

A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PERIODICAL ARTICLES ON THE MUSIC OF THE NATIVE PEOPLES OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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INTRODUCTION

I. Opening Statement

The present work was motivated primarily by the writer's own interest in African studies — in particular, in the music of sub-Saharan Africa. There has been a widespread awakening of interest in all aspects of African studies in recent times. The prime catalysts, of course, are the emerging nations of Africa. Together with this interest, there is a continuing awareness on the part of scholars of the value of the interdisciplinary approach in studying the complex cultures of Africa, i.e., of bringing several different points of view to bear upon the study of a particular culture, for the purpose of attaining a more complete picture of the culture as a whole. The writer thus hopes that the present work will be of use not only to students of African music, but also to Africanists in other fields seeking to broaden their knowledge and understanding of this vast area and its various peoples.

II. SCOPE

There are two extant bibliographies in this area.^{1 2} Both are excellent sources — but they are presently out-of-print and need to be up-dated. In line with what has been said in the Introduction, the writer felt that a logical step to take would be that of assembling and making available an up-to-date list of articles appearing in a variety of scholarly journals. To accomplish this end, the writer decided on the purely practical method of surveying the complete runs (covering issues appearing up to November 1, 1962) of several periodicals. The periodicals chosen were selected on the basis of:

- (1) recognized standing in a variety of fields of study (anthropology, linguistics, musicology, etc.);
- (2) general availability (circulation and point of origin);
- (3) variety of viewpoints (regional, national special, etc.);
- (4) whether the periodical contained a fair number of articles on African music (determined by a scanning of tables of contents).

The following periodicals were selected:

Africa (Great Britain) 1928;
 African Music (and the preceding *Newsletter*, South Africa) 1953;
 African Studies (South Africa) 1941;
 Afrika und Übersee (formerly *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprachen* (1920-1950), formerly *Zeitschrift für Kolonialsprachen* (1910-1920), Germany) 1910;
 Bantu Studies (South Africa) 1921-1941;
 Les Colloques de Wegimont. Ethnomusicologie (Belgium) 1954;
 Ethnomusicology (and the preceding *Newsletter*, U.S.) 1953;
 Journal of American Folklore (U.S.) 1888;
 Journal of the American Musicological Society (U.S.) 1949;
 Journal of the International Folk Music Council (Great Britain) 1949;
 Musical Quarterly (U.S.) 1915;
 Studies in Ethnomusicology (U.S.) 1961.

The list of articles which follows below, is a "primary" bibliography, in that the compiler has seen all the articles which are listed (in the Library of Congress, and other libraries in the Washington, D.C., area). Included in the bibliography are all articles, or excerpts of articles, describing the music of peoples native to that portion of the African continent generally south of the Sahara. Excluded are articles on the music of peoples of non-African extraction (e.g., whites, Indians, etc.), and articles quoting song texts but otherwise containing no discussion or commentary upon the music *per se*.

In general, the writer has also excluded book and record reviews, and articles discussing the related, but separate, subject of the influence of African music on the music of other cultures and geographic areas; writings in these categories have, however, been included when it was felt that substantial information pertinent to the study of African music was presented which was not readily available elsewhere.

III. METHOD

Abbreviations are used instead of the full titles of several periodicals, and these abbreviations are given below, together with the full titles of the periodicals to which they refer:

A.M.	African Music.
A.M.S.-N.	African Music Society. Newsletter.
A.S.	African Studies.
A.u.Ü.	Afrika und Übersee.
B.S.	Bantu Studies.

¹ Douglas H. Varley, *African Native Music: An Annotated Bibliography*. (London: Royal Empire Society, 1936).

² Alan P. Merriam, "An annotated bibliography of African and African-derived music since 1936", *Africa*, XXI, No. 4 (October 1951), pp. 319-329.

C.I.	Les Colloques de Wégimont, Cercle International d'Études Ethno-Musicologiques, I (1954).
C. III.	Les Colloques de Wégimont, III (1956), Ethnomusicologie II.
E.	Ethnomusicology.
E.-N.	Ethno-musicology. Newsletter.
J.A.F.	Journal of American Folklore.
J.A.M.S.	Journal of the American Musicological Society.
J.I.F.M.C.	Journal of the International Folk Music Council.
M.Q.	Musical Quarterly.

