

## **“Puruṣa bound from within / without looking on”: Gurani Anjali’s Sāṃkhya-Yoga Music on Long Island, New York**

*Thursday 23 May 2024 16:15 (30 minutes)*

Gurani Anjali (1935-2001) arrived to the United States in the 1950s before the major influx of immigration from India that would follow in the 1960s. She eventually established Yoga Anand Ashram in Amityville on Long Island, New York, where she taught Sāṃkhya-Yoga philosophy within the context of the United States’ countercultural and post-countercultural periods. Central to Anjali’s repertoire of yoga techniques were music practices which she and her students adapted to the countercultural social and historical context in which they found themselves. This paper shows how Anjali’s universal ideas about Sāṃkhya-Yoga became entangled in her new sonic environment as her yogic lyrics merged with her students’ acoustic folk ensemble, but also how Anjali intended for her lyrics to lead students toward a transcendent experience of their social environment altogether. Thus from an etic perspective, this paper firmly situates Anjali’s music in its historical context, while also articulating, from the community’s emic perspective, how Anjali’s yogic music from her Indian Ocean world proposed to inculcate an experience of yoga’s higher Self, puruṣa, which was evidently “bound from within / without looking on” as the lyrics to her popular song suggest. This paper draws its analytical framework from the newly emerging literature outlining an Indian Ocean Ethnomusicology to demonstrate how Anjali transported her yoga philosophy from Bengal into her new countercultural sonic environment on the United States Atlantic Coast. Because her musical influence extended beyond the Indian Ocean region, however, this paper also argues that limiting ourselves to performing Indian Ocean Ethnomusicology inevitably presents the same analytical limits the emerging field has sought to overcome in area studies of music. It thereby proposes that we adopt a “One Ocean Ethnomusicology,” a new analytical framework that permits us to connect musical heritage from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean and beyond.

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