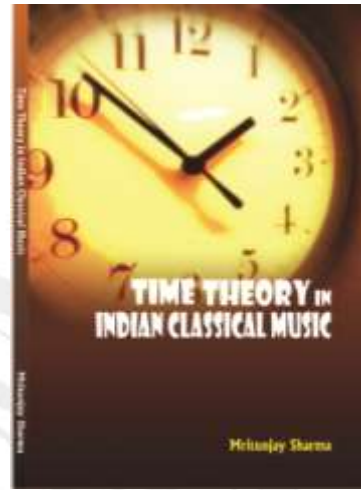


BOOK REVIEW

Time theory in Indian Classical Music, by Mritunjay Sharma, SREIT: India, 2009. 287 pages (Tables, appendices, etc.) Rs. 700, Hardbound. ISBN 978-81-910942-7-5. Reviewed by Dr. Pankaj Gupta

Being spiritual, Indian music is inimitable where the performer attempts to reach Divinity through his performance. The Indian classical music is a journey of the soul towards the Celestial. It is thought that some ragas are useful while sung at a suitable time. The Indian music systems believe in the time theory, the theory, which was fabricated and disseminated for the first time by the renowned Hindustani musician, Pandit Bhatkande. Pandit Bhatkande is revered as the father of Hindustani music, because he was the one who formulated a schematized fragment of Hindustani music. The reason for classifying these ragas is perhaps because they create a precise emotion, which can be intensified by that season. Mritunjay Sharma, in his insightful book, sets out to unveil the details of time theory in Indian Classical Music.



Mritunjay Sharma, youngest D.Lit. of Himachal Pradesh has titivated the Department of Music, Himachal Pradesh University with his outstanding academic expertise. He has illustrious academic background and is associated with number of academic bodies of repute. Mritunjay Sharma takes up the challenge of throwing open to researchers & readers a comparatively new and neglected, often feared area in music. The book consists of eight chapters. Origin of Indian music is taken up in the first chapter, where the author has not only traced the history of Indian music but also discussed various schools of vocal & instrumental music. In the second chapter author has discussed in details the time & season in performance of raga. Mritunjay Sharma argues that theory of raga is one of the important ingredients of music appreciation and third chapter is devoted to the theories of raga. Mritunjay Sharma identifies nature of emotions, its psychological dimensions and relates them with music. Author has discussed feeling and emotion from the behavioristic and psychoanalytic point of view. The two-factor theory, Cannon-bard theory, Cognitive Appraisal theory and James-Lange theory of emotion have been conversed in detail, besides numerous other theories. Chapter five reviews the studies conducted by other researchers and chapter six deals with the methodology and experimental details of study. Details of the experiments on the validity of traditional time theory in music have been traced by the author. Results of the experiments together with their interpretations form the part of seventh chapter followed by concluding chapter. The concluding chapter briefly debates over future perspective of the theme and also proposes new avenues for future researchers.

The book makes a clear statement that to understand the time theory in Indian classical music is to understand the foundation principles of Indian music. Undoubtedly, the book is a timely contribution, especially within the context of Indian classical music. In the preface Mritunjay makes it clear that his main concern is to enlighten the readers about the concept of time theory in music. In this impressively compact book, Mritunjay Sharma joins a broader debate over time theory in

Indian music. A striking feature of this work is the objectivity with which it approaches the readers. The introduction and the chapters collected in this book are an important read. The language varies from rather complex sentences conveying erudite ideas and knowledgeable debates to simple one conveying the message of the author. And an index would have helped. Thus, the book explores a very important topic in contemporary music research. This book attempts to make theoretical contributions to the world of Indian classical music. Mritunjay Sharma in his book is commendable for its conscious attention to Time theory in Indian Classical Music. In spite of a number of thoughts, this work is well organized and legible; the experimental analysis is based on meticulous research. In conclusion, the book is edifying and thought provoking. It is a must-read for serious scholars of Indian Music.

