



The Harmonium in North Indian Music

By Birgit Abels

Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, India, 2010. Softcover. Book Condition: New. First Edition. The harmonium holds an ambiguous reputation in India as well as in its "home continent" of Europe. There is an abundance of clear statements made by distinguished Indian musicians, theoreticians and also politicians who time and again would decry the instrument. Rabindranath Tagore's famous description of the harmonium as "that bane of Indian music" is just one example. And yet, the harmonium is arguably the instrument most widely used for accompanying the foremost medium of North Indian classical music, i.e. the human voice. Thus, by all appearances the anxiety about the harmonium's potentially destructive impingement on traditional music, is not shared by the majority of the musicians. This book seeks to understand the complex history of the harmonium in North India, analyse the apparent conflict between musical theory and practice and describe how the instrument is used in musical practice. Is the harmonium an instrument suitable for Indian music? Can it live up to the requirements of Indian music? Can it live up to the requirements of Indian music? These questions pervade the whole book, at the end of which, they will appear in a...



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