole and Durham 2006: 17).

The merged themes of generation and friction, however, initially gave rise to some frictions of their own. Chief among these was a concern that Western notions of generation gaps and oppositional relationships within families not be imported into the South Asian context where extended families often consist of several generations that interact closely and often live together. Within extended families, a firm hierarchy predicated on seniority will frequently solve the type of inter- and intra- generational domestic conflicts that can pit family members against one another. Indeed, the very word for generation in Malayalam, *thalamura* (roughly "kinship order") from *thala* (head) and *mura* (order, kin relation), invokes the authority of age-based seniority, and yet elders often reproach young people for lacking deference. Contemporary Malayalam expressions like "this new generation doesn't respect anyone"⁶ are the cross-cultural equivalent of phrases like "kids these days," or other expressions that call out the perceived shortcomings of younger generations. So this is certainly not to overstate that family conflict is absent in South Asia, but rather that relational place in the family – older sister, husband's younger brother, mother's aunt and so on – plays a much greater role than whether one is in an older or younger "generation."⁷ The concept of generation, which also can be translated to *pīrhī* in Hindi and *nasl* in Urdu (today's generation, for example, would be *āj kal kī nasl*), is thus a broader and much less fractious designation than in North America, yet still one with some meaning. As explained above in reference to Regula's work, the North Indian *gharanas*, or hereditary stylistic schools of classical music, are legitimized through their layers of generations of practitioners.

The point is that by adopting an understanding of “friction” that reaches beyond contentiousness to embrace the “awkward, unstable, and creative qualities” that emerge from intergenerational differences (Tsing 2005: 4), we open myriad approaches to the productive interaction of these themes.

An illustration of the productive role friction can play in research comes from Margaret’s early experiences studying *kathak* dance in Toronto in the late 1990s. Almost from the beginning, she found the transplanted version of guru-shishya parampara to a Canadian context where teacher and students represented a range of ethnic origins difficult to adjust to. While her discomfort could be analyzed as cultural, a white North American used to a certain degree of autonomy and independence faced with expectations of obedience and devotion to both teacher and art form, Margaret also analyzes the tension as generational. If she had been 15 to 20 years younger, unmarried, and living locally, she might well have happily adapted, as have many other non-South Asian students of music and dance. Her primary friction with the class environment, however, was not expectations of loyalty or unquestioning obedience, but rather a learning environment in which willingness to contribute to the school by doing small tasks or staying long after the scheduled end of class was seemingly valued more than practice or improvement. Yet, her struggle with this friction caused her to practice with extra energy as she tried to prove her dedication in spite of being unable and often unwilling to conform to the expectations of *seva* or service at the Toronto dance school.

Arriving in India in 2002, Margaret realized quickly that she could not join the class of a dance guru in New Delhi either. Her doctoral research into *kathak*’s history and historiography necessitated a broad ethnographic approach, interviewing and observing as many established *kathak* dancers as she could. Such behaviour would contradict the loyalty that is characteristic of the guru-shishya relationship. Furthermore, she was beginning to find that the history of *kathak* and the identities of the hereditary *Kathak* gurus had both been manipulated. Although Margaret was already unwilling at that point to enter into a discipular relationship for other reasons, she also had no intention of fraudulently indicating loyalty and then betraying her teacher through her historiographic dismantling of the dominant narrative of *kathak* and the identity of its central practitioners.

It is rare in South Asian performing arts to specialize in a “classical” genre and be unable to connect oneself to an identifiable guru or lineage, and Margaret has run into further frictions in both *kathak* and academic worlds because of this lack of lineage. On the other hand, her freedom from the parampara’s expectations allowed her to ask questions and theorize

answers about a range of issues including kathak's hegemonic and gendered power structures. What originally seemed a problem, even a weakness in her character and training, became a crucial foundation in her historiographic work ([2014] 2016).⁸

Variations on Intergenerational Relations

Our contributing authors certainly embraced the breadth and variety of approaches, questions, and interpretations the theme "generational frictions" can give rise to. In addition to ethnographic work reaching from Karachi to Assam, Delhi to Chennai, and Kolkata to London the articles present voices ranging from emergent scholar to Professor Emeritus and explore vernacular, folkloric, popular, and classical music and dance (see Map). The theme of generational frictions is approached through an equally diverse set of lenses, and the authors in this issue have explored tensions and instabilities through generations of family members, disciples, scholars, genres, and technological and economic changes. Moreover, we invited contributors not only to explore myriad topics arising from the theme of generational frictions, but also to engage with their experiences in the field, reflecting and theorizing about how their own subjectivities and positionalities interacted and perhaps continue to interact with those of the people they have worked with. This again gave rise to great variety; some papers are more accurately read as memoirs than critical essays, and a number of the authors write of deep interpersonal situations where lines between family, friends, professional colleagues, and research consultants blend and sometimes disappear.

