

GYPSIES AND THEIR MUSIC: The travels of the Gypsies in the Movie Latcho Drum, and their influence on Flamenco (Spanish folk Music from Andalusia)

The Gypsies originated in India, and were pushed out a long time ago, around the year 1000 of the Common Era.

The movie shows a group of Gypsies traveling in India. Later they are seen in Romania. The group featured there is called "Taraf de Hadouiks." Notice the playing of violin, with its very interesting, scratchy sound, product of the pulling of a cord across the string, and the amazing playing of fiddle players, Cimbalom (dulcimer-type) players, and little recorder player.

The movie travels to Northern Europe, and then to southern France, near the Spanish border. Here the influence of pop music is evident: the musical language sounds like that of French songs from the 50's. There is also a notable jazz influence, evident in the improvised guitar solos. Notice the religious devotion of these Gypsies, as seen in processions.

Finally, the end of the road: Spain. The Gypsies in Spain mixed with the resident Arab culture, as the Arabs were in Spain from around the year 800 until 1492. The music sounds somewhat like that of the Gypsies in India, because of the microtones, and the dwelling on certain notes by repeating them. Spanish classical composers then picked up these characteristics during the Nationalistic period of Classical music.