

HINDI CHRISTIAN *BHAJANS*:
A SURVEY OF THEIR USE BY CHRISTIANS
AND
A CRITIQUE BY HINDU PROFESSIONALS IN THE MUSIC WORLD

C. H. Dicran

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Abstract

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The Hindi *Khrist-bhajan* (Christian *bhajan*) is surveyed in the Hindi belt of North India, particularly Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and some major cities in Maharashtra. This study in ethnomusicology seeks to understand the meanings of *bhajan*, *kirtan*, *namjap*, and mantra from a Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Hindu perspective. *Bhakti* and *bhajan* are studied in the mission of the Church, both evangelical and ecumenical. The charismatic Catholic movement is also observed, especially with regard to how it mixes with the indigenization and contextualization of Roman Catholic worship since Vatican II. The use of many kinds of devotional songs in *satsangs* in homes and in Christian ashrams in North India is thoroughly described. Also a critique of Indian church music by Hindu professionals is given along with a demonstration of Hindu worship. Finally suggestions are made for how to encourage Christian musicians to perfect their skills in the use of *ragas* in *Hindusthani* classical music.

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* For reasons of security some names and places have been concealed, and the author himself is using a pseudonym.

Chapter 1

INDIGENOUS WORSHIP IN NORTH INDIA: THE HINDI *KHRIST-BHAJAN*

For two hundred years since the church's beginning in North India, converts have been noted for their attachment to Western worship forms. It is common to go to a Protestant church and hear *What a Friend we have in Jesus*, or *Showers of Blessing*, sung in Hindi. Worship that "sounds Indian," however, has largely been an experiment in the Protestant church encouraged by some missionaries and Indian artists at various times in the last 150 years.

At best, on any given Sunday morning, one in three hymns is an indigenous song, and many of these, though composed by Indians, are reminiscent of Western hymns. If Christian songs are composed with the intention of sounding particularly Indian (songs that sound like those used by Hindus and Muslims), they are sung only in conventions, special performances at Christmas and Easter, or for evangelistic events in the villages. They have not been welcomed as a main staple and do not come close to replacing the Western hymn in the regular worship of the church.

Though efforts to indigenize worship have been going on for over a century, Protestant church members still prefer to remain culturally different from the people around them. It was the Western missionaries who began to realize that the Indian church needed to look more Indian if it was going to attract more members from other religious communities. They began to encourage and even patronize Indian Christian musicians. Music seminars were organized, hymnbooks were compiled, and many new songs were published with musical notation.

After Indian independence in 1947, however, all foreign missionaries, unless they were from the British Commonwealth, were required to have missionary visas. In the 1970's even the British were required to have visas. Gradually the era of the long-term foreign missionary became a thing of the past, until finally, in 1984, after the assassination of Indira Gandhi, almost all foreigners with official missionary visas were expelled from India. The last fifty years, therefore, and especially the last fifteen years have shown a marked decline in efforts to indigenize worship. It was not as though the Indian Christian church lacked talented musicians who could compose indigenous songs, but rather that it lost its most enthusiastic promoters and sponsors.

CARAVS, in Jabalpur, an organization that used to produce radio programs, is a case in point. From its beginning it was sponsored by a Western mission organization. Under the direction of songwriter Ahsan Masih, over one thousand new Indian songs, many of them still famous in the church today, were produced between 1959-1984. After the supporting mission was forced to withdraw from India, and the support of the work was left in the hands of CARAVS, the organization was forced to cut back on programs that could not be self-supporting. The music department was the first to die.

Similarly, the last Protestant Hindi hymnbook with musical notation was produced in 1975 by the Lucknow Publishing House, under the direction of a foreign missionary and musician, Muriel J. Stephenson, and an Indian musician, Vijay Lazarus. In the last twenty-five years since then, however, no such work has emerged from the Protestant church. Not only so but it is quite evident that not many have been using the book since its production, in spite of the subsidies from Canada which enabled the 650-page volume to be sold for only 45 rupees (one dollar). I noted that a well-known

musical enthusiast and promoter of Indian music in the church did not have his own copy, even though he was the pastor of a church in Lucknow for a number of years in the 1990's, and is now a professor and music director at a North Indian seminary.

Even in the days of missionary support, indigenous worship was used mostly in demonstrations at seminaries, less frequently in actual evangelism with the goal of attracting Hindus and Muslims, and virtually never in the regular worship of the church. In the church today the efforts are not as united, and where they are, the focus is rarely on indigenous worship, or on evangelism. Worship seminars do take place from time to time, led by both foreign and Indian teams, but they are largely Western in orientation, and follow a model for worship very similar to ones taught by the International Vineyard Fellowship. The need for indigenous expressions of worship is acknowledged in theory, but in practice the issues become too complex to deal with in a short seminar. Recognizing the complexities of worship style, seminar leaders from the West hand over the responsibility of working out these issues to the North Indian church. The church, as already mentioned above, is not interested as a whole in a change towards indigenization. The older members prefer to continue with Western hymns and the younger members are eager to experience the latest trends in Western worship led by the expert foreign team.

There are a slowly increasing number of unofficial missionaries, however, who are supporting individual musicians in all the aspects of their ministry, from hosting evangelistic performances to sponsoring the production of cassettes. These have expressed the need for a corporate effort to train young Indian musicians in indigenous methods. Seminars and workshops for composing, performing, and leading worship in Indian ways are being called for again. At the forefront of such efforts are organizations

such as South Asia Concern (SAC), a British-based group that promotes many efforts in evangelism in the U.K. and India. Ram Gidoomal, the director, recently witnessed the power of indigenous music used effectively in evangelism in the U.K. An Indian evangelist and singer, Subhash Gil, conducted a very Hindu-style meeting called *satsang*, in which he sang many Indian spiritual songs called *bhajans* and finally gave an invitation to respond to Christ to many Hindus who were gathered there. Gidoomal was so encouraged by the response that he wrote in an email to Raju Abraham, his colleague and an avid promoter of indigenous worship in Mussoorie, India, saying, “It has brought home to me once again the power of music to reach our communities. We must persevere with this strategy and not let go” (R. Abraham, 1999).

These ongoing evangelistic experiments result in momentary bridges that traverse the gap between Western and Indian religious practice. Most Protestants, however, have not incorporated indigenous worship into actual services on any regular basis. Even if a non-Christian Indian is attracted by one of these outreaches, when they enter the church, they find that what attracted them is not actually an integral part of regular worship. Partly on account of this, churches do not see much lasting fruit from these kinds of outreaches, and hence they are not conducted on a consistent basis. Songs that were originally composed to attract non-Christians are now used only in special programs for the edification of church members.

The Roman Catholic Church has been more successful in promoting indigenous expression, although it had a late start in this area. Efforts to indigenize the Mass only began in the 1960’s after the Second Vatican Council. The mandate from Rome was strong enough to bring about actual changes in the worship services. Now, only twenty

years later, many churches, especially in the North, have adopted Indian forms. A highly publicized Mass conducted by Pope John Paul in New Delhi in 1999 with 70,000 worshipers in attendance illustrates this fact. The newspapers in Mumbai reported that the Mass incorporated Indian forms of worship in ritual, in dress, in song, and in dance. Only the prominent churches in the metropolitan cities remain largely Western in their worship style.

The Roman Catholics have also founded communication centers in Mumbai, Indore, Bhopal, Pune, Ranchi, and Benaras in the North, and many of these have employed Indian music and dance instructors. They also have incorporated Indian music programs into many of their seminary curriculums. I noted two musicians who are fully sponsored and commissioned by indigenous Catholic organizations to compose and direct music programs. Fr. Charles Vas, the director of the Sangeet Abhinay Academy in Mumbai, spends all his time teaching students Indian vocal music, directing an Indian dance troupe, and composing indigenous spiritual music. Sister Pushpanjali in Bhopal similarly has been freed from all the duties of her order so that she may devote her time to composing songs for the Church. Both Vas and Pushpanjali together have produced over ten cassettes of Indian spiritual music in the last decade.

The issues related to Christian worship in India, however, run far deeper than the attempts of Protestant and Catholic indigenous workers like Vas. This is acutely seen in the success of the charismatic movement in India, which has never actively attempted any systematic indigenization. It is clear that the common people, both Christian and Hindu, respond to certain kinds of music more positively than others regardless of whether they have Western or Indian origins. This is illustrated by the fact that within the Catholic

Church, not only indigenous worship but also, and perhaps more so, charismatic worship in local languages is very popular. It is popular not only among Catholics who are experiencing charismatic renewal but also among Hindus from both South India and North India who are attending the meetings in the thousands. This phenomenon can also be observed among Pentecostals. Christians and Hindus alike respond to what they perceive as the movement of God through high-energy singing that can sometimes last for as long as four hours without a break.

It is not the songs themselves that remind the Hindu devotees of their own worship, but the form of the worship service and the energy with which it is conducted. Hindus are very familiar with singing sessions, or *satsangs*, that begin in the evening and last until the early hours of the morning. They are also familiar with the way in which music and song can affect the body and lead to emotional ecstasy and to what they feel is the presence of God.

Charismatics have been more successful, certainly in the short term, because of this “accidental indigenization.” Some of them, however, are unfamiliar with the theoretical arguments that defend it. Anything that helps achieve the experience of God’s presence, whether *bhajan* or Western worship chorus, is accepted enthusiastically. In B____, for example, the two thousand devotees who gather every Sunday for the charismatic healing service in the Catholic M____ A____ sing all kinds of worship songs whether influenced by Western or Indian musical ideas. The *acharya* (head monk) of the ashram commented about a popular song he had written, *Aaja Mere Prabhu*, whose rhythm was set in waltz time and whose words speak of closeness with God and healing: “...they like to hear that, because it has some power also, [and] I believe in [that power]”

(D____, 1999). The longing to experience the power of God (*shakti*) and devotion to God (*bhakti*) bind charismatics and Hindu devotees together in a similar purpose. Evidently many types of songs, both Western and Eastern, help to achieve this so long as the language used is Hindi.

Interestingly, the Hindi movie industry takes a similar approach. Instead of devotion to God, their goal is entertainment; and for this they use every type of music, whether Indian or Western, and many kinds of fusion as well. Fans of Hindi film songs all over India are little concerned as to the origins of the melodies and rhythms used. A song is judged by its entertainment value, not by the origin of its style. The movie industry has proved from the 1940's right up to the present time that Indianization of the latest Western ideas in pop music, combined with Indian classical music, results in a cocktail that appeals greatly to the Indian public. This is because everything in the movies is portrayed as Indian by the heroes and heroines.

The movie industry gets away with using Western music because the public accepts it as an Indian institution. The church, however, both Protestant and Catholic, does not receive the same leniency. The church is viewed as a Western implantation on Indian soil. This strongly held view makes it difficult for individuals and even organizations that are attempting to indigenize existing church structures.

The Catholic Church claims that it is Indian because it has chosen Indian forms to worship Christ, though they are borrowed mostly from Hindu practices. But fundamentalist Hindus argue that Catholic exclusive worship and preaching of a "foreign god" is enough to reject their claims to being Indian. For them indigenization is only a cover-up for the age-old Christian and Western goal of world conquest (Shourie, 2000,

pp. 1-2). Fr. James M.L., a Catholic lyric writer and producer of Hindi dance dramas at the Navchetana Communication Center in Bhopal, holds a long-term view of the ultimate success of indigenization. “Instead of preaching directly, the whole culture in India is to be evangelized, not individuals...Here in North India we feel that Christianity has to grow much in culture [through] the art forms. It’s in the initial stage. A Christian art is to be developed” (James, 1999).

Individual Protestant thinkers who would agree with the above statement of Fr. James are frustrated by the fact that they are one gigantic step behind the Catholics. The vast majority of Protestants in North India still worship using Western forms and show no signs of wanting to change. It is for this reason that some Protestant indigenous workers have gone underground, and do not even associate with the visible church, preferring to plant fellowships of Christ-worshippers (*Khris-bhaktas*) who worship in Indian ways as the Catholics do, but who call themselves “Hindu followers of Christ.” These are a tiny minority; and they often struggle, on account of their confusing identity, to explain themselves both to Hindus and to Christians.

Among Protestant thinkers who would not go this far, but who recognize these difficulties, the question is asked: Does worship style matter at all? For these thinkers, it is more important for each new generation to be spiritually and emotionally satisfied in worship, whether it is Indian, Western, or some combination of both. Contextualization and indigenization, terms which will be discussed more in Chapter Two, are important but secondary issues for them. More importantly, it is the felt power of the Holy Spirit to bring about spiritual change that must be looked for in any Christian work, not whether

the forms used are Western or Eastern. Viju Abraham, director of A.C.T. (Association for Christian Thoughtfulness) in Mumbai, comments:

The power to change in communication is something we have got to pay attention to and not just communicate... Unless you have that type of anointed singing, anointed communication, I think then the rest of it is useless in whatever we are trying to do. Because in Missions we have studied contextualization [and] indigenous patterns; I am thoroughly for that. As Sadhu Sundar Singh has said, “If you give the water of life in an Indian cup, our Indians will drink it. It will be more acceptable...” (Abraham, 1999).

Viju goes on to criticize various works of indigenization saying, “They have learned all the techniques; [but] do I see the power?” (loc.cit.). It is this feeling which binds together many charismatic Protestant and Catholic Christians alike in their desire to see the power of God manifest in all Christian work. The need for a cultural transformation of society by Christians, expressed by Fr. James, is superseded by the need for a spiritual change in individuals by the power of God. And like the M_____ A_____ in B_____, any method is used which makes room for the “anointing” and the release of power to change hearts and heal bodies.

What kinds of worship forms are best suited to making room for the release of spiritual power in believers? This is a complex question and will be attended to in detail in Chapter Three. For the present we will confine the discussion to the kind of music which has captured the hearts of Protestant and Catholic youth in India. An ever increasing number of young people in Indian cities and even smaller towns, but especially Christian youth, are attracted to Western pop music, and the majority of those interested in learning an instrument choose the guitar or keyboard. The Hindi movie industry in Mumbai employs many Christian musicians, and virtually all of them are required for their skill in Western music. It is extremely rare to come across a Christian who is a

professional *tabla* (Indian percussion instrument) or *sitar* (Indian string instrument) player.

In my research I came across two Christian professional *tabla* players, Mr. Thorat in Pune and Mr. Morris Masih in Bareilly. Both of them lamented the fact that virtually no Christian young people come to them for serious study, although they are willing to teach them for a very nominal fee and, in some cases, no fee at all. They both mentioned that they themselves receive little public recognition for their achievements, although they have both accompanied some of the top Indian classical artists such as Bhimsen Joshi and Anup Jalota (Thorat, 1999; Masih, 1999). This is attributed to the fact that, as Christians, they are misfits in the world of Indian classical music. It is no wonder, then, that without heroes in the Indian classical field, Christian young people are more inspired by professional Western-style musicians because of the greater possibility for them to receive recognition in that field.

However, more Catholic youth in the last decade have been learning Indian art forms and instruments in a few Catholic music schools, though this is still virtually unheard of among Protestants. I noted that many priests and nuns prefer Indian forms of worship that are based on the classical *raga* system. They find these forms to be more suited to helping them in their disciplines, especially in meditation and contemplation. They have their heroes, too, in men like Fr. Charles Vas, who is well known as a composer of Indian Christian spiritual music in secular circles in Mumbai. Fr. Vas told me that he makes special concessions to help priests and nuns learn Indian classical music at his academy. Certainly Catholic youth, like Protestant youth, love Western pop music; but unlike them, they do not seem to have the same indifference to and even dislike for

Indian music. This is no doubt partly due to the massive united effort in the last thirty years to indigenize Catholic worship.

This effort by the Catholics builds on a theological foundation established at the Second Vatican Council that encourages a very open relationship to other religions and their practices. Vatican II gave theological sanction to the Catholic Bishop's Conference of India (C.B.C.I.) to oversee the implementation of the directives of the Fathers of the Council (Duncan, 1999, p. 8). The Mass, once translated into vernacular languages such as Hindi, could then be put to music that was also Indian. Likewise, other forms of Indian worship were studied and some were deemed acceptable for Christian worship. One of these is the lighting of the lamp, called *Aarti*, which Catholic churches practice all over the country.

The Catholic position since Vatican II considers these practices to be Indian and therefore neutral, and usable in Christian worship (*loc.cit.*). The traditional view of Protestants, however, has been to call these practices not Indian, but Hindu. Far from being neutral, they are believed to be deeply intertwined with idol worship, and therefore have demonic origins. Therefore they are unacceptable for worshipping Jesus Christ.

This view, that most of what is Indian is Hindu and unusable, has been ingrained in the minds of Protestant Christians for two centuries. Though many missionaries in the last 150 years have attempted to correct this view, they have not succeeded. Their lack of success has not been so much in the cognitive realm as in the practical day-to-day realm. One finds today that most Protestant Christians acknowledge, theoretically, that there is no reason why Western dress, Western music and Western worship forms are more Christian than Indian ones. They freely acknowledge that sitting on the floor, using

Indian musical instruments, and singing Indian-style songs are much more appropriate expressions of Christian worship in India. They recognize that making these changes would, no doubt, attract more Hindus to the Christian fold.

This agreement, however, ends abruptly at the theoretical, in the realm of conversation. When examples of Christians who are using indigenous forms of worship are cited, the common response is that these forms are artificially practiced by Christians, and therefore seem strangely out of place both to Christians and to Hindus who may happen to observe them.

A church that has been westernized for two centuries has not only been accepted as such by its members, but also by the communities around them. When Indian Christians feel forced to put on an artificial show, and Hindus smell dishonesty, indigenous Christian workers in the cities often find they have few friends in either camp.

It is interesting to note that foreigners who are interested in learning Indian art forms are much more readily accepted by the art community than are Indian Christians. Foreigners, all of whom are Christians as far as most Indians are concerned, have shown a love for Indian art. This affords Indians an opportunity to take pride in their culture, boasting that even foreigners have come to study it. But as far as the Hindu is concerned, an Indian Christian has already rejected Indian culture just by being part of a community that preferred Western religion and all its cultural trappings. This is an unpardonable sin and cannot easily be repented of. An Indian Christian who wants to learn Indian art, therefore, must be all the more dedicated, and willing to accept without flinching any criticism from his teachers and fellow students.

In my research there were some notable instances of Christians who proved themselves and were loved, even favored by their Hindu or Muslim music masters. But they had to pay the price, accepting criticism from both their own Christian community and the Hindu and Muslim artists. The criticism from the Christian community had largely to do with two aspects of Indian classical music: the first being the relationship of student (*shishya*) to his teacher (*guru*), known as *guru-shishya parampar*; and the second, for vocal students, being the lyrical content of songs.

In Indian classical tradition, a student must respect and obey his teacher as much as and, if it were possible, even more than God himself. In days past, students lived with their masters and served them, receiving instruction in return. Today, what remains of this relationship is the outward ritualistic show of respect, or in the extreme, devotion. This outward show of respect is expressed in an extreme politeness on the part of the student and the customary touching of the guru's feet or knees when entering and when leaving his presence. For most Hindus and Muslims today this gesture is understood in terms of respect rather than worship. But for many Christians, the gesture is interpreted as worship and considered a deviation from the worship of the one true God.

Likewise, and even more offensive to Christians, is the lyrical content of many of the songs which students of vocal music learn right from the beginning. These lyrics are usually either secular love songs or songs of devotion in praise of Hindu gods and goddesses. Christian musicians have handled this difficulty in different ways. Samson Manwadkar, an announcer for All India Radio in Nagpur, and an evangelical Christian, told me that when he was learning vocal music from a blind Hindu vocal master, he first sought to win the respect of his master. After some time, he was bold enough to ask

politely whether he could learn secular songs wherever possible. Because his instructor was pleased with him, and also because he was sensitive to Samson's convictions as a Christian, he complied (Manwadkar, 1999).

In Mumbai, while sitting in on one of Fr. Vas's vocal lessons, I noticed that one of the songs he was teaching had the word *Shaam* in it. After asking Fr. Vas whether this was the word for "night," he said that I had misheard it, and it was actually *Shyam*, another name for Lord Krishna, one of Hinduism's most popular gods. When I asked him why he was teaching a Hindu worship song, he replied that this was just for instruction, and that some *ragas* were set only to lyrics of a devotional nature. In other words, in teaching this particular *raga*, he had no choice. He had no reservations about learning or teaching Hindu devotional songs for the purpose of mastering Indian classical music. He considered it wrong, however, for a Christian to compose and sing songs in devotion to other gods (Vas, 1999). For Charles Vas, the purpose of learning Indian music is to praise Jesus Christ.

Most Protestant Christians and even some Catholics would not agree with Vas. Viju Abraham, for example, expressed alarm when I told him about Vas' practice. Viju's concern is one shared by many Protestants, that the names of the gods hold some demonic power, and that even speaking of them could cause spiritual harm (Abraham, 1999). The issue of the demonic in much of Indian cultural practice has not been addressed in practical detail in the scholarly literature on the subject. There is much that could be studied here. In this study we will have to discuss the demonic in as much as it relates to Indian music. For the present we will say that this is perhaps the greatest stumbling block to Indian Christians adopting the indigenous song forms of India.

Against this complex backdrop of issues we come to the particular focus of this study: the use of the *bhajan* in the Hindi-speaking church of North India, what I will call the *Khrist-bhajan*, (Christ-*Bhajan*). Indigenous worship songs in India in the past have fallen into three main categories: *geet*, *ghazal*, and *bhajan*.

Geet is the Hindi word used to describe a song which roughly follows the Western hymn form in its lyrical style, that is, having many long verses and usually speaking about God rather than directly to God. A *geet* may also include testimonial songs that speak of the devotee's sorrow for his or her sins, past life, and present struggles.

The *ghazal* is a type of lyric in the Urdu language that was developed in India during the time of the Mughal emperors but made popular through the Hindi film industry in this century. *Ghazals* deal largely with the subject of love, but like much poetry of the Middle East, the "beloved" may be understood in a worldly or a spiritual sense to be a human or a divine being. The church has experimented with this form in worship, and most hymnbooks have a section of Christian *ghazals*. The language used is the flowery, poetic Urdu; the lyrics, often philosophical and pensive, and the musical style are usually slow. The *ghazal* form is as ideal for testimonial songs as is *geet*, only perhaps more so, because of its great popularity with the Indian masses. Since this study is focused on *bhajans*, no further mention will be made of *ghazals* and other Muslim worship practices that have influenced the church. Of *geet*, however, there will be more to say, since one of the problems, though perhaps incidental, in the study of *bhajans* is how people differ in their understanding of the relation between *geet* and *bhajan*.

A few words about why I have chosen to study *bhajans* instead of *geet* or *ghazal* will be necessary here. *Geet*, as it is a rough translation for hymn, has been excluded in this study for the reason that it is far too intertwined with the Western hymn, a form already familiar in the West and well-studied. I have limited this study to *bhajans*, the devotional songs of the Hindus, only because the subject is far too vast to include any other indigenous form. *Ghazal* today has largely become a secular form of song, as has *qawwali*, the worship song of the mystic Sufi Muslims. There is a need for a separate study of the use of *qawwali* and *ghazal* in Christian worship. The reason for choosing *bhajans* over *qawwali* or *ghazal* is on account of my own background of using *bhajans* in worship and evangelism in India, the U.K., and the United States during the last eight years.

The *bhajan* will be described in greater detail in subsequent chapters, but for now we will define it in general as a devotional song (Hawley, 1984, p. 245) with few lyrics (Santiago, 1999), addressed directly to God (Dev, 1999). *Bhajans* are usually described by Christians as slow meditative songs repeated over and over again with slight variations in lyrical and melodic content (Ahsan, 1999). Much freedom is allowed in the way a *bhajan* is sung. For example, one common way of singing *bhajans* is to begin them very slowly with no percussive accompaniment, and after having repeated the song five or six times with slight variation, to then repeat the refrain over and over again, increasing the speed each time and ending in a terrific climax. The percussion instrument, usually the *dholuk* (a cylindrical hand-played drum), guides the music and the speed until the end. But *bhajans* come in all kinds of forms, and perhaps more than any other style of Indian music, this form is allowed maximum freedom for innovation. The *bhajan* in all its

forms has been used by Hindus in their devotional worship for at least a millennium (Hawley, 1984, p. 244).

Protestant Christians in India, if the South is included, have been singing *bhajans* for at least two centuries. In fact, Christians have adopted *bhajan* singing almost simultaneously with some of the great Hindu poet saints. For example, when Tyagaraja (1767-1847), the great poet saint of Tanjore in Tamil Nadu, was composing his *bhajans* and *kirtans* (a type of *bhajan*) in the early nineteenth century, Purushottam Choudhury, a Christian convert from Andhra Pradesh, began composing *bhajans* for the Telugu-speaking church (Rao, 1983, p. 5,6).

The Church in North India took longer to adopt the use of *bhajans* in worship. The poet saint of Maharashtra, Tukaram, lived and wrote in the sixteenth century (Macnicol, 1919, p. 19). However, it was not until the end of the nineteenth century that Narayan Vaman Tilak, Christianity's first poet in the same state, began writing *bhajans* and hymns for the Marathi-speaking church (Richard, 1991, p. 1).

Coming to North India and the Hindi belt of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, and Haryana, we find some Hindi *bhajans* in use at the turn of the twentieth century. A songbook called *Gazal and Bhajan with Music*, printed in Benares in 1898, includes sixty-four *bhajans*. No songwriter of the stature of Tilak or Choudhury has ever emerged in the Hindi-speaking areas, however. As a result, the vast majority of hymns in the Hindi hymnals are Western hymns translated into Hindi. This also explains one of the reasons why there has been no formal study of Hindi Christian *bhajans*.

The purpose of this study, therefore, has been to find as many individual occurrences of *bhajan* writing and performance in the Hindi belt as possible, either in the

past or present, and somehow to string together a story. The story will seek to capture the successes and failures of the movement, the joys and frustrations of the musicians, and the hopes and dreams of missionary strategists who continue to use *bhajans* in worship and evangelism.

In the last decade the missionary world has once again turned its eyes upon Hindu India. Hindu fundamentalists are well aware of this renewed focus and are already rallying their forces to oppose it. Many in the church, both Catholics and Protestants, believe that unless Christianity in India incarnates itself in Indian forms it will not grow or make any significant spiritual impact.

As to the significance of this study, the next chapter will help bring into focus some of the major issues related to the use of *bhajans* in Christian worship. The third chapter will tell the stories of Christian composers and performers, both past and present, and will be an encouragement to others who are using, or are eager to use *bhajans* in worship or evangelism. The fourth chapter will include critical comments by Hindu professional musicians on the best of existing *Khrist-bhajans*, and will help challenge Christian composers to continue in the pursuit of excellence. Finally, in the conclusion I will reflect on some of the issues that I am facing in my work using *bhajans* in the growing multi-cultural worship scene in some of the metropolitan cities around the world.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter I have attempted to articulate the various arguments for and against the use of *bhajans* in worship and evangelism. Firstly, of particular help to this study were clarifications on the meanings and methods of contextualization as used by various Christian missions groups. Secondly, books on the use of *bhajans* in Hindu history helped clarify why some Christians oppose them, while others feel they ought to be sung. Thirdly, it was necessary to enter into the discussion on demons and territorial spirits to understand why, to this day, many missionaries do not encourage Christians to learn Indian classical music, though it is the source for quality *bhajan* composition. Finally, I felt the need to do my own study of relevant Scripture passages, in order to provide a Biblical argument for Christian musicians who feel led to enter the classical music world of India. This need arose from the fact that, though musicians I met lamented that there were no competent Christian classical musicians, they seemed unable to articulate a clear Biblical argument for involvement in musical training that has pagan roots.

Contextualization and Indigenization

Of all the issues introduced thus far, the most volatile concerns whether *bhajans*, because of their age-old service to Hindu gods and goddesses, are suitable for the worship of Christ. This issue might be better understood if one could stretch the imagination far enough to picture members of ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) attempting to make their worship more relevant to American Christians by singing *A mighty fortress is our Ram*, or *Stand up, Stand up for Krishna*. ISKCON's

argument would run similar to the Christian one, that because their gods are universal, any form of religious music is appropriate for their worship. However, the American devotees who had always hated church hymns anyway, and had been first attracted to the *Hari Krishnas* by their Eastern worship songs, would likely find such a proposal preposterous. Not only so, but it is hard to imagine such a strategy going over too well with Christian hymn lovers either.

This is not, however, as far-fetched as it may seem, though it may be hard to imagine that anybody on either side is actually going so far as to substitute Krishna for Christ in a Wesley hymn or to chant *Hare Yesu, Hare Khrist* as a variation of the familiar Krishna mantra. Rev. Bhasker, the former director of CARAVS, tells of a Christian group that sang the popular Hindu worship song, *Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram*, at a Christian conference, merely substituting *Yesu* for *Ram* in the chorus. Likewise, I found that at the M_____ A_____, one of the most enthusiastically sung *bhajans* was *Om Nama Khristaya*, which is in every respect, except the name of the deity, an exact replica of the famous mantra, *Om Nama Shivaya*, in praise of Lord Shiva.

This issue is a major one in missions circles, with questions, doubts, and fierce opposition coming from one side, and bold and even far-fetched experiments being tried on the other. It is impossible to go into very great detail as to the origins and development of new ways of communicating the gospel cross-culturally. Through the various bodies of the ecumenical movement in this century, and especially with the forming of the W.C.C. (World Council of Churches) in 1948, a united effort was made to increase understanding between the major religions (Hesselgrave & Rommen, 1989, p. 74). Evangelicals generally stayed away from this approach because it had roots in

theologically liberal views (op. cit., p. 52). In the 1960's, the Roman Catholic Church made official its growing commitment to foster an understanding between the religions. The Church encouraged its leaders to acknowledge that there is much truth in other religions that can be a blessing to the faithful. They also encouraged indigenization of church structures, under the name enculturation, together with the incorporation of local cultural forms (Flannery, pp. 738-9 in Duncan, 1999, p. 13). The evangelical missions community was the last to recognize that it was possible, and indeed necessary, to seek a deeper understanding between religions, and that this could be done without sacrificing the exclusive claims of the gospel (op. cit., p. 52).

Contextualization, a term coined in the early 1970's by members of the W.C.C., began to take the place of the older term, indigenization. Contextualization is a richer term, more full of meaning, though in one sense the two are synonyms (op. cit., pp. 28-31). In the last twenty years the term contextualization has become popular not only in ecumenical circles, but evangelical ones as well. Although indigenization and contextualization are basically synonyms, meanings and methods change drastically depending on who is using them. The major differences are rooted in a long theological debate between liberal and conservative Christians.

Contextualization in W.C.C. circles has taken on secular meanings in which the "line between the world and the church is blurred" (op. cit., p. 52). The goal of mission is to foster a world community, and dialogue is the key to achieving this. Through dialogue Christians may "understand...and learn from [the world community] so that all together might progress toward unity and truth" (op. cit., p. 52). In the following descriptions of contextualization in evangelical missions and indigenization in the Catholic sphere, some

of the specific definitions of the terms will be made clear as they relate specifically to the use of *bhajans*.

Evangelical Contextualization

The radical form of contextualization described above has its roots in Universalism and is, therefore, unacceptable to evangelicals. Appealing to Biblical authority, evangelicals maintain that “any understanding of contextualization which is separated from the proclamation of the gospel and the indigenization of the church is unacceptable” (op. cit., p. 52). Evangelicals do not all agree, however, on what valid Biblical contextualization is. For a middle-of-road understanding of what it involves, Hesselgrave and Rommen (1989) in their book, *Contextualization: Meanings, Methods, and Models*, explain how the communication of the gospel across cultures today always involves at least three cultures:

[These three cultures are] that of the source (the Ancient Near East), that of the interpreter/communicator (in our case North America), and that of the listener (e.g., the North American Eskimo)... [For example], how effectively can someone brought up in the asphalt jungle of New York City communicate the meaning of the agrarian parable of the sower to an Eskimo? (pp. 170-171).