Nevertheless, commonalities emerged and deciding on an order for the papers, which had initially looked like a struggle, became quite suddenly and rather organically straightforward. The issue begins with a contribution from Carol Babiracki that puts modernity, indigenous and ethnic identities, and gender in dialogue with the stories of three generations of professional performers in a Jharkand Ghasi family she has been accepted as part of since 1981. The social and generational layers she explores contain changes in musical style, economic mobility, and reclamation of indigeneity in a constantly shifting and complex setting. The ongoing gentrification and commodification of vernacular music in rural India is also explored in Rehanna Kheshgi's article on *bihu* performance in Assam. Kheshgi frames her study of intergenerational engagement with changing performance norms, particularly for women, through the autoethnographic lens of her experience of unintentional celebrity status as a folkloric performer. Underlying the social

changes that both these papers engage with is India's globalized neoliberal economy, a marked shift from Nehruvian socialist control to a consumer market that occurred in the 1990s. Anaar Desai-Stephens addresses another friction arising from neoliberalism in India through her analysis of a very different musical context – an elite urban school for Bollywood playback singing in Mumbai. Concentrating on a single generation of middle-aged, middle-class women, she analyzes the disjunction between the women's aspirations and the reality of their domestic lives as they work towards producing a demo recording intended to launch their careers. The recording industry, of course, has experienced its own generations of technological changes, and this is the focus of Rakae Jamil's article. A performing artist in his own right, Jamil compares his memory of recording in his grandfather's analog studio in Lahore with a more recent experience in the state-of-the-art digital Coke Studio in Karachi.

Jamil's work on the Pakistani recording industry allows the volume to shift musical styles, as his article addresses vernacular, popular, fusion, and classical music genres. The classical musics and dances of South Asia are established and globalized cultural markers, particularly of postcolonial India. North and South Indian classical music, moreover, is still a central research focus of many South Asianist ethnomusicologists. It is not surprising, therefore, that five of the nine papers in this issue focus on or make strong reference to various classical performance practices. Adrian McNeil's paper is the first of this group. An active performer on the *sarod*, McNeil writes from the perspective of an insider in the profession, exploring the frictions found in expectations between guru and shishya or student, particularly when these come into tension with caste, class, and religious asymmetries. McNeil frames the generations in his study with the cultural revival that occurred in the first half of the 20th century and the economic liberalization of the 1990s. In the next paper, Tiziana Leucci shares her very personal experience of the tensions caused by the revival during her study of *Bharatanatyam* in Madras/Chennai in the 1980s. Her memories of witnessing the dismissive attitudes of upper-caste reformers first-hand while studying dance from a hereditary master combine with biographical vignettes of women whose names and artistry have long been erased. Sitara Thobani, in her work on Indian classical dance in the UK diaspora, also addresses the long shadow cast by the revival. Thobani puts generations of dance genres in dialogue, comparing the social and historical frictions of the revival, as courtesan dance was gentrified and classicized, with the current rise of South Asian Contemporary Dance, which in turn seeks to professionalize and modernize the supposedly "ancient" classical genres created through the revival. Both

moments of canonization, Thobani points out, draw their legitimacy from hegemonic colonialist norms.

Questioning and reflecting on norms, whether hegemonic or not, links the final two papers of the issue. Moreover, these two articles invite a direct dialogue between generations of scholars, as Jeffrey Roy, co-author of the penultimate piece with Pavithra Prasad, completed his doctorate in ethnomusicology at UCLA under the supervision of Daniel Neuman, whose “scholarly memoir” ends the volume. Roy and Prasad throw out a pointed challenge to South Asian music researchers to reach across disciplinary and generational borders towards an ethnomusicology of Indian classical music that intersects more intimately with the methodologies and theories of performance studies. In particular, they argue that many of the frictions apparent in epistemological taxonomies and canonized fields of study can be linked to our field’s ongoing privileging of classical virtuosity as a mark of scholarly legitimacy. Openly framed through autobiographical accounts, the paper invites us to critically re-examine our assumptions and methodologies. Equally autobiographical, and arguably even more personal, Dan Neuman’s paper offers a retrospective on the traditions, both musical and scholarly, that Roy and Prasad wish us to question. Neuman’s recollections about his research on hereditary sarangi players, undertaken in Delhi in the 1980s, and in particular his long-term, close relationship with his Ustad, Sabri Khan, and Khan’s family, underpin his assertions regarding the exceptionality of Hindustani classical music, its Muslim practitioners, and the unique bond experienced in discipular training. Neuman seems to be asking: “Frictions? What frictions?” and although he does recognize that it was the focus on classical traditions that allowed a lot of South Asianist ethnomusicology to adroitly sidestep much of the theoretical discourse that has become central to the broader field, he ends the paper as he began, with a focus on relationships, exceptionalism, and adaptability.

