Shiva Mahadeva. Dagar Brothers. Drupad, Classical Vocal Music of North India. Recordings uncredited. Annotated by Felix van Lamsewede. PAN Records PAN 4001-02KCD. 2 CDs with 11 pages of notes in English, 4 b/w photographs of performers and instruments, 1 b/w photograph of folk art. Region: South Asia–North India. 14 tracks recorded at a live performance (6 tracks on CD 1; 8 tracks on CD 2). Tracks 1-6 on CD 1: Malkaus; Tracks 1-3 on CD 2: Darbari Kanada; 4: Adana; 5: Bhatiyar; 6-8: Demonstration. CD 1: 71’30; CD 2: 67’35. 1996.

Recordings of dhrupad and dhamar sung by the late Dagar Brothers — Zahiruddin (1932-94) and Faiyazuddin (1934-89) — are now collector’s items. Pan Records did a great service to students and connoisseurs of Indian art music by releasing the recording of a complete live concert given at the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam in 1978, along with excerpts from a lecture-demonstration by the brothers given in 1981 at the same institute. Four dhrupads, two of which are in the ten-beat sul tal, and a dhamar are featured in this performance. The dhrupad in rag Malkaus has the minor third; however, the strong presence of the overtone of a major third from the bottom string (tuned to the system tonic in the lower octave) of the tanpura presents an interesting case in point for discourse on drone, “dissonance,” and selective listening. Excerpts from the lecture-demonstration are excellent guides, especially to the Hindu religious roots of the dhrupad style of singing in Vedic chant and yogic philosophy. The detailed description of various vocal techniques employed in alap (CD1, Track 6) and a demonstration of the relation between tal and text in dhamar (CD2, Track 8) are particularly useful. The excellent liner notes provide information about the performers, the musical genres, and the nuances of renditions of the song texts. On the technical side, fluctuations in volume and a lack of balance of voices are noticeable.

JOSEPH J. PALACKAL

CENTRAL ASIA


This is one of the best CDs of xooam (in Occident, overtone singing). The CD is accompanied by detailed cultural, historical, and musical information. All the musical instruments and vocal styles are identified by the vernacular terms with correct spelling. Both field recordings and liner notes are of excellent quality. The notes provide information about xooam outside of Mongolia (in Tuva, Bashkiria, etc.) and in Mongolia among the Xalxa Mongols. Other aspects are also treated, such as techniques and styles, learning methods, history and origins, and finally, modern revival in Chandman’ sum. Tserendavaa performs 5 main styles of xooam (labial, palatal, glottal, chest cavity, nasal, and the additional labial and dental whistlings). Johnston’s recordings (Tracks 1-18) are of xooam overtone singing, isgreei whistling style, instrumental music with flute tsoor, bamboo and metal Jew’s harps, and bogino douu short songs. Mongol Radio’s recordings (Tracks 19-33) contain imitation of flute limbe by human voice, flute tsoor with human voice as a drone, and xooam overtone singing from the best singers of the country from the 1960s until now, in solo and with the accompaniment of different musical instruments.