INSTRUMENTOS MUSICAIS POPULARES PORTUGUESES. ERNESTO VEIGA DE OLIVEIRA.

Ernesto Veiga de Oliveira’s work about musical instruments in Portuguese folk music is the result of many years of travel and research in remote regions of Portugal. With 439 photographs and 239 pages of text this gives a comprehensive and vivid image of Portuguese musical folklore in its present and historical forms.

Although not concerned with Africa, it is most interesting to students of African music. The influence of Portuguese musical culture on Africa and the influence of African music on Portugal have often been the subject of cursory statements without very deep penetration into the matter. In Oliveira’s work there are numerous photographs of instruments, particularly frame-drums, scrapers and flutes, which have their counterparts in West Africa. For instance in 1960, while in Nigeria, I noted the presence of Portuguese-type frame-drums among the Yoruba. Also some of the scrapers illustrated, particularly where anthropomorphic, seem to me very similar to some I have seen in Angola.

Oliveira’s book is a welcome source for students who would like to penetrate more thoroughly into the question of mutual influence between Portuguese and African musical culture.

G. KUBIK.

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This article is based on tape recordings by Rev. Otto Rytz, Presbyterian Mission, made on the 12th June, 1963, in Kpembe, Northern Region of Ghana. Dr. Dauer analyses extensively both text and music of eight recorded songs of the Gonja people with the assistance of Mr. J. W. Amankwa from Salaga, Ghana, who was then studying at the University of Mainz.

The musical analysis contains sections about additive rhythm patterns and kinetic motion, multipart techniques, harmony and formal aspects.

The fact that Gonja music is not very well known and the precise and neat approach of the author make this one of the most valuable studies to have been published in Germany since 1945.

G. KUBIK.

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A magnificent new dictionary of large size, but remarkably small print. Very clear to read, nevertheless, due to the large spaces left between each entry. The biggest space, however, is the one next to this work on the shelf for a companion English-Swahili volume! Much to be desired, in view of the present volume. To quote from the Introduction: “The present dictionary has critically reappraised the entire word-stock of the language, modernizing and augmenting from many sources. It brings the vocabulary up to date, including the fantastic developments since World War II.”

It contains many examples of word usage. To take just one example out of hundreds, the prickly proverb “Mimi si pweza kujipalia makaa”, i.e. I will not contribute to my own discomfort, like the cuttlefish, which when roasted on the fire, spasmodically pulls coals onto its own body. The Fifth Amendment, U.S. Constitution?

ANDREW TRACIEY.

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The Library has received notice to the effect that the two works, listed below, by Dr. Wolfgang Laade are now available:


(2) “Bibliographie zu Gegenwartfragen der Musik in Afrika und Asien” (Special bibliography on current problems of music, music research and music education in Africa and Asia), about 90 pp.

Orders are accepted by the author at:
Lorsher Weg 6,
Heidelberg-Dossenheim,
D 6901,
West Germany.

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