In their evangelistic efforts evangelicals have employed indigenous methods and models, varying in degree from shallow to deeply radical. Traditional “extraction evangelism” has been the most common. The call to conversion from one religion to another is at the root of this method, and baptism and fellowship in the Christian community is the sign of its genuineness.

Some evangelicals in India oppose this method, asking why it is necessary for a new believer to join the Christian community. They argue that the Christian community in India is as much a social community as it is a spiritual one. Paul, they say, did not

compel Gentile believers to join the Jewish Christians. On the contrary, he commanded them to retain the position in life that they had when they were called. Therefore, they argue, though Hindu believers ought to be baptized, they need not be compelled to join the westernized Christians (Richard, 1996-7, p. 16).

India has about 25 million Christians, about 3% of the population. They are recognized by the government as a society with its own culture, religion, and civil code. The church, in appearance and even in its separate civil code, is a culturally Western structure. It is made up almost entirely of “untouchables,” now known as *Dalits*. These make up over 200 million of India’s one billion people. High- and low-caste Hindus, however, make up 600 million, and among them less than .01% (60,000) have become Christians.

Therefore, the more radical contextual methods, though still authentically Biblical in their commitment to the born-again experience, do not require new believers to change communal allegiance. Change of religion, for these “contextualizers,” takes place essentially in the heart of a person, while outwardly he may continue to interact as a full-fledged member of his community, even continuing to call himself a Hindu or a Muslim. The authenticity of the inward change is gradually proven in the believer as he begins to live a life of love, is baptized, and gathers around himself a community of seekers within the Hindu social structure. Instead of joining Christian society, which is alienated from the Hindu, these believers form their own culturally appropriate communities. This does not mean that they break off spiritual ties with the church, or engage in syncretism, but rather that they form an effective and long-lasting bridge to the Hindu world.

Such radical groups are not as concerned, by and large, with changing the westernized church structures as the Catholics are in changing theirs. Ideally, they are looking for converts who have continued as members of their communities, or who are willing to re-enter their communities as Hindu or Muslim followers of Christ, and break away from westernized church culture.

Narayan Vaman Tilak, a high-caste Brahmin convert baptized in 1895 in Maharashtra, and North India's most famous writer of Christian *bhajans*, presents a good example of this. Tilak, who had spent all his converted years in the Christian community, two years before his death embraced *sannyasa*, the final stage of life for a high-caste Hindu. Renouncing the world, and in this case separating himself from Christian structures, Tilak attempted the formation of a "brotherhood of baptized and unbaptized disciples of Christ." Unlike the Catholic missionary Robert de Nobili (see below), Tilak's identity and the origins of his movement were no secret. The brotherhood was also openly evangelistic. H.L. Richard, an avid promoter of contextual ministry, suggests in an article for *Missions Frontiers* that Tilak's brotherhood contains "the seeds of a missiological model" (Richard, 1996-1997, p. 16). Unfortunately for promoters of contextual ministry, two years was not enough for Tilak's brotherhood to survive without him.

In the continual search for good examples of this kind of work, H.L. Richard edited some of the writings of another Indian, R.C. Das. Richard calls Das an "evangelical prophet for contextual Christianity." In his book of that same name, he also refers to him as the "central figure in the field of Christian evangelism among Hindus in the twentieth century" (Richard, 1995, p. 1).

R.C. Das' thoughts and reflections have been helpful in this study on Christian *bhajans* for two main reasons. Firstly, he was outspoken in his praise of the use of this medium to communicate the gospel to Hindus, and many of his insights help explain why *bhajans* began to be used more frequently in evangelistic efforts in his day. Secondly, one of the sites I have chosen for my study, the Catholic M_____ A_____ in B_____, is a practical outworking in many respects of the ideas that he strove to promote in India. It ought to be noted, too, that though Das was converted in the Protestant tradition, he had "long esteemed the evangelically oriented Catholicism of B_____ and had hopes for a lasting and happy relationship" (op. cit., p. 10).

Though the term contextualization was largely unknown during Das' forty-six years of Christian work among high-caste Hindus in B_____, Richard says that "his wholistic concern and content clearly validates him as a contextual thinker and activist, [though] he himself always used the older indigenization terminology" (op. cit., p. 3).

For an example of his thinking, note Das' comments on the work of the Holy Spirit "outside the church frame":

If the Holy Spirit continues this work there may come, sooner or later, a time when Hindus as a community will awake to find that they are truly Christian in faith though Hindu in religion (culture and life). This position is valid in the light both of the Vedas and the New Testament...Some of us, under the Lord's grace, have tried with some success to live the life of a Hindu Christian loyal to the church and the country (op. cit., p. 218).

It must be noted that Das remained within the missionary structures of the Protestant church all of his life, and though he criticized it, he continued to hold firmly that "with all its defects, weaknesses and sins of omission and commission the church is the best institution in the world and sound to its core" (op. cit., p. 12). In spite of this

feeling towards the existing church, however, Das together with others felt the need to form an “indigenous, self-supporting and independent...church in India.” In 1955, the all-India *Bharat Khrist Sangh* was formed as a “fellowship of life and prayer and...an evangelistic agency.” Das said of the fellowship, “We stand for, and try to explore, methods of realization of an indigenous church. We advocate an independent church in India.... But we are not, on these accounts, disloyal or disrespectful to any branch of the church of Christ” (op. cit., p. 222). During his work in B____, Das baptized nearly a hundred Hindus (all educated), and also admitted to his *Khristpanthi* Ashram some unbaptized secret believers (op.cit., pp. 216-217).

The singing of *bhajans* played a major role in the worship and evangelism conducted through the ashram. *Khristpanthi* Ashram was located “in the heart of B____ just up from the great central *Dasashwamedh Ghat*” (op.cit., p. 8). Das spoke very highly of the use of music in evangelism:

About once or twice each year I would invite the music party from Bareilly Theological Seminary...We would go to the *ghats* and seat our selves on a *dhari* which was partially filled with books displayed. Then the audience would be entertained with Christian *bhajans* (lyrics) and at intervals someone would give a short evangelistic message or read from scripture and explain a verse and interpret a story. Sometimes there would be some questions and answers but we never entered into a controversy. This method was very effective. This is how Hinduism is preached on the ghats or in temples explaining the Ramayana, Gita, or Bhagavata Purana almost daily, specially on holy and festival days. There is no better way to teach religion and morals to the common man (op. cit., p. 98).

Das’ mention of the music party from Bareilly Theological Seminary reveals his willingness to involve the organized church in his indigenous work. This was partly due to his loyalty to the church, and his hope that the seminary students would catch a vision for indigenization. It is also true, though, that the only place one could find such music

groups was in the organized church. The fledgling independent *Bharat Khrist Sangh* was certainly too small to have a well-developed music team.

During my research I found two elderly musicians who remembered seminary field trips to R.C. Das' ashram in B____. Ahsan Masih, the famous writer of the worship song, *Awaaj Uthaenge*, remembers the influence of Das while he was a student at Leonard Theological Seminary in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh. His comment about Das' efforts to indigenize was, "*Main to bilkul unke saath hun*" (I am definitely with them).

One might not expect such a positive comment from Ahsan. Out of more than a thousand Hindi Christian songs that he composed while working as a full-time music director for CARAVS, only a handful are in the *bhajan* style. Many, of course, are *ghazals*, but the vast majority would come under the category of *adhunik geet* (modern songs). As I have said in the introduction, many Christians intellectually agree with the fundamental arguments for indigenization and this may partly explain Ahsan's positive comment. In the next chapter, in which I have devoted an entire section to the Masih family of musicians, more detail about Ahsan Masih and Christian musicians in general may reveal other reasons for this positive attitude.

It is probably Ahsan's brother, Mumtaz Masih, the writer of one of the most famous Hindi Christian *bhajans*, *Bhajta Kyon Nahin Re Man Murakh*, and his music team from Bareilly that Das refers to in the account above. In the hopes of confirming this, I visited the seminary in Bareilly and met Mumtaz' son, Rev. Irfan Masih, who was a lecturer there. I learned that Mumtaz and his team had indeed been to B____, though his son did not specifically remember any details about it.

Irfan Masih, it was interesting to know, had founded an organization dedicated to the promotion of Indian classical music in the North Indian church. As a part of the work of his organization, Irfan visits churches with a professional *tabla* player and colleague, Morris Masih, and conducts demonstrations on the use of Indian classical music in worship and evangelism. He told me that the organization was struggling to find financial support and was, therefore, not very active.

While I was there, the seminary students, about fifty in number, sang *bhajans* enthusiastically in the morning chapel, though this might have been partly due to the fact that Irfan Masih, who led the chapel, announced that a researcher was present who was studying Christian *bhajans*. Upon inquiry later, however, I learned that there was no longer a “music party” that sang *bhajans*, nor even a music department at the seminary. I found, rather, that some of the students, including Irfan Masih’s son, were avid fans of rock music. Irfan’s son was eager to learn from me all he could about “rock lead guitar” playing. Not wanting to disappoint him entirely, I gave him a demonstration of how he might render a guitar accompaniment to his father’s Indian classical *ragas*. He was very impressed, and the idea appealed to him greatly.

The other elderly musician I met who knew Das was the Rev. Stanley Ramsey, a trained Hindusthani classical musician and a member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Roorkee, U.P. Ramsey also could not confirm whether it was Mumtaz’ music party that had gone regularly to B____. Though as a young man he had often played *tabla* or sung in Mumtaz’ group, he had never had the opportunity of going to B____ with him. Most of his experience with *bhajan* outreach was in the village areas surrounding Bareilly. However, he had been to B____ once on a field trip to learn more about

Hinduism. He recalled that, as a student in the 1950's, he had been fascinated by the debates that were held at Das' ashram.

Remembering a discussion on the sacred Hindu syllable *Om*, that which symbolizes the essence of the universe (Hume 1931:391 cited in Simon, 1984, p. 57), Ramsey said that, though Das presented a good argument for why the word *Om* could help explain to Hindus the Christian concept of the Eternal Word, he could not agree with him. He said, "*Acharya* (the teacher) wanted to [tell] non-Christians, or the people of India, that "You are worshipping *Om* – please come and see Jesus Christ; he is, actually, *Om*, and Eternal Word of the God." Though Ramsey had been attracted by such thinking at the time, and though he said "[Das] was a very nice man," Ramsey concluded by saying, "The same thing" (indigenization) "I tried, but Lord saved me"(Ramsey, 1999).

Das did, indeed promote the use of Hindu terms:

Christian writers and thinkers should use Hindu religious terminology more abundantly and without fear.... While it is true that no human word can convey the full Christian meaning I venture to say that Hindu terms are excellent vehicles of expression for Christian truths. Few realize the injury done to the Christian cause in India through overmuch caution in this respect. Vernacular Christian literature is on the whole unreadable. Educated Hindus prefer the English Bible to a translation in their mother language. To the less educated vernacular translations are largely unintelligible. The same is true of hymnals...When Christian truths are put into natural indigenous moulds, Christian apologetics will find their bearings (Richard, 1995, p. 78).

Das' commitment to seeing everything through the eyes of Hindus and Hinduism comes through clearly in this passage. His point about hymns being unintelligible is interesting. Though he probably refers here to Western hymns translated into Hindi, I found that even indigenous *bhajans*, containing Sanskrit and at other times colloquial words, are in some places unintelligible to the average person. Some of the indigenous

songs, in fact, are a mix of various literary styles, even dialects. *He He Prabhu* is one such *bhajan*, the music of which was composed by Peter John of Delhi, and the lyrics unearthed from some obscure source by his brother, Rev. John, an ecumenical promoter of religious dialogue now settled in South Africa. When I played this *bhajan* for a team of Hindi Catholic scholars at the *Maitri Bhavan* (Dialogue Center) in B____, they were critical of the lyrics. Father Rogue said that, though the majority of verses were composed in Hindi, a phrase here and there was added in the *Bhojpuri* dialect of Eastern U.P., and other phrases originated from the poetical language, *Braj*, in Mathura. It was as though the lyricist had wanted to show in a single song that he had some skill in all these dialects (Rogue, 1999).

A few things are clear from these observations. Firstly, indigenization is a necessary, but very complicated business. Das says, “No experiments in methods of worship or evangelism must be made by amateurs. Only men of deep Christian conviction and experience are worthy to handle the delicate instruments of indigenization” (op. cit., p. 120). Raju Abraham, a Christian thinker and promoter of indigenous worship in Mussoorie, U.P., expressed similar convictions regarding attempts to use indigenous song:

My observation in Indian music is that...there is [a] wide variety of music associated with worship.... You can't talk about *bhajans* as a form of worship.... You can only talk...about a “people group” who look at *bhajans* as a form of worship that you want to contextualize in.... [What they] consider worship music [is] the key to what you are doing...(R. Abraham, 1999).

This emphasis on the particular needs of each “people group” (there are hundreds of such groups in the state of Uttar Pradesh alone) is a relatively new concept in missions and has yet to be proved necessary in practice. How much these people groups might

actually overlap in their response to various styles of worship has yet to be seen. The vast majority of these have been named “unreached people groups” by evangelical missions strategists, because the groups have yet to see some of their own number following Christ and living and worshipping among them. Religious feelings and responses to music among a single people group in North India, let alone the hundreds of them, have yet to be formally studied. The lack of knowledge about the peoples of North India, especially among Christians, is overwhelming, and the task of learning the culture of each of them is daunting.

Indigenization is not only a complicated business; it is also a business that has already failed in the Protestant church in North India as we shall see in Chapter Three. The few examples given of men and institutions that have been influenced by R.C. Das fifty years ago should be sufficient, for the moment, to illustrate this point. Even without these as examples, the casual observer, if he visited a seminary, would only hear about indigenization in a lecture, or see it demonstrated in a chapel service. But if he were to visit any of the churches in North India he would have no idea that indigenization was ever even talked about within their walls.

Das, no doubt, suspected this, and thus he was in favor of an independent church that would contextualize from its very inception. He fully recognized how difficult it would be to indigenize existing structures, not because the outward forms of indigenization were so difficult to practice but more because an inward “indigenization of the heart” would be required. He said:

Indigenization in worship and witness alone will not be effective and will appear as artificial and far-fetched unless Indian Christian life in its cultural and social aspects also are naturalized at the same time” (Richard, 1995 p. 116)....

Indigenization must be a natural process and must begin with men rather than mere forms of worship. Mere adoption of Indian forms in an imitative manner will produce sterility among the worshipers just as Western forms have produced complacency and indifference. Indian Christians must be truly and deeply Indian in their outlook, emotions and ideas as well as in outward conduct. Then, worship in an indigenous way will come naturally and inevitably...(op. cit., p. 120).

In North India today, where indigenous experiments are still being tried in churches and seminaries, they do indeed “appear artificial and far-fetched” to both Christian and Hindu observers. It is the same feeling one gets trying to imagine what the hymn would sound like if the lyrics were, *My Khrishna I love Thee, I know Thou Art Mine*. Any *Hari Krishna* who seriously felt the need to win more Americans to the fold without forcing them to shave their heads and wear the saffron dress would have to consider leaving the fold and branching out on his own. He would never be able to win his fellow Krishna worshipers nor any Americans with *Khrishna the Very Thought of Thee*. His method would require him to enter the Christian or secular community as a normal member of society and to begin preaching Krishna consciousness from within. He might be able to use hymns that do not use the name of Jesus in the lyrics, such as *Be Thou My Vision*.

Similarly, evangelicals who remain convinced of the need for indigenous methods have resorted to contextual ministries that bear no connection with the church. Some of these “underground” ministries attempt to keep the pastor or bishop of the area informed as to the progress of the work, and to seek his blessing and prayers. But few get the local church involved in any way beyond that. In many cases there is no local church anywhere nearby.

Protestants began thinking about and implementing indigenous worship a century ago, but today there is little sign of it institutionally. The “underground” ministries that still believe in it do not publicize their work, and so it is rather difficult to judge how much is actually going on in North India today.

Indigenization in the Catholic Church

The first Catholic missionary who attempted to contextualize his life and message to reach Hindus was Robert de Nobili, the Jesuit priest who came to Tamil Nadu from Italy in the seventeenth century. De Nobili became a Brahmin priest and won a large number of high-caste Hindus to his faith in Jesus. He denied that he was a foreigner or Christian, and fully adopted the life and ways of the Hindus. The Pope in Rome gave official approval to his method at the time. A century later, however, Rome completely condemned the method, and it was two hundred years before de Nobili’s ideas were considered again (Neil, 1985, p. 36).

De Nobili’s love for India and its religious life and his commitment to incarnate Christ in that life was not to be forever lost in the missionary work of the Catholic Church. In the latter half of the twentieth century the Church took some initial steps to bridge the cultural gap between the traditional Western liturgy, and Indian religious practices and languages. In 1963 the fathers of the Vatican Council decided that the faithful ought to be allowed to worship God in their own languages. They concluded that people should be able to participate “fully and actively” in the liturgy. These conclusions were laid out in Article 14 of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy in Duncan, 1999, p. 5). The Constitution was thorough, and even exhorted missionaries to get training in indigenous music (op. cit., p. 6).

Stephen Duncan's research reveals that the church in India, for the most part, responded positively. The process by which this occurred, and is still occurring, was carefully planned. A post-conciliar instruction was issued three years after the "Constitution" and contained detailed instructions for the Church. The C.B.C.I. (Catholic Bishops Conference of India) was formed to implement these instructions in India.

Of particular interest is a music seminar organized in 1980, which invited musicians from all across the subcontinent to attend. The following is a statement made at the conclusion of the seminar:

People who understand that the entirety of creation is good having come into existence through the Word of God, and knowing that all of creation has been redeemed by this same Word made flesh, acknowledge that there are problems in deciding what is sacred and what is profane in music.

Certainly not all music is suited for liturgical celebration, but that is a question of function, not of style. At this beginning what is needed is the realization that all styles of music and all musical instruments are in themselves good. They have the potential to express faith and to be used in liturgy.

Since the mission of Christ is universal, the indigenization of music is not some kind of hobby, rather it is a timely responsibility, one made more important by the great influence music holds in our religious and social lives.

For these reasons we note the variety of styles found in Western music as well as those found in Hindusthani, Carnatic and tribal musics. Those musical traditions which are already religious lend themselves to adaptation more easily, but all styles can be used for the expression of faith in worship. We must decide which hymn, *bhajan*, *namjap*, *kirtan*, *namvali*, *sloka*, etc. is the best choice for use in a particular place in the liturgy and in a particular season of the liturgical year.

In the end all new music created must be written to show both fidelity to faith and the beauty of indigenized prayer (Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, *Conclusions of the Seminar for Composers of Liturgical Music*, Bangalore, India: N.B.C.L.C., 1980 in Duncan, 1999, pp. 11-12).

The spirit of this statement deserves some comment. First, the problems and complexities of the issue are recognized. Secondly, the recommendation to use all styles

of music in worship is spoken of in terms of “potential,” implying that only in the hands of people of sound faith and skill can every style of music be useful for worship. Thirdly, the specificity of the statement is noteworthy, calling for decisions regarding various kinds of *bhajans*, *namjap*, *kirtan*, etc., and their appropriate placement in the worship service. Finally, the call for “fidelity to faith and the beauty of indigenized prayer” reveals the writers’ commitment to, and passion for, Biblical truth. It is, no doubt, partly due to this spirit that the C.B.C.I. has made considerable progress in the process of indigenization in India.

In my research, however, I discovered that, as in the music seminars of the Protestant church, some of the conclusions of the Catholic seminars have not had effect beyond the confines of the seminar classroom. One such conclusion has to do with the correct use of *ragas*, a “melody-type” of Indian classical music.¹ The leaders of the 1980 music seminar said, “The *raga* used” (in a *bhajan*) “should reflect the meaning of the text which it supports. This would include the season of the year and the time of day”... (op. cit., p. 12). In practice I found this not always to be the case. In fact, many of the composers of *bhajans* could not clearly remember when certain *ragas* were supposed to be sung. In any case, all of them without exception, told me that, in practice, it really did not matter at what time of day or year the *bhajans* in various *ragas* ought to be sung. This attitude reflects the present situation in Indian classical music circles as well. A typical evening concert of classical music would include many popular *ragas*, some of

¹ In Indian classical music, according to the music theorist, Herbert Popley, “*ragas* are different series of notes within the octave, which form the basis of all...melodies, and are differentiated from each other by the prominence of certain fixed notes and by the sequence of particular notes The *raga* is a “melody type...” (Popley, 1921, p. 39). [They] are not the melodies themselves but the groundwork from which the

which, according to the rules of *raga* performance, are meant to be played only in the morning, afternoon, or late at night. Like secular classical musicians, Christian composers affirm the timings for *ragas*, and speak about them enthusiastically in theory. In practice, however, they are quick to say that these rules are impossible to follow in these modern and changing times. Most people are only able to attend evening concerts, though their favorite *raga*, *Bhairavi* for example, might be indicated for the morning. Worshipers, likewise, may love a popular late night *bhajan*, and wish to sing it on every occasion of worship from morning till evening. Further practical results of the efforts of the C.B.C.I. will come to light in Chapter Three in the description of the M_____ A_____ in B_____.

The efforts of the Catholics have been presented in a rather positive light thus far, especially when set against the efforts of the Protestants. However, Duncan makes it clear that not everyone accepted indigenization (op. cit., p. 11). The bishops did not force their ideas on the Church. Anyone who visits a Catholic church in a metropolitan city would probably find few, if any, signs of indigenization. When speaking with Fr. Charles Vas in Mumbai, he said:

Some of the bishops are very orthodox. Bombay also. So that's why it is not very easy to adopt certain things. It takes time because [they think we are] bringing [ideas from Hinduism.] So that's the notion. You know when I give lectures...on Indian culture, Indian forms and all, some of the priests said, "Why should we take it from there? Why [don't you] take from the Muslims? Why do you take from Hinduism?" [But I say], it is not either Hindu or Muslim. It is something taken from India – Indian (Vas, 1999).

melodies are afterwards formed. A thousand different melodies may be composed upon the same *raga*" (op. cit., p. 50).

The metropolitan city churches are not the only ones who don't care for indigenization. Tribal peoples who make up the majority in the Church find the imposition of Hindu forms of worship "as foreign as the Latinizations of the Portuguese" (op. cit., p. 79). One can see how the C.B.C.I. would struggle, in light of these cultural differences, to implement the directions of the Church Fathers. The question is: "From whom is 'full and active participation,' expected?" If it is from Church members who are from tribal backgrounds, the status quo might be preferred. If it is to attract Hindu neighbors to Christ, indigenous worship might be preferred. These are some of the struggles Catholics are facing, especially in South India.

According to Duncan, the church in North India has responded much more positively than the south (op.cit., p. 80). Below is an interesting critique of Catholic indigenization in North India by Samson Manwadkar, a Protestant *bhajan* composer from Nagpur. It indicates that Duncan is right; even the Protestants have noticed that the Catholics are changing:

The Catholics and Protestants are mixing up together. And [Catholic churches] have started arranging revival meetings... They use, more than the Protestants...paintings, drama, dance, inside the church, in worship [and] witness. They have accepted this, whereas we have not accepted it here, especially the dance.... And there is a problem also using these media, traditional media like *bhajan* and *kirtan*. In cities they don't use them but in villages people really appreciate them (Manwadkar, 1999).

In further conversation with Samson, he expressed vividly the deep concerns of many Protestant parents who send their children to Catholic schools. Speaking of Catholic indigenization in schools, Samson said:

[A concerned parent told me], "We have to change the children's school, you know." I said, "Why?" He said, "My children are going to the Catholic school and they have started using *yoga* and doing *puja* and all, "Om" and all." So he

said, “I cannot adjust with that.” So he had to shift...his children from there. What is this [that] the Catholics have started? This is too much (Manwadkar, 1999).

When I asked if these weren’t just cultural expressions that Christians should feel free to use, he answered:

[Our people] have been so much influenced...that this is Hindu culture, so it is sinful.... It will take time.... I am involved in traditional art form. People are not that much interested. In 1996 there was a conference, “Gospel and Culture,” [organized by the] W.C.C. They had circulated one questionnaire, and asked all the churches to discuss this matter. They wanted to discuss the matter of culture and gospel. They emphasized that we must use our local culture....

The problem is that pastors are not interested in these art forms. Most of them [say], “Just sing your song.” But they are not that much interested. But I tell them that a three minute song is a big preaching. Lord can change the hearts of people within three minutes and I have seen people crying (Manwadkar, 1999).

Samson feels that the Catholics have taken indigenization too far. Yet he is generally in support of it as long as it is helpful in evangelism. Evangelicals, like Samson, are more concerned with results that they can see, like “the Lord changing the hearts of people within three minutes,” as occurred through Samson’s *bhajan*. If this is happening through indigenous methods, they give their full support. If not, then they tend to be suspicious. Obviously Samson saw clearly that the Lord was using his *bhajans* to change hearts. He could not, however, see this happening in the Catholic school through the use of yoga and the chanting of *Om*.

Indigenous workers want their efforts to evoke an emotional response (“people crying”), or as the Catholic Fathers put it, to see “the assembly participating fully and actively.” They long to be free from what R.C. Das calls “sterility, complacency and indifference among the worshipers.” Few can argue against these noble causes.

Certainly Manwadkar would not. There are others, however, particularly within certain

camps of the charismatic and Pentecostal movement, who remain unsatisfied. They might ask, “Are these reasons enough to justify the use of Hindu forms for Christian worship?”

A Historical Perspective on the Use of *Bhajans* in Hindu Culture

Having approached the question, in general, from the perspective of mission strategy, it will now be looked at from the perspective of the *bhajan* itself. This historical review of *bhajans* has helped explain Protestants’ rejection of them because of their ancient connection with a Hindu past. The review also reveals clues as to why others feel that they ought to be used. The questions could be asked: Who incorporated *bhajans* when they were first used, and for what use? What new doctrines, if any, did these songs help to spread all over India? For historical information on *bhajans* I am indebted to Robert Leopold Simon for his book, *Spiritual Aspects of Indian Music* (1984), the first fifty pages of which are an overview of *bhajan* singing from the sixth to the nineteenth century.

Introduction: A Definition of *Bhajan*

The word *bhajan* is a member of a family of religious words, all derived from the same Sanskrit word, *bhaj*, meaning “adoration” and “worship” (Simon, 1984, p. 4).

These words are *bhakti*² (devotion), *bhagavan* (god), *bhakta* (devotee), and *bhajan*³

² Quoting from Rao on the meaning of *bhakti*: “The word *bhakti*, a derivative of the Sanskrit root *bhaj*, which means among other things, ‘to serve, to honour, to revere, to love and to adore’ has retained the standard meaning of loving adoration or devotion. In common usage, it means worshiping the *istadevata*. But in fact, it is participating in the whole process of sharing with God, His divinity, His bliss and His grace. It expresses unquestionable trust and a loving relationship to a personal god. Unfortunately no single English word, including ‘devotion,’ can possibly convey the full meaning of *bhakti*. For example,

(devotional song). Of these, devotion to God (*bhakti*) and singing to God (*bhajan*) sometimes appear to be one and the same (Hawley, 1984, p. 245). In the following history the meaning of these terms will become clearer.

Though a definition of *bhajan*, in general, is straight forward—a devotional song, or the act of singing to God—an attempt at a precise description of *bhajan* is impossible. There are simply too many opinions about what it is. Therefore, I have reserved further discussion about the musical description of *bhajan* for Chapter Three, where the musicians themselves will be allowed to describe it, each in their own way.

devotion means ‘zealous application to any pursuit or practice, especially to religious duties.’ The most important ingredient missing in this meaning is the sense of trust and loving adoration of the deity.

Another possible translation is ‘worship’ which means, in the broadest sense of the word, ‘the paying of religious reverence and divine honours such as adoration, thanksgiving, prayer, praise, and offering....’ These two words, ‘devotion’, and ‘worship’ put together, mean ‘the religious practice, paying religious reverence and divine honours such as adoration, thanksgiving, prayer, praise and offering.’ This is what *bhakti* is” (Rao, 1984, p. 21).

³ Quoting from Simon: “*Bhajan* means to sing the praises of, or to worship the Lord. It denotes: (1) a genre of devotional music; (2) a kind of religious ritual; (3) an expression meaning, religious worship. In the first instance, as a genre of devotional song, there are several forms, some of which are performed only in a worshipful context, and others that are sung in the religious context as well as in concerts of classical music. The word *bhajan* also refers to a congregational ritual, i.e., the ritual itself is called ‘*bhajan*’. In this type, family, friends, or groups organized for this purpose will meet periodically to worship together. The third meaning of the word *bhajan* has to do with an individual’s approach to God. One frequently hears the expression, ‘...to do one’s *bhajan* to God....’ That is, one demonstrates one’s devotion to and love for God through acts of ritual worship. Although the meaning of *bhajan* appears to be precise in that it is concerned with the loving worship of God, its applications can be quite varied, and do not always imply musical performance” (Simon, 1984, p. 4-5).

The History of *Bhajan* and *Bhakti*

The intertwining of *bhajan* and *bhakti*, song and devotion, is due in large measure to the fact that the path of *bhakti* from its very beginning was preached through song. Sometime in the sixth century A.D. two groups of singer-saints, the Nayanars and Alwars, arose in South India, the one promoting the worship of Shiva and the other Vishnu. The leaders of this movement preached, in song, a message that ran contrary to the atheistic Buddhist philosophy current in that day. The Nayanars and Alwars practiced and taught *bhakti*—complete surrender to personal gods” (Simon, 1984, p. 17). *Bhakti*, it can be argued, has roots that go much farther back than these poet-singers.

Every new teaching that seeks a home within the Hindu framework looks for their authority to the Vedas, Hinduism's most ancient inspired writings. *Bhakti* theology can, indeed, be traced back to the Vedas. The following hymn to the god Indra, from the oldest of the Vedas, illustrates how the attitude of passionate love for God existed even then:

O beauteous Indra, to be adorned with hymns and salutations! Those desiring (to perform) the eternal rites, those desiring riches, and those that are wise steal to your presence like loving wives” (to) “their husband, O powerful Indra, their thoughts touch you” (Rg Veda 1.62,11; N. Raghavan, 1956, A:10, in Simon, 1984, p. 8).

The *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, India’s two great epic poems, contain much of the inspiration for *bhakti* themes, both in story and in doctrinal form. The *Ramayana* was translated into many languages, the most famous of which is a Hindi version by Tulsidas (1532-1574), called *Ram Charita Manas*. This contains the story of Ram, an *avatar* (incarnation) of Vishnu. It is through the *Ram Charita Manas* that Ram *bhakti* and particularly the chanting of the name of Ram gained prominence in North India

(Raghavan 1972:14 in Simon 1984, p. 10). To this day, men gather in small neighborhood temples or homes, and chant it from start to finish without a break, while loudspeakers attached to the roof point in all directions enabling neighbors to share in the “blessings.”

A small section of the *Mahabharata* contains Hinduism’s most famous treatise, the *Bhagavad Gita*. The *Gita* is a sermon preached by Lord Krishna to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. It contains much of the theological essence of Krishna’s teaching on the path of *bhakti*. “In any way that men love me,” says Krishna, “in that same way they find my love: for many are the paths of men, but they all in the end come to me” (B.G. IV. II; Mascaro 1963 : 62 in Simon, 1984, p. 11).

Though Ram *bhakti* is inspired by the *Ramanyana*, Krishna *bhakti* finds its greatest inspiration, not from his preaching in the *Gita*, but from the numerous legends recounting scenes from Krishna’s childhood and youth. This recalls to mind the various infant Jesus sects of the Catholic Church. Legends regarding Krishna’s youth can be found principally in one of the volumes of a collection of legends about the gods compiled in the Middle Ages, called the *Puranas*. The *Bhagavata Purana* contains the stories of Krishna’s infancy in which his mother Yashoda is continually punishing him for his naughty pranks. It also contains the stories of Krishna and the *gopis*, married women who were also cowherds and were all passionately in love with Krishna (op. cit., pp. 33-34).

