



Ragas of Northern Indian Music

By Alain Danielou

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The first part of the book traces the history of Indian music and the continuity of its theory and practice for more than two thousand years. It is based on many years' research into the vast ancient Sanskrit literature of music. These valuable technical treatises, which lie in the form of scarcely catalogued manuscripts throughout the public and private libraries of India, had hitherto remained unemployed. Part Two transcribes and studies in detail 50 typical Raga-s. Each is preceded by a Sanskrit poem in translation which depicts the atmosphere; then follows an analysis of the scale, covering its intervals and expression, a study of the theme with its characteristic motives and finally a typical development. The present work is based on the author's two-volume Northern Indian Music published in London (but not America) some ten years ago, but long out of print and much sought after by students. It was described by Colin Mason in the Manchester Guardian as "of immense value to any practical musician" and "an invaluable addition to the very scanty literature of fascinating and neglected subject". This new version contains a number of additional Raga-s; the earlier text has been extensively revised and many music examples redrawn for greater clarity and accuracy. Some abridgement has taken place, but only of material which appeared originally for the benefit of Indian readers unfamiliar with Western staff notation, those able to read Sanskrit, and specialists in Sanskrit literature. The book provides modern composers outside India with a source of new inspiration and enables practising musicians to play and study some of the endlessly variegated modes for which Indian music is unique.

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