Neuman also sees any existing generational frictions, whether historical, scholarly, musical, or familial, as supportive of this adaptability, and ultimately as enabling rather than restrictive. It is our hope that the contrasts between articles and authors in this volume is a similarly warm and productive example of friction, and we are pleased to have had such a range of responses to our theme. As always, of course, there are gaps, perhaps the most glaring of which are that there is only one article, Jamil’s, that is South Asian and not Indian, and only one, Thobani’s, that explores the vast South Asian diaspora. Our collection also reflects and perhaps reinforces the field’s asymmetrical focus on the classical or “great” traditions at the expense of vernacular, “folk,” and, rather curiously given its role in generational

expression, popular music. We have attempted to decentre this in some small way by beginning with Babiracki's and Kheshgi's work on vernacular genres, both of which also include important reference to South Asia's indigenous or *Adivasi* cultures. It is also interesting that, although the issue spans several decades of scholars and scholarship, the "middle" generation, arguably the one to which Kaley and Margaret belong, is not really represented in the articles. Nevertheless, many of the important issues that frame South Asianist ethnomusicology, including nationalist reconstruction, regional identity, economic change and disparity, caste, class, and especially gender, are explored through the variety of genre and generational lenses.

It was gender, through the workshop on Women Performers as Agents of Change, that gave rise to this issue. Kaley and Margaret are both grateful to Regula Qureshi for her initiative in 2010 and patience over the past few years as this collection has taken shape. In addition, we want to thank sincerely the more than 20 reviewers who provided honest yet productive feedback for our authors. Heather Sparling and Gillian Turnbull and the rest of the *MUSICultures* editorial team have been a patient and generous source of wisdom and experience for us, and we are grateful to have been able to put together what might be seen as a more specialized "area studies" topic than most issues of the journal. Issues of generation, in addition to power dynamics, gender, and musical change, are surely universal, and we are confident that our choice of merging these with ideas of productive friction will be of interest to all readers. 🍀

Notes

1. The workshop participants included Regula Burckhardt Qureshi, Matthew Allen, Carol Babiracki, Charn Jagpal, Beverley Diamond, Christina Gier, Shumaila Hemani, Amie Maciszewski, Kaley Mason, Aloka Parasher-Sen, Davesh Soneji, Margaret Walker, and Shabi Ahmad. Amanda Weidman later presented in a follow-up panel at the Annual Conference on South Asia in Madison, Wisconsin (2010).

2. In her chapter for the edited volume, *The Courtesan's Arts* (Qureshi 2006), Qureshi offers a more detailed account of her experience in the field with the master hereditary singer, Zarina Parveen.

3. With the exception of terms commonly used in the English lexicon (e.g., raga, gharana, shishya), we have transliterated South Asian language words following guidelines established by the Library of Congress. We have, furthermore, given the individual authors in the issue the choice of whether or not to use diacritics and to what extent, as this can be in itself reflective of scholarly generation.

4. This movement was part of a broader “temporal turn” to historicize anthropology’s colonial past while also scaling up research on histories of the human costs of globalization and capitalist modernity (Fabian 1983; Bear 2016: 488).

5. Thomas Turino acknowledges the critical role played by generational and age-based relations in his theory of how broad cosmopolitan formations and narrower cultural cohorts shape musical belonging and experience along multiple affinities (2008: 112). Meanwhile, research in popular music studies has explored the effects of aging on musical subjectivities (and scenes) in addition to work on taste communities associated with specific age groups (Bennett and Hodkinson 2012). Lastly, the study of children’s music is a growing subfield in itself (Gaunt 2006; Campbell and Wiggins 2013).

6. “*Ī puthiyathalamura āreyum bahumānikkilla*” – This generation doesn’t respect anyone.

7. This point regarding one’s place in the family is made in Ksheshgi’s article, and Desai-Stephens refers to the difficulties of living with one’s extended family.

8. See Malefakis (2015) for another example of how Tsing’s concept of “friction” can serve as a catalyst for ethnographic insight and critical reflection on human relations in the field.

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