The vast majority of Hindu *bhajans* find their themes in subject matter of this kind. The only Biblical story that comes close is the dialogue between the “Lover” and his “Beloved” in the *Song of Songs*. As for the relationship between “Mother Mary” and

“Baby Jesus,” too little is known of it to create a lyrical genre. One finds, then, in much of Hindi Christian *bhakti* a style more similar in content to the Psalms than the passionate and descriptive love lyrics of the *gopis*. Christians do, indeed, find the refined style of the *Psalms* more suited to their devotional needs. The Hindu *bhakta* would perhaps find the style of the *Song of Songs* more appealing because of its greater closeness to normal human experience – the passion play between lover and beloved.

Krishna *bhakti* literature reaches its final stage in the *Gita Govinda*, an allegorical Sanskrit song-cycle written by Jayadeva (late twelfth century), in which the writer takes one of the *gopis*, Radha, who in earlier literature is rather inconsequential, and makes her Krishna’s consort. Jayadeva describes Radha’s longing for Krishna and her jealousy aroused by his attentions to the other *gopis*. According to Simon, “she represents the human soul longing to be united with the universal soul” (op. cit., p. 37).

The most famous of Hindi poet-singers who composed songs to Krishna was Surdas (1479-1584), the blind poet-singer of Agra. His songs are loved to this day by millions in North India (Behari 1970:250 in Simon, p. 40). Though these “love plays” (*lilas*) of Krishna and the songs of Surdas may be the most popular, they are certainly not the only option for Hindu *bhaktas*.

In the land of the Tamils to the South, Ramanuja (1017-1137 A.D.), perhaps the greatest promoter of devotional religion, taught *bhakti* as a way of union with God, and provided the theological groundwork for future reformers within the later *bhakti* tradition.

Bhakti is only one of three paths (*margas*) to attain union with God. *Karma Marga* is the path of works by which a person may eventually achieve union with God by doing righteous deeds and fulfilling his *dharma* (duty). This inevitably requires

numerous rebirths. *Gyana Marga* is the path of knowledge whereby a person may achieve union with God through some form of asceticism, spending years in meditation until the person becomes “one with the universe.” The Buddha attained enlightenment through some form of the *Gyana marga*. This path was made popular among intellectuals in the West, in part by men such as Vivekananda, a “contextualizer” *par excellence* of the Hindu message for Western society. It is partly because of such men that dialogue and rethinking became a necessity in Christian missions (Hesselgrave & Rommen, 1989, p. 75).

Bhakti marga, in contrast to both of the other paths, requires no work or knowledge, but only loving devotion and complete surrender to a personal god. Ramanuja’s teachings, says Simon, “gave the greatest impetus to the developments in *Bhakti*, that of a personalized god who is filled with love for all His creations” (op. cit., p. 36).

One of Ramanuja’s followers, and the most influential leader of the *bhakti* movement in North India was Ramananda (fourteenth century A.D.). Ramananda was a reformer. Though a Brahmin himself, he taught that all people may experience union with God. He welcomed all castes into his fold, even Muslims. What is most interesting is that he detected the dangers inherent in the sexuality of the Radha—Krishna cult, and chose the more acceptable Sita—Ram⁴ couple as his object of worship (op. cit., p. 40).

⁴ The story of Ram and Sita is told in the Ramayana. It is a tale of chivalry and righteous action. Sita, Ram’s wife, is abducted by Ravan, the demon god of Sri Lanka. Ram and his fellows, Lakshman and Hanuman, rescue her from the demon’s clutches. However, when she is brought back to Ayodhya, Ram’s city in the North, the righteous people of the city do not accept her. This is because she is suspected of having defiled herself with Ravan. Though her innocence is proved, the people are not satisfied, and to show his righteous conduct, Ram is compelled to banish her from the city. Sita is then swallowed up by Mother Earth and is praised for her chastity and her willingness to be banished even in her innocence. Ram

Among Ramananda's followers there are some noted poet-singers whose Hindi vernacular *bhajans* have captured the hearts of Hindu *bhaktas* for nine centuries. These are Kabir (fifteenth century), Raidas, and Dadu. All of these were from Varanasi, as was Ramananda himself. Noteworthy among these is Kabir, whose name implies that he might have been one of Ramananda's Muslim followers. Very little is known of Kabir's life, however. His teachings were a fusion of Hindu and Muslim ideas (op. cit., p. 40).

Simon argues that even Guru Nanak (1469-1539), the founder of the Sikh religion, should be counted among the great poet-singers of the Hindu *bhakti* tradition, because his teachings agree with the core tenets of *Bhakti* religion. Nanak emphasized, for example, the chanting of the names of God and the singing of *bhajans*, which he called *sabads*, for achieving union with God (op. cit., p. 41).

Lastly Mira Bhai (sixteenth century), a poetess from Rajasthan, and devotee of Krishna, deserves mention. Mira broke caste distinctions, as did Ramananda, and she also did much to help women find meaning in devotional worship. She taught an "immediate and direct approach to God" (op. cit., p. 42). It is written in the *Bhaktamala* (the stories of the saints) that Mira was so passionately in love with Krishna that she aroused the jealousy of her husband. In anger, her husband's family sought to poison her, but she drank the cup gladly and was unaffected (Hawley, 1984, p. 252).

is praised for his commitment to *dharma* (duty) over his longing for his wife. Ram and Sita, therefore, represent the righteous couple *par excellence*.

The Place of Christian *Bhakti* in the Larger *Bhakti* Tradition

The most recent history of the *bhakti* movement and the poet-singers who promoted it has already been spoken of in Chapter One. The latest revivals of *bhakti* song coincide with the first attempts by Christians to make their contribution to the tradition. As has been said, the great singer-saint of the nineteenth century in Tamil Nadu, Tyagaraja, whose compositions are very popular to this day, lived at the same time that Puroshottam Choudhury was writing Christian *bhajans* for the church in Andhra Pradesh.

Do the characteristics of this brief history allow Christian poet-saints a place in the same tradition as, for example, Guru Nanak of Sikhism has been allowed? The history shows, firstly, that *bhajans* were used to introduce what were actually new religions. Though they all come under the umbrella of Hinduism, they are in many respects as unlike each other as Christianity is unlike Islam. The Alvars and Nayanars were theists who sang fervently to personal gods in the face of the atheism of Buddhism. Ramanuja opposed the sexual elements in the Krishna cult and promoted a religion of greater refinement under the perfect society of Ram. Ramananda and his followers opposed the caste system, a religion in itself, with its hopeless cycle of rebirths. He welcomed all to his fold and taught that God loved all mankind. Kabir synthesized religions, as did Nanak, both seeking to reconcile Hindu and Muslim thought. In this long line of theists, preachers of God's grace and love, and uplifters of the downtrodden, there seems no reason for the "Singers of the Lord Christ" to be refused a place. This would appear to be the argument of some in the churches of South India that have a *bhakti* culture.

Why, then, are Christian *bhakti* singer-saints not recognized as belonging to the larger Hindu tradition? One reason is that the Christian church itself did not want to be recognized as part of the Hindu tradition. It wanted rather, at all costs, to break off the ties. The Biblical command to “come out from them and be separate” (II Cor. 6:17) was taken literally to mean separate in every way, including culture, traditions, history, etc. Christian *bhakti* movements in the South were always eventually assimilated into regular westernized traditions.

Therefore, whereas Sikhism, although a separate religion, is accepted as part of the Hindu *bhakti* tradition, Christianity is not, though it did also have its *bhakti* movements. Those who believe fervently in indigenization, especially among Protestants, lament that it may be too late for the church in India to gain acceptance in this same way. Christians, they feel, could have preserved their unique identity as the disciples of Christ, while continuing to be relevant to Indian society by remaining within the tradition and history of *bhakti* movements.

Some contributions, in South India and Maharashtra especially, have indeed been recognized to some extent by the majority community. There is hope among Christians there that recognition and acceptance will continue to grow. In a most fascinating book called *Bhakti Theology in the Telegu Hymnal*, R.R. Sundara Rao argues that Telegu Christian *bhakti* poetry does deserve an honored place in the devotional literature of Andhra Pradesh:

In all respects, literally, musically and in terms of content [the Telugu Hymnal] is second to none and enjoys a place equivalent to any other hymnbook in the Telegu language of other religious traditions. Unfortunately, its rich theological content, its literary value, and its musical movement have not yet been thoroughly and critically examined; these are waiting to receive their share of

appraisal from literary and religious critics of different religious faiths and tastes. Once this is done, the Hymnal will doubtless, enjoy the place it deserves in Telugu devotional literature (Rao, 1983, p. 19).

The Telugu church is able to boast about its hymnal on account of the great poets she gave birth to, although she has not been recognized very much outside her own circle.

The Marathi church, and further South, the Tamil and Malayalam church, can all make similar boasts. However, in the fledgling Hindi church no such poet has yet emerged, though some within the Catholic Church are hopeful. Indigenous workers among educated Hindus in the North complain that there is little or no interest in the Protestant denominations to cultivate such aspirations among the young people. As has already been said, English and English language music is winning the hearts of the youth.

Bhajans and the Demonic

The Theology of Territorial Spirits

The prevalent theological attitudes among many missionaries in North India are not very conducive to helping a *Khrist-bhakti* tradition grow within the Hindu community. One of the most popular theological trends among foreign evangelical workers in North India and also around the world is what is called the doctrine of territorial spirits. This doctrine says that there are various levels of evil authority that hold control over geographical areas of the world. This may include countries, cities, neighborhoods, streets, shrines, or places of pilgrimage. In order for the gospel to make any kind of lasting impact for change in places that are controlled by these spirits, it is first necessary to break the demons' power through persevering and united prayer. Once

this is done—that is, once this release is “felt” and also experienced in very practical ways—then a large incoming of converts from that area is expected.

Many actual examples of these kinds of breakthroughs have been carefully documented and printed in various books. One of the leaders of the movement is C. Peter Wagner, editor of the book, *Breaking Strongholds In Your City: How to Use Spiritual Mapping to Make Your Prayers More Strategic, Effective and Targeted* (Wagner, 1993). For a simple definition of spiritual mapping Wagner turns to another supporter of the movement, George Otis Jr., writer of the book, *Last of the Giants* (Chosen Books). Spiritual mapping is “an attempt to see the world around us as it really is, not as it appears to be” (Wagner, 1993, pp. 14, 50). In North India, for example, where two centuries of missions has not scratched the surface of Hinduism or Islam, Otis’ idea is rather appealing. Perhaps not enough Christian missionaries have yet seen North India as it really is, and that is why there has been no breakthrough. What is needed are people who will be able to see the evil powers that lie behind this lack of response, and who can then pray effectively against those powers.

An example of such united, strategic prayer occurred in North India in the spring of 1998, when the Hindu *Khumba Mela* took place in Hardwar, U.P. The *mela* was expected to attract millions of devotees from all over India. After united prayer and “binding of the demonic strongholds” over the city, only a few hundred thousand devotees came. This was because of much internal conflict within the ranks of the Hindu ascetics who had come to the *mela*. The conflicts eventually led to bloodshed and

pandemonium which scared most people away. The Christian “prayer warriors” concluded that their prayers had been answered.⁵

On a much smaller scale, but no less deadly, are objects, forms, and names which are said to be controlled by evil spirits. Of particular interest to this study is the possibility that the *bhajan* form is in some way the property of demons because of its long association with idol worship. In Chapter One I have referred to Viju Abraham's comments concerning certain Catholics who felt the freedom to sing the names of Hindu gods in order to learn Indian classical music; he went on to say:

In the Scripture you sometimes find that you should not even mention the names of the gods on your lips. The powers that are worshiped, who the people call gods, are not neutral in any way. They are real powers. Unless you understand the reality of that power and the hold it has on people, the way it enslaves people, be careful. [If] you knew that, you would not be flippant about it, singing praise or anything like that, even if it is for practice. How we can do otherwise, I don't know. I don't have an easy solution because I have not thought that through (Abraham, 1999).

Wagner, too, is concerned about the “real powers” behind things that appear harmless. He devotes a chapter to the subject of discerning aspects of culture that have been corrupted by demonic forces (Wagner, 1993, p. 58). He gives the example of a number of pieces of art from South America that his wife and he had enjoyed having in their living room for many years. They eventually got rid of the art concluding that it did not glorify God. Some of the articles, they believed, were actually demonized. Others that were not were, nevertheless, made by artists who had “changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man” (Rom. 1:23; op. cit., pp. 62-64).

⁵ This account was told to me by one of the main leaders of the movement for prayer during the *Kumb Mela*

Paul's Teaching Regarding Food Sacrificed to Idols in I Corinthians 8-10

Viju Abraham's concern with the existence of demons behind lyrics, and Wagner's with art, has its roots in a certain interpretation of two difficult and seemingly contradictory passages in I Corinthians Eight and Ten:

So then about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one. For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

But not everyone knows this. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat such food they think of it as having been sacrificed to an idol, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do (I Cor. 8:4-8, NIV).

Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. I speak to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

Consider the people of Israel: Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar? Do I mean then that a sacrifice offered to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons. Are we trying to arouse the Lord's jealousy? Are we stronger than he? (I Cor. 10: 14-22, NIV).

It would appear from the first passage that Paul is saying that an idol is nothing, but even if it were something (which it is not), for us Christians it is nothing because we have Jesus Christ and he is the only power, and therefore we have nothing to fear in our daily lives of eating and drinking. However, in the second passage, Paul begins, in agreement with the first, saying, "Do I mean that...an idol is anything? No." However,

he then brings in another character, not an idol, not the Lord God, but a demon. Paul says that a demon is behind the idol, and therefore he does not want us to have anything to do with the sacrifices of pagans.

What can be understood from this seeming contradiction? More careful observation reveals a subtle difference in the two passages regarding the setting in which the food and the idol are involved. It is not abundantly clear, but may be inferred, that in the first passage the subject of Paul's lesson is food. As far as Paul is concerned, the eating of food is a neutral thing: "We are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do." The second passage, however, has as its subject the sacrifices of pagans "offered to demons," or "idol feasts." Here Paul is suddenly stricter, and warns believers not to take lightly involvement in such events. "Are we trying to arouse the Lord's jealousy?" he asks. The one is Paul's response to a person who needs food to fill his stomach, and the other is his response to a person who wants food to participate in a ceremony. One, says Paul, is harmless; the other might be deadly.

How may this lesson be applied to the various things that relate to the worship of idols in India? Food is offered to idols, shops are dedicated to idols, houses are blessed by idols, and vehicles are adorned with idols. *Bhajans*, it is said, are swift vehicles of praise, flying straight to the power behind the idols. It would seem from the above passages of Scripture that if the subject has to do with a practical "need," it is inconsequential whether the needed thing has been affected by an idol or not. If I must travel in a vehicle that has been blessed by an idol, or live in a house that has received the same blessing, necessity allows me to count any evil effect negligible. However, if the

subject somehow revolves around participation in the worship service itself, which is not something one needs to do, it is no longer safe.

From the perspective of *bhajans*, if a Hindu *bhajan* is learned for the sake of mastering Indian classical music this might be a necessity for a musician. Here the subject would be “learning *bhajans*.” If however, the same *bhajan* is being sung in a Hindu worship service in an idol’s temple, participation suddenly becomes no longer that of need, but of want. The subject becomes, “singing *bhajans* in a Hindu temple.” The question must then be asked: Why would a Christian want to participate in a worship service to an idol? There seems to be no reason for it, other than some kind of curiosity, or a desire to experience worship that is different.

If this interpretation is the correct one, then perhaps some musicians are justified in learning *bhajans* that worship other gods, because Indian classical music is their profession and therefore a necessity. They would not, however, be justified if they decided one day to regularly attend the Hindu song-service at the temple down the street.

Wagner also studies these Corinthian passages in his book. He concludes by saying, “It is not easy to know where to draw these lines,” and then he suggests three questions that could help: Might this open me to direct demonic influence? Does this give any appearance of evil? Does this glorify God? These questions, if asked about paintings and sculptures in a living room might easily result in their eviction. After all, a sincere Christian wants to glorify God, and if there are things in his life that might not be glorifying to Him, he will gladly get rid of them in order to show his love for the Lord, and his non-attachment to material things.

However, if one takes these same questions and asks them of a professional Indian Christian classical vocalist, one might get different answers. Here, his very livelihood is being questioned. He may indeed recall how in his training he had learned the songs of Hindu gods, and though he no longer sings those songs, he is aware that his whole life as a musician is bound up in the culture and ways of India, with all its gods and goddesses. What is he to do?

In the book of II Kings, in Chapter Five, we read of a man, part of whose profession it was to enter the temple of his master's god and bow down to the idol along with his master. This man was Naaman the Leper, who was cleansed through the word of Elisha after dipping seven times in the Jordan river. After this miraculous healing Naaman became a devotee of Israel's God. Yet he was fully aware that he would not be free to relinquish his profession. He asked Elisha, therefore, whether he could bow down to the idol and yet not be held guilty as long as in his heart he worshiped only Israel's God. Elisha said, "Go in peace."

There is no use speculating whether Naaman had the freedom and means to leave his job in search of another more suited to his new faith. The point of the story was that God was concerned with Naaman's heart, not his actions. His actions were overlooked in this case because of an unavoidable situation. Why is it that a Christian musician in India is not "forgiven" when he must learn to sing the songs of the idols? Is this any worse than Naaman? Probably part of the answer is that if he could just as easily choose another profession, he ought to. If Wagner could just as easily enjoy his living room by getting rid of some dubious South American masks, he ought to. Why? It is for the sake of glorifying God.

It is no wonder so few Christians in India are professional Indian classical or even semi-classical musicians. Too much apparent compromise is necessary to become that skillful. It is also no wonder that Christian music producers who are concerned with quality and who want to sell more cassettes have to find Hindus and Muslims to sing the Indian devotional songs of Christ. The question might well be returned: Does this state of affairs glorify God?

I am here putting into my own words the argument I heard over and over again in favor of allowing Christian musicians in training to sing songs in praise of Hindu gods. However, supposing this were not necessary, as indeed it has been proven not to be in some cases (Malakar, 2000, & Manwadkar, 1999). Some teachers are willing and able to teach only secular songs if they are politely approached. Daniel and his friends in the Old Testament, after all, became stronger than the other trainees, though they refused to defile themselves with the king's food (Dan. 1: 8-16).

Though Daniel is praised for his uncompromising conduct, few seem to notice that in the verses that follow we are told that God gave Daniel and his friends "knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning" (vs. 17). Indeed it was God who gave this to them, but can we assume that He gave them this wisdom miraculously in the same way He gave them the interpretations of dreams? It is unlikely. We can infer that they must have learned all these things in a similar way that Indian students learn philosophy, religion, and music—from their masters. Babylon was a pagan kingdom, and it is hard to believe that Daniel did not experience similar things in his "student phase" that Christian music students face when sitting at the feet of their pagan teachers today.

Daniel, however, had no choice. Neither did Naaman. Christian musicians have plenty of choice. They can choose, instead of the *bhajan* form and all the demon-contaminated culture around it, to learn uncontaminated Western contemporary worship music. Or if they particularly enjoy Indian music, they can learn it more as a hobby than as a profession, thus sparing themselves the need to go into it too deeply. In this way they save themselves from causing offense to Christians. A lukewarm version of Indian classical music, like a toned-down version of American rock music, is much more acceptable to the church. Perhaps this explains why I met only two professional classical Christian musicians in North India, and why, when I asked if others existed, I was told that there were none.

How may Christian musicians be encouraged by their pastors to take Indian classical music seriously so that they may sing *bhajans* effectively, when Scripture says that one should not offend a brother? Like the people Paul describes in the first passage above, some Indian Christians are so accustomed to idols that every time they hear a *bhajan* they shrink away from it because the melody and rhythm reminds them of the idols. They are unable to enjoy the worship even if it is directed to Jesus because their conscience is defiled. According to Paul, it would be a sin to participate in the worship if it meant going against their conscience, because “everything that does not come from faith is sin”(Rom. 14:23). This is why he is careful to advise stronger Christians to avoid doing anything that might be a stumbling block to the weak (I Cor. 8: 12-13).

In a paper called “Missiological Syncretism: The New Animistic Paradigm,” Robert Priest and others⁶ argue that Paul, although he has concern for the weak, nevertheless doctrinally takes the side of the stronger brothers. The weaker brothers who believe in the power of demons behind food and other things are doctrinally wrong. Priest affirms, however, that Paul does not discount the weaker brothers’ belief altogether. However, that belief is cultural, and not doctrinally correct. The way forward is to promote “pastoral and missiological methods which are sensitive to such subjective cultural realities, but which retain correct doctrinal understandings (Priest, et.al., 1995, pp. 36-37).

Assuming that in the church the Christian musicians are the “stronger brothers,” what pastoral or missiological approach could encourage them in their profession and yet avoid causing offence? Or, how do Catholic missiologists themselves promote the use of Hindu forms in worship without scandalizing a large section of the Church and damaging the consciences of its weaker members? There are no easy answers to these questions. As has been mentioned, some Protestants have answered it by separating their indigenous work from the church altogether.

The Catholics cannot do this so easily, as they are more committed to the indigenization of all their institutions, and therefore are apt to cause more offence. They do, at least, have considerable sanction from the Pope in Rome. Since the Second Vatican Council, Rome has acknowledged that there is, indeed, much truth and much that is good in other religions (Flannery, pp. 738-9 cited in Duncan, 1999, p. 13).

⁶ Priest is co-author of this paper along with Thomas Campbell and Bradford A. Mullen.

The Protestants have no Pope whom they must respect and obey. They do, however, have lone prophets crying out with lone voices, voices whose ultimate authority can only be proved by their fulfillment through the test of time. I will close this chapter, then, with a quote from R.C. Das, who though certainly not a greatly recognized authority today, has been recognized by some as a prophet of God and a righteous man:

The fear of idolatry or pantheism in a national form of Christianity is groundless. The Indian mind is alert enough and Christianity is spiritual and vital enough to avert any untoward result. And unless we [have] faith in the best, we [cannot] proceed. Hesitation will mean stagnation. Better a few mistakes and slips from the right path, than overcautiousness and indifference (Richard, 1995, p. 104).

Grounded and rooted in definite experience of the new life in Christ and anxious to purify and preserve the noblest elements of our ancestral faith, one can defy the spectre of pantheism and idolatry. Touched by the magic wand of Christ, the great soul of India will reveal the mysterious depths of its moral and spiritual resources to the wonder and lasting good of all mankind (op. cit., p. 106).

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY, PROCEDURES, AND RESULTS

Biases

When I began this study I was acutely aware of some of my own biases with regard to the use of *bhajans*. Firstly, coming from an American evangelical background, and raised in Nepal by missionary parents, I had come to look with favor on worship songs that had a distinctly Nepali flavour.⁷ This was not because I did not appreciate Western worship music. On the contrary, I have always preferred Western forms, and have responded the most to music that has rock influences. My bias towards using Nepali forms in Nepal, and later, Indian forms in India was due to an aesthetic sense of the authenticity of such worship in those contexts. Nepal's happy folk melodies and India's sorrowful *ragas* offered something to my worship experience that the West could not. When, therefore, I heard Indians singing translated Western worship choruses or hymns, I was prejudiced against their use. This was because I knew that I could experience that style of worship, as I understood it, more authentically in the West. I was always eager when in India to experience worship in Indian ways, and yet I was disappointed to find that the churches seemed to prefer the Western songs.

⁷ Actually, there were two kinds of indigenous song used in the Nepali church. One was taken from the Nepali folk music based on the pentatonic major scale. The other was Indian Hindi songs translated into Nepali. Some of my favorite Nepali songs were these. I liked them because of their haunting melodies so different from the West. Years later I learned that the songs I like were based loosely on Indian *ragas*. One such *bhajan* was *Prabhuko Darshan*, which in Hindi is *Prabhuka Darshan*, composed by M.R. Utarid (1915-?) The unique feature in the melody is, that while ascending the major third is used, yet while descending the minor third is employed. Likewise, when descending to the fifth, the minor sixth is used, but when ascending in the lower octave to the tonic, the natural sixth is used (*Aradhna ke Git*, 1975, p. 457).

I have had to resist, therefore, in this study, two related biases. The first has to do with English-language worship in India. Though I enjoy the privilege of experiencing “authentic Western worship” whenever I am in the West, most English-speaking Indian Christians do not. City church members see such worship on videos, hear it on cassettes, or experience it for a weekend when a Western group comes to town. Some of the more affluent and growing charismatic and Pentecostal churches use Western musical instruments left behind by such groups, and are thus able to improve the quality of their musical presentation. Many English-speaking young people have grown up listening to and playing Western worship music in church. For them the goal is always to make their music sound like the original. Often they end up sounding better than the average worship group in the West.

To discourage them in this goal is as unreasonable as discouraging an American church from improving its worship. Many of the urban churches in India are westernized, and their members aspire to be; it could be argued that they have a right to be stylistically Western as long as they remain relevant to their urban neighbors. These churches argue that they are relevant because urban India is also very westernized in many respects.

The second bias has to do with Western songs translated into local languages, what I have considered “unauthentic Western worship.” These very songs are cherished by many Indian Christians as their own authentic worship. I have found that in the church the translated Western hymns are as deeply loved by the older generation as their original versions are by older people in the West. The more recently translated Western choruses are as deeply loved by the youth as the worship music of the U.K. rock band, Delirious?, is by youth in the U.K. and U.S.A. In many cases, especially in new churches with new

converts such as exist in the hill stations of North India, believers have no idea how to differentiate between a Western-style or Eastern-style song. As far as they are concerned all the worship songs must be local since they are sung in local languages.

The reason I speak here, in a study of *bhajans*, of the English-speaking or bi-lingual urban church is that it is mother to many smaller suburban, town, and village churches whose worship style is often more Indian. However, at large youth conventions organized by Y.W.A.M., Campus Crusade, or O.M., which attract young people from both urban and rural areas, it is the city young people who set the example for smaller village church members. These smaller churches do not usually have access to the equipment and musical expertise that Western worship bands require, and therefore, anything that might have a touch of the West and modernity is in great demand. Philip Malakar, an Indian classical vocalist and director of music at F.E.B.A. Radio in Delhi, told me that in his many promotional tours all across North India, from urban to small town areas, without exception church members loved his Western-influenced songs, but found his Indian-influenced songs boring (Malakar, 2000).

In this study, therefore, I have had to be very careful not to observe the use of *bhajans* from my own positive perspective, but rather from the perspective of those Indians who sing them and listen to them. The most important realization that I came to was that Protestant Christians, whether they worship in Hindi or English, do not place *bhajans* on a higher plane than they do their other songs; but if anything, they are placed lower, and considered to be out-dated and enjoyed only by some members of the older generation. In fact, even older people prefer translated Western hymns to *bhajans*, because the lyrics of poets like Charles Wesley and Fanny Crosby have greater

theological depth than the lyrics of the early *bhajan* writers. Among young people, geets (inspirational songs), *ghazals* (spiritual love-lyrics), and translated Western worship choruses are all preferred to *bhajans*. In fact *bhajans* are all but extinct in the Protestant church. For example, Ratika Cassettes, North India's largest Christian "record company," has over forty titles, only one of which is a production of *bhajans*.

I began to wonder, as I discovered these things, why I was studying *bhajans* in the Hindi Protestant church at all. My search, however, was not entirely in vain. Protestant groups, for example, that were actively involved in evangelism among Hindus were using *bhajans* and discovering that Hindus enjoyed them much more than any other worship form.

The Sites for Data Collection

The Catholics

Before beginning this research I planned to include the Catholic Church in the study because of the assumption that I would not find enough examples of *bhajan* usage in the Protestant church alone. As mentioned above, this assumption turned out to be correct; I found almost nothing among Protestants in the Hindi belt, and so I turned to the Catholics.

I began at the M____ A____ in B____, as it was the only Catholic center I knew of where *bhajans* were being composed and sung. At the ashram I was informed that Catholics were actively using *bhajans* all over North India and had established communication centers in many cities. After spending ten days at the ashram, an account of which will be given below, I visited the other Catholic centers in order to see whether

the M____ A____ could provide an adequate model of *bhajan* singing in general. I visited the Norbertine Fathers Communication Center in Jabalpur, the Navchetana Communication Center in Bhopal, Ishvani Kendra in Pune, and the Sangeet Abhinay Academy in Bandra, Mumbai. For a number of reasons, I was convinced that the M____ A____ provided the best living example of Catholic worship and evangelism among Hindus in the Hindi belt.

Firstly, the ashram was a unique blend of charismatic and indigenous methods, and thus represented in a single center two of the most influential movements in the Catholic Church in recent decades. Secondly, the ashram presented examples of *bhajans* both in Christian worship and in evangelistic efforts. Thirdly, the massive response of village Hindus (two thousand in attendance every Sunday for healing prayer) allowed the *bhajan* to be observed in a vibrant and growing situation.

On a negative note, the original *bhajans* composed at the ashram did not, perhaps, present the best examples of Catholic *bhajans*, as their influence had not spread very far beyond B____. However, the ashram incorporated some of the popular *bhajans* that were composed by more famous people such as Charles Vas in Mumbai. Interestingly, though the ashram's original *bhajans* composed by Acharya A____ D____ did not become famous among Catholics in Hindi areas outside of the state, some were popularized in evangelical Protestant circles by the group OLIO. These *bhajans* include *Naam Liyo Re*, *Bhaj Pawantam Yesu Naam*, and *Deep Jale*.

The Evangelicals

I have included as part of the sites for data collection the evangelistic efforts of an evangelical Protestant group in B____, who use many of the songs of Peter John and

A____ D____ that an Indian music group, OLIO, promote through a cassette called *Naam Liyo Re*.⁸ The site I have chosen is a Sunday afternoon *satsang* in the home of one of the workers.

⁸ I am leaving out of this study OLIO, of which I have been a member, because of the unavoidable bias that I would accuse myself of, and in turn be accused of by others if I included it. However, a study of *bhajans* in the evangelical outreach in North India is not complete without mentioning OLIO. I have been a member since its beginning in 1991 when it was named “OLIO and the Rock Opera.” OLIO is a ministry to upwardly mobile youth, and a part of O.M. India (Operation Mobilization India). Our very first program at Jubilee Hills in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, in December 1991 included two *bhajans* composed by Peter John of Delhi, and sung by myself, accompanied by acoustic guitar and Mr. Andrews on *tabla*.

In 1994 OLIO, the principle members of which were the manager and founder, Jose M.D., the sound engineer, Sebastian T.S., guitarist Mike Williams, bass guitarist James Byles, and myself, recorded an English rock music album called “VIDEO,” which included a *bhajan*, *Aparampar*, performed with electric guitars, bass guitar and drums. The *bhajan* was used with the permission of the composer, Peter John. Six years later, in 1999, a video production of *Aparampar*, produced by CBN India (Christian Broadcasting Network India), was aired at regular intervals on various CBN programs on the national T.V. station, D.D.Metro. It continues to this day to be shown regularly, along with videos of contemporary Western Christian bands, on a program for youth called “ICubed.”

“VIDEO” also included a raeggae version of a Gospel Nepali *bhajan/geet* that we called *Surulurulu*. The song won a place in a secular all-India original rock song competition called “The Great Indian Rock.” It was released on cassette and distributed all over India with a special edition of a major rock magazine, *The Rock Street Journal* (RSJ).

