

European tonal structure in singing with a resultant hybrid that makes the worst of both worlds. While school-recordings are easy to obtain, they should, except where the children are too young to be "contaminated", be regarded with suspicion.

To produce collections of songs and a theory of music for schools based on their own interpretation (or misinterpretation) of traditional works, is to move within a circle of doubtful validity. The process may be justified by educationalists on the grounds that the complex structure of much African music is beyond the ability of modern schoolchildren (though illiterate herdboys sing it). "Simplified readers", restricted to a pupil's vocabulary range are common educational practice, though children are warned that they are not the "real thing". There is a possible case for "simplified music", i.e. in which "ornamentation" of which only a professional musician is capable is omitted. One cannot, however, construct a "Theory and Practice of the English Language" from the 2,000 root words of the General Service List, and a similar task in music using comparable material cannot be contrived without distortion. What Mr. Mbabi-Katana has in fact produced is not an "Introduction to East African Music" but an introduction to African Music that has been simplified to fit into a European mould.

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'MUSIQUE DE L'AFRIQUE' by FRANÇOIS BEBEY. Edition HORIZONS DE FRANCE — 19 × 22 cm., 208 pp., 97 illustrations and four line drawings, with a 17 cm. L.P. record. No price, no address of editor given.

This is obviously an unusual book, by a Cameroonesse novelist-essayist-poet-linguist-composer whose peer it would be difficult to find for, being an African, this makes all the difference. Given such assets on the author's side, this beautifully produced and presented folk work falls short of what could — and should — have been expected from him; it becomes barely more than an 'introduction' to African Music, a kind of musical *apéritif*. If this was the sole purpose the author had in mind in writing it, one must concede he has done exceedingly well in whetting one's appetite for much more, for a full course, for a copious repast.

The author aims at the general reader, and thus much of the subject matter will be familiar to the student of African music. However there is considerably more, for even the familiar is replete with insights that only a gifted African scholar could divulge with such an undeniable authority; insights which lend the key to a number of questions that often baffle an outsider — especially when the author deals with music as the expression of African life; the African musician; the African human voice; African music at large — and he does it with a mastery of the language that will appeal to both the casual reader and the hard-to-please musician. These same insights will be precious also to the ethnologist, the more so that the author takes advantage of the cultures — French and English — he has acquired not to look down on his own people but to bring them up, without fuss but no less forcibly, where they rightly belong in the large family of our complex human race; and by the same process, African music is brilliantly vindicated.

But more was expected because, paradoxically, we are already given so much in the short compass of text offered. In a book of 208 pages, there are 97 illustrations — 40 of them full-page, 20 two-third, 37 half-page — the majority of them artistically flawless, all relevant to the text; but 51 of them, including the kodachrome front cover and the attractive back cover, are introduced with only a romantic caption and without any geographical or topical data, making it a frequent cause of frustration to be at a loss among the immense variety of musical instruments, costumes of dancers, or performing ethnic groups in Africa above the equator. Then, if to over 75 pages of illustrations we add some 40 pages devoted to a 'selective discography' — an analytic, comprehensive and well-balanced repertory of L.P. records chosen for their documentary and artistic values — we are left with less than one hundred pages of text proper. This text, running along with the illustrations, is divided into three short chapters: music as an expression of life, the musician, music at large; and a longer chapter on musical instruments, rich in precise and topical information but limited to short descriptions only. Dance is frequently referred to all along the work, but only as a matter of course. Only two musical examples — seven notes in all — are given, lost in the text.

In sum, one feels that the author had the tools and the credentials to produce a major work badly needed if one is to stop turning around, or often groping in the dark, inside the temple; one feels that only an accredited African mentor of Mr. Bebey's calibre could do this. But we have been denied such a work, and we shall feel frustrated so long as we are not able to share with him the still vast amount of knowledge that, almost teasingly, he has kept in store.

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FOLK SONG STYLE AND CULTURE, by ALAN LOMAX, with contributions by the Cantometrics staff and with the editorial assistance of EDWIN E. ERICKSON, Washington, D.C., American Association for the Advancement of Science "Publication No. 88", 1969. Pp. xx, 363, with 76 tables, 75 charts and graphs, 3 appendices, bibliography, list of sources, index.

Alan Lomax has managed to analyse the singing styles of the world, and to find reflected in them the cultural patterns of mankind. It is a breathtaking effort backed by a prestigious wing of the intellectual community, and in time it may lead to a great contribution to the humanities.