

Although the author excludes from his study the general question of the relationship between melodic intervals and tonal changes of linguistic material associated with the instruments examined, yet he is obliged to discuss this matter when dealing with the function of slit-gongs (here described as "wooden drum") as instruments serving to transmit messages. From his own work among the Sundi he finds that only some "three or four drum-messages are still generally in use" (p. 68). The reviewer had hoped to find a discussion on the relationship between linguistic tones and the two distinct musical notes produced by other instruments such as the double bell and the side-blown flute which the author describes as being used for signalling. It is well known, however, that the tonal structure of the Kongo language seems to be more complex than that of languages associated with signalling on musical instruments in the Middle and Upper Congo areas; we must await a further elucidation of this problem when the tonal system of Kongo has been adequately compared with that found elsewhere among peoples with a highly developed signalling practice.

In these days of voluminous publication on all scientific questions, it is easy to overlook material published during the preparation of a work such as the one under review. But it is a pity that the recent monograph on Belgian Congo slit-gongs: F. De Hen, *Tamtams in Belgisch-Kongo*, Universitair Instituut voor de Overzeese Gebieden; Antwerp, 1954-5, was not available to the author, especially as it describes the very rich collection of these instruments in the Brussels (Tervuren) Museum.

We welcome this book as providing a well-documented monograph on the Lower Congo musical instruments. It should serve to stimulate comparative work on musical instruments found in other areas of Congo and provide the ethnographical basis for much-needed musicological investigations.

J. F. CARRINGTON.

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BLACK ORPHEUS. No. 1 September 1957, 52 pps. Ministry of Education, Ibadan, Nigeria.

It is with particular pleasure that we note the appearance of a new journal devoted to contemporary African literature, and see in its first edition contributions of such high standard. It should provide an excellent medium for mature writers on African artistic matters through which to express their observations on the integrities of African artistry. While it cannot replace literature in the vernaculars which must of necessity remain the most fluent medium for indigenous imagery within their privileged circles, a journal in English will reach a wider public which is still lamentably ignorant of the pattern of African thought but which is most anxious to learn from genuine artists and writers.

We have suffered far too long from poor translations by back writers, and it will be most encouraging to those in other territories to learn that a start has been made by gifted writers on art subjects in Nigeria to avail themselves of this opportunity of reaching a wider public. The point of view of the foreign writer, however sympathetic and learned, can never wholly take the place of the indigenous. In other words African literature can only be written by Africans, and if they can master an international language with skill and ease, as the present Nigerian contributors have done, and present their views alongside the most constructive commentaries of sympathetic and knowledgeable non-Africans as this first edition demonstrated, then we predict a bright future for Black Orpheus.

The African Music Society will specially welcome the appearance of articles such as the first in this edition by Adeboye Babalola which throws light upon the lyrics of this continent from an inside point of view. The adequate translation of lyrics has long been one of the most difficult aspects of local musical research, one which requires not only a high degree of sensitivity in the foreign translator, but also a sympathetic knowledge of the symbolism employed by African poets.

The *ijáldá* type of song described by this writer, is found in many African territories to the south, and mature readers in Bantu Africa will find it easy to make comparisons with their own variations of 'ijáldá' through translations such as those by Adeboye Babalola.

Our one regret on the appearance of this journal is in the choice of title. It was, we feel, quite unnecessary to use a title indicating colour. African artists, writers and musicians must surely achieve universal recognition by the validity of their work and not in any degree by recourse to a qualification of skin pigmentation. The African Music Society has already revealed through its studies and recordings, enough of this continent's music to know that no such special dispensation is necessary in presenting the compositions of the folk composers and a few others of applied musicianship whose work, like good wine "neds no bush".

H.T.

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JAMAICAN REVIVALIST CULTS. Social and Economic Studies, Vol. 5, No. 4. December, 1956.

Professor G. E. Simpson of Oberlin College, Ohio, spent seven months in Jamaica in 1957, doing research into revivalist sects in West Kingston. The results of this work are given in an entire number (132 pages) of the Jamaican quarterly review Social and Economic Studies devoted to his paper.

The importance of the study of the sects that have broken away from the older churches and missions has been realised ever since the publication of Bengt Sundkler's book, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*.