

(as in the Ngambay example) designed primarily for socio-religious ends. Even if intensive research shows that in all parts of Africa melodies follow the tonality of the words, the music must surely be freed now and then from the bondage of the words and allowed to develop purely as music. We need to know much more about the rhythmic and harmonic structure of African music, and whether in fact melodies always follow the tonality of the words, what tolerances are allowed and what concessions are made to purely musical expression.

Louis Achille, in a most interesting article on Negro Spirituals, discusses their genesis, and asks why such religious music sprang up in America but not in French Africa, and why Protestant evangelization in America paved the way for these new musical forms, whilst Roman Catholic evangelization in the Antilles and elsewhere led to no such development. He suggests that Anglo-Saxon colonisation was more separatist than the French system, which was based on the assimilation of the indigenous peoples, and that Roman Catholic discipline and the use of plainchant in liturgy left little opportunity for initiative in liturgical matters.

In Africa today, however, it appears that the Roman Catholics are ahead of the Protestants in the Africanization of liturgical music: it remains to be seen whether Roman Catholic congregations will follow the lead given by their priests, and throw up new styles of religious music as vital as those that have appeared in Protestant America.

J.B.

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ETHNOMUSICOLOGY, Journal of the Society for Ethnomusicology, Vol. II, No. 1—3 (January, May and September, 1958).

These are the first three issues of the new Journal, which supercedes the *Ethnomusicology Newsletter*. Dr. Alan P. Merriam and his associates are to be warmly congratulated on a very handsome publication, which is well-printed and a pleasure to read. Each number contains articles, book and record reviews, a current bibliography, notes and news and correspondence, thus keeping readers in touch with the great variety of work being done by ethnomusicologists. There are no articles in Nos. 1-3 devoted solely to African music.

J.B.

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MUSIQUE CENTRE-AFRICAINE—Extrait du Volume "Afrique Equatoriale Francaise" de L'Encyclopédie Coloniale et Meritime—by Herbert Pepper, 20pp.

Dr. Pepper describes briefly the music and musical instruments of Central Africa, illustrating his text with photographs and musical transcriptions. He does not always specify whose music he is discussing, but one has the impression that he must be covering a large area in which there are presumably many different styles of music, each related to the society and culture of which it is a part.

Although the article was not written for a scientific journal, one wonders what useful purpose is served by such a vague and general description. The distribution of the instruments is not discussed; none of the transcriptions has any metronome markings, and most are so fragmentary that they give little idea of the patterns of the music; and the layout of the text is most confusing, so that one's eye must constantly jump from column to column and up and down the page. It is quite clear that Dr. Pepper has an unrivalled knowledge of the music of Central Africa and it is unfortunate that his style has been so cramped by his editors: he should have been given much more space to discuss Central African music, or alternatively have been allowed to discuss the music of one society in detail.

Nevertheless, he does manage to unite his facts within the loose framework of a thesis which may best be described in his own words:—

1. "African instrumental music follows the melodic pattern of ordinary conversation . . . Thus all aesthetic considerations are excluded, and instruments act as mechanical means of reproducing the exceptionally musical qualities of the language."

2. "Thus speech-tone influences the music, but it does not altogether explain its tonal system, which . . . must be sought in the realms of Nature."

The first part of this thesis is most strikingly illustrated by the "music" of the message-drums, and by the drumming at the *Mumpa* divination ceremony (which Dr. Pepper describes in detail), where each rhythm is a musical comment on what is happening.

The basis of the music's tonal system is to be found in the harmonic sounds which can be obtained from trumpets and musical bows. Dr. Pepper further shows how the scale of each instrument is based on the natural harmonic series, and he even quotes a *sanza* hand-piano whose scale is an exact reproduction of the harmonics 6-12 of the fundamental *Mi*.

We would like to know, however, whether in fact all the rhythms and melodies of Central Africa