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Rodenhuis, W.N.

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Hindustani Music: Thirteenth to Twentieth Centuries. Edited by Joep Bor, Françoise 'Nalini' Delvoye, Jane Harvey and Emmie te Nijenhuis. New Dehli: Manohar Publishers and Distributors, 2010 [736 p., ill, 25 cm. ISBN 9788173047589. €45]

It took more than ten years before the book was published, but now that it has reached the shelves, it is more than worth diving into it.

Hindustani Music can be seen as the papers of a symposium hosted by Codarts Rotterdam Conservatory, 17–20 December 1997 in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, *The History of North India Music: Fourteenth to Twentieth*

Century, bringing together specialists in the field of Hindustani music, researchers as well as musicians and other practitioners, most of whom had never before met in these particular circumstances. Moreover, due to the long period of production of the book, the opportunity arose to invite additional authors to write a contribution on one of the total of five main topics presented during the symposium. This extension of the content of the book adds to the character of a true companion to the phenomenon of Hindustani music.

Despite the initial scope of the symposium, which had the fourteenth century as a beginning, the survey took the thirteenth century as a starting point, taking into account that in this era Sarngadeva wrote his highly acclaimed and influential treatise on music, the *Sangitaratnakara.* As a parallel development, the thirteenth century also saw the rise of the Delhi Sultanate, leading to a flourishing of culture and politics, renowned until the present day as the Indian-Persian culture.

The editors give an outline of existing literature on Hindustani music, as made available to western readers in the past. Since the late eighteenth century, Indian music has met with a keen interest among western scholars, like the British Orientalist Sir William Jones, who in 1792 published his essay *On the Musical Modes of the Hindus.*

It is a widely-acknowledged fact among scholars in the field that Hindustani music over the centuries has met with decay, both in practice and in theory, initially due to influences of the surrounding Muslim cultures, and later by European colonialism. This notion was promoted by the orthodox view that Hindustani music had a direct link with ancient and medieval treatises on its practice and the underlying theory, whilst neglecting a natural process over centuries of gradual development, innovations, cultural and economic exchange, poetry, techniques that influenced the music skills and styles.

The book comprises five sections, and each part covers a field of interest that adds to the monumental effect that comes along while reading it. This effect is underscored by the highly diverse contributions, written by Hindu, Western, and Muslim scholars and practitioners such as musicians, offering the reader a rich and varied choice and shedding a unique light on the many facets of Indian music.

The first section, *The Formative Period,* offers an overview on Hindustani music from the early medieval developments onwards. By doing so, a solid basis is given to the topics that follow, like sections on the modern period, musical instruments, Indian music and the West, and a conclusive section on concepts and theories.

In their first chapter, *Sanskrit and Indo-Persian Literature on Music,* Emmy te Nijenhuis and Françoise 'Nalini' Delvoye draw attention to the fact that Sanskrit sources have been of essential importance for the study of Indian music up to the nineteenth century. For today's research purposes these sources still contain valuable information on issues such as the development of the tone system, the musical temperament, the classification of musical types, musical time and meter, types of compositions and styles of performance, and the techniques of playing musical instruments.

For the section on the modern period the renowned vocalist Sulochana Brahaspati presented during the symposium a paper on the nawabs of Rampur and the Rampur-Sadarang tradition, adding in her presentation a number of musical examples as an illustration. Rampur, after the annexation by the British in 1857, developed to one of the strongholds of classical music in North India, especially through the work of vocalist composer Sadarang, who was the court musician of emperor Muhammad Shah. Sadarang's disciples, such as the *sursingar*-player Bahadur Hussain Khan and vocalist Amir Khan, played a vital role in the dhrupad revival. Up into the twentieth century the Rampur tradition, as established by coincidence in the nineteenth century, has been a major factor in the process of keeping Hindustani music alive.

For those who have a keen interest in musical instruments, *Hindustani Music* offers four fine chapters, focusing among others on musical iconography as a source of information about the early centuries, i.e., the fifth to the seventh century. James Kippen wrote a highly informative chapter on the tabla, stating that the nowadays-dominant position of this drum, has not always been the case, and even could be seen as having a certain marginal character.

Rokus de Groot wrote a chapter for the section *Indian Music and the West* on the reception in the Netherlands of the oeuvre of Rabindranath Tagore that was made largely possible through the promotional work by idealist and psychiatrist Frederik van Eeden.

The fifth and conclusive chapters are devoted to theory (*Concepts and Theory*) and here the reader will find two chapters: the *Rag-Ragini* theory by Harold Powers and an attempt to frame the phenomenon of Shruti by Suvarnalata Rao and Wim van der Meer.

Each contribution is completed by a detailed and highly accurate bibliography. This allows the reader to verify and to extend their knowledge of his field of interest considerably. This adds to the conclusion that *Hindustani Music* deserves a place on the library shelves of both conservatories and research libraries, and that the book has a lot to offer, not only for those who have a (professional) interest in the music of North India, but for readers with a more general interest in music as well.

Willem Rodenhuis
Library, University of Amsterdam