

theoretical perspectives. It builds on his previously published archival research on *isicathamiya* in *African stars: studies in Black South African performance* (1991) and offers complementary ethnographic perspectives. Although this text is significantly more vivid than his previous writings, I would have liked to have had more sense of the individual voices of *isicathamiya* – the leaders, the women, the judges – and through them, be permitted insight into a broader range of experiences of the genre. In addition, the text would have been enhanced by a closer sense of the author himself, particularly in light of his introductory appeal for a more reflexive approach to the study of expressive culture.

The book, with its accompanying 60-minute videotape, makes a particularly valuable contribution to scholarship in South African performance studies, which has been largely historical in approach. It also contributes distinctively to South Africanist social and political history. Characteristically influenced by neo-marxism, this body of literature has tended to gloss over the formal and performative details of expressive culture, which Erlmann attends to so meticulously. While he may have failed to include analysis of musical structures and sound – an aspect of *isicathamiya* which has yet to be documented – he argues convincingly for an analysis which recognises the centrality of expressive culture to the production of power and notions of resistance. These arguments are pertinent not only to South Africanists, but also to ethnomusicologists and scholars of popular culture studies more generally.

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AFRICA FOLK MUSIC ATLAS, hardbound book, CD-ROM & 3CD-Audio, edited by Leonardo D'Amico & Francesco Mizzau, 1997, Firenze, Italy: Amharsi Edizioni Multimediali. 93pp. index, map, illustrations, bibliography, cloth. Hardware requirements: CD-ROM drive double speed, PC486 DX2 66 MHz, Windows 3.1 or 95, 8Mb RAM, keyboard and mouse Microsoft compatible, graphic board SVGA 640x480 high color 16 bit mode, audio board Sound Blaster compatible.

The Africa Folk Music Atlas is Vol. 1 of an 8 volume series, with the seven subsequent volumes covering Italy, Latin America, the Middle East, Asia and Oceania, North America, Celtic Europe, and the Ways of Jewish Music. Credit for the idea for this book/CD-ROM/CD-audio compilation is given to Francesco Mizzau, Livio Biacomini and Matteo Silva. The intention of this volume and the series in general is “to increase awareness of the world’s many musical origins...Our hope is that ethnic music will be studied in schools as an important subject, a metalanguage for mutually understanding and accepting the differences of all the cultures of the planet” (8-9). Though the audience targeted is “everyone” this product will likely have its greatest use in school libraries and classrooms. The text of the book and CD-ROM is accessible for school age consumption, but also at an adequately sophisticated level to have appeal among adults. The texts are informative in an encyclopedic tightly summarized style.

The ‘atlas’ idea is carried from the book – which is illustrated with numerous color photos and two maps of the continent, one topographic, the other geographic – to the CD-ROM. With the help of the CD-ROM this product becomes a comprehensive interactive atlas of African music with special attention to African instruments and vocal styles in relation to their points of geographic/cultural origin. The CD-ROM is accessed from a map of the continent for each of five major “routes”: Ethnohistory, Vocality, Music of the African People (with sub-topics North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa), Musical Instruments, and Modern African Music. The

book has these same five topics as section headings with additional sections covering “The Origin of the Baa Drum,” the CD-Audio series (with photos and write-ups on some of the artists and ensembles on the recordings), and a brief description of the CD-ROM giving installation and hardware requirements.

The CD-ROM is of exceptional quality, with excellent photos, sound samples, explanatory texts, supporting information, and in selected cases video-clips. The authors apologize for the necessity of making choices from the myriad of styles and ethnic musics existing in Africa. Their efforts to be comprehensive are obvious. It is impossible to adequately describe the wealth of information – visual, sound, and textual – presented on the CD-ROM. For example, clicking on the map for Music of the African Peoples, North Africa, Tuareg of Mali, one can view an excellent video clip of a Tuareg woman playing *imzad* fiddle and with this screen also access additional sound samples of *ezele* singing with *tinde* drum and *sarewa* flute, plus another sound sample of *imzad* fiddle music.

The ‘route’ on “Musical Instruments” is especially strong with sound samples (except the Fang *mvét*, harp zither which has none) and illustrations/photos, plus a video clip of the *kora* in performance. The ‘route’ on “New African Music” is a tour-de-force of pop styles (with video of Rai in performance) throughout the continent, including Cape Verde and Madagascar. The remaining ‘routes’, Ethnohistory and Vocality are equally rich in visual, sound, and textual information.

The 3 CD-audio offerings: “Voices of Africa”, “Winds and Strings of Africa”, and “Drums of Africa” are representative covering a broad scope of contemporary African artists and ensembles. There is an index to titles of the selections on each audio CD in the book, followed by a section with photos and write-ups about various artists and groups featured on the recordings. This section would be much more reader/listener accessible if the author had included a citation locating item number and CD location for each particular featured artist/ensemble with each write-up, so that the reader could easily locate and listen to the music s/he is reading about. As it is one must search through the list of titles for each CD, which are not arranged alphabetically, from the write-ups on the various artists/ensembles, which are arranged alphabetically.

The Africa Folk Music Atlas is a comprehensive, attractive, and thorough presentation on African music. It is an excellent investment for school and/or home libraries provided the proper PC equipment is available to access the CD-ROM, which makes the product literally come alive. The authors have done an excellent job of creating a product that informs the reader/viewer/listener about cultural diversity and artistic expression through music across the entire African continent.

Diane Thram, I.L.A.M.

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