The articles have been divided into groups according to the geographic area they pertain to. An initial "General" group heads the list: it includes articles discussing African music in general, or discussing the music of more than two geographic regions. Within the various groups, the articles are listed alphabetically by the author.

Each bibliographic citation is followed by brief annotations (where applicable) in the form of words and abbreviations; these are given and defined below:

1. Name of tribe, tribes, or country discussed (if not included in title of article).
2. General — the article is general in nature, or discusses the music of more than three tribes.
3. illus. — the article includes pictures, diagrams, charts, or other illustrative matter.
4. music — the article includes musical examples.
5. bibl. — the article includes a bibliography.
6. footnotes — the article includes bibliographic footnotes.
7. Record List — the article includes a record list.
8. recordings — recordings are referred to in the article.
9. data — the article presents original basic information, facts, or source materials (e.g., descriptions of musical instruments, charts, tables, etc.).
10. background — descriptions, observations, or comments concerning various aspects of musical activity are presented, such as may contribute to a general understanding of the musical climate or "background" in a particular place or region.
11. analysis — the article includes the critical examination and study of data (musical, anthropological, linguistic, etc.) presented, seeking to reduce particular (musical) phenomena to their underlying component parts, elements, and/or causative factors, and to describe, examine, or evaluate the latter.
12. synthesis — the article (through use of inductive reasoning, the analytic process, or otherwise) seeks to group evidence or inferences drawn from particular phenomena (musical and/or otherwise) around one or more central topics or hypotheses.

The last four terms cited above (numbers 9-12) have been included with a view to giving the user some idea of the intent, method, or purpose, of a particular article, and what sort of information it presents.

Thus, for example, a musicologist might wish to study those articles including analysis, while an anthropologist might wish to consult articles giving general background information, and a specialist in a particular area might be particularly interested in articles giving raw (or unanalyzed) data.

An author index, and indexes of tribal names and linguistic areas follow the bibliography. The linguistic area index uses the classification scheme for the Bantu languages reproduced (together with a map showing where these areas lie in Africa) in *Gramophone Records of African Music*, Johannesburg, Gallo (Africa), Limited, 1952, cover p. 2.¹ By use of this index, the reader will be able to refer to articles on tribes whose languages are related: this, it is hoped, will facilitate comparative studies of the music of related tribes. In addition, the majority of the sub-Saharan African languages are tonal. For this reason, it is felt that an index of the type here given will be useful to scholars interested in making analytical studies of the interrelationships between language and music (especially in terms of pitch, rhythm, accent and inflection) of various African tribes.

CONCLUSION

The compiler, of course, realizes the inherent pitfalls in attempting to reach broad conclusions on the basis of partial data; it goes without saying that the 208 articles listed above by no means constitute all articles written on the subject of African music. Nevertheless, it is felt that one can see certain patterns taking shape in this sampling of the currently available literature.

To begin with, the 208 articles are ascribed to a total of 112 authors (including collaborators), 28 of whom (25 per cent) have written more than one article. Of these 28, 14 (12½ per cent) have written more than two articles, and five (about 4½ per cent) have written eight or more articles. If these statistics are based on a valid sample, then there is clearly a need for many more intensively trained individuals in this area of specialization — for scholars who can devote a considerable portion of their professional study time to intensive field work, and who will make frequent contributions to the available literature on the subject.

¹ For a scholarly article by a linguist, explaining this classification system in detail (with maps), see: Cole, Desmond T. "Doke's classification of Bantu languages", *African Studies*, XVIII, No. 4 (1959), pp. 197-213.

One finds a similar situation with respect to the coverage of individual tribes. The index of tribal names in the present work refers the reader to articles containing substantial discussion of the music of the particular tribe named. This index (which includes a few cross-references) includes 112 tribal names, 25 or which (22 per cent) appear as a subject in more than one article. Of these 25 tribes, 16 (about 14 per cent) are discussed in more than two articles, five (12½ per cent) in more than three, and only one tribe, the Yoruba, is discussed in more than five articles. It should also be pointed out that 112 tribal names is only a very small "drop in the bucket". One standard reference work on African cultures, that by George P. Murdock,¹ has about 6,400 names in its index of tribal names (including variant spellings), and Mr. Murdock makes no claim that his book includes all African tribes.

Moving on to an examination of tribe-by-tribe coverage, the overall picture is one of lack of balance. To cite but two examples, the *Ga* and the *Fulani* are both represented in the above list by one article each. Relatively little has appeared in the ethnological and anthropological literature concerning the *Ga* — one standard bibliography, that by Wieschoff,² lists only 18 sources which discuss them. There is a relatively plentiful literature on the *Fulani*, however — the Wieschoff² bibliography, for instance, lists 104 sources. Similar comparisons could be made right on through the list of tribal names in the present work.

There are a few exceptions, however. The *Yoruba*, for instance, are fairly well represented in the above list, with nine articles discussing their music. Both the Wieschoff² bibliography (which lists 70 sources), and that compiled by Ruth Jones³ (which lists 237 sources) cite a relatively large number of sources discussing this tribe: it may well be that, with a few more studies in depth on their music, we can soon begin to relate our knowledge of the music to that of the culture as a whole.

On a larger plane, we find that the coverage of the various countries and geographic areas is also rather spotty. West, Central, South and East Africa lead the list in terms of number of articles cited — but one quickly notes that South West Africa, Mocambique (except for the Chopi), Ethiopia and Tanganyika are hardly touched on at all. These are rather vast areas, and one must certainly hope that we will soon have more studies of the music of the peoples of these areas.

With respect to subject matter, the anthropologist will find that more articles are needed concerning the place of the musician in society (see articles No. 24, 25, 79), and the cultural significance of music and/or its role in society (see articles No. 27, 76, 86, 207). The linguist will wish for more articles analysing the interrelationships between the various African tonal languages and indigenous music (see articles No. 10, 36, 97, 200). The ethnomusicologist, in turn, will no doubt hope for more articles comparing the music of related and non-related tribes (see article No. 124), defining and analyzing the various African scales (see article No. 28), and analyzing musical form (see articles No. 74, 84, 172, 195). Also needed are more articles studying and bringing together these various points of view, and drawing the larger conclusions concerning musical life and/or musical style in this or that region. A few articles of this type have already been written (see articles No. 8, 12, 18, 19, 78), and many more no doubt will be written as further information appears in the published literature.

It is the compiler's opinion that the periodicals chosen constitute a representative group of those scholarly journals in which one might expect to find articles by specialists in African music. For this reason the compiler feels that the articles cited form a valid sampling of the available scholarly studies on African music. In addition, it is felt that a perusal of the Varley⁴ and Merriam⁵ bibliographies will, if anything, reinforce the statements made above. Combining the references given in these two sources with those given in the present work would, of course, change many of the statistics stated above. On the whole, it is the writer's contention, however, that the proportions these statistics represent would not be altered to any great extent: that is, one would still find, for instance, several areas which are hardly covered at all, and a relatively small number of authors who have contributed a substantial number of written works to the extant literature.

If these assertions are correct, then the statistics given above, and the statements which follow them, surely indicate that this is a comparatively untouched field. Our greatest need, in this field of investigation, would appear to be for much more information in the form of carefully researched data, systematically analyzed and clearly presented for publication. For until we know more about the music of those tribes about which we now have scant data (or none at all), we cannot begin to draw the larger conclusions which are necessary if we are to have a clear picture of musical styles and/or musical activity in this or that region. In this connection one must certainly hope, therefore, that the dedicated scholars who have supplied the information now available will be encouraged to keep on with their work, and that many others will come forward to follow in their footsteps.

¹ George P. Murdock, *Africa, its peoples and their culture history* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959).

² Heinrich A. Wieschoff: *An Anthropological bibliography of Negro Africa* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1948).

³ Ruth Jones (Comp.), *African Bibliography Series: West Africa* (London: International African Institute, 1958).

⁴ Douglas H. Varley. *African Native Music: An Annotated Bibliography*. (London: Royal Empire Society, 1936).

