

# AFRICAN MUSIC

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### EDITORIAL

The fact that African Affairs in general have never been so prominently and sympathetically studied, coupled with the increasing violence and discontent amongst some African and Afro-American communities, presents a challenge to all persons who would like to help ease the present tensions, and not least to musicians.

Music, quite apart from its artistic and aesthetic qualities, has an important therapeutic role to play in all societies, yet the recognition of this aspect in Africa is all too slow in coming. Of all the branches of African studies undertaken and financed by Universities and their supporters, the science and proper application of music in Africa finds itself near the bottom of the list or not mentioned at all, no doubt entirely due to lack of comprehensive knowledge and research.

Of all the Universities in Africa only two, we are informed, touch upon the vast field of African music and its many social connotations. Of the thirty-six or more African Studies Centres in the United States of America, five alone mention music as part of their routine curriculum and, it appears, no diplomas or degrees can as yet be obtained in this direction. European and British Universities with only minor exceptions are altogether silent upon the subject, mentioning on occasions African Arts, which include sculpture and modern painting, but leaving the more widespread art of music severely alone in the hands of a few, very few, students with the appropriate initiative and vision.

A great proportion of African studies may have long term advantage to Africa, but few, if any, at the present moment, could create such immediate benefit to the amour propre of all persons of African descent as the rational and scientific appraisal of Africa's genius for music. It has been left far too long in the twilight patronage of romantics, protagonists of Western musical clichés and jazz boffins. It needs to be brought out into the full light of intelligent analysis, where it can prove itself a discipline as exact and worthy as any other in the range of important African studies.

Herein lies the challenge to individual musicians and others of good intent towards this side of life in Africa . . . for without pioneer work on a much wider scale, this field of the humanities will languish for lack of the necessary financial support appropriate to its intrinsic value towards the solution of present day problems and the integration of African personalities in their modern context.

We again recommend our Codification and Textbook Project to the musicians and music appreciators of the world, and invite individuals and institutions to add their contribution in whatever way possible to the discovery, analysis, and detailed appraisal of the virtues of African music.

THE EDITOR.