In 1997, with the permission of Peter John and Vishwa Jyoti Communication Center in B____, OLIO (which then included, in addition to previous members, Temsu Jamir, Samuel K.J., and Rajan Shahi) recorded a cassette of *bhajans* called *Naam Liyo Re*, that included songs by Peter John, Acharya A____ D____, and Garib Das. In the last three years over 6000 copies of this cassette have been sold, and A____ D____’s title *bhajan*, *Naam Liyo Re*, has become popular in many Protestant circles.

If the *bhajan* style has in any way become popular again among Protestant youth in North India, it is partially on account of OLIO’s influence. Introducing the “boring *bhajan*” from a very exciting rock-and-roll stage, and using Western instruments, brought this old-fashioned form to life for many Protestant youth. At two Campus Crusade rallies called *Yuva Darshan*, held in Delhi in the fall of 1997 and 1998, hundreds of young people from all over North India experienced Olio’s combination of modern *bhajan* worship and Western worship songs, and went away enthralled by the experience. As an example of the effect this music has had on Protestant youth, when I was at the Leonard Theological Seminary in Jabalpur I met a young composer named Eric Nath. Eric sang a *bhajan* he had composed called *He Yesu Nasari*. At the end of the interview, he told me that he had been influenced in the composition by a cassette called “OLIO” that some friends of his had brought back from *Yuva Darshan* in Delhi. He particularly liked the way Indian melodies were used in modern ways, and he sought to incorporate uniquely Indian melodic ideas into his songs. He had no idea that I was a member of OLIO.

It has been difficult to locate other such evangelical groups working in North India. The use of *bhajans* has disappeared to such an extent that it is once again a pioneering work. But it is slowly gaining popularity. Its popularity in missions, however, is largely in ministries that shun any form of Western presence. It has, therefore, been impossible for me to visit any of the sites where *bhajans* are being used in evangelism. The only similar examples I could study would be ones that did not have such strict rules regarding foreign involvement. However, even among these, security has still been a primary issue, and therefore it has been virtually impossible to know where such works are taking place, let alone gain admission to study them.

A Model for Experimentation in *Bhajan* Composition

The director of O.M. India, Joseph D'Souza is aware of the pioneering nature of *bhajan* usage, and suggested that as a part of the study I produce a few new *bhajans* with the help of Indians. In the conclusions in Chapter Five I will describe the process by which two *bhajans* were composed and recorded, and suggest it as a model for others who may want to develop this work further. I mention here that, though the music for these two *bhajans* was newly composed, the lyrics, written by Mumtaz Masih, were more than thirty years old. This use of old *bhajan* lyrics with new melodies came from an idea borrowed from Peter John's *bhajan* cassette, *Darpan*, produced in 1989. In this cassette, the songs of which have been promoted by OLIO, Peter has composed fresh music based on Indian *ragas* to old *bhajan* lyrics from various hymnals.

The Ecumenicals

In the mainline Protestant denominations, the C.N.I. (of which Peter John is a member), the Methodist Church in North India, I expected to find much more use of the

bhajan form. Peter John's brother, the Rev. John, was the producer of the cassette, *Darpan*, and collected the old *bhajan* lyrics. He has since moved to South Africa where he is involved in the ecumenical inter-faith dialogue movement.

Indigenous theology has been promoted in ecumenical circles of the W.C.C. in India since the 1950's. Positive attitudes towards non-Christian faiths have been in existence since the Jerusalem Conference in 1928. Likewise, it was the T.E.C. (Theological Education Fund), a branch of the W.C.C., that coined the term "contextualization" in the 1970's (Hesselgrave and Rommen, 1989, pp. 28-32).

I expected, therefore, to find many more examples of contextualization, especially musical ones, in the ecumenical churches. I found, however, no current uses of *bhajans* at all (Peter John has not recorded Christian *bhajans* since *Darpan* a decade ago). Ecumenicals were much more involved in inter-faith dialogue than in the indigenization of church worship.

At the Leonard Theological College in Jabalpur, which in the 1950's was a center for communication through Indian art forms (Bhasker, 2000), I found that the only traces of indigenous worship occur in their chapel services. Once a month, in the morning worship at the college, indigenous songs are sung in the various languages of India. Hindi *bhajans*, therefore, are sung only about twice a year. The students I interviewed, however, said that, though this seemed like nothing, it was more than what existed in their home churches (Thomas, 1999).

Christian Radio

The hope of finding *bhajans* in regular use still lay in one area: Christian radio. I began with CARAVS (Christian Association for Radio and Audio-Visual Service) in

Jabalpur. I learned that CARAVS had indeed been a pioneer in the promotion of indigenous art forms in the 60's and 70's, and perhaps the only one, with the possible exception of a radio program from Delhi called *Masih Vandana* (Lazarus, 2000, & Bhasker, 2000). However, CARAVS was forced to make many cuts in its budget after 1984, and the music department was one of the first to be dismantled, after which the radio programs were also cut. What remains today is a Christian book shop, a music studio that rents its facilities to Christian and non-Christian groups, and a large, two-story office complex that is rented out to secular companies. CARAVS does continue to produce new cassettes, but on a very small scale, and these all follow the modern trend towards Western music. However, the old cassettes of indigenous music can still be ordered.

Failing to find *bhajans* used currently in CARAVS, I turned to F.E.B.A. (Far East Broadcasting Association) and T.W.R. (Trans World Radio) in Old and New Delhi respectively. I was once again surprised to find that T.W.R. for the last few years has not even had a functioning studio for musical recordings, and has produced no new original musical works at all, let alone *bhajans* (Lazarus, 2000). Like T.W.R., F.E.B.A.'s last production of Indian worship songs was in 1997, and among them, very few were *bhajans* (Malakar, 2000).

Areas Outside the Hindi Belt

Frustrated by this lack of enthusiasm in the Hindi belt, I crossed the Hindi-speaking boundaries to some cities in Marathi-speaking areas, namely, Nagpur, Pune and Mumbai. In one sense it can be argued that, as metropolitan cities of North India, they may be included in the Hindi belt. However, though I found many more examples of

bhajan usage and learned much about the use of *bhajans* in general, I was unable to focus on any of them because the study was limited to Hindi *bhajans*.

Bhajan singing in the church is relatively more popular in Marathi, Gujarati, and Bengali-speaking areas of North India than it is in Hindi areas. Also, in the Hindi-speaking states themselves, *bhajan* singing in certain language groups very similar to Hindi has been quite successful. This is evident in Bhojpuri areas east of Gorakhpur and into Bihar, where at least five well-known pastor-singers are composing Bhojpuri songs with much success. Likewise, in Dehra Dun a full-time Christian worker composes *bhajans* in his native language of Gharwali. Studies of the use of *bhajans* in any of these language groups would be very helpful to the church.

Hindi-Speaking Musical Families

In the Hindi belt I did find one Protestant musical family whose impact on worship music, and particularly *bhajans*, was notable. Unlike Catholics, whose *bhajan* composers are mostly South Indian Fathers who have formally studied Hindi and Hindusthani music, Protestants composers and singers often come from musical families. These cannot compare with the musical families, called *gharanas*, among Hindus and Muslims, in which classical music has been preserved and cultivated for centuries. Nevertheless, at a semi-classical level, they have been responsible for the production of new songs, the promotion of traditional Indian musical values, and the supply of fairly competent singers and *tabla* players to the church.

One such family is the Masihis of Bareilly, of which mention has been made in Chapter Two. Key figures in the family include Ahsan of CARAVS, who is credited with as many new Hindi songs in the *Aradhna Ke Git* hymnal, as Fanny Crosby is with Hindi

translations of her hymns. Ahsan's brother, the late Mumtaz Masih, was a semi-classical *bhajan* singer whose *bhajans*, based on Indian *ragas*, are still loved by many older people in Uttar Pradesh. His son, the Reverend Irfan Masih, a professor at the North India Theological College, heads up an organization, Rhythm for Glory, which promotes the use of Hindusthani music in evangelism. Irfan's teenage son, Noel, is a guitarist and fan of rock music, but is greatly influenced by South Asian rock groups such as Junoon, that sing *quawalis* (Sufi devotional songs similar to *bhajans*) accompanied by electric and bass guitars.

It may yet be that through these families, and especially their children, *bhajan* composition and singing, which requires classical training and discipline, will be revived in new forms in the C.N.I. and Methodist churches of North India. For this reason I have included in the study a report on the music of the Masih family, particularly the "Demonstration of the Use of *Tabla* in Christian Music," by Rev. Irfan Masih and *tabla* player, Mr. Morris.

Results

Roman Catholics: The M_____ A_____

The M_____ A_____ is a 200-square-meter compound just north of B_____.

Though the property was purchased long before the area was developed, the road is now lined on both sides with shops, and the traffic bringing in laborers from the villages grows heavier every day. The ashram is a center for Indian Christian spirituality and dialogue, and although Catholic it is open to all. It had its origins in the early fifties and was started as “a spirituality center on a typically indigenous pattern.” The first attempt, however, did not succeed, and it was not until 1976 that Fr. D_____ I.M.S. began developing the place. It is said that Fr. D_____ had “an intense year of ashram experience in the Khristpanthi Ashram of B_____ founded by Fr. I_____ P_____, and was thus well-equipped for the work.” H.L. Richard, in his book on R.C. Das, says that “Das’ own *Khristpanthi* Ashram was not maintainable by the Roman Catholic communion [and so] it closed with Das’ death there on Dec. 22, 1976. A Roman Catholic building of the same name but in a different location continues today in B_____, but is not in any true sense an ashram any longer” (Richard, 1995, p. 10). Perhaps, Das’ vision is now being carried on at the M_____ A_____. The following description may give clues as to whether that is the case.

One ministry of the ashram in the last decade has been to the villagers who live within a radius of fifty kilometers from the center. In 1999, two thousand villagers from various castes and creeds were regularly attending a weekly *satsang* at the ashram that offered “healing-prayer.” While I was there I saw that to meet the increasing demand, the priests, brothers, and nuns were taking turns even on weekdays to lead “healing-prayer” meetings in a small chapel hut. These prayer meetings for the villagers continued all day

long, with breaks only for meals and thrice- daily prayer in the main chapel specifically for the ashram staff. The impression I got after ten days was that the people at the ashram were praying and singing all the time.

Sunday represents the busiest day at the ashram because of the huge crowds that come for prayer. In some respects it represents a typical day, except that the morning Mass is more elaborate, and the ashram teems with thousands of villagers rather than dozens, as on other days. I was able to act as an unnoticed observer on two such Sundays, and have combined some of the events in the account below.

A Day of *Bhajans* and Prayers at M A

At 4:30 in the morning Sr. Lucretia opens her cell door, breaking the night's stillness with a long creak. In a moment she has reached the door of the little dome-shaped chapel. Entering, she prepares the chapel for the worshipers who will soon follow her there. The windows are opened, and hearing the sound, the birds in the surrounding trees begin their morning song. Then for half an hour she sits in silent meditation as, one by one, her fellow sisters open the creaky doors of the cells that form the courtyard "walls" and come to kneel by her side on little cushions.

At 5 a.m. sharp the silence is broken, and the voice of a woman, soon joined by the others, is heard chanting in simple three-tone Sanskrit recitation:

Namaste Sate

Namaste sate sarvalokasrayaya (Salutation to Thee! Intelligence pervading)

Namaste cite visvarupatmakaya (The whole of the Universe, salutation to Thee!)

Namo advaitatatvaya muktipradaya (Salutation to the Principle which is One without a second and the giver of freedom)

Namo brahmane vyapine sasvataya (Salutation to the Brahman, the all-pervading and eternal)

(Transliteration and translation taken from *Prarthana Manjari*, M_____ A_____)

After a prayer in unison, about forty-five minutes passes in silent meditation until, once again, the silence is broken with song, only this time accompanied by the piercing clang of a small gong struck with a metal hammer:

Vande!

Vande Vande Saccidanandam (Hail! Hail! The existent, the knower, the blissful,
The furthest goal)

Vande Vande Saccidanandam (Hail! Hail! The existent, the knower, the blissful)

Yogi vanchita bhogi lancita (Despised by the world, longed for by...)

Carama padam (...Holy men).

(by Brahma Bandhava Upadhyaya)

(Transliteration and translation taken from *Prarthana Manjari*, M_____ A_____)

Finally the service is concluded, gently, with a melodic meditation:

Dhyana Mulam

Dhyana mulam guromurtih (The root of my meditation is the image of my Guru)

Puja mulam gurorpadam (The root of my worship is His feet)

Mantra mulam gurorvakyam (The root of my mantra is His Word)

Moksa mulam gurorkrpa (The root of my salvation is His Grace)

(Transliteration and translation taken from *Prarthana Manjari*, M_____ A_____)

Sanskrit mantras (chants) are sung regularly at the ashram. Some of them are borrowed from famous Hindu mantras from the *Vedas*. One of the most famous of all

Sanskrit *slokas* in India is the *Gayatri Mantra*, taken from a text in the *Rg. Veda* 11,62,10. It is included in a little book of prayers and mantras produced by the ashram. Even now, as I type in another city, a cassette of the *Gayatri* Mantra is being broadcast through loudspeakers from a temple just outside my window. I have been listening to it for over an hour, as it sung again and again at least fifty times on tape. I first heard this same version when a *bhajan* composer, Fr. Amarnad, played it for me in Bhopal, saying it was one of his favorite tapes for meditation. It is one of an increasing number of high quality mantra cassettes that have modern, yet genuinely Indian melodies sung by famous playback singers in Mumbai.

Gayatri Mantra

Om Bhur bhuvah svah Tat savitur varenyam (Om! We meditate upon the glorious
splendor of the Vivifier divine)

Bhargo devasya dhimahi Dhiyo you nah pracodayat (May he himself illumine our
minds!)

(Transliteration and translation taken from *Prarthana Manjari*, M____ A____)

Mass begins at 6 a.m., and because it is Sunday, there is a special ritual: the nuns, brothers, and a few village worshipers who have just come in, file out of the chapel and form two lines. Hindi hymnbooks in hand, they march around the circular chapel and then return to their cushions inside; the priests, clad in saffron dress, are seated, cross-legged, behind a low platform at the front, waiting.

During Mass, many hymns are selected from the hymnbook and sung unaccompanied. Chants and recitations of the liturgy accent the service and enhance the ritual. During one moment of worship, sister Kamal from Kerala, who once lived in

seclusion for two years in a thick forest in Gujarat, breaks forth in a *bhajan* of her own creation. The congregation repeats after her in the antiphonal singing so common to the *bhajan* form:

Aaraadhana teri

Aaraadhana teri aaraadhana ho (All adoration be yours, O Lord)

Aaraadhana Yesu aaraadhana ho (All adoration be yours, O Jesus)

Aaraadhana teri aaraadhana ho (All adoration be yours, O Lord)

Aaraadhana Yesu aaraadhana ho (All adoration be yours, O Jesus)

(Transliteration my own, translation by Ft. Prem Antony I.M.S.)

Sister Kamal sings as long as the variations keep coming to her lips: “All adoration be yours, Abba Father (*Abba Pita*), Lord, the Spirit (*Aatma Prabhu*), O Lord, the Ocean of Compassion (*Karuna Saagar Prabhu*).

Though Kamal does not know Indian classical music, she loves it, and has here composed a melody influenced by some aspects of the famous, *Bhairavi raga*. In this case the only relation the melody bears to *Bhairavi raga* is in the notes it uses, that of the Western phrygian scale. The other, more complex rules of the *raga*, such as characteristic phrases, are not followed. This scale is minor in sound, like the natural minor, except that the second degree of the scale, *Re* is flattened, producing a haunting effect.

Because it is related to a difficult *raga*, the villagers and some of the brothers do not join in on the repeat as accurately as the melody requires, and many just mumble or remain silent, preferring to enjoy the nuns’ voices instead of their own.

Not all the songs used in the service are *bhajans*, however. Some are popular geets borrowed from evangelical and charismatic Protestants. The following geet employs words and melody that were popular in Western contemporary worship in the 1970's. The melody is minor and well-suited to lively guitar accompaniment. The singing line over the *hallelujah* descends parallel with the chord progression, which is: *A minor, G, F, E7*. Similar song-types in the West would be, *Summon Your Power Oh God*, or *Blind Man Stood by the Road and he Cried*.

Hallelujah Stuti Gaye Hum

Hallelujah Stuti Gaye Hum (Hallelujah praises we will sing)

Yesu ki Stuti Gaye Hum (Jesus' praises we will sing)

Am G F E7 (*chord symbols*)

Ha—hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah (Hallelujah...)

Am G F E7

Ha—hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah (Hallelujah...)

(Transliteration and translation are my own).

It appears that, though this song is very popular with the congregation, the same people who had difficulty with the last one have even more trouble with this. This is partly due to a sister having started the song in a register that was too high, even for herself. Another reason may be that the tonic/dominant emphasis in the melody and harmony is foreign to traditional Indian music.

The Mass ends with a long hymn from the hymnbook, and one by one, silently, the worshipers file out and find their footwear. Absolute silence is required in the courtyard of the chapel at all times, so greetings are exchanged with smiles and nods of

the head. The nuns and priests of the ashram then make their way over to the dining room for breakfast, while the villagers await their return.

At 9 a.m., “healing-prayer” begins in the same chapel, and more villagers begin trickling in. The first to enter, even before the nuns, is a teenage girl, apparently distressed. Falling down prostrate before the picture of Jesus on the raised platform, she lies perfectly still with her arms stretched out, reaching for the deity. Gradually others trickle in, and after placing a coin in the offering box near the picture, join the woman in silent, or murmured prayer. By 10 a.m. the little chapel that comfortably held twenty worshipers for the Mass, is packed full with over one hundred villagers, many of whom are forced to stand outside the doors that are open on three sides of the chapel. The prayer service consists of singing simple *bhajans* (there are no hymnbooks this time), followed by what could be called “mass prayer.” At times the praying is less than enthusiastic, and a presiding nun is compelled to admonish the congregation to take it more seriously and pray with more fervor and faith. Louder praying is often worked up with the antiphonal chanting of *Yesu ki stuti ho!* (Praise Jesus!). The pattern is repeated over and over again with different songs each time, until by noon no less than thirteen *bhajans* have been sung.

Three of these songs are worthy of note: *Rajao ka Raja Yesu Hallelujah* (King of kings, Jesus, Hallelujah) is a Western Pentecostal Jewish-style chorus. *Om Nama Khristaya* (Praise be to the Name of Christ), mentioned in the introduction to Chapter Two, is a mantra copied directly from the famous *Om Nama Shivaya*, in praise of the god Shiva. Interestingly, it was one of the songs that was sung most enthusiastically. This might be for two reasons, the one being that mantras have very few notes and are thus

easy to sing, and secondly, that the Hindus would already be familiar with the form and melody because of the Hindu original. The last *bhajan*, *Pyare Yesu*, is a typical hymn that the nun in charge picks out from her hymnbook, though no one else has access to one. There is very little response to this song, and she ends up singing it almost as a solo, with a barely audible accompaniment of murmurs and vocal rumblings.

After lunch at 1:30, the large “healing-prayer” meeting begins under a semi-permanent “revival tent”—bamboo poles supporting a tin roof, with a long cement stage at the front. A public address system is set up with a dozen horn speakers tied to bamboo poles at various points. Two thousand villagers have already taken their seats on the jute or plastic mats. Many others mill about on the driveway, or stand alone, arms crossed, watching curiously and sometimes skeptically from a distance.

Worship begins, led by a nun standing behind a pulpit. She is joined in song by a team of three other singers seated cross-legged on the stage to her left. After a number of *bhajans* in various styles, which are blasted through the speakers and badly distorted in the process, the *acharya*, A____ D____, steps up to the podium and leads the congregation in the famous *bhajan*, *Naam Liyo Re*.

Naam Liyo Re

Chorus (*Asthai*):

Naam leo re, naam leo re (Take the name of Jesus, sing the name of Jesus)

Yeshu Ka mangalkari, naam leo re (The blessed name of Jesus, sing the name of Jesus)

Verse (*Antara*)¹:

Pap Herega, Tap Herega (You are my shield from sin, and have taken my punishment)

Pavan bhavan sundar (Holy, attractive, and beautiful)

Mera Yeshu Ka naam (is the name of my Jesus)

(The transliteration is my own, the translation is by Hemendra Nath, and the rendering in English is by Peter Hicks.)⁹

The *bhajan* is in typical Gujurati *gharba* dance rhythm, a 6/8 pattern where the emphasis lies on the first, fourth and fifth beats, each of these being accented by the percussion instrument in use. The melody is, again, related to a *raga*, though the composer, A_____ D_____ himself, could not remember what *raga* it was. Coming from the semi-classical as opposed to the pure classical tradition, A_____ prefers to compose songs without thinking about all the many rules of a particular *raga*. He finds, however, that his melodies generally fit into the pattern of certain *ragas*. They never flow in and

⁹ The following translation follows a contextual method, trying to communicate to modern Western youth not only the meaning but the emotion as well. Therefore in certain places the meaning has been altered slightly in order to render in modern English a line that would touch the heart of a Western young person in a similar way that the line in Hindi touches an Indian. For example, in the translation the verses are directed to God, “you,” whereas in the Hindi, it is “he.” This is done because in *bhajans* in India the sense of “you” is assumed. In Western culture, however, the “you” is still a fairly recent phenomenon brought to the center by charismatic worship. Singing “you” is therefore necessary to communicate that emotion.

out of different *ragas* in a single song. *Naam Liyo Re* employs a scale that omits the third degree all together. The first phrase of the melody, therefore, begins with the tonic, *Sa*, followed by the second degree, *Re*, and then jumps to the 5th, *Pa* and down to the 4th, *Ma*. The second phrase also avoids the third, beginning with the 2nd, going to the 4th and then rapidly down from the 2nd passing through the tonic to end on a new note altogether, the flatted 7th in the lower octave. The verse makes use of the upper tetra-chord of the scale, playing off between 4th, 5th and flatted 7th in the middle octave and then returning to a similar range as in the chorus.

Partly because D_____ is the highest spiritual authority, and is also the speaker for the day, the congregation repeats the lines of his *bhajan* more enthusiastically. It may also be because D_____ has a commanding and matured voice and this encourages more effort on the part of the people. The *bhajan* itself, once again because it is related to *ragas*, is not as easy for a common villager to sing, and so the enthusiasm is expressed more in what sound like loud “grunts” than loud singing. Another of Fr. A_____’s *bhajans*, *Yesu Yesu Yesu Naam* (Jesus’, Jesus’, Jesus’ Name) has simple words, though the melody still twists and turns.

Fr. A_____ then leads the congregation in an invitation to the Holy Spirit to come and show His mercy in their midst: “*Aao Pawan Atma, mujh par daya kar*” (Come Holy Spirit, have mercy on me).

A leprosy patient from Bihar, who has been partially healed of his leprosy, then mounts the podium and shares his story, after which he sings a solo *geet* of his own composition. I am not able to discern the response of the villagers to this song, except to

note that there is almost pin-drop silence during the whole performance, something unusual for a crowd of two thousand villagers.

The song lyrics are as follows:

Yesu Tumhare Pyar Ne

Chorus (*Asthai*):

Yesu tumhare pyar ne jeena sikha diya (Jesus, your love has taught me to live)

Masiha tumhare pyar ne jeena sikha diya (Lord, my savior, your love has taught me to live).

Verse (*Antarta*) 1:

Lila dikha de apne insaan bana diya (You demonstrated your power and made me truly human.

Yesu tumhare pyar ne jeena sikha diya (Jesus, your love has taught me to live)

Bhoola huwa tha raasta, bhatka hua tha main (I had forgotten the way and wandered far away from you)

Yesu ne mujhko apne charno main la diya (But Jesus brought me back again to your feet)

(The transliteration my own, and the translation is by Fr. Prem Antony I.M.S.)

After repeating the chorus the leprosy patient goes on to sing two more verses, telling in the first of how he had not “bent his head to anyone to date,” but has now “prostrated himself at the gate of the Lord’s court.” In the last verse he says, “Your precious blood has given me a new lease of life, and for my sake you chose to give your life on the cross.”

As this is not a *bhajan*, but an inspirational testimony *geet*, I will not discuss its musical form. I mention it only because *geets* are extremely popular in Christian circles in India, especially at conventions and crusades.¹⁰

The “healing-prayer” meeting continues with more *bhajans* and prayers. I am surprised to hear a familiar *bhajan*, *Pawan Atma Antar Yami*, and it takes me some time to realize that I first heard it sung by Carolyn Machenzie, a Catholic artist living in Builth, Wales, who leads Christian *bhajan* singing sessions for New Age people in her area. The lyrics are:

Pawan Atma

Pawan Atma Antar Yami

(Holy Spirit, the indwelling Lord—lit. “one
who looks into the heart”)

Barsa do apni krpa, apni krpa, apni krpa (Shower me with thy grace, thy grace, thy
grace)

(The transliteration is my own, and the translation is by Fr. Prem Antony I.M.S.)

This soft meditative *bhajan*, calling on the “one who looks into the heart,” leads smoothly into a message on prayer by Fr. A_____ from the Scripture: “Watch and pray so

¹⁰ Testimony and inspirational songs used to be popular in the West also, but praise and worship music has increased in quality and relevance and has gradually become more popular among young people there. A Christian pop group’s most popular song today is often a worship song sung directly to Jesus, such as *I Want to Fall in Love with You*, by Jars of Clay, or *I Could Sing of Your Love for Ever*, by Delirious?. It is interesting also that some praise and worship in the West has begun basing songs on the typical Indian drone and *raga*/mode influenced music. *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord* is one example. *Come Like You Promised* by Delirious? is another, in which the guitar melody between the verses is particularly Indian, and on the live version the whole song includes *tabla*, India’s most famous percussion instrument. It is not surprising, of course, that Indian Christians should be fascinated by Western inventions, such as testimony solo performances in corporate worship meetings, while Western Christians are attracted to the more personal, meditative, Indian *bhajan* styles that sing directly to Jesus. It is a manifestation of the inevitable and even desirable process of globalization taking place.

that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak” (Mt. 26:41). Following the message, he announces the time for the “anointing of oil.” Suddenly two thousand villagers produce from places concealed in their clothing bottles of all shapes and sizes, filled with oil, and raise them up towards the preacher. A prayer for the bottles to be anointed with healing power is then said, along with a caution not to believe in the bottles themselves, but rather in Christ’s power to heal. The climax of the meeting then occurs with loud praying to *Daya Sagar Yesu* (Jesus the Ocean of Mercy). Finally the nun closes joyfully with *Dhanya Dhanya Yesu*, a translation of the Western worship chorus, *Thank you, Thank you Jesus*.

Further Definitions of *Bhajans* and Other Related Terms

The Catholic Understanding of *Bhajans*

Like many *bhajans*, the one above, *Pawan Atma Antar Yami*, has very few words, and infinite variations are possible, such as “shower me with your love,” “shower me with your power,” etc. This song fits the most common Catholic understanding of what a *bhajan* is for seven reasons:

1. Each line is short enough for a congregation to remember the words and melody and repeat it.
2. It requires call and response, antiphonal singing.
3. The entire *bhajan* is short, lyrically.
4. There are infinite possibilities for slight lyrical variation.
5. It is slow and meditational, but has scope for becoming more intense and gradually increasing tempo.
6. The melody has Indian classical influences.

7. It directly addresses God (the one who looks into the heart).

I have compiled these seven characteristics from many sources. The first two are the most essential marks of a true *bhajan* in the Catholic sense, short lyrical lines that more easily facilitate call and response. Father Santiago, one of the compilers of the new Catholic Hymnbook, *Ish Vandana*, says: “The speciality of *bhajan* is that it is repeated; it is repeated over and over again [and] when it comes to repetition...the lines can’t be longer.” He went on to sing for me what he considered the quintessential *bhajan*, *Bhajo Re Bhajo*. This song, written by Subhash Anand, an Indologist from Pune, is one of 332 *bhajans* included in the hymnbook. The hymnbook itself is one of its kind, as one third of all the entries are *bhajans*, indicating how seriously Catholics have taken indigenization.

Bhajo Re Bhajo

Chorus (*Asthai*):

Bhajo re bhajo, Bhajo re bhajo, Prabhu ka naam bhajo (Praise, Praise, Praise the Lord’s name)

Verse (*Antara*) 1:

Pawan naam, Sundar naam, Prabhu ka naam bhajo (Holy name, beautiful name, Praise the Lord’s name).

Differences with the Hindu Understanding of *Bhajans*

Fr. James M.L., a prolific lyricist at the Navchetana Communication Center in Bhopal, criticizes Santiago for this narrow definition of *bhajan*:

[According to Hindus], everything sung for prayer is a *bhajan*. But in the Christian traditions a wrong concept has come that [a *bhajan* is] what is being

repeated again and again. That is actually not a *bhajan*; it is a mantra; but it has come to be termed [by Catholics] as a *bhajan* (James, 1999).

Leopold Simon suggests that: "... In form and function, the *bhajan*, because of its repetitive elements, might be considered to act somewhat in the way that a mantra does" (Simon, 1984, p.103). The Catholics have clearly adopted the word *bhajan* and attached their own particular meaning to it.

The most accurate description of Hindu *bhajan* I found that fit my own experience in North India was in Henderson's study of Nepali devotional music:

Bhajan, in both Hindu and Buddhist gatherings in the Kathmandu valley in Nepal, is both a genre and a performance event. As a genre, it contains clearly anticipated norms of expression that allow individual songs to be classified, labeled, and performed or sold as *bhajans*. They are songs to gods, songs about gods.

As a performance event, *bhajan* can be a loosely organized sequence in which at certain points performers can incorporate a wide variety of song styles, from traditional group hymn-singing with harmonium and *tabla* accompaniment, to rock music cassette-playing with guitar and bass accompaniment (Henderson, 1996, p.442).

Other Terms Related to *Bhajan*

With this wide variety of song styles, one can understand how *bhajan* is not easy to define. One of the most common confusions relates to another term, *kirtan*, that in Hindi-speaking areas is often used together with *bhajan*, as though the two put together were some kind of music, like "praise and worship." The following are some varying definitions of *kirtan* in North India. (To avoid further complication I have left out definitions of *kirtan* current in South India). The definitions may also be valid for *bhajan*, if *kirtan* and *bhajan* are, in fact, almost synonyms.

Duncan, whose research for his dissertation took place mostly in Mumbai and Pune (Marathi-speaking areas) and in some cities further south, gives the following definition:

Kirtan is a form of ritual music from the Hindu tradition which closely resembles Christian hymnody. A text which praises God is sung or proclaimed with musical accompaniment. The simple three-toned recitation resembles the reciting-tones of the Catholic Church, both in its Latin and Syrian rites (Duncan, 1999 p. 27).

His definition raises a few questions. Firstly, what exactly is the resemblance to Christian hymnody? Is it that *kirtans* and hymnody are both genres in devotional music? Then *kirtan* would be synonymous with *bhajan*, and with “hymn.” Duncan’s comparison with the “simple three-toned recitation” of the Latin rites seems also to be too specific a description of *kirtan*. In the description of the day of worship at the ashram, the first example of the Sanskrit *sloka*, *Namaste Sate*, sung as a mantra with its three-toned recitation, seems to fit this description better.

In favor of Duncan’s definition, Popley in his book on Indian music says, “*Kirtans* imply the praises of God meant for group singing. They are full of religious content and can be sung with nominal or no musical accompaniments” (Popley, 1921, p. 4). Apart from the possibility of singing them without musical backing, Popley’s definition agrees with Duncan’s, implying that *kirtan* is a genre of music and not any one particular style. R.C. Das affirms this definition for B_____ saying, “...*kirtan* or *kalakshepam* (songs sung in union by a party)...induce *bhakti* to Christ” (Richard, 1995, p. 123).

Assuming *kirtan* to represent a genre, we find that throughout India there are considerable differences in approach. The following description is of *kirtan* in Bengal:

The *Kirtan* in Bengal is a kind of dramatic sonata, which was first introduced at the time of Chaitanya in connection with the *bhakti* revival. The theme develops from phase to phase and from emotion to emotion, and is generally based on a distinct part of the Krishna legend. It gives plenty of scope for originality and improvisation. The *raga* also changes with the emotion, and both music and melody are fluid and not rigidly bound to definite modes. There is usually a choir to help the leader, and a small orchestra. In the Maratha country, the name *Kirtan* is usually given to a *Bhajan* performance (Popley, 1921, pp. 90-92).

Tilak, the great Christian *kirtan* composer of Maharashtra, gives a definition similar to the Bengali one: “A real *kirtan* ought to be a happy combination of music, poetry, eloquence, and humor, all contributing to drive home religious truth” (Richard, 1991, p. 70). I had the opportunity of hearing a greatly shortened demonstration of this kind of *kirtan* performance while in Nagpur. Rev. Sudhir Ingle, accompanied by a harmonium and *tabla* player, led his group in a series of songs in various styles, *ragas*, and tempos, stringing each together with a lively, one-toned, preaching narrative. I was told that *kirtans* in Maharashtra, as in many other areas of India, often continue late into the night.

My own experience of what people called *kirtan* in B_____ is narrower than R.C. Das’ definition—i.e., “songs sung in unison by a party”—unless by “song” he means a kind of *bhajan* called the *nam jap*. When I was there, devotees gathered in temples or household rooms and sang various melodies to the words *Siya Ram*, or *Jaya Siya Ram*. When a song is made up lyrically of nothing but the names of god, or even just one name of god, it is called a *nam jap*. One place just up from the *ghats* apparently sustains this singing twenty-four hours a day, all year long, through different groups that come in and take over from the previous group. I myself can testify that it continued for at least seventy-two hours.

Slawek, in his dissertation on *kirtans* in B____, helps explain why *bhajan* and *kirtan* songs are hard to distinguish from each other. He describes how, from area to area, the terms are “frequently interchangeable, though sometimes not” (Slawek: 70-71, quoted in Henderson, 1996, p. 444). Henderson, who studied Nepali devotional song says that “what might be called a *kirtan* in one place may sound like what a singer somewhere else calls a *bhajan*, and the difference in name is not enough to overcome some similarities of practice” (op. cit., p. 444).

Evangelical Satsangs in B____

Down a narrow gully of uneven brick pavement, with fifteen-foot brick walls rising on either side, caked with dung patties, is G____, one of the most popular haunts for foreigners in love with Indian culture. Here on the banks of the river, ancient wall-to-wall houses, three stories high, form the walls on either side of hundreds of gullies not more than six feet in diameter. One of these houses, a mere kitty-corner from the G____ steps that lead down to the bathing areas, is the residence of Anand, a high-caste Hindu, and the landlord of one of our principle characters in this narrative, D____. D____ came to live here in 1998 from his home in South America. Of Indian origin himself, he was eager to learn the language of his people, Hindi, and something of their ways.

A____ arrived in B____ from his home in South Africa not long after D____, and the two became friends. A____, also of North Indian origin, began studying Hindi at the university further down the river, living at a hostel there. Both of them, though of Hindu background, were followers of Christ in their own countries.

During the first months, they made numerous friends and learned much about Indian culture. Their friends, in turn, learned about the Christ whom they worshiped. Before long, A____ and D____, along with some others they met, had begun a small *satsang*¹¹ on the second floor of D____'s pad. The *satsang* was attended normally by five to fifteen friends and neighbors, from teenagers to middle-aged, all men except for one or two women who came occasionally, and almost all of them high-caste Hindus. Neither A____ nor D____ were trained singers, certainly not in the Indian sense, but they began enthusiastically to learn *bhajans* and to play the harmonium, an Indian accordian-like instrument, the shape of a medium-sized rectangular box, which is played sitting on the floor.¹²

Eager to learn Hindi songs to Christ that their Hindu friends would enjoy, they began in earnest a search for *Khrist-bhajans*. The following is what might be considered an “order of worship” for a typical *satsang* at their house. Among Hindus, *satsangs* consist almost entirely of singing, though the pandit-singers may also give small messages based on Vedic Scripture in between *bhajans*, as will be seen in Chapter Four.

¹¹Hawley comments on the meaning of “*satsang*”: The nature of such a society in the *bhakti* context points to what is perhaps the most fundamental sense of “service through singing,” what one might call a musical sense of community. For in the *bhakti* tradition community is constituted not by amalgamation of people who serve different yet complementary functions, as society is normally depicted in texts describing Hindu *dharma*, but rather by putting together people who respond to a single sense of what is true or real. In the literature of *bhakti* such a community is typically called *satsang*. Sometimes this word can mean “the gathering of the true.” Since *sang* means “gathering” and *sat* means “good,” “true,” or “real.” But *satsang* can also mean a gathering for the sake of the true, an assembly stimulated by the recognition of a common divine reality and the need to respond to it, and this gives it still a further meaning: “true community” (Hawley, 1984, p. 258).

¹² After a *satsang* meeting at D____'s house, I had the opportunity of observing their rehearsal of songs that would be introduced in the following *satsang*. They practiced two *bhajans*, one *Bhajo re Bhaya*, (composer unknown) and *Diya Tune Vardan*, by Charles Vas S.V.D. A____ led the group, accompanying himself on harmonium. D____ played guitar, and a local pastor named P____ played the *dholak*, a cylindrical wooden drum with skin stretched over the holes on either end, commonly used in *bhajan*.

A few of the *bhajans* below are indicative of the various sources for *bhajans* available to A____ and D_____.

Order of Worship for the Sunday Afternoon *Satsang*

Jaya Jaya Yesu

Composed by probably the earliest of the Hindi *bhajan* writers, C.D. Jadhav (1868-1935), this *bhajan*, though no longer popular in Protestant churches today for reasons of trend already mentioned, is nevertheless a classic Christian *bhajan*. Many church members would know it enough to be able to teach it to B___ or A____. The *bhajan* is included in many hymnbooks of the Protestant Church.

Bible Scripture reading

Bhaj Pawantam Yesu Naam

Chorus (*Asthai*):

Bhaj pawan tam, Yeshu naam (Let us meditate on Jesus' holy name)

Yeshu naam jai, Yeshu naam (Jesus' name, His victorious name)

Verse (*Antara*) 1:

Yeshu naam, Mangal naam (Jesus name, Blessed name)

(The transliteration is my own, the translation is by Hemendra Nath, and the rendering in English is by Peter Hicks.)

This *bhajan*, composed by Fr. A____ D_____ of the M____ A____, was first released by Vishwa Jyoti Communications, B____, on a cassette called *Naman*, and distributed entirely among Catholics in the state. I bought a copy of this cassette on the recommendation of a Christ-following *sanyasi* (mendicant), when I visited the ashram in

1995. Since I was already singing *bhajans* at the time, I chose a few from the cassette, arranged them for acoustic guitar, and began to teach them at prayer meetings in L____. After two years, our group OLIO decided to record an album of *bhajans* set to guitars, *tabla* and *dholak*. Procuring permission from A____ D____, and giving a financial gift to the ministry of Vishwa Jyoti Communications, we recorded many of those *bhajans* on a cassette called *Nam Liyo Re*. It is from this cassette that A____ and D____ learned *Bhaj Pawantam* above.

Mero Man Lago

(Not much is known about this *bhajan*.)

Bin Yesu

Chorus (*Asthai*):

Bin Yesu ho nahin nistaara (Without you there is no solution)

Bin Prabhu kaun hamara (Who is there besides the Lord?)

Ke prabhu bin nahin nistara Without you there is no solution

(repeat entire two lines)

Verse (*Antara*) 1:

Purab dhunda, paschim dhunda (I searched in the East, in the West)

Dhunda phira jag saara (I searched all over the world)
(two times)

Bible padkar raha jo paai (But the way I found, reading your Word)
(two times)

Khoj liyo jag saara (It is like I have found the whole world)

Ke Prabhu bin nahin nistaara... (Without you there is no solution...)
(sing one time and then continue with chorus)

(The transliteration is my own, the translation is by Hemendra Nath, and the rendering in English is by Peter Hicks.)

This is another old *bhajan* from the Protestant hymnal, and though many older people have heard of it, it has ceased to be sung in the churches. The composer is not known. However, the version that I sang at the *satsang* is a different musical composition than the original in the hymnbook music edition. This new music was composed by Peter John for a cassette of *bhajans* called *Darpan*, released by John's brother, a pastor in the C.N.I., in 1989. The *bhajan* was also included in OLIO's *Nam Liyo Re*, after paying Peter John officially for copyrights to the song. Below are the lyrics, and also the two different melodies. Interesting to note is that the original melody is much easier to sing, as it only spans a range of a minor 6th. Peter John's version spans a minor 10th, and includes both the major and minor 7th in the composition. Another interesting point is that the *bhajan* is quite long and has many words. This does not fit the Catholic description of a *bhajan*. It is not "mantra-like." However, from a Protestant perspective, and certainly a Hindu one, this is indeed a *bhajan*, as shall be seen in Chapter Four. Some of the lines are too long for a congregation to easily repeat after the leader. This is true of the chorus, which has fourteen words before there is a repeat. However the melody in the verse is set up more appropriately for antiphonal singing. The first line has only eight words before there is a repeat. The second line has five, and the third line is not repeated at all. This is quite common in many *bhajans* composed with solo performance in view. The idea in a solo performance of a *bhajan* is that the congregation may join in as they please, where it is easier to do so, and that the soloist will cover those sections where congregational response is impossible, as where a line is not repeated.

Second Bible Scripture reading in Hindi--Woman at the Well--John Chapter Four.

Message

The notes for this message were prepared by D_____ in Hindi but interpreted and delivered by one of the young members of the *Satsang*, a Bangladeshi Muslim student at the University, who had been following Christ for just less than a year.

Panghat Pe Yesu Ja Betha (Jesus Went and Sat by the Well)

I sang this *bhajan* at the request of D_____, because it fit in well with the theme. This version, also by Peter John, is difficult to sing and involves some knowledge of classical melody and rhythm. It therefore falls under the category of “performance *bhajan*.” The lyrics are, once again, old *bhajan* lyrics from the hymnals. This one can be found in the Assemblies of God hymnbook from Calcutta.

He Prabhu Darshan Do

This *bhajan*, composed by Fr. Charles Vas S.V.D., is on a cassette called *Madhur Geet: Bhajans: Vol. 1,* that A_____ purchased from a Catholic communication center in B_____. It represents the typical Catholic style already described above.

Benediction in Hindi by D_____

In conclusion A_____ and D_____ are representative of today’s enthusiastic pioneers in cross-cultural work in North India. Firstly, they are foreigners with a keen love for India. Secondly, they are committed to learning Hindi and Hindi songs. Thirdly, they are active in sharing their faith. Fourthly, they are well aware of their weaknesses, but seem to press on in spite of them. Weaknesses include, first, their “foreignness.” Although they are of Indian origin, their accents betray their Western upbringing. Second, their lack of musical skill in either Western or Indian music leaves something to

be desired in their rendering of it. Nevertheless, they have enough friends who have forgiven these things. Apparently their enthusiasm and love more than make up for their lack of grace and precision in language and song, so prized by Indians.

But understandably, their work reaches only to Indians who are relaxed about these things, who prize friendship and love more than cultural exactitude. To reach the vast majority in G___ who have more pride but who nonetheless need to hear the gospel, Indians who have a more thorough grasp of the Hindi language and Hindustani music may be required. One hopes that if such were to come to B___, they would have the same love, zeal, humility, and perseverance that A___ and D___ have exhibited.

The Masih Family of Musicians

Mumtaz Masih

The Masih family legacy begins with grandfather Masih, who was an Urdu poet. Little is known of him. The story, therefore, begins with his son Rev. Mumtaz Masih (1916-1975), whose ministry of music and evangelism at North India Theological College in Bareilly was renowned all over Uttar Pradesh. Apparently, according to his son, Mumtaz even sang *ragas* at the famous Gwalior court. Mumtaz, with the encouragement of the college administration, ran a music department in which Indian instrumental and vocal instruction was offered. He himself was trained in Indian classical music at a semi-classical level.¹³

¹³ In India, semi-classical music includes the categories of *ghazal*, *geet*, and *bhajan*, because they are influenced by classical *ragas*, though not completely controlled by their rules. Classical music itself strictly follows *raga* guidelines and therefore, to become professional, total immersion in the study of *ragas* is required for many years. Styles within classical music include stately older forms, such as *dhrupad*, *dhamar*, and lighter more popular forms developed in the Mughal period, such as *tumri* and *khyal*. Interestingly, *bhajans* are often sung in strict classical forms. In fact classical music in its early days was

Mumtaz' group performed a combination of Christian and secular lyrics to the various *ragas*. They also had Christians and non-Christian musicians in the group. According to Irfan, one of the *tabla* players who performed with Mumtaz was pandit Jagdish Mohan, head of the department of music at the Moradabad Degree College. The Pandit often came to practice (*riyaz*) at Bareilly. Irfan boasted that Pandit Jagdish was a better *tabla* player than Zakhir Hussein, the world's greatest *tabla* player alive today. Whatever may be the truth of these reports, there is no question that Mumtaz' *bhajans* were famous in the church all over North India.

Some of them are included in the hymnbooks of the church. These include:

Bhajta Kyon Nahin Re Man Murakh, Dekho Nurani Taara, and Mohe Lagado Par. Of these, the last is of particular interest as it expresses a metaphor, common among Hindus, that life is like a boat sinking in the middle of the river and needing an experienced boatman to take it across to the other side. To illustrate how Christians, like Mumtaz, have used this Hindu theme in their songs, I have included below the lyrics of *Mohe Lagado Par*, as well as the lyrics of a Nepali Hindu *bhajan* studied by Henderson, and based on the same theme.

Mohe Lago Do Par (Take Me to the Other Side)

Take me to the other side, Oh Lord
Take me to the other side

My boat is being tossed by the waves
I am stuck in the middle of the current
Take me to the other side, Oh Lord
Take me to the other side

used entirely for the purpose of achieving union with God. Music in that sense was a *marga*, or a Yogic discipline.

I am so weak, I shake with fear
 Come Lord and take this oar
 Take me to the other side, Oh Lord
 Take me to the other side

The waves of sin try to scare me more
 All my efforts are in vain
 Take me to the other side, Oh Lord
 Take me to the other side

You saved your disciples on the lake
 In the same way help me reach safety
 Take me to the other side, Oh Lord
 Take me to the other side

(The transliteration is my own, and the translation is by Hemendra Nath.)

The Nepali Hindu *bhajan* below is from a recording by Acharya N.D. called
Samarpan (dedication). I have included here, the translation.

Bhagavan

Bhagavan ...life (is) a boat
 Come arrange (a way) to the other side
 Whenever a crisis may fall (upon me)
 Come and get (this boat) moving

[*Bhagavan*...]

Without wisdom (I) became blind
 A sense-driven foolish buffoon
 In the middle of this ocean of existence
 (I am) a traveller with a long way (to go)
 The bedazzling light of knowledge-
 Illuminate it and show (me) the path.

[whenever...*bhagavan*...]

You are meek, merciful, generous
 I am sinful, a beggar.
 Confused, I am in dire need:
 Take me into (your) shelter
 I am in a prison of (my own) senses:

Come and set (me) free
[whenever...*bhagavan*...] (Henderson, 1996, pp. 446-7).

As can be seen from the lyrics, both songs could be sung by a Hindu or a Christian. The *bhajan* expresses sentiments that anyone sorrowful for their sin and hopeful of God's mercy might feel. The theme, too, of life as a boat, is familiar in many parts of the world.

Mumtaz uses standard themes a lot in his *bhajans*. He also uses standard melodic ideas based on *ragas* (Santiago, 1999). Therefore his songs tend to be very accessible. One feels like he has heard them somewhere before. Some, even in his day, considered Mumtaz to be old-fashioned. The Reverend Bhasker, for example, who hired Mumtaz' younger brother Ahsan, considered Mumtaz' songs to be an uninteresting older style.

Ahsan Masih

Ahsan Masih (1933-), seventeen years younger than Mumtaz, learned all he knew of music from his brother. After pastoring a congregation in Delhi for some time, he was hired in 1959 by CARAVS in Jabalpur, and became their music director. In the course of his career there, he wrote one thousand Christian songs for radio, dance dramas, and film strips. In his day, the 1960's and 70's, his songs were considered *adhunik geet* (modern songs). There are twenty in the hymnbook, *Aradhna Ke Git*. The only other Indian composer who comes close to that number is Shujat Ali with thirteen songs attributed to him.

Vijay Lazarus, director of T.W.R. and editor of *Aradhna Ke Git*, calls Ahsan the greatest modern writer of Hindi Christian songs (Lazarus, 2000). Likewise, Fr. James M.L., when I asked him if he knew of any good composers in the Protestant field, said,

“Earlier I was a fan of [Ahsan] when [*sic*] I have never met him, but when I heard his first few songs, like *Awaaj Uthaenge*, all excellent it was.”

Ahsan speaks of his early days as a music director at Christ Church in Delhi, saying that he was very bold in attempting to use Indian forms of worship. The church members opposed him, saying: “What are you doing bringing the *kirtans* of the temples and *gurudwaras* in here?”¹⁴ Ahsan said:

The young people were with me. But the older ones would say, “If that Ahsan is in the choir, then I won’t come!” Now tell me, if you use harmonium and *tabla* in the church, does that mean...? Listen!... [The] piano is an instrument that is played in clubs. So when you play the piano or organ in the church then you are turning the church into a club. By just playing *majira*, *kartal*, or *tabla*, or *dholak* [does the church become a temple?] But anyway [that was all very sad]. Eventually I was transferred from that church to Panipat in Haryana! (Ahsan, 1999).

But Rev. Bhasker, Ahsan’s director, though he spoke very highly of him, was not sparing in his criticism:

My frank opinion is, first of all, Ahsan had no education in music. Yet somehow his family members were very interested in music so he got into that. So I doubt if he knew very much of classical music. He was not a classical singer and he also didn’t have a good voice.

Secondly, there was no depth to what he was composing, subject-wise. I often told him so. The use of words, the meaning that you visualize, should come from the very depth of your [heart]. He has two or three songs like that that are wonderful, but by and large I don’t think....

One professor, Radha Krishna, from Leonard Theological College, used to make fun of Ahsan: “*Aray tum kya yaar? ‘Mera Nau Dub Raha...come save.’*” (*My ship is sinking, you come and save me.*) That is the subject matter of his song: *The sun is rising and you are the light of my life and you take care of me.* While the analogy is all right, there is no depth, no deeper feelings, emotions....

Only one song I remember he made use of an Indian phrase, [and] said, *The blood of Calvary that washes away the sins of people is like the waters of Ganges that*

¹⁴ The quotes from Ahsan are translated by me from the Hindi original.

cleanses the people. Ha! When he said that, there were so many criticisms. He said, “Now, what is wrong about it.” But people didn’t like that kind of thing.

Taking into account the Catholics, it is still very meager.... Yet among the Protestants I believe that CARAVS and Ahsan were “on top.”

Throughout my interview with Rev. Bhasker, there was no question that he had great respect for Ahsan, in spite of the criticism above. In spirit they were one, both revolutionaries, eager to see changes, new ideas, and bold enough to stand up to opposition. Vijay Lazarus comments that while they were compiling the hymnbook, some members of the committee raised an objection to one of Ahsan’s lyrical ideas:

[Ahsan] says, “Christ taught us the lessons in *satya* (truth) and *ahimsa* (non-violence).” The committee objected, saying, “No, no, this is Gandhi, not Christ.” Ahsan said, “No, No. Why? Christ taught us non-violence.” So [Ahsan] was not ready to give up. But when we think of *satya* and *ahimsa* together, at once our thoughts go to Mahatma Gandhi. But eventually Mahatma Gandhi got it from Christ... So...Ha, Ha...

Ahsan Masih is very rigid. He is so very confident of what he has written, it’s almost impossible to change what he has written. I really appreciate him. He is precise. His technique is perfect (meter and rhyme). He won’t give up.

The only objection about his style is at places, instead of Urdu, he starts using Hindi words. Of course [this is because] he is living in Jabalpur, so his Urdu is not all that pure. But perhaps he is so liberal that he has started using Hindi words also (Lazarus, 2000).

Ahsan comments on this criticism of the use of Hindi, saying:

These old people, like Tiwarson *Sahib*, when I used to give them new words, I used to say, “Now these Urdu lyrics are not being understood in your generation (that was way back in 1967, when Hindi was much more in use). So remove these words like *Intiquabi*. What do people understand from that? And you use words like *Makhluqaad*, and are we expecting our children to know the meaning of *Makhluqaad*. (It means creation). I know it because I am from an Urdu background, but your children study Hindi and will have no idea what you are talking about. “Yes,” they said, “but in these words there is more meaning.” But I said, “*Siraf pharak yahaa par hain; pharak wahan par nahin hain*” (that may make a difference among us, but not among them).

As a result of Ahsan's and others' language campaign, the hymnal committee decided to include, where there was a revised lyric, two versions of songs, the old Urdu words and the new, more understandable Hindi words.

Ahsan's spirit comes through in the following comment on the use, supposedly, of Hindu ideas in his songs:

In our Methodist Church a certain Mr. Man used to come... (he died). He was an Urdu man, a poet. He criticized us saying, "Why are you taking these old things and putting them in something new?" I said, "This is not old, it is new. It is you who are doing what is old." "But," said he, "This is Hindu." (What is Indian they call Hindu, or religious). [But I say] nothing is Hindu. If you sing a Hindi *bhajan*, then what is Hindu about that? They sing for their Krishna; we sing for Christ. All right? Our devotion is for Christ. Theirs is for Ram and Sita.

This all depends on your faith. If your faith is so weak, that if you hear these songs you are shaken, then I say, "Leave it. Stop calling yourself Christian if your faith is that weak. It is not God who is weak, it is you. Or if your God is weak then certainly your faith will be weak." Well, I am sorry, I have fought much with them and struggled a lot.

At age 67, Ahsan is retired now, though he keeps active running a private homeopathic clinic in his living room. He himself admitted to me that after some years at CARAVS, the pressure to compose songs every week took the life out of his compositions and he began to treat his writing like a job. After going on like that for some years, he finally realized it would be better to leave than continue with such drudgery.

Reverend Irfan Masih and "Rhythm for Glory" (*Taal Mahima Ke Liye*)

Rev. Irfan Masih, nephew of Ahsan and son of Mumtaz, has continued the "Ministry of Music and Evangelism" founded by his father. As a boy he used to accompany his father on *tabla*. His musical guru was Pandit Goswami, and he relates how he had to practice (*tapasya karna*) for endless hours daily. The group of students,

over twenty in number, would sit in front of the guru and perform what they had practiced individually for him.

Later he joined the Leonard Theological College in 1969, writing a thesis in his final year on *The Hymns of the North Indian Church*. The thesis is edited and abridged in a little booklet called *Music and Evangelism: With Song Book*.

Having pastored Hindi Methodist churches in Almora, Shahjahanpur, and Lucknow, he eventually returned to Barreilly as a lecturer at North India Theological College. Though in his father's time there was a thriving music program, no such thing exists at present, and Irfan is able to help the students only through leading the singing in morning chapel services.¹⁵

However, with his son and some other Christian young people, he forms a choir from time to time and performs in various conventions and conferences. I met his group once at *Yuva Darshan*, a youth conference in Delhi organized by Campus Crusade in 1997. The group participated in the singing competition that took place one night.

Since then, Irfan has resurrected the ministry of his father, and recently published a brochure advertising *Rhythm for Glory: Taal Mahima Ke Liye: Supreme Performance of SAAZ and AWAZ*. Irfan writes in the brochure that under the auspices of the Ministry of Music and Evangelism, he and the associate director, Morris Masih, "visit churches and congregations both rural and urban, to conduct and guide [them] so that the people

¹⁵ The following *bhajans* among others were led by Irfan Masih at a morning chapel I attended at the college. *Mukti Dilaye Yesu Nam*, probably the most famous Hindi *bhajan* in the world right now, here rendered with different lyrics in some verses than is normal throughout the rest of the North. *Prem Nidhan Yesu Kripa Kijiye* by Hingan is a *bhajan* composed in *Raga Desh*, and *Yogya Kewal Tu* is a modern chorus in Hindi that has some Western influence in the flow of the melody.

could praise the Lord by singing the songs in their original Hindustani form and concept, and more, in perfect RHYTHM (*TAAL*).”

The following is a complete transcription, apart from song lyrics, of the mock demonstration Irfan and *tabla* professional Morris showed me as an example of their work, at Morris’ house in Bareilly.

Demonstration of the use of *tabla* in Christian music

Very happy to be at this place of Mr. Morris Masih, who is one of the top most artists in the field of *tabla* playing. Though it is an unthinkable time to give a demonstration, but even then, as we are not very much prepared at this occasion, but we are ready, timely or untimely, to sing for the glory of God. “The Ministry of Music and Evangelism” is a ministry for glorifying Jesus Christ.

Tabla is one of the main rhythm instruments both in pop music, but especially in classical music, *ragas* or harmony. So it has a main place in the field of music and we are fortunate to meet Mr. Morris Masih at his residence here in Bareilly. So he will be performing the *tabla* accompaniment with me, showing how he performs for the purpose of glorifying God.

Main Ata Hun Tere Paas Prabhu Yesu Mere Masih (I come to you Lord Jesus my

Savior)

No comment will be given about this very common *bhajan*, which is still sung often today, especially by young people in organizations like O.M.

Geet Fateha Ke Masih Ki, by Mumtaz Masih

Irfan continues, “[The following] song is set in *Rupak taal*, seven beats, and [see] how Morris plays to make the song more beautiful and more praising to the Lord. The *raga* is *Bupali*.”

In the middle of the song, in between one of the verses, while the *tabla* and harmonium continue softly, Irfan translates the words of the verse he is about to sing into

English: “In every direction [one] should be always holding the flag of Christ and that flag of victory everywhere. And you have to show his glory unto the end of the world, glorifying his name through the flag of victory.” Again before another line of the same verse: “As St. John said, ‘I should decrease but he should increase.’ *Uski Shaan ka, hamara shaan ka nahin*, but for his glory, Jesus we praise always.”

About the *tabla* and Mr. Morris.

So *tabla* was created by thirteenth century saint named Amir Khusro. He was the inventor of various classical Indian instruments such as *tabla*, *sitar*, [and] *tanpura*. As you are carrying your *sitar* and have a great love and regard for it, so *tabla* is basically a skinned instrument and everything is O.K. with the *tabla*, but to use it for the glory of God is the greatest thing and Morris is always ready to share his gift of music for the glory of God.

So Morris and his family have been dedicated for the service of the Lord. Though he is a *par excellence* artist, a T.V. and radio artist at Rampur, Delhi, and other places, and people always take him here and there for performance, [yet] if anything for the church comes he gives the priority to be in the meetings or in the worship service in church and in thanksgiving service. He is always ready to use this gift for Jesus Christ. So to always mention his name is a breakthrough in the Indian church music.

We had an opportunity of going to the churches, rural as well as urban areas, and it is all “Rhythm for Glory,” (*Taal Mahima Ke Liye*), through this Ministry of Music and Evangelism, of which he is associate director with me, always using the talent for the glory of God.

Chamkila Sitara Pyare (The Stars are Twinkling Beautifully) in *Dharbari Raga*,

Teen Taal, by Mumtaz Masih.

At the second verse Irfan says, “See, heaven is at the feet of Jesus Christ. That is the true heaven (*Charno main Yeshu ke mujhko bhi ponchado*). Again, after singing some more, Irfan begins to describe what he is singing:

Now the characteristic of this song is that the *antaras* (verses) are going differently; all three *antaras* are going differently. Usually...all the *antaras* are on

the same scale and same notes, but in this *raga* [it is not so] (And he proceeds to illustrate this by singing.)

Again on *taal*, Irfan says, “*Teentaal* consists of sixteen beats.” (He counts the beats off in rhythm, while Morris accompanies with a simple *teentaal* beat with no elaboration.) “And to sing a song in this *taal* is very difficult.”

Again after more improvising in classical style, Irfan says, “You must have strength to sing, otherwise you can’t [perform classical music].”

Final Comments.

Now the sad thing of the congregation is that they are not interested in this kind of music which is a basic cultural music of India. They like to hear those songs that are jazzy, pop, and all. But since [these songs] are the heritage of the Christian church, we cannot leave it or ignore it. It is the basic music of India, and also the [basic music] of the church. It is a combination of harmony and *taal*. “Supreme Performance of SAAJ and AWAZ,” as I have given this name. May God bless Morris and his ministry.

Morris Masih, who remained quiet until now, was more optimistic, saying of Indian music in the church, “*Ek din aaega*” (One day it will come). It will come with our efforts. If we are discouraged, and do not set our hearts on this path, then it will be buried” (translation mine). Irfan added:

There are a lot of boards, committees, and other things going on in the church, but for the music part, I do not know why they are [not interested].... There were some missionaries like Ms. Muriel Stephenson of Ratlam, Indore, M.P. Those people used to take people for composing, [and they used to] encourage artists, and all sorts of support. But maybe they have shifted to administration more, not a business as such, but more work and responsibility.

But we must come up with this idea that one must pay attention to the quality of music which we have and if we can have seminars, music workshops and competitions and rallies it will be nice. Literature needs also to be published. I want to write a book which can be placed in the libraries, called *Sangeet: Prem Sandesh* (Music: The Message of Love).

The title of this book is a fitting conclusion to the story of this Christian musical family: “Music: The Message of Love.” Could such families and their children yet hold the key to unlocking the door of Indian music in the church? Perhaps it depends on their sons, on Noel, Irfan’s youngest who, as I mentioned earlier, is a fan of the fusion group Junoon.

Junoon is a band from Pakistan that used to perform only Western classic rock concerts for university crowds in the sub-continent. Their singer was able to ape the songs of Led Zeppelin and the Doors almost perfectly. But their most recent album, which sold 400,000 copies in India in its first four weeks, was entirely of Sufi songs. Sufi songs, or *qaawali*, are devotional love songs that can relate to secular love or to love for God. Junoon used electric, acoustic, and bass guitars with *tabla*, *dholak* and drumset accompaniment. The *sufi* songs already lend themselves to the high energy of classic rock, as the singing lines are often in a very high tenor range. With role models like this for Christian young boys like Noel, perhaps the church will indeed have a generation of young people who believe in a truly Indian devotional music that is relevant to the twenty-first century.

Chapter 4

A Critique of Christian *Bhajans* by

Professionals in the North Indian Classical and Semi-classical Music World

Having spend four months in the Christian *bhajan* world of North India, my impression, after a mere three days among Hindu professionals, was that I had been swimming around in a small pool only to be introduced at the last minute to the limitless ocean. The depth of understanding of Indian music and the joy with which every note was sung struck me immediately.

During my interviews, I found the singers, song-writers, and journalists to be very encouraging in regard to the use of Indian art forms to worship Christ.¹⁶ By and large I received very positive comments. The format of the interview involved playing for the interviewee the chorus and first verse of three to five *bhajans*.

The comments of two professionals are given below, translated by me from Hindi into English. First are the comments of Dr. U. K. Thapliyal, whom I met at his ninth-story apartment on Vidhan Sabha Marg, Lucknow. His method of answering was to get me to critique each particular *bhajan* first before he offered his comments. Second are the comments of a musical *bhajan* duo named Agnihotri Badhu. These are twin brothers, Rakesh and Devesh, who compose and sing *bhajan* melodies all over India, and are very popular in Lucknow. I met them at their home, and they gave me a demonstration of the way they perform *bhajans*. The demonstration is given below in its full form.

¹⁶ For a list of interviewees see the list under Disc 21 and Disc 22 of the Minidisc Table of Contents.

Dr. Urmil Kumar Thapliyal, senior news reader and radio journalist

Some of these *bhajans* have been recorded very professionally. It is clear that they have been recorded in Bombay. What seems to be lacking is not in arrangement or recording, but in the vocal quality.

There also seems to be a translation of moods in some of these *bhajans*. Originality creates strength, but these *bhajans* seems to be musical translations. The worship of Jesus ought to be in Indian styles, no doubt, but it must be authentic and original.

I feel that you need to begin with some more original lyrics. It is not right to translate. What these composers seem to be doing is, for example, to take a line such as “*He logo, Aao sab milkar gae, Krishna ki jai,*” and in the place of Krishna, put Yeshu.

Nevertheless, I feel that the attempt is excellent. Only the feelings are lacking. These *bhajans* seem to be depressing. Where is the joy in singing *bhajans* to Christ? Where is the festivity? In India, you may have noticed, festivity is very important! When you sing *bhajans* you are inviting people to join you. You, yourself must be full of joy as you sing in order to draw the audience into the experience with you. You may begin with a *bhajan*, singing it as a solo, but at some point you must draw the audience into the experience. Why be sad? You are in front of God, your Father.

If the subject matter is of confession, then yes, there is sadness. But when you come to God to praise Him, having confessed your sin, then it is time to praise joyfully! When you pray you are not praying as a sinner but as a child of the Father. Don't forget that the greatest thing in Indian-ness is festivity and joy. Remember these things when you compose songs to Christ in India.

Agnihotri Bandhu

Introduction: The Difference Between *Bhajan* and *Kirtan*

The very meaning of *bhajan* is “the repetition of any holy name” (*kisi pawitra naam ka jap lena*). *Bhajan* is a refined form. What came first was *jap* (the repetition of the name of god). From *jap* came *kirtan*, and from *kirtan* came *bhajan*.

When we compose lines that repeat in a *bhajan*, it is not, firstly, because it facilitates audience participation, but rather because the composition demands it. It would not sound pleasing without it. Likewise, there are other places in the melody where it would be out of place to repeat a particular line.

Usually when we sing a *bhajan* in a performance, we close it with a *kirtan*, so that the audience may join in at the end with something simple and thus be connected intimately with the whole *bhajan*, though they do not sing along during most of it.

Bhajans and *kirtans* compliment each other. *Bhajan* is a *shaabdik rachana*, a lyrical composition, whereas in *jap* and *kirtan* the words are few. In *jap* there is much repetition of one line.

Kirtan

Hare Ram Hare Ram, Ram Ram Hare Hare, Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare.

Bhajan

Ram ka kiya karo Krishna ka kaha karo (two times).

Divya prem banth ke (two times).

Pathik ban chala karo (one time).

Ram ka kiya karo (one time).

Kirtan again

Hare Ram Hare Ram, Ram Ram Hare Hare Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna. "Bolo" (sing).

Lyrics: Yogesh Praveen; Music: Agnihotri Bandhu.

So you see how we have sung lyrics, and then, at the end, attached a *kirtan* to it, and in this way the public have been brought into the experience at the end.

The meaning of the lyrics, *Ram ka kiya karo Krishna ka kaha karo*, is that we should do in life whatever Ram did. He performed the works of a normal human being, and therefore, his life can be imitated. As far as Krishna is concerned, we cannot imitate him because his life had a particular purpose and he performed many miracles that we can never do. However we must do the things that Krishna preached in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

Demonstration of a Hindu *Bhajan* Performance

This is a poem of Surdas, in which he has defined love. He has given love the highest place. *Prem* (love) is the greatest thing. And this is love, that we and you are sitting here together. We have met you today for the first time and yet we do not feel like it has been so. This is love. And Surdas has here defined it. Lord Krishna did many such works. For example Shabri gave some bitter fruit to Krishna, and he ate it and went on his way. He never complained about the fruit because Shabri was in love with Krishna. In this *bhajan* we have used the word *sagai*; *sab se unchi prem sagai* (the highest love is found in marriage). *Sagai* means *shadi* (or marriage). If you have married for love, then in your love you will go from joy to joy.

Sabse Unchi Prem Sagai, Prem Sagai Ji

In this song, a character named Duryodhan, who was very proud, invited god to come to his home to eat of fifty-six snacks. God did not go there. Rather he went to Viddur Mahatma's house in the forest and there he ate a very simple meal because there was love there.

This next *bhajan* is of Hanuman. Hanuman's prayer was always in Ram's name. The most famous mantra of Hanuman is *Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram*. Using this mantra, we find Ram. Unless we make friendship with Hanuman, we cannot meet Ram. Now as we sing this Hanuman *bhajan* we use the lyrics of Tulsidas. (One of the members of Agnihotri proceeds to speak some lines in Sanskrit from Tulsidas about Hanuman. Then the brothers begin singing, starting with a *kirtan* and continuing with more lyrics in *bhajan* form.)

Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram Jai Shri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram.

The following line is joined to the end of each verse of the *bhajan*, becoming like a refrain: *Jai jai vipatti harana hanuman sab dukh door karo bhagavan* (Praise be to Hanuman who takes away all our troubles).

However, in a sense, it is the *kirtan* that is the primary refrain, as it is here that the audience can most easily join in, and in this case, the brothers introduce the *kirtan* after each verse.

The brothers continue:

Without the name of Hanuman, the story of Ram is incomplete. Hanuman's name is more worshiped in homes, even than Ram. Hanuman is the ocean of mercy, the alleviator of suffering. He is the savior of Lakshman and Sita, and has performed many other great feats as well.

Here is a final *bhajan* in which god says, "Whoever comes into my presence, he will be set free from adversity." Without calling on god one can never be free of trouble. Unless a child cries, a mother will not feed it milk. God, likewise, cares for everyone who he accepts as a child. If we are a little baby, then God will carry us around on his back. But if we think ourselves grown up and mature, then how will god carry us around on his back? God says, I want to feed you, I want to satisfy your thirst, but unless you cup your hands, how can I do so?

Suneri Maine Nirbal Ke Balram

After singing the chorus once, the brothers ask:

What does Surdas, the composer, say here? He says, "Unless you confess to God that you are weak and in need of his grace, how can he save you?"

They sing some more and then offer a commentary again as follows:

Once an elephant was trapped by a crocodile, and since the elephant was a *bhakta* of god, it called out to god, and god appeared immediately and saved it from the grasp of the crocodile.

At the end of the song, they conclude, saying:

Now see how strong the elephant was, and yet even with such strength it was unable to free itself, and had to call out to god. So, just as the elephant recognized its weakness, so you too recognize your weakness and call upon god for help always.

And finally, you cannot fool god; you must be honest in your devotion and truly recognize your need. It does no good to travel from holy place to holy place, to donate money here and there, if your heart is not honestly seeking god. You can find god and be forgiven of your sins through faith. If you sense that your faith is weak, but you hunger for more faith, this is a good sign.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

Young Protestant Christian musicians have found their niche in the increasing demand for quality Western music in India. Even if they should want to take up Indian classical music, they might not be welcomed, and could face much prejudice. There does not seem to be any change forthcoming. Without discounting the value of having India's best Western musicians in the church, if the church is serious about its mission, it cannot expect to win the hearts of Indians if it continues only in Western ways. Assuming, then, that the vast majority of Protestant Christian musicians will move farther away from Indian music and specialize even more in Western music, the church needs to find other ways to be involved in Indian music.

The way forward for *Khrist-bhajans*, therefore, as it has been from the beginning, lies in the path of evangelism out among Hindus and Muslims, and to some extent away from the church. I say "to some extent" only because in the twenty-first century, music is going to be increasingly global in its presentation. Indian classical *bhajan* singers, for example, will need professional Western-style guitarists, drummers and keyboardists, and vice versa.

However, in order to reach India for Christ, a branch of the church must break off its loyalty to Western ways and immerse itself in Indian culture and music, as the Roman Catholics have so impressively done. Two distinct groups of people may be involved in this process. The first group would consist of non-musicians who are promoting

indigenous music in one way or the other. The second group are musicians who compose and sing *bhajans*.

Recognizing the great need in North India for *bhajans* to be used in evangelism, as they are, for example, in G____ and M____ A____, non-musicians can play a vital role in the promotion of *bhajans* in two areas.

The first has to do with singing *bhajans* regularly among Hindu friends. It is clear from the accounts of the above places, from the examples of *kirtan* singing by the common people, and from the critiques of Hindu professionals, that what is needed most in *bhajan* singing is not skill, but emotion. Joy and enthusiasm, a genuine relationship with God, the infilling of the Holy Spirit, and a love for Indians is all that is required to lead a group in *bhajans*, apart from some minimal musical skill! There are numerous cassettes of Christian *bhajans*, especially Catholic productions, and they are easily available at any one of the communication centers. One needs only follow the example of A____ and D____, and begin learning them by listening to the cassettes.

But secondly, non-musicians can be involved in the production of new *bhajans*. During this study I spent a few weeks with my colleague Peter Hicks, a guitar player and singer/songwriter, creating and trying out a model for *bhajan* composition and recording that could be imitated by others. Our friend Hasan Ali Khan composed music to two lyrics by Mumtaz Masih, *Yesu Raja Trilok Nath* and *Kalame Khuda* (see lyrics on page 162 and 164). With Peter accompanying on guitar and Hasan on harmonium, we recorded these two songs in our living room n L_____.

The model we used was as follows:

1. To find a young competent Indian singer/songwriter, trained in classical music at least up to the fifth year (*visharad*) who is sensitive to spiritual things and particularly loves to sing *bhajans*. This person may or may not be from the Christian community. In our case, it was a 21-year-old Muslim friend who is a gifted *ghazal* singer and has been interested in Christ for many years. He even had the experience of being “born again,” as he described it.
2. Find an old Christian hymnbook, either *Geet Ki Kitab*, *Aradhna Ke Git*, The A.G. Church hymnal from Calcutta, or a Catholic hymnbook such as *Ish Vandana*. These can usually be found through older church members. Let the musician select lyrics that he likes.
3. Give him or her a few days to compose a melody for one of the lyrics.
4. Do a simple home recording in the following manner (for those with access to international e-commerce):
 - a. Purchase, on-line, a minidisc digital recording walkman, preferably a SONY MZ-R55 walkman and SONY MS-907 stereo microphone, for \$300 and \$85 respectively; and purchase 74-minute minidisks at \$2.50 apiece.
 - b. Have the musician come to your home, bringing with him a *tabla* or *dholak* player he enjoys playing with.
 - c. Find a guitarist who plays Western style to accompany. This will provide the necessary modern touch to the *bhajan*.
 - d. Other musicians such as flutists or violinists could also be called in.

- e. The minidisc walkman and microphone are simply turned on and the performance begins. The recording quality, I found, was potentially better than the quality of some of the *bhajan* recordings that took place in studios.
- f. For duplication, a high quality SONY double-cassette deck is necessary, and may cost up to 10,000 rupees (\$250). Make as many copies as you have time to record, using high quality SONY blank cassettes. What usually happens in cassette production in India is that a high-quality master cassette is made in the studio at considerable expense, and then completely ruined when it goes to the duplicating companies. Even the best duplicators in Madras give a relatively poor performance.
1. Honor the musician with a gift, perhaps of a new harmonium, guitar, or *tanpura*. He will probably not accept money, especially if he is a friend. Nevertheless, he has worked hard, even if just for one song, and in order to properly express thanks and also motivate him further, a generous gift is advisable. (In my experience, it was very difficult to get a hold of our musician. He would promise to come, and then never show up. We were able to compose and record only two *bhajans* in the space of two weeks.)

Thus the first group of non-musicians are able to promote *bhajans* effectively by organizing *bhajan* composition, recording, promotion and distribution.

Peter Hicks and I also worked separately, arranging some *bhajans* for Western tastes. Responding to a felt need among non-resident Indians (N.R.I.'s) in the U.K., U.S.A., and South Africa, we sought a blend of Indian *bhajan* melody with Western acoustic guitar rhythms. *Bhaj Pawantam Yeshu Naam*, a *bhajan* composed by A_____

D____, is given here as an example of our work in this area. This is still very much in its experimental stage, as we have only performed *bhajans* in this way in the U.K. in the summer of 1999. Peter Hicks provides the rhythmic and chordal work, taking the role of both harmonium and *tabla*. I provide the melodic aspect by singing and playing interludes on the sitar. I also use a small *tanpura*, designed especially to accompany instrumental music, such as the guitar or sitar. Peter also joins in on some lines of the *bhajan*, and though his accent is clearly not Indian, his love for the *bhajans* and desire to sing them reflect the love that many N.R.I.'s and Caucasian Westerners feel for this form.

The second group of people are skilled or potentially skilled musicians in Indian music. It is clear from this study that the former are hard to find in the Christian community. However, there are many potentially skilled musicians. These can be found both in the Christian and non-Christian community. In the Christian community, young musically talented children from an early age may be taught to appreciate Indian music, to love being Indian, and to experience what being truly Christian and yet truly Indian is like. Research has been done in Lucknow that reveals an increased interest among Hindu and Muslim parents to send their children for training in Indian classical music (Thapliyal, 2000). If Hindus and Muslims are showing a renewed interest in the face of all the Western music which is being promoted on television, why might not Christian parents also support the preservation of this great culture?

In the non-Christian community, there are countless musicians who are potential followers of Christ. They only need someone to take an interest in their life and work, to love them and love their art, someone who will share Christ's love with them, and

someone who will encourage them to “retain the place in life that the Lord assigned to them and to which God has called them” (I Cor. 7:17). The rest is in God’s hands.

One hopes that through this study, Christian leaders may be challenged to take the musical needs of the mission field in North India more seriously. This will include channeling more funds towards patronizing some gifted Christian musicians and commissioning them to compose and perform *bhajans* full time. It will also include the sponsoring of music and worship seminars for church planters and the purchasing of harmoniums for the students that attend.

Though I have attempted to cover as much ground as possible, North India is a vast field, and there are, no doubt, many evangelists and pastors scattered here and there across the country who are living the lives of singer-saints, and leading many to the family of Christ. It is they who must be sought out, encouraged, and helped to continue their valuable work. Perhaps music seminars could be conducted simply and inexpensively at regular intervals, and new *bhajans* could be taught along with rudimentary instrumental skills.

It was disciples of Christ from non-Christian backgrounds who preserved their identity as Indians and continued to love their Indian culture, that gave to Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu their great Christian hymns. Likewise, there are musicians in North India today that God has prepared to be the singer-saints of the Hindi *Khrist-bhakt* movement of the future. But who will go out to find them? And who upon finding them will support them to continue their trade, giving glory to Christ through their music?

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- Agnihotri Bandhu, Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Indira Nagar, Lucknow, February 17, 2000, 18:36.
- Albuquerque, Rev. Earnest, pastor and worship leader at Valley of Praise, Grant Road, Mumbai. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Y.M.C.A., Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. November 6th, 1999, 13:26.
- Bakla, Father Emmanuel. Jesuit professor at Jabalpur Catholic Seminary, musician, and music producer. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Sneha Sadan, Jabalpur, M.P., India. October 29, 1999, 17:04.
- Barpagga, Sri Dharam Pal, professor of vocal music. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Bhaathkhande Sangeet Mahavidhyalaya, Lucknow. February, 14, 2000, 15:48.
- Bhasker, Rev. K.D., former director, CARAVS. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Bhasker's home, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, India. February 5, 2000, 10:34
- D____, Father A____, Acharya of M____ A____, composer and singer of *bhajans*. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. M____ A____, B____, India. October 23, 1999, 15:04.
- Doot, Deb. Singer/songwriter and music director of Mumbai-based Christian music troupe, FISH. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. C.M.S. House, Grant Road, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. November 8th, 1999, 15:41.
- Father Amarnad C.M.I., *Bhajan* composer and singer, professor at C.M.I. Seminary, Bhopal. Interview by author, Minidisc recording. Carmelites of Mary Immaculate Seminary, Bhopal, Maharashtra, India. October 30th, 1999, 11:00.
- Father James ML, C.M.I., lyric writer and director, Navchetana Communication Center, Bhopal. Interview by author, Minidisc recording, Navchetana, Bhopal, Maharashtra, India. October 30, 1999, 18:19.

- Father Moses, Norbertine Fathers, *bhajan* composer and performer and director, Norbertine Fathers Communication Center, Jabalpur. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Norbertine Center, Jabalpur, M.P., India. October 28th, 1999, 17:59.
- Father Rougue, Father Santiago, compilers of the 1999 Hindi Catholic hymnbook, *Ish Vandana*. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Maitri Bhavan (Dialogue Center), Varanasi, India. December 5th, 1999, 11:23.
- Father Sebastian, C.M.I., *bhajan* composer and performer, and professor, C.M.I. Seminary, Bhopal. Interview by author, Minidisc recording. Carmelites of Mary Immaculate Seminary, Bhopal, Maharashtra, India. October 30th, 1999, 13:00.
- Holakar, Avinash, *bhajan* composer and performer, and music director at Seventh Day Adventist Studio, Pune. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. 7th Day Adventist Center, Pune, Maharashtra, India. November 4, 1999, 15:12.
- John, Peter, *bhajan* composer and performer, and government-employed music teacher. (Hindi). Interview by author. Minidisc recording. John's house. Gurgaon, Delhi. November 10th, 1999, 12:24.
- John, Rev. Pramod, pastor, Free Methodist Church, Nagpur, Ingle, Rev. Sudhir, pastor, Calvary Alliance Church, Nagpur, & Timothy, Arun, evangelist/singer Mure Memorial Hospital. Group interview by author, Minidisc recording. Free Methodist Church, Wanjari Nagar, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India. November 1, 1999, 11:02. November 1, 1999, 15:45.
- Joshi, Sri Kishan, party leader of Shikhar-Swar, a folk dance group of Kumaon, and B-High grade artist, Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Katra Maqbool Ganj, Lucknow, February 16, 2000, 19:59.
- Kumar, Pradip, freelance journalist for Doordarshan II, Gorakhpur. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Katra Maqbool Ganj, Lucknow, February 16, 2000, 19:29.
- Lazarus, Vijay, music director, TWR, New Delhi. Interview with author. Minidisc recording. TWR, New Delhi, India. February 2, 2000, 10:47.
- Malakar, Philip, music director, FEBA Radio. Interview with author. Minidisc recording. FEBA Radio, Delhi, India. February 2, 2000, 13:54.
- Manwadkar, Samson, *Bhajan* composer and performer, India representative, T.M.U. (Traditional Media Unit), and announcer, All India Radio, Nagpur. Interview by author, Minidisc recording. All India Radio, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India. November 1, 1999, 20:17.

- Masih, Ahsan, *geet* and *bhajan* composer, former music director, CARAVS. (Hindi). Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Ahsan's home, Jabalpur, M.P., India. October 29, 1999, 12:49.
- Masih, Ahsan. (Hindi). Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Ahsan's home, Jabalpur, M.P., India. October 29, 1999, 18:31.
- Masih, Rev. Irfan, director, "Rhythm for Glory," singer of classical *bhajans*, & professor, Bereilly Theological Seminary. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Masih's home, Bereilly, U.P., India. November 15th, 1999, 12:34.
- Masih, Rev. Irfan, Masih, Morris, professional *tabla* player. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Morris Masih's House, Bereilly, U.P., India. November 15th, 1999, 18:15.
- Misra, Dharam Nath, professor of Tumri and *Ghazal*, Light music. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Bhaathkhande Sangeet Mahavidhyalaya, Lucknow, February 14, 2000, 16:03.
- Nath, Eric, *bhajan* composer and singer, and student of Leonard Theological Seminary (L.T.S.), Thomas, Sunil, chapel coordinator and L.T.S. student. Group Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur, M.P., India. October 29, 1999, 15:56.
- Paul, E., recording engineer, CARAVS. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. CARAVS, Jabalpur, M.P., India. October 28, 1999, 10:28.
- Ramsey, Rev. Stanley, retired pastor, *bhajan* singer and classical music teacher. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. R.P. Church, Roorkee, U.P., India. December 22, 1999, 8:40.
- Randive, Raman, classical Marathi and Hindi *bhajan* singer. (Hindi) Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Ambarnath, Maharashtra, India. November 8th, 1999, 00:05.
- Solomon, Leela, former playback singer, CARAVS, David Francis, former lyricist and actor, CARAVS, Basharat Manmohan, former playback singer, CARAVS. Group Interview by author. Minidisc recording. (Hindi). CARAVS, Jabalpur, M.P., India., 9:41.
- Timothy, Arun, evangelist/singer, Mure Memorial Hospital, Nagpur. Interview by author, Minidisc recording. Mure Memorial Hospital, Nagpur, November 1, 1999, 11:02.

- Thapliyal, Dr. Urmil Kumar, Senior News Reader, radio journalist and writer, and writes a column called *Aaina* for the Rastriya Sahara newspaper. He is also a theatre activist. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. February, 16, 2000, 12:33.
- Thudipara, Ft. Thomas SVD, Audio-visual Production Dept., Ishvani Kendra. Interview by author, Minidisc recording. Ishvani Kendra, Pune, Maharashtra, India. October 3, 1999,15:23.
- Thorat, Anant, classical music enthusiast, Holakar Avinash, Marathi and Hindi *bhajan* composer and performer. Group interview by author. Minidisc recording. Thorat home, Pune, Maharashtra, India. November 4, 1999,19:59.
- Thorat, Vinayak, professional *tabla* player. (Hindi). Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Thorat home, Pune, Maharashtra, India. November 4, 1999,19:59.
- Vajpai, Nirmal, promoter of Christian arts, Christian events marketer, Y.W.A.M member. Interview by author, Minidisc recording. Vajpai's home, Pune, Maharashtra, India. November 3rd, 1999, 19:50.
- Vas, Father Charles, S.V.D., Dmus, director, Sangeet Abhinay Academy, *bhajan* composer and singer, and classical music teacher. Interview by author. Minidisc recording. Sangeet Abhinay Academy, Bandra, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. Novemeber 5th, 1999, 14:42.

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3. Dhyana (meditation) – Dhyana Mulam.

Mass – October 17, 1999, 6:00

4. Oh Dharti – procession.
5. Greeting and invitation to worship Christ.
6. Prayer and response.
7. Aradana teri aradana – bhajan/kirtan like.
8. Confession – Invitation and confession by congregation, and conclusion.
9. Swarga main mahima parmashwar ki ho - folk.
10. Prayer.
11. Madhur bachan – sing to the word of God.
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18. Naam Liyo Re - Worship at *Satsang Bhavan*, M_____ Ashram.
Ahsan Interview at Home Looking at the Hymn Book (in Hindi)– Jabalpur - October 29th, 1999, 18:51

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 20. Ahsan Interview End.

Disc 2

Sunday Charismatic Healing Service at *Satsang Bhavan*, M_____ Ashram, October 17, 1999, 14:19

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4. *Yesu Tumhara Pyar Main Jeena Sikhadiya* – N____'s Song.
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11. *Yesu Mere Nath, Teri Aradhana, bhajan.*
12. *Jaya Jaya Jaya Ho, bhajan.*
13. *Rajao ka Raja Yesu Hallelujah*, Charismatic Indian.
14. *Atma ke Anand Se, bhajan*, Indian/Western.
15. *Aaja Mere Prabhu*, Charismatic.
16. *Jeewan Jyoti Yesu Ji, bhajan.*
17. *Om Nama Kristaya, naam jap*, western style.
18. *Mukti Dilaye Yesu Naam, bhajan.*
19. *Naam* (for interesting effect on MD repeat mode).
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22. *Yesu Yesu Nam, kirtan.*
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Sunday Charismatic Healing Service at *Satsang Bhavan M_____ Ashram 1.- October 24th, 1999, 13:04*

26. *Hallelujah Hosanna*, refrain in western type kirtan.

27. *Rajao ka Raja Yesu Hallelujah*, charismatic.
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Ahsan Interview at Home Looking at the Hymn Book, October 29, 1999, 18:31

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6. E. Paul Song Demonstration in Studio (non-Christian recording)– part 3.
7. E. Paul Song Demonstration in Studio (comments on Satish Gyan contextualization) – part 4.
8. E. Paul Song Demonstration in Studio (comments by an avid listener of Hindi Christian music on Satish Gyan contextualization) – part 5.
9. E. Paul Song Demonstration in Studio (The use of non-Christian singers) – part 6.
10. E. Paul Song Demonstration in Studio (Yesu Katha in Chattisghadi or Bhojpuri) – part 7.
11. E. Paul Song Demonstration in Studio (Yesu Katha in Chattisghadi or Bhojpuri, and further comments on Christians being culturally different from Hindus, Yesu Katha from Kanpur on six cassettes, and Punjabi folk) – part 8.
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15. About the singing of *bhajans*.
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10. Ft. Amarnad, Interview – musical background.
11. Ft. Amarnad, Interview – the difference between *bhajan* and hymn and other questions.
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20. Father Sebastian Interview – how he goes about the actual recording.
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22. Father Sebastian Interview – Who listens to the music? Not Hindus.
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2. Ft. James ML Interview – Regarding some of his cassettes and recommendations of other *bhajan* releases.
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4. Ft. James ML Interview – On CARAVS and Ahsan.
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6. *He Ishwar, He Abba.*
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8. *Awaaj Uthao.*
9. *Prabhu Swikaro*
10. *Pawan Pawan Hain.*
11. He is Lord.
12. Doxology – Chant.
13. Mass – prayer and priests blessing.
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Interview with Arun Timothy, Nagpur, November 1st, 1999, 11:02

16. Arun Timothy Interview – Testimony.
17. Arun Timothy Interview – *Yaad Yesu Ki.*

Bhajans at the Methodist Church, October 1st, 1999, 15:45

18. *Mukti Dilaye Yesu Naam,* Arun Timothy and party.
19. *Charan Masih Ke.*
20. About *Charan Masih Ke.*
21. Introduction to Marathi and *Kirtan* style.
22. *Kirtan – Naam Naam Yesu* etc., performed by Pastor John Ingle.
23. Pastor Pramod John, Pastor Sudhir Ingle, and Arun Timothy, Interview.
24. *Memnath,* Tilak *bhajan*, sung by Arun Timothy and party.
25. *Prabhu...?*, Marathi hymn by Tilak.
26. *Dhanya Hui Goshala*, (Git for Christmas), by Arun Timothy – Introduction.
27. *Dhanya Hui Goshala Suno Re Bhai.*

Disc 7

Samson Manwadkar, Interview, All India Radio, November 1st, 1999, 20:17

1. Samson Manwadkar, Interview.
2. *Jeewan Mera,* by Manwadkar.
3. *Aakhon Main Hain Aapka,* *geet* by Manwadkar.
4. *Tere Sivan,* *ghazal* by Manwadkar.
5. *Subha Shaam,* *bhajan.*

6. Naam Tera Prabhu Sada Main Gaun, bhajan.
7. Ghar Aaye More Yesu Hamare, Darbadi Kanda, classical bhajan by Manwadkar.
8. Kya Tera Kya Mera, bhajan by Manwadkar.
9. Samson Manwadkar, Interview – miscellaneous.
10. Kaun Hain Tu, ghazal by Manwadkar.
11. Samson Manwadkar, Interview along with Radio Announcing Live.
12. Radio Announcement.
13. Samson Manwadkar, Interview.
14. Bhajan Ganga Program, (Marathi), Sant Main Aa.
15. Bhajan Ganga Program, (Marathi), Roop Savare Maharao.
16. Samson Madwadkar, Interview.
17. Samson Madwadkar, Interview - What is a bhajan style.

Reading at Guest House, Mir Hospital, Nagpur

18. 1st Corinthians 7, Nagpur, November 2nd, 1999, 11:36.

Bhajans sung by Arun Timothy at Mir Hospital, Nagpur, October 2nd, 1999, 16:01

19. Ham Se Barne Jaye.
20. Bhajta Kyon Nahin Man.
21. Ham Yesu Masih Ke Chele.

Samson Manwadkar's House, October 2nd, 1999, 18:33

22. Aaj Kushiyan Ki Shaam.

Interview with Ft. Thomas Thudipara SVD, Production Dept. AV, Ishvani Kendra, Pune,
October 3rd, 1999, 15:23

23. Ft. Thomas Thudipara, Interview – part 1.

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Interview with Ft. Thomas Thudipara SVD, Production Dept. AV, Ishvani Kendra, Pune,
October 3rd, 1999, 15:23

1. Ft. Thomas Thudipara, Interview – part 2 – on Charles Vas' bhajans.

Interview with Nirmal Vajpai, Event management, YWAM, November 3rd, 1999, 19:50

2. Nirmal Vajpai, Interview- A Christian Arts Association.
3. Nirmal Vajpai, Interview – Hindu roots of Indian classical music and more about the association for arts.
4. Nirmal Vajpai, Interview – Continued.

Abhinash Holkar, Interview, 7th Day Adventist Center, Pune, November 4th, 1999, 15:12

5. Holkar, Interview.
6. Holkar, Interview- Hindu influence on classical music, a problem?
7. Holkar, Interview – On *bhajans*.
8. Holkar, Interview – *Man Mera Gun Gaye*, from cassette with comment by Holkar.
9. Holkar, Interview – *Man Mera Gun Gaye*, from cassette with comment by Holkar, continued.
Interview with the Thorat musician clan of Pune, and Avinash Holkar, November 4th, 1999,19:59 – part one
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11. Anant Thorat, Music enthusiast, interview- on *bhajans* and Hindu origins.
12. Anant Thorat, Music enthusiast, interview – on Narayan Vaman Tilak and history of Marathi culture in the church.

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1. *Yaad Hamesha Karte Jaaye*, *bhajan* in *shivranjani rag* composed by Holkar with comment afterwards about participation.
2. *Gele Maze?* (Marathi), *bhajan* by Holkar.
3. Vinayak Thorat, Professional *Tabla* player, Interview – the experience of Christian musicians in the classical field (Hindi).
4. Vinayak Thorat, Professional *Tabla* player, Interview – demonstration of polyrhythms on *tabla*.
5. Vinayak Thorat, Professional *Tabla* player, Interview
6. Vinayak Thorat, Professional *Tabla* player, Interview – example of *khyal* and other beats and times, like *Jhumra*.
7. *Classical Song for Dance Drama* (natya sangeet), sung by Holkar, with Thorat accompanying on *tabla* with explanation.
8. Conversation in Marathi.
9. Vinayak Thorat, Professional *Tabla* player, Interview – Are there any other Christians in the classical field, and what is his experience as a Christian in this field (Hindi).

Interview with Ft.Charles Vas, director, Sangeet Abhinay Academy, Mumbai, Novemeber 5th, 1999, 14:42

10. Ft. Charles Vas, Interview.
11. Ft. Charles Vas, Interview – Suleka, Vas' student arrives.
12. *He Prabhu Hum Kahin Milgae*, latest unreleased song composed by Vas that very day, lyrics by professional lyricist of Mumbai film industry.

13. Sulekha's Lesson – Suna Leeje Vinti Mori, Raga Kamod.
14. Taking Araxi Home in the car, Loudonville, NY, USA, September 22nd, 10:45.

Disc 10

Interview with Ft.Charles Vas, director, Sangeet Abhinay Academy, Mumbai, November 5th, 1999, 15:58

1. Shaam Shaam Pad Pawe Soii – Raga Kalyan Sulekha's lesson.

Interview with Pastor Earnest Albuquerque, Y.M.C.A., Mumbai, November 6th, 1999, 13:26

2. Pastor Earnest, Interview.

Interview with Viju Abraham, director, ACT, Bandra, Mumbai, November 7th, 1999, 14:01

3. Viju Abraham, Interview – the work of ACT and something about the singer, Deb Doot.
4. Viju's wife and their daughter's marriage.
5. Viju Abraham, Interview – The neutrality of music, contextualization and other subjects.
6. Viju Abraham, Interview – The Catholics and Contextualization.

Competition at Ambarnath, Mumbai, November 7th, 1999, 18:46

7. Raga, Rachel.
8. Kahin Barso Se, Holkar's special number.
9. Garba, Samson and Sweta.
10. Song in waltz time, James Manaha and Ms Prateema from Kalyan, first place, but disturbed by Diwali celebrations outside.
11. Marathi song in three, Raman Randive's special number, Patadeep Misra raga.
12. Light classical song, by Mr. Aquilla, chief guest.
13. Crus Pe Qurban, Julius Ceaser, western style song, received prize for best upcoming artist.
14. Main Madhur Ki, Ms. Priya Ribon, Memorial Methodist Church, Kalyan, song in 6/8 with like classical style vocal, 1st place in solo song.
15. Yesu Ne Tere Waste, Mr. Aquilla, chief guest, western style 6/8 song.

16. *Yesu Tu Hain Mahan*, James Moushe, Bad bass guitar lines.
17. *Folk Song*, Arun Gayguar.
18. *Song*, Holkar, 6/8 in western/indian film style with sound track.
19. *Todi*, Raman Randive.
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Interview with Raman Randive in Hindi, Ambarnath, Mumbai, November 8th, 1999, 00:05

21. Raman Randive, Interview.

Musical Rehearsal and Interview with Deb Doot, Mumbai, November 8th, 1999, 15:41

22. *Mera Yesu Raja*, by Deb Doot.
23. *Man Ware*, by Deb Doot.
24. Deb Doot, Interview.
25. Deb Doot, Interview – the folk style and its origins.
26. Deb Doot, Interview – suggesting a yearly get together of musicians.

Interview with Peter John in Hindi, Gurgaon, Delhi, November 10th, 1999, 12:24

27. Peter John, singer/songwriter, Interview in Hindi.
28. Peter John, singer/songwriter, Interview – “My main motive I to promote Khrist *Bhajans* in Hindi”, Music in Rajasthan, Peter John’s official training in music.

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Boys at “Jesus Only Mission”, Bagalpur, outside Gorakpur, (Bhojpuri area), November 13th, 15:14

1. *Mukadma Ho Gae Tu Karle*.
2. *Samari Nagariya Ke*, Bhojpuri song on the Samaritan woman.
3. *Chalne Wali Hain Ye Naiya*, folk song in film style.

Service in memory of the death of a Church Member, Peace Home Fellowship, Gorakhpur, November 14th, 1999, 18:45

4. *Hovenge Bharkar ke Baria*, (There Will Be Channels of Blessing).
5. *Yesu Kaisa Dost*, (What a Friend We Have in Jesus).
6. *Rab Ki Hove Sanna Hamesha*.

Interview with Rev. Irfan Masih, Bereilly, November 15th, 1999, 12:34

7. Rev. Irfan Masih, Interview.

Demonstration of Christian Classical Music at Mr. Morris Masih's House, Bereilly,
November 15th, 1999, 18:15

8. Demonstration of *Bhajan* singing with Mr. Morris Masih accompanying on *tabla*, Rev. Irfan Masih.

9. *Main Ata Hun Tere Paas.*

10. *Geet Fateha Ke Masih Ki*, in *Bupali Raga*, in *Rupak Taal*, by Mumtaz Masih.

11. Demonstration Continued - About the *Tabla* and Mr. Morris – Rev. Irfan Masih.

12. *Chamkila Sitara Pyare*, in *Dharbari Raga*, *Teen Taal*, by Mumtaz Masih.

13. Demonstration Continued – Christians don't like the Classical Music but we still cannot ignore it – Irfan.

14. Interview with Mr. Morris, *Tabla* in Hindi.

Papu Khan Sings at Irfan Masih's House, November 16th, 1999, 00:20

15. *Raaz Tu Apni Haquiquat Ka*, composed and performed by Papu Khan.

North India Theological College Morning Chapel, led by Rev. Irfan Masih, November
16th, 1999, 9:22

16. *Mukti Dilaye Yesu Naam.*

17. *Dhanyawad Sada.*

18. Christopher Hale's *Bhajans* Introduction.

19. *Binti Sunle*, by Peter John, sung by Christopher.

20. *Naam Liyo Re*, by A____ D____, sung by Christopher.

21. Prayer.

22. More about Christopher's Thesis on *Bhajans* – Rev. Irfan Masih.

23. *Bhajan* introduction - *Raga Desh*.

24. *Prem Nidhan Su Kripa Kijiye*, by Hingan.

25. *Jaya Jaya Yesu.*

26. *Yogya Kewal Tu.*

27. Closing Prayer.

Pete and Chris' first Song for the MD Recorder – “Dippin’ and Divin’”, and another older
composition, November 21st, 1999, 22:23

28. *Dippin’ and Divin’*- part 1, by C____ H____ and Peter Hicks.

29. *Dippin’ and Divin’* – part 2.

30. *Composition from Birmingham, England.*

31. *Composition from Birmingham, England* (with high mic. sensitivity).

Blind Man on the Nilanchal Express to H _____, December 3rd, 1999, 16:16

1. Blind Man Song– one.
2. Blind Man Song– two.

Sankat Mochan (Hanuman Temple) H _____, December 4th, 1999, 5:01

3. Bhajan Intro (Nam Jap) Sita Ram 1.
4. Sita Ram Intro 1B.
5. Jaya Sita Ram 3.
6. Siya Ram Jaya 4.
7. Siya Ram Siya Ram 5.
8. Sita Ram 6.
9. Sita Ram 7.
10. Jaya Jaya Sita Ram Jaya 8.
11. Jaya Siya Ram 8B (fast).
12. Siya Ram 9.
13. Jaya Siya Ram 9B (fast).
14. Jaya Siya Ram 10.
15. Jaya Siya Ram 10B (faster).
16. Jay Siya Ram 10C (fastest).
17. Sita Ram Sita Ram 11.
18. Jay Siya Ram 11B.
19. Nama Sivayo.
20. Nama Sivayo B– Mahadev.
21. Mahadev C (fastest).
22. Jaya Jay Siya Ram 12.

Twenty-four Hour Kirtan at A _____ G _____, December 4th, 1999, 10:24

23. Jay Siya Ram (fast).
24. Jay Siya Ram, Jay Jay Siya Ram (slow to fast).
25. Jaya Siya Ram (slow).

Listening in on Nitai's Sitar Shop, H _____, December 4th, 1999, 12:13

26. A visitor speaks of H _____ while Nitai does the Jawari on a foreigner's *sitar*.
27. Nitai speaks of his family and life.

Pete and Chris' A _____ G _____ Jam "Holy Holy Holy Lord", H _____, December 4th, 1999, 23:01

28. Holy Holy Holy Lord/ Yesu Leege.

Disc 13

Interview with Father Rougue and Father Santiago, Maitri Bhavan (Dialouge Center),
H _____, December 5th, 1999, 11:23

1. Father Rougue, Interview – Prem Chand.
2. Father Rougue, Interview – “Art for Art’s Sake is...No”.
3. Father Rougue, Interview – “Popularity and Finance”.
4. Father Rougue, Interview – “Charles Vas and Proksh”.
5. Father Rougue, Interview – Enter Ft. Santiago.
6. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview - What is a *Bhajan*?
7. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – Enter Sister who has come from Pune to learn Hindi.
8. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – Lunch.
9. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – Examining the list of 13 *bhajans*, and Hymn book, “Ish Vandana”.
10. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – P. 805, E434, *Yesu Naam Pyara Naam*.
11. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – The Origin of the above *bhajan*.
12. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – p. 793, *Bhajo Re Bhajo*.
13. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – The writer of the above *bhajan*.
14. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – “This is what I mean by *bhajan*...but what about Gate Hain and other decisions taken in the new hymnal”.
15. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – E293, *Jaya Jaya Yesu* , by Ft. Proksh – Introduction.
16. *Jaya Jaya Yesu*.
17. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – Criticism of Ft. Santiago’s singing, and the battle between lyrics and music.
18. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – Pushpanjali, the Mirabhai of Christian *bhajan*.
19. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – p. 788, E377...
20. *Prabhu Var Mera*.
21. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – about the above *bhajan*, and other *bhajan* criticism.
22. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – *Shub Shaam Lun* – the critic of the critics.
23. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – *Naam Liyo Re*.
24. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – Famous *bhajans* of ML James, *Tu Shital Jal Dhara* (Psalm 42).
25. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – Cristuraj.
26. Father Rougue and Santiago, Interview – Where do *Jaya Jaya Prabhu Yesu Ki* and other common songs fit.

Kashi Ki Sangeeta, A _____ G _____, H _____, December , 5th, 1999, 16:46

27. *Jaya Jaya Yesu*.
28. Scripture Reading, and prayer (in Hindi).

29. Bhaj Pawantam Yesu Naam.
30. Mero Man Lago – introduction.
31. Mero Man Lago.
32. Scripture Reading introduction.
33. Scripture Reading.
34. Introduction to Pete and Chris by D_____ B_____.
35. Bin Yesu.
36. Ending.

Disc 14

Kashi Ki Sangeeta, A _____ G _____, H _____, December, 5th, 1999, 16:46- continued

1. He Prabhu Darshan Do (acapella).
2. Benediction.
3. After the service, a *bhajan* rehearsal, Suno Re Bhaya, Kiya Tune Humko Vardan.
4. He Prabhu Darshan Do.

Ramacitramanas, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow, December 7th, 1999, 19:43

5. Walking from home to the temple.
6. Approaching the temple.
7. Ramacitramanas, p.10-22.
8. Ramacitramanas, p.10-22.
9. Visiting Jose on the way back from the temple.
10. Going back home.
11. Entering the house.
12. Preparing to sing.
13. Pacing the Cage, by Bruce Cockburn, sung by Peter Hicks.

Disc 15

H _____ Satsang by Pradip Ayer, C _____ H _____, and Peter Hicks. December 18, 1999, 17:33

Disc 16

- Interview with Rev. Stanley Ramsey, R.P. Church, Roorkee, U.P., India. December 22, 1999, 8:40.
- Interview with Raju Abraham, Mussoorie, U.P., India. December 24, 1999. 18:44.

Disc 17

Interview with Vijay Lazarus, TWR, New Delhi, February 2, 2000, 10:45.
 Interview with Philip Malakar, FEBA, Delhi, February 2, 2000, 13:54.

Disc 18

Interview with Philip Malakar, continued, 14:58.
 Interview with Rev. Bhasker, former director CARAVS, Hyderabad, February 5, 2000,
 10:34.

Disc 19

Minidisc compilation of “Bhajans from Hindi Films Vol. 1-4”:

Sooraj Ki Gharmi Se. PARINAY. (1974). Sharma Brothers. Music, Jaidev.
 Lyrics, Pt. Ramanand Sarma.
Sukh Ke Sav Sathi. GOPI. (1970). Mohd. Rafi. Music, Kalyanji Anandji. Lyrics,
 Rajinder Krishan.
Man Tarpat Hari Darshan Ko Aaj. BAIJU BAWRA. (1952). Mohd. Rafi.
 Naushad. Lyrics, Shakeel Badayuni.
Tu Pyar Ka Sagar Hain. SEEMA. (1955). Music, Shankar Jaikishan. Lyrics,
 Shailendra.
Eh Malik Tere Bande Hum. DO AANKHEN BARA HAATH. (1957). Lata
 Mangeshkar. Music, Vasant Desai. Lyrics, Pt. Bharat Vyas.
Allah Tero Nam. HUM DONO. (1961). Lata Mangeshkar. Music, Vasant Desai.
 Lyrics, Sahir.
Jot Se Jot Jagake Chalo. SANT GYANESHWAR. (1964). Mukesh. Music,
 Laxmikant Pyarelal. Lyrics, Bharat Vyas.
Yashomati Maya. SATYAM SHIVAM. (1978). Lata & Manna Dey. Music,
 Laxmikant Pyarelal. Lyrics, Pt. Narendra Sharma.
Bara Natkat Hai Ye. AMAR PREM. (1971). Lata Mangeshkar. Music, Rahul Dev
 Burban. Lyrics, Anand Bakshi.
Kanha Kanha Aan Padi Main. SHAGIRD. (1967). Lata Mangeshkar. Music,
 Laxmi Pyarelal. Lyrics, Majrooh.
Om Jagdish Hare. PURAB AUR PACHHIM. (1970). Mahendra Brijbhushan
 Shyama Chittar. Music, Kalyanji Anandji. Lyrics, traditional.
Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram Dhun. PURAB AUR PACHHIM. (1970). Kapoor
 Manhar. Music, Kalyanji Anandji. Lyrics, traditional.
Main To Aarti Utaroon. JAI SANTOSHI MAA. (1975). Usha Mangeshkar.
 Music, C. Arjun. Lyrics, Pradeep.

Yahan Wahan Jaha Taha. JAI SANTOSHI MAA. (1975). Kapoor. Music, C. Arjun. Lyrics, Pradeep.
Kaal Ka Pahiya-Ram Krishna Hari. CHANDA AUR BIJLI. (1969). Manna Dey. Music, Shankar Jaikishan. Lyrics, Neeraj.

Disc 20

Minidisc Classical and Semi-classical Bhajan Compilation

Ambe Charan Kamal Hain. “Maa.” Jagjit Singh.
Ga Le Re Govinda Guna. “Sant Gyan.” Girija Devi. Lyrics, Namdev.
Main Gaaon Pad Gaaon. “Triveni.” Kumar Gandharva & Vasundhara Komkali. Lyrics, Kumar Shok.
Mujhe Laagi Lagan. “Chalo Chalo Sakhiya.” Suresh Wadkar & Kavita Krishnamurti. Music, Shrinivas Khale. Lyrics, Brahmanand.
Naam Liya Hari Ka Jisne. “Chalo, Chalo, Sakhiya.” Kavita Krishnamurti. Music, Shrinivas Khale. Words, Brahmanand.
Hirana. Kumar Gandharva. Words, Kabir.
He Govind, He Gopal. “Hare Krishna.” Jagjit Singh. Words, Nanak.
Maro Pradam, “Meera Bhajans.” Kishori Amonkar. Words, Meera.
Ram Ram Ram. Pt. Bhimsen Joshi.

Disc 21

Interviews with Professionals in the North Indian Music World

1. Sri Dharam Pal Barpagga, professor of vocal music, Bhaathkhande Sangeet Mahavidhyalaya, Lucknow. February, 14, 2000, 15:48.
2. Mr. Dharam Nath Misra, professor of Tumri and *Ghazal*, Light music, Bhaathkhande Sangeet Mahavidhyalaya, Lucknow, February 14, 2000, 16:03.
3. Mrs. Tharani, MA Hindi, administration office, City Montessori School, Mahanagar, Lucknow, February 14, 2000, 17:29.
4. Ankosh Tharani, composer and music teacher at City Montessori School, Charbagh, Lucknow, singing Deep Jale with his own melody, February 14, 2000, 17:40.
5. Dr. Urmil Kumar Thapliyal, Senior News Reader, radio journalist and writer, and writes a column called *Aaina* for the Rastriya Sahara newspaper. He is also a theatre activist. February, 16, 2000, 12:33.

A Demonstration of Western Hard Core Thrash music by Indians

6. Hemendra Nath and Sunny Oberoi play western music on bass and drums, February 16, 2000, 16:52.

Interveiw with Professionals Continued

7. Pradip Kumar, freelance journalist for Doordarshan II, Gorakhpur, Katra Maqbool Ganj, Lucknow, February 16, 2000, 19:29.
8. Sri Kishan Joshi, party leader of Shikhar-Swar, a folk dance group of Kumaon, and B-High grade artist, Katra Maqbool Ganj, Lucknow, February 16, 2000, 19:59.

Disc 22

The Agni Hotri Bandhu

The Agnihotri Bandhu of Indira Nagar, Interview and Demonstration, Lucknow, February 17, 2000, 18:36.

Appendix A

CASSETTE OF *BHAJANS* PLAYED FOR PROFESSIONALS

Yesu Leege Khabariya Hamari - Prakash, Guru Gyan, S.V.D. *Shraddhanjali, Volume One*. Cassette. Mumbai, India: Gyan Ashram.

Tu Hi Data Tu Charvaha – Vas, Father Charles, S.V.D. *Madhur Geet: Bhajans: Volume II*. Cassette. Mumbai, India: Sangeet Abhinay Academy.

Teri Hove Prabhu Ji Sada Jai – Ahsan and T. Hansada. *Pawan Tero Naam: Tape 8*. Cassette. Jabalpur, India: CARAVS: Swar Sangam.

He Logo - Manwadkar, Samson. *Anugraha: The Grace of God*. Cassette. Nagpur, India: Traditional Media Unit of ICMC.

Bhajta Kyon Nahin Re Man Murakh - Mumtaz Melody. Aaradhna: *Religious Songs of Late Rev. Mumtaz Masih Sung by Rev. Irfan Masih Vol. One*. Cassette. Lucknow, India: Masihi Sangeet Natak Sangh. (Irfan Masih claims that the M.S.N.S. is not the producer of the cassette, but only the sponsors and designers of the cover).

Binti Sunle – Olio. *Nam Liyo Re: Khrist Bhajan*. Cassette. Lucknow: P.S.D., 1997.

Yesu Raja Trilok Nath - lyrics, Mumtaz Masih, music, Hasan Ali Khan, arrangement, Hasan Ali Khan & Peter Hicks, recording, home recording on Minidisc.

Appendix B

MUSICAL CLIPS

(These can be found embedded in the text)

Side A

1. *What a Friend We have in Jesus (Yesu Kaisa Dost Pyara)* – Peace Home. p. 5.
2. *There Will be Showers of Blessing (Howenge Barkar ke Baarish)* – p.5.
3. *Aaja Mere Prabhu* – Fr. Anil Dev. p. 10.
4. *Shyam Shyam Pad Pawe* – Sulikha’s lesson at Fr. Vas’. p. 18.
5. *Binti Sunle-* OLIO. p. 20.
6. *Awaaj Uthaenge* – Ahsan. p. 31.
7. *Bhajta Kyon Nahin Re Man Murakh* – Mumtaz Masih. p. 31.
8. *Jai Jai Yesu* – N.I.T.C. chapel. p. 32.
9. *Bhajo Man Jai* – Rev. Ramsey. p. 32.
10. *He He Prabhu* – Peter John. p. 33.
11. *Bhairavi* – Hari Prasad Chaurasiya. p. 40.
12. *Jai Jaya Siya Ram* – Sankat Mochan, Varanasi. p. 45.
13. *Ram Charita Manas* – Lucknow. p. 45.
14. *Bara Natkat Hai Re Krishna Kaneiya* – Lata Mangeshkar. p. 46.
15. *Hirana* – Kumar Gandharva, (Kabir bhajan). p. 48.
16. *Shwa Shanti Mala* – Sikh bhajan. p. 49.
17. *Mara Re Giridhar Gopal* – Lata Mangeshkar (Mira bhajan). p. 49.
18. *Aparampar* – OLIO and the Rock Opera. p. 67.
19. *Surulurulu* – OLIO and the Rock Opera. p. 67.
20. *Namaste Sate, Vande Sachidanandam, Gyan Mulam* – prayer at M____. p. 74, 75
21. *Om Bhur bhuvah Svah* – Gayatri Mantra by playback singer. p. 76.
22. *Aradhna ho* – Sister Kamal, healing prayer meeting at M____. p. 77.
23. *Hallelujah Stuti Gaye Hum* – healing prayer meeting at M____. p. 78.
24. *Rajao ka Raja Yesu Hallelujah* – healing prayer meeting at M____. p. 79.
25. *Om Nama Khristaya* - healing prayer meeting at M____. p. 79.
26. *Om Nama Shivaya* – Anup Jalota. p. 80.
27. *Pyare Yesu* – Christian hymn - healing prayer meeting at M____. p. 80.
28. *Naam Liyo Re* – Fr. Anil Dev – *satsang* healing prayer at M____. p. 81.
29. *Yesu Yesu Yesu Naam* – Fr. Anil Dev – *satsang* healing prayer at M____. p. 82.
30. *Yesu Tumhare Pyar Main* – Nabal Singh – *satsang* healing prayer at M____. p. 83.
31. *Pawan Atma* – *satsang* healing prayer at M____. p. 84.
32. *Daya Sagar Yesu* – *satsang* healing prayer at M____. p. 85.
33. *Dhanya Dhanya Yesu* – *satsang* healing prayer at M____. p. 85.
34. *Bhajo Re Bhajo* – sung by Fr. Santiago. p. 86.
35. *Bhajo Re Bhaiya* – rehearsal at A____G____. p. 91.
36. *Diya Tune Humko Vardan* – rehearsal at A __G____. Fr. Charles Vas. p. 91.
37. *Jai Jai Yesu* – Sunday *satsang* at A____G____. p. 92.

38. *Bhaj Pawantam* – Sunday satsang at A____G____. p. 92.
39. *Mero Man Lago* – Sunday satsang at A____G____. p. 93.
40. *Bin Yesu* – Sunday satsang at A____G____. p. 93.
41. *He Prabhu Darshan Do*, and benediction – Sunday satsang at A____G____. p. 95.
42. *Mohe Lagado Par* – Mumtaz Masih. p. 97.
43. *Mukti Dilaye Yesu Naam* – morning chapel at N.I.T.C. p. 103.
44. *Prem Nidhan* – morning chapel at N.I.T.C. p. 103.
45. *Yogya Kewal Tu* – morning chapel at N.I.T.C. p. 103.
46. *Mein Ata Hun Tere Paas* – Irfan Masih & Morris Masih. p. 104.
47. *Geet Fateh Ke Masih Ki* – Irfan Masih & Morris Masih. p. 104.
48. *Chamkila Sitara Pyara*, with comment, and conclusion – Irfan & Morris. p. 105.
49. *Ram ka kiya karo, Krishna ka kaha karo* - Agnihotri Bandhu. p. 110.
50. *Sabse Unchi Prem Sagai* – Agnihotri Bandhu, p. 111.
51. *Sri Ram Jai Ram* - Agnihotri Bandhu. p. 111.
52. *Suneri Main Nibal ke Balram* - Agnihotri Bandhu. p. 112.
53. *Yesu Raja Trilok Nath* – bhajan experiments – Hasan Ali & P. Hicks. p. 114.
54. *Kalame Khuda Mujasam Huwa Hai* – Hasan Ali Khan & Peter Hicks. p. 114.
55. *Bhaj Pawantam Yesu Naam* – bhajan experiment – C.H.Dicran & P Hicks. p. 116.

Appendix C

COMPILATION OF HINDI CHRISTIAN *BHAJAN* LYRICS

Bhajta Kyon Nahin Re Man Murakh – Mumtaz Masih.

Deep Jale –Fr. Anil Dev.

He He Prabhu – lyrics, unknown.

Teri Aradhna – traditional, possibly originally composed by a Hindu.

Yesu Leege Khabariya Hamari – Guru Gyan Prakash.

He Logo – Samson Manwadkar.

He Prabhu Darshan Do – Father Charles Vas.

Kalame Khuda – Mumtaz Masih.

Tujhe Dhoondte Hain – Garib Das.

Yesu Raja Trilok Nath – Mumtaz Masih.

(The Hindi script typing is done by Mr. Ashish Bhasin, and the translations are by Mr. Hemendra Nath, with English rendering by Peter Hicks.)

3 PYWP !/ PXF !Z LMF !OX! Why Don't You Praise Jesus

!

3 PYWP !/ PXF !Z LMF !OX!

Foolish Heart, why don't you praise Jesus
name? For his name is the True
Name.

J Z !J \ O P !!

M P \ !Z PJ !Q; UP!

Z PJ !

If you want to reach the other side of this
vast ocean, do not fear
He will take your boat across this ocean of
life

!

!

For Jesus name is the True Name

3 PT !Q] O !OX !L > ! KS !

WOZ P !!

You own your houses of diamonds.

SV P !QF IA !OX !Z LMF !

You enjoy the life of luxury.

IV 9 !8 OZ P !

Think clearly of what you give your heart
to

NPO !I OX] P !YMTZ !Z > P !! For Jesus name is the True Name

M PV !Z PJ !Q; UP!

Z PJ !!

Break the chains that bind you to this earth
whether with joy or pain

!

Sing the Lord's name, and meditate on Him
always

LMOPXF !I P ! X !L PA !

For Jesus' name is the True Name

HZ P !L > !U J I !S J I !I P !

- P - !HZ P !L X > !

QPXU !QJ !I O !Q > S P !I O !

Why do we hold on to this world, when we
know it is all passing away

^ X ! !

As long as you live, praise the Lord

M PV !Z PJ !Q; UP!

For Jesus name is the True name

Z PJ !

!

SVKZ P !I X ! X !Z P WX !

Mumtaz Masih

] P X WX !WYS X !QHI PX !

LF QWX !OPXWX !

N 3 PV !Z PJ !KZ W !YN ^ X !

3 PY !^ X ! !

M PV !Z PJ !Q; UP!

ZPJ!

!

!

SVKZ P!Q!L>! I!

KSZ!YPZP!1VO!JP P!Q!

/ PXF!K^M PZP!

NP P!QLX!YH!WI!W\!

3PY!^X! !

M PV!ZPJ!Q;UP!

ZPJ!

!

JVJWPY!JQL!

SMNY^ X!

!

SMNY^ X!N_3 PV !Z PJ !OLX!

J XOX!J K@ S O!J XF !

J K@ S O!J XF !!

!

!

QPB !QHXX! L!J Z!

] P X!

XQV !WXOP !Z PJ !N_3 PV !

XQV !WXOP !Z PJ !

Z PJ !OL !XJ Z !J XF !

N_3 PV !Z PJ !OLX!J Z !

J XF !!

!

!

SMNY^ P X!OPL!

KZ LP B !

S PEZ !I PX!N_3 PV !

S PEZ !I PX!!

[PZ !HQPX!KS^ !J XF !

N_3 PV !!

[PZ !HQPX!KS^ !J XF !!

!

!

LX!N_3 PV !S PWP!

KT TKT PPWP!!

Z J Z !I B !N_3 PV !Z J Z !

I B !

Keep the Lamp Burning

Keep the lamp burning so the Lord's name
will remain;

Remain in the temple, remain in my heart

In the morning and in the evening my soul
sings to you

Jesus, your name, Lord Jesus, your name

Let your name remain in my soul,

Lord for your name to dwell in me

I am lighting the lamp and watching the
road

To see, Oh Lord, to see you

Come dwell in my heart,

Lord, come dwell in my heart

Oh Lord, Giver of life, Creator of the world

I bow Lord, I bow before you

Passion awakens in my soul, and love stirs

in my soul

Anil Dev

OP] !Y] X!J Z !J XF!

[Z VOP] !Y] X!J Z !J XF!!

!

!

[KZ ^ !SXT!

!

LX!LX!N_3 PV!

!

GE TO!IP![TWPO!3 P PX!WVJ !NPKZ!
KLW!HK^SPZ !LPX!

PJE![P=JP!JVB L!M!8 P^PX !
LX!N_3 PV!I PPKZ PPZ!
KZ U !LPX!WVJ !QHX!GE TO !
QHY] !YZ !IX!7TPJM!LPX!!

JZ![T] VZ !WX!JPKL !HUP [PX!LX!
N_3 PV![@WO PJM!!

!

!

!

!

LX!LX!N_3 PV!Y] !IOWPO!J PXLX![NX!
LM!N_XJ !Q!3 PO!SX!!

J PXLX![NX!LM!OF] !JXF!OF] !SX !

J PXLX![NX!LM!N_XJ !Q!3 PO!SX!

LX!LX!N_3 PV !Y] !IOWPO !J PXLX!
[NX!LM!N_XJ !Q!3 PO!SX!!

!

!

!

!

N_XJ !Q!9 PX8 P!7T] E!KFLPQ!

N_XJ !Q!I O^M!JZV !SXL! PPO P!

N_XJ !Q!9 PX8 P!7T] E!KFLPQ!

N_XJ !Q!I O^M!JZV !SXL! PPO P!

WVJ !LM!LPX!QW![TWPO!QX! !

LX!LX!N_3 PV!Y] !IOWPO!J PXLX![NX!

LM!N_XJ !Q!3 PO!SX!!

!

!

!

[@ PI !Z >Z !3 PM !I PXX Z!

IP P!

JVSPXE !I PX!3 PM!WVJ ZX!KY^P P!

[@ PI !Z >Z !3 PM !I PXX Z!

IP P!JVSPXE !I PX!3 PM!WVJ ZX!

KY^P P!

^M^P!WV O L P C M ! [NPO!QX !!

LX!LX!N_3 PV!Y] !IOWPO!J PXLX![NX!

O Lord, Fill Me With Your Love

You are the incarnation of God, the sacrifice
for sinners

Put your Spirit over me, O Lord of mercy
You are the Lord of all, the Lord of the World
If there is anything unpleasing within me,
cleanse me from it, all-knowing Father

O Lord, Master of all things, fill me with your
love

Mold me in your likeness, fill me with your
love

O Lord, Master of all things, fill me with your
love

You left your throne in heaven because of your
love for me

You became a man

You are the True Incarnation

O Lord, Master of all things, fill me with your
love

You healed eyes of the blind, the shadow of the
leper you made whole

You even raised the dead

Your ways are too great for me to understand

O Lord, Master of all things, fill me with your
love

Teach us how to love

Teach us to walk in these ways

I always pray...

O Lord, Master of all things, fill me with
Your love

LM!N_XJ!Q!3 PO!SX!!

!

!

!

N_XJ!LJXF!3 PM!I OZ P!KQ PP!SPX!!

XQM!OPL!N!U^Z P!KQ PP!SPX!

N_XJ!LJXF!3 PM!I OZ P!KQ PP!SPX!

XQM!OPL!N!U^Z P!KQ PP!SPX!

KTZ WM!I OW!L>!HPO!HPO!Q!

LX!LX!N_3 PV!Y] !I OWPO!J PXLX! [N X!

LM!N_XJ!Q!3 PO!SX!

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 NPN P J P ! I O ! YMTZ ! S X !
 S X !!
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 WXQM ! [POP P Z P ! I B !
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 W \ ! L M ! J L P Z !
 Q T E P K / W J P Z ! W \ ! L M !
 L > ! J X O X ! YMTZ ! I P !
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 YMTZ ! Q X ! J X O X ! W \ !
 J K L J P ! N P G E !
 I ! L M ! I P J Z P ! I B !
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 NPN P J P ! I O ! YMTZ ! S X !
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 Q K A ! I X ! L O X ! I ! I P !
 I P ! J X F ! 9 P P ! L X !
 WXQM ! L M ! J K L J P ! I P ! O P Y !
 N P M ! 3 P M ! I O W X ! L > F !

I Worship You

I worship you
 Forgive my sins and give me life
 I plead for your mercy and I worship you

You are great, omnipotent; you are the song
 of my life
 The strings of my heart make music
 To worship you is like a beautiful song
 May you receive glory through my life
 This is my only plea
 Lord, that you give me life by forgiving my
 sins
 I plead for you mercy and I worship you

Your glory reigns over all creation
 Even the birds of the air praise you
 May my praises be acceptable to you
 This is my hearts cry
 Lord, that you give me life by forgiving my
 sins
 I plead for your mercy and I worship you
 !

! ! ! traditional

WXQM!N_ PFQP!
J XQM!3 PM!3 PK/ W!WV X!
] _L P!LPX!!
L S !QX!IPJZP!I B !
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NPN PJP!IO!YMTZ!SX!
SX!!
S P!IM![UEZP!I B !!
WXQM![POP PZP!I B !

XQV !^MYX! PHKO P!
 LJ PGM!!
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 XQV !^MY>X! PHKO P!
 LJ PGM!!
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 7TPJM!
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 SKV PW!L S !QH!
 KH^ P!!OLX!L>F!!
 QV P!^PX!I PPI PGM!
 WXQM!3 PK/ W!I PX!WYI O!
 7TPJM!
 NPNI X!!LV !N YPGM!
 XQV !^MY>!!
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 PJE !9 PX8 ![PJE!
 JXF !N !] !
 HMWM !R JKO P !QPGM!
 [H!WPX!7TPJM!I N!
 8 P^ !SPX!
 LJ ! [P !L>F!
 K3 P PPGM!
 XQV !^MY>!!
 !
 WV !JXF !KJ ^ I O!WV X!
 Z! \ F P!
 KY@ S] PZM !R L PGM!

Jesus, hear my story

Jesus, hear my story
 O Master, there is no hope anywhere else
 Jesus, hear my story

The grieving hearts are weeping
 Merciful God, turn your ear to our plea
 Master, when we ceased to worship you
 We became worshipers of sin
 Jesus, hear my story

Turning away from righteousness, we fell
 into unrighteousness
 We spent our years in sin
 Master, now you have turned to us and
 shown us your favor
 We have come to you as beggars
 Jesus, hear my story

Out of you we came, but you we never
 sought
 In my greed, anger and love of this world
 I forgot you
 In this I wasted my life
 Jesus, hear my story

Guru Gyan Prakash

!

I P J ! I _ P X P ! J S !

^ P X 3 P ! J P X L ! J X F ! !

W X Q M ! P S ! K H Q P M !

X Q V ! ^ M Y > ! P H K O P !

L J P Q M !

!

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!] V !

6 P Z ! N _ I P P !

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LX!^PX] PX!!!
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 KJ ^ !I O!] P X! XQV!
 IM!Y !!
 XQV!IM!Y ! XQV!
 IM!Y !] P X!LJ!
 XQV!IM!Y !] P X!!
 !
 XQV!LM ! XQV!LM!
 Y] !R PPOI !!
 XQV!LM!L>!
 !
 OPYP [PXF!IP!
 OPYP [PXF!IP!OPYP!LM!
 JXOP! XQV!L>X!
 !
 GE PTO!L> !GE PTO!
 L>! XQV!LM!JXOP!
 N_3 PV!L>!!
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 ! ! ! Q"!
 JFZTP8 IO!
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Come all you People

Come all you people, let us sing victory to
 Jesus
 Victory to Jesus, victory to Jesus, we sing
 victory to Jesus

Jesus alone is the Giver of Salvation to the
 world

Jesus alone is the King of kings

He is God, He is God, Jesus is my Lord

!
 ! ! !
 !
 !

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!Samson
 Manwadkar

!

!

L > !N_3 PV !S PEZ !S PX!! O Lord, Give us your Vision

!

O Lord, Give us your vision

L > !N_3 PV !S PEZ !S PX!

Come into my heart

J XOX !KS ^ !J XF ! [P [PX!!

!

You alone are Lord! Giver of life, have
mercy on me

!

W\ !LM !N_3 PV !YMTZ !

S PWP !J V !ND!S P !I OPX!

You alone are Lord! Redeemer, have
mercy on me

!

W\ !LM !N_3 PV !J V K/ W!

S PWP !J V !ND!S P !I OPX!

You alone are Lord! Giver of peace, have
mercy on me

!

W\ !LM !N_3 PV ! PPFKW!

Fr. Charles Vas

S PWP !J V !ND!S P !I OPX!

! ! ! ! ! !

U P O ^ Q ! T P Q !

I ^ P J X ! P V S P !!
 !
 I ^ P J X ! P V S P ! P V S !
 J V Y 7 Q J ! L V [P ! L > !
 L ! T X L S W ! Z L M F ! L > ! W P X !
 K < O ! [P > O ! / P ! L > !
 L J P Q M ! L M ! P P K W O ! T P X !
 S V K Z P ! J X F ! [P P !!
 P O P < W ! Z L M F ! L > ! W P X !
 K < O ! [P > O ! / P ! L > !
 !
 1 P P ! Y H ! S \ O ! H P G E Q !
] V Z P L P X F ! I X ! G E Q P !!
 Z ! Y P W X ! Y L P B ! I P ! T P X !
 N] P J ! ^ P P !!
 < Y ^ ! N O ! < Y ^ ! L J Z X F !
 N P P ! J Q M L P !
 X ! Q L J W ! Z L M F ! L > ! W P X !
 K < O ! [P > O ! / P ! L > !
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 Z Y O ! Q X ! 1 P P ! [P X ^ ! X !
 J P Z P ! Y L P B F ! J X !!
 T P X ! L > ! Q P 1 P ! [N Z P X ! I X !
 L O ! S J ! Y L P B ! J X F !!
 T P X ! K < O ! H P N ! I X ! S P K L Z X !
 H > - P ! L > ! Y P I O !!
 K P < P L W ! Z L M F ! L > ! W P X !!
 K < O ! [P > O ! / P ! L > !
 !

The Word Himself Became Flesh

The Word Himself became flesh
 If this is not his willingness to attach
 himself to us, then what else is it?
 He came to this world because of us
 If this is not nobility then what else is it?
 I was far from God and in my sins
 Until the Good News of Christ came to
 me.
 In Christ I received grace after grace.
 If this isn't God's mercy, what else can
 be?

Although he is far above the World
 He is always close to his own.
 He is seated at the right hand of
 God the Father.
 If this isn't God's healing then what is it?

Mumtaz Masih

J V O W P Y ! J Q M L " !

!

WV X! \ B WX!L>F!
 !
 WV X! \ B WX!L>F!
 X!4 POX!J QMLP!
 IOX!LJ I PX!S V KZ PB !
 NOX PPF!J QMLP!!
 WV X! \ B WX!L>F!
 X!4 POX!J QMLP!
 !
 NB M!YH!] V Z P L P X!J X F !
 Y T P Z M !L J P C M !
 R 8 M !L O!] ^ M !J X F !T L !
 H Z I X !I L P Z M !!
 H L P ! P \ Z !H Z !I X !
 L J P O P !M Z P !
 WV X! \ B WX!L>F!
 !
] J X F ! [P H ! J X F ! 1 P P !
 R ^ P ! Y J P Z P !
 Q L P ! G Q ! Y L P B ! J X F ! W \ !
 H Z I X ! W O P Z P !
 Q V Z P P ! Y P X ! W V J Z X !
 T P X ! Z] J P ! Q L M ! 1 P P !!
 WV X! \ B WX!L>F!
 !
 !
] Q M H ! S P Q !
 !

We Search for You

We search for you, Oh dear Lord
 This world keeps harassing us, Lord
 We search for you, Oh dear Lord

When we were young we fell into sin
 My sinfulness was no secret
 Our sweat dripped like blood
 We search for you, Oh dear Lord

The world was entangled in grief and
 prestige
 In this world you lived as a pleasing song
 The song, which you sang to us, is true
 We search for you, Oh dear Lord

Garib Das

X PV !OPYP !
 !
 X PV !OPYP !K ^ PXI !
 Z P1PP !!
 SMZ !SV PM !IX !WVJ !
 LPX !KT PPWP !!
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 ^ PY! PQJ !J PXOM !
 OK P PX !Y] W!J XF !!
 WVJ !KHZ !Z LMF !
 I PXG E !SV YP !KT PPWP !
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 NPMZ !I PO P !K^ PX!
 [TWPOP !!
 SXLV !N_P P !KS PX!
 9VA IPOP ! !!
 !!
 J V OWPY !J QML " !

King Jesus

King Jesus is the master of heaven,
 Earth and hell
 You are the hope of the downcast
 And you raise them up

Keep my honor in this world
 There is none besides you

For the sinners you became incarnate
 You redeemed me by
 giving your life and body

Mumtaz Masih

Appendix D

SAMSON MANWADKAR INTERVIEW

All India Radio, Nagpur, November 1st, 1999, 20:17

[Christians musicians perform in] these secular orchestras and they have a complaint, they say that “our Christian people don’t use us”. But they say, “How can we use them, they are singing for the secular world. How can we use them? So this is the problem. But I invite them, you know all this, our Christian people who are working in the secular field, and they really like that. That’s why the teaching is needed you know: What is Christian art? Whether you are singing in the church, is that the way it is a Christian song? Or only words are Christian? So we emphasize on Christian experience, and unless and until you have that Christian experience, you speak from your heart, that cannot become.

Are there many Christians there in the secular field as musicians?

Yes, yes, many, especially in the film industry. The film industry is full of Christians, bass guitar, synthesizer players. There are singers also, well known singers you know, like Vijay Benedict, Usha Timothy, Mala Sinha.

But Vijay Sings so much in the churches as ministry?

Ha, Yes, singing for the film also. I think he goes around the world, taking his troupe.

We produce Christmas and Easter programs here. I do a lot of OB (Outside Based) programs. Recently the Leprosy mission completed 100 years, so I had gone there, stayed for three days there, recorded the whole program. Then I wrote down the

script, giving the gist and I mentioned you know why they are working; it's only because of Jesus' love in their heart, it's coming out. Yes, we emphasize that! Somehow, see, you have to use your mind to put in a such a way. This is a purely secular media, and I feel we can do it. We produced last year a program on TV, including four groups. It was broadcast all over India. It was in Marathi. All over Maharashtra plus it was networked on the DD10. So I used you know, not only singing; Our Christian programs I hear, you come there and somebody comes, preaches, then one song, then preaches, one song. No we don't do that. You know, using this professional media, professional style, two people are talking with one another and introducing and slowly slowly the background of how Jesus came into this world, what was the situation, and he came, and then dramatizing the situation, dramatizing the parables, the miracles, incidents, you know. In that Seminary Hills we have a Seminary College, Catholic; we recorded there...beautiful. They have the cassette there.

Are the Catholics active in Nagpur?

Yes, they are more active, and now days there is a very good atmosphere in Nagpur city I have seen. The Catholics and Protestants are mixing up together. And they have started arranging revival meetings, Catholic churches. There is a movement. They want to know now something. They use, more than the Protestants, they use paintings, drama, dance, inside the church, in worship, witness. They have accepted this, whereas we have not accepted here, especially the dance we have not accepted. Drama we have accepted, paintings. And there is a problem also using this media, traditional media like *bhajan* and *kirtan*. In cities they don't use but in villages people really appreciate.

I used to do a lot of singing here [at All India Radio] also, signature tunes, theme music. My songs are there, because I am an audition artist here so; I have given an audition, Marathi and Hindi. I am an audition artist here. And I encourage all the Christian artists; nobody got passed here because they don't have that background. (We take a break for Samson to make radio announcement in Marathi)

Because they don't have this classical style of singing or even *riyaaz* (or practice); so they come here, even very good singers, when they come for audition, they cannot enter. They get failed. Not only the classical, they don't [even] have basic knowledge of music. I tell them, "at least have some basic knowledge"; I teach to the groups same thing, how to sing properly, how to sing on that note, scale, change your range, go down. It is not only simply going to the *guru* (music teacher) and learning, but at least learn there; that's why we arrange workshop. What to do, yaar.

What was your own training in music?

Music only, *Gayan*. In Youtmal, I was studying, doing my B.D., so there was one *guru*, in a government recognized school. I had very much desire; my friend is a classical teacher, a blind person. So he has done his M.A. in music and he is a music teacher. So he was teaching me in the beginning. Then when I went for seminary training I was longing to have. Then I came to know that person. So I told him that...(He knew Christian people, you know, seminarians, that they don't worship, they don't sing the idol song)...So I told him, he said, "No problem". He was a quite well known man because he was the faculty-in-charge of one college. He comes here as a classical singer. So I took training three years under him. And he was very much fascinated to help me. I don't know [why].

I had heard a lot of good singers. I had that habit from the beginning, to go to the auditorium. If I don't have money you know, I would go to some place where the sound will come, and I will hear.

(Radio announcement break)

Still I am learning, see I try to learn.

(We listen to a Hindu *bhajan*, *Tu Pyar Ka Sagar Hain*, that Samson has put on live on his radio program).

I feel you know brother, see everyone is seeking after God. So they are expressing their own ways, their own feelings towards God. So I don't feel that because they are not referring the name of Jesus, I can't believe that. Yes we accept that without Jesus there is no Savior, O.K., but their expression is also good, na? *Ye Dekho*, I used to cry you know, while listening this song. Just two years back, my elder brother from the heart attack, he was dead. So next day I presented a program on "death", using all these spiritual Hindi filmi songs, comparing you know, what is the meaning of death, life. What is God? How, I mean, "Do you know God", or something. And I told my *bhabhi* (sister-in-law), that I am offering my program, whole *madhumati* to my brother, without mentioning that I am offering. Seasonal programs; *Barsat aayega to barsat...* give some program (If the rain season comes then give a program of music of the rainy season). How God created the *barsat*. We can use, yaar, any medium, any medium!

My elder brother used to like this song very much. That was his favorite.

Vivek Havel was a seminary graduate, he was working for a Christian...very good friend, and very good believer. He had done his B.E., electronics, he was working with

OM, Logos he worked, and then he came to seminary. Then after finishing his studies, Doulos was asking him, but he didn't go there, he joined the Christian broadcasting agency. So five years he worked there. I don't know what happened, but he didn't like their professionalism. He said that they are not interested in producing programs more creatively. So somehow he was selected for Dur Darshan, a University Grant Commission program, as an engineer. So he is working there, producing programs, plus he is the assistant pastor of one of the churches there in Pune. This fellow, you know, he, Mr. Williams, is working with him...Chris Williams.

Vivek will be very good, because he is a musician also, he will give you a lot of information. He is very much interested in Christian traditional music, because he worked for that organization, some Christian broadcasting program. And in U.B.S. also they have a studio there, they are also producing something, I don't know only recording? (Speaking of me)

If you are doing this work, you should continue; India will be grateful to you. We need people, Yaar, here. Really I tell you. Kathleen Nichols and Dr. Nichols have done a quite good work but not particularly on music; all kinds of arts, music and traditional art forms.

I used to sing for the orchestra, you know, before coming to know the Lord. I was working for a dance company, drama company and orchestra. So I am very much attached to the film music and pop music. That is helping me, ya. I ask, whenever God gives me song and composition, I ask my wife or anybody, "Do you feel that there is a some filmi style or there is no spirituality? Not a single person has said so far. "Samson there is a spirituality in your song". I say "Praise the Lord", that's all. Even though I

listen a lot of music, but whenever God gives me song or, there is always some spiritual touch. So that's good, ya.

You know after two years I was thinking of quitting this job but my friends, you know, they encouraged me, "Samson, this is, God has given you the place, you should not leave, you should [be] a testimony there. So I felt the same thing. Then I continued.

There were a lot of people, you know, criticized me in the beginning, "This fellow was doing God's work, not he is involved in the secular work. They didn't understand.

(Radio announcement break).

Samson plays for me a number of recordings of his music on spool:

Jeewan Mera, by Manwadkar.

Aakhon Main Hain Aapka, *geet* by Manwadkar.

Tere Sivan, *ghazal* by Manwadkar.

Subha Shaam, *bhajan*.

Naam Tera Prabhu Sada Main Gaun, *bhajan*.

Ghar Aaye More Yesu Hamare, *Darbadi Kanda*, classical *bhajan* by Manwadkar.

Kya Tera Kya Mera, *bhajan* by Manwadkar.

Kaun Hain Tu, *ghazal* by Manwadkar.

They always say, these non-Christians, "Samson your music is completely different, yaar".

Hindi...both songs on the stage we have to sing.

So I don't get money. *Teen baar* (three times) I get chance, *bara* (12) songs every year, Christmas *gana* (songs), Good Friday *gana* (songs), so I use other artists also.

Other artists *ko nahin chorunga*. For special programs they don't need audition; that's why I could get them to come. Otherwise their quality is not good, *yaar*. That is there, they don't practice, *riyaaz nahin karte, tanpure par practice karna parta*.

Do you practice?

Nahin, main roz gumte, chalte, phirte, gate raheta hun. Yeh practice hain na...continued in Hindi...

Mostly Christian *bhajans* are in Pahadi (*raga*). You have to use devotional *ragas*. *Dil ko chune wale* (songs that touch the heart). You can use them. Create. *Bhairavi and Bhairav main jyada hain. Maine bhi Kedar ka istamaal kiya tha, Hamir ka bhi. Malkauns main, ha, kiya tha, Darbari main bhi, ha. Bupali main bhi kar sakte hain. Jo raga main spiritual sense hain. Early in the morning ka or late in the night ka. You know ragas you must have studied, early morning ragas and late night ragas. Un main spirituality ka sense hain. You can use them.*

But don't all the *ragas* have a spiritual sense?

Yes, because you are a spiritual man. If you are spiritual, everything becomes very spiritual. That's why I tell my Christian guys, you know, why do you think this is not good and this is good; how do you differentiate. Take the Christian perspective, everything will be all right. Purifying. It is what I feel, I may be wrong you can tell me.

Light type of [song] people can understand, learn quickly. Generally India *main wo, Christian music bole to, "Eh, ki jaisa ja raha hain"*. *Vijay Benedict jaise ga raha, waisa lagta, maza nahin ata. Lekin is ke liye, mehanat bhi karni parti. [Our people] hard work nahin karne chaate hain.*

(radio announcement break.)

Is there anyone conducting *Satsang* type meetings in Nagpur?

Nahih, yaha wo, jazbai (feeling) nahin aya . But once I experienced that sam *satsang* type. One New Life Fellowship pastor had asked me to come to his church where most of the congregation people are from non-Christian background, purely. One or two years back they became Christians. They have wonderful stories and wonderful miracles. So he is one of my friends, Ronny Jacob, of Methodist. I was counselling him when I was a Methodist church pastor there. He used to be a football player. Somehow he came to the Lord and he became a pastor, and he asked me, “Brother Samson can you come?” I said, “O.K.” Then they started preaching and singing and all, then they gave me half an hour. “Samson now you do your singing”. So I sang songs, traditional which they like, *bhajans* they liked, *tumri*, *powada*, *kirtan*. We went up to one and half hour. And there was a great, like *satsang*, you know, using their hands, and Hallelujah, Praise the Lord, dancing and it was like a charismatic. And they asked me, “don’t stop”. Then they accepted and said, “Why we like this because this is our, we feel that this is our *bhajans*, our language, our style of music. Otherwise you Christian people sing in a very different type of songs”.

Was your program there unusual of are they having it like that every Sunday?

Every Sunday they have but not like that. They don’t use *bhajans* you know, *kirtan*, *powada*. *Nahin karte na, un log*. Nahin, to bolo humko, “ki tum workshop rakho, main to aane ki teyaar hun, bulate”, to main bolte to, “tum time fix karo”. Whenever he

meets me, no, “Hey brother, why don’t you come?” I say, I am coming but why don’t you fix that Sunday. He said, “You any time come”.

Every year they celebrate CNI day, Church of North India day. So they asked all the CNI churches to give one song. And it was 25 years of celebration, 50 years of celebration of India’s independence. So then I asked my youth fellows, “Hey what to do yaar?” “O.K. we’ll sing one lively song. Like that”. I said, “No yaar...See this is CNI day we are celebrating; along with that we are celebrating 50 years of India’s independence. So *desh bhakti* means patriotic songs used in a *pawada* style. So I said, “Can I use, yaar, *powada*”. They said, “Yes, yes, yes, yes”. I always go for a new thing. *Hatke, toda sa alag*. Then I prepared one *pawada*. So I linked that Independence with the independence from the sin, from Jesus Christ. I linked that idea, no. 50 saal huwe, har logo ne ye kiya, wo kiya, that’s how we got independence. What about today’s situation? Are you really free? Politically you may be free. Socially you may be free. What about spiritually? You are still in the bondage of sin. You need salvation. You need independence. Now come to the Lord Jesus Christ. It was linked, beautiful, *powada*, and everybody got marvelled, you know.

An example of *pawada* would be:

Jeeda Jeeda, Jee da da, Jee da da, Jee Jee Jee, Hai! Etc. Aaj kushion ka yeh din hain. 50 saal huwe hain yeh. Darane da di da di dire da...(spoken) Hain, ha, to bhai, unmain kaun kaun log the, Mahatma Gandhi the, Nehru the, uno ne kya kiya, Are aisa, da dina da... Like that, and then I brought the name of Jesus there, *hamari kaisi stithi thi, koi to mandir jata tha, puja upwaas karta tha, to koi phaida ma tha tha, raji, ji, ji, ji, ji. Tik*

hain? To kya hogaya bhaya phir? Phir prabhu ne apna bete ko bhejdiya. Aur logo ko papon ke, apana praan de diya, taki wo swantara ho jaae. Ah to phir gao re, Ji ra. Ji ra. Ji ra kya hain?

Ji ra is just some words, you know.

Then once I used *tumri*. (*Tumri* is a semi-classical type of song where different *ragas* are used). They don't have any *ragas*, just mixed. *Tumri*, that was a drugs work shop. So for young people I prepared a you know from how they are tempted in drugs, because of love affairs, unemployment problem, and dealing with the social youth's problem. And I spoke on that *tumri*. *Dekne to yeh larki bohot achchi lagti hain, lekin you get attracted and then you get, bhang ho jata hain*. You get disturbed. Then you go for a drink. You go for drugs. See and you get spoiling your life But if you want real love, real job, real satisfaction, come to the Lord, brother. He will give you, yaar, right type of love. Yes, a spiritual love. Like that you know, *tumri*, in a dancing way of style. You see, non-Christians *logo main hota hain*. They use. But our Christians, "Oh that is their way of singing. That is their". Are, what is our way of singing, ya? *Are, yeh to hum Hindustani hain. Yeh to hamara hi hain*. Why can't we use? So we are working for that, you know.

(Radio Announcement).

"We have to change the children's school, you know", [one concerned parent said to me]. I said, "Why, ya?" He said, "My children are going to the Catholic school and they have started using yoga and doing puja and all, OM and all". So he said, "I cannot adjust with that". So he had to shift you know his children from there. What is this the Catholics have started? This is too much ya.

Aren't these just cultural expressions that we can use?

O.K. Hamare log ke liye acceptable nahin hain, tayaar nahin abhi.

[Our people] have been so much influenced, they have been taught, ya, what to do, that this is Hindu culture so it is sinful, ya. *Lekin main ye bolta hun ki*, are, dance was started in the *mandir*. It was a way of worshiping God. So why don't you worship your God through this art form. What is sin there, yaar? What is sin? It will take time. Because I am involved in traditional art form. People are not that much interested. In 1996 there was a conference, "Gospel and Culture", WCC something. They had circulated one questionnaire, and asked all the churches to discuss this matter. They wanted to discuss the matter of culture and gospel, how to mix up. They emphasized that we must use our local culture. So that's how the South African, they had very good number of Christianity, so dance was banned in South Africa. And as soon as it was released, "No problem you can use your own cultural forms or worship", so they started using dancing, so the churches got revived. Full of churches, they are using, yes. *Bas, bas, wo hona bhi chaye*. And that's how they planned now. We always discussed with Dr. Nichols, I said "then we should have some centers for training because our Christians don't go to these non-Christians people for training". So I told Dr. Nichols, I had given him the plans, I said, "Why don't you support me for a center, central in India, which will offer courses in music, dance, drama, Indian purely, based on Bible. Christians will teach, purifying the culture. Whatever is good we will accept. Whatever is not acceptable to the other community we will not accept". So he was very much favorable. What to do ya? Instead of we are going, now we are going to the different churches and conducting workshops. And then he suggested that, "Samson it should start this movement from the

seminaries, because these pastors who are taking training in the seminaries, they should be taught. Then the churches will change”. I said, “Yes, you are right”.

Yeh problem dekhiye, ki pastors are not interested in these art forms. Most of them are, “O.K. gana hain, galo”. But they are not that much interested. *Main to unko ye kaheta hun, 3 minute ka gana bhi* is a big preaching. Lord can change the hearts of people within three minutes and I have seen people crying. There is no use of taking 25 minutes of preaching. You give me three minutes. *Main kabhi bhi gana gaya na, log hil jate. Main jada lambhi preaching bhi nahin karta.* Short and give them from the heart. *Maza aata. Aur dekha maine ki* hearts are touched, when you sing from the bottom of your heart. With the experience, yaar. Then the words become very alive.

Sana Surya Vanshi is a famous *bhajan* and *kirtan* singer, who I called to conduct a workshop here once. He lives in Naasik.

Also Vivek Habbel is worth meeting. He works for the University Grant Commission studio on the University campus, Pune...

Bhajan Ganga Program, (Marathi), *Sant Main Aa.*

Bhajan Ganga Program, (Marathi), *Roop Savare Maharao.*

What do you think of taking Kabir and Mira and using their style of writing to make Christian lyrics?

Hindi... I would have definitely used their style. You put your Christian words. (Radio announcement break).

Now days you see these Pentecostal churches are growing. They have worship time, simply can worship, that’s all, and people like that. Why? It is only because our Indian background that we like singing, keep on singing, just glorifying the Lord, praising

the Lord. They like that, even non-Christians like too much, you know. Those who are in Pentecostal churches most of them are coming from non-Christians, purely non-Christians. Full of non-Christians, I say. This CNI, Methodist, they don't have non-Christians. They don't have even conversions because they don't work. Pentecostals are going to the place to place, and when they come for worship they start worshiping, they don't start preaching, they just keep on singing, half an hour, one hour, two hours of singing. People like that.

Are you saying that any song is good whether western or Indian?

Unko accha lagta hain. So I, main ek baat sikha ki, our non-Christian community likes singing in worship. Style ki jyada matlab nahin hain. Rhythm to ek hi rehta hain. Da Ge Na Ti Na Ke Dhin. Wohi rahega, 4 matra, 6 matra ka rhythm rahega. So I feel when they sing, they are singing from their heart, ya. They enjoy, you know, free movement. Jo traditional churches main bilkul nahin hain. You cannot use your movements. Jab main CNI churches mai, main gana sikhata hun, I say, "O.K. come on clap your hands, Use your hands. At least use this movement, postures. Not like "Hallelujah", but at least use this. They like that. They become very much alive for at least five to ten minutes.

What of Indian culture in these churches?

Yeh unmain miss ho raha hain. Hum log jo apne light songs hain na, rhythmic song hain, jaise, nare lagao aur gao re, janda Masih, aise gane in ke paas. To wo gane tikh hain. Simple hain, easy hain. *Bhajan* istimaal nahin karte. Main jaata hun to main *bhajan* istemaal karta to people jaada like karte hain. Pentecostal churches mai be jaata hun, they call me. Because I am a free guy. I have not [labored?] myself to any particular

denomination. So if I go to pentecostal church even wherever I go, whatever I am, it comes up. Like Dr. Nichols he told me, “Samson they may feel bad yaar. This is not a pentecostal church”. But I said, “But it is so natural Uncle”. Then after the church service we came to know that was a charismatic church. I was wondering, when I was dancing and praising the Lord and speaking with power and authority. So they stood up and gave response, yes! I taught two songs, *Naam Naam Naam*, and ... They liked this very much. Every time they sing they say, “Oh, *Naam Naam Naam*”. And two or three songs I taught. *Tali Bajao* I taught them. Simple wordings. *Wo gane mai toda sa joy hona chaiye*. Some happiness and some liveliness. *To logo ko achcha lagta hain*. Whether they may not understand the language also. I saw that Croatian people enjoying the Hindi song. Because that song had lively. I felt, otherwise how would they like?

Where is the song *Khushi Khushi Manao* from?

It is an Indian song. *Western touch se gaate. Main bhi gaata hun kabhi kabhi. Usko style main gaana parta to we western banjaata. Lekin main to bachpan se aur mera jo anubauv hain, wo mujhe lakta hain ki wo Indian hi origin tha. I may be wrong. It's a bhajan. Kyon ki iske saath aur lamba hain. Jaya bolo, jaya bolo, Yesu Masih ki jaya bolo. Added one. Mujhe lagta hain ki yeh bhajan hain. Maybe yeh Maharashtra se nikala hogo. Kushi Kushi main, mujhe lagta ki Marathi-ness lagta hain. Marathi ke bhajans, we understand. Kyon ki us mai sense hota hain, Marathi-ness hota hain. Kushi Kushi Manao bhajan style main gaate hain, to bhajan ban jaate. Gaana hain waise wo. It's a geet. Lekin when you sing with the bhajan style it becomes a bhajan. Bhajan is a bhaj, to...*

(Radio announcement break).

Hindi. It becomes a *bhajan*....That is called *bhajan*.....the whole group sings...Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, Pandit Jitendra Avisheki, they also sing *bhajans*. But they are more of use classical way of *bhajan* singing. Like that Anil Dadesh Pande. Like Gulam Ali uses *ghazal* putting all these classical art forms.

What is the most common definition of *bhajan*?

Bhaj. I had produced one program on *bhajan*. So I take the “*bhaj*”, *bhaj yane bhajo, jan ke dwara, logo ke dwara*, by the people, when the people join together. And when they sing for the Lord it becomes a *bhajan*. *Aisa*, I feel. Very simple. *Bhajo. Bhajo. Bhajan. Jano ke dwara bhaj kia hua. Wahi bhajan. Jan*, it becomes a crowd. I have produced program on *bhajan, qaawali, ghazal*. Spiritual programs, spiritual. I don't know where they are, I scratch it off. I was producing a “*bhajan sarita*” program. *Sarita* means *nadi*, river on Vishwavani. It continued for three years. Half and hour program I produced.

Appendix E

VINAYA THORAT, PROFESSIONAL TABLA PLAYER

INTERVIEW

Pune, November 4th, 1999, 19:00

Translated from Hindi

(Some background).

When he was five, his father taught him talas. Then when he was seven the Ustad taught him. Daoud village, 75 Km from Pune, he learned eight years with his Ustad. Khapra mama, another teacher, taught him polyrhythms in Pune. Pandit Jayasraj, Bhimsen Joshi. “When Bhimsen Joshi heard my *tabla* playing he commented that he played very well.” There is a special way to accompany vocal, instrumental and dance music.

Interview begins:

My first teacher came to teach me at our home. My older brother was learning *raga* Todi for nine months. His mother complained, but the father said, “He will learn this one *raga* and then be able to play all of them.” In those days I was learning Khyal style of playing.

In *Bhajans* mostly one tala is used. Bhajne Theka it is called – 21:30. Within the 8 beats there are endless varieties.

In Gujarat, Deep Chandi is common – 21:32. This is sung in Thumri. Deep Chandi is in seven or 14 beats.

Ada main bhi gaate Deep Chandi main bhi gate hain, yeh hain Thumri baj.

Dhumali is used in Sakhi/Dhindi in Natya Sangeet.

Punjabi *Taal* in 16 beats. It is a theka from Natya Sangeet.

Baal Gandharva theka in 16 beats. Aisa uska bandish hain. Also used in Natya Sangeet, the themes of Mahabharat, or on social themes.

Natya Sangeet in Marathi, every five minutes there is a song, the theme is that “this fellow is expecting about the knowledge of god (dev).” by Abhinash Holkar accompanied by Vinayak Thorat on *tabla*.

There are no Christians in classical music. I could have become a top artist in my field, but I don't want that. In following the Lord Jesus I have lost nothing. But the Brahmins discourage me. There are more in Pune, otherwise I played all the various styles (baaj) of music.

The brahmins have spread into every area of the arts world and they make it difficult for us Christians to come up. But the top artists do not behave this way, only the middle level artists do – 21:50.

The organizers prefer brahmins. But when someone says, “No, we need Thorat, then I am called.” I don't want to boast, but in *Natya Sangeet* in Bombay and Pune, people know that I should be the one who accompanies this music. They always want him because they know their drama will go well if he plays.

The church has never encouraged me, but Hindus have and they recognize me also.

I am ready to teach freely, but Christian boys don't come. They are not ready to take the trouble. The practice I did when I was a child has resulted in what I am now. I used to practice 8 hours a day, waking early in the morning. I would cry but my father would force me up.

In Indian music Christians have no idea how to guide someone, who to go to for lessons, etc.

Christian youth think that learning an instrument is like going to typing class; you can learn it in 6 months.

What looks or sounds nice should be used, should be learned, wherever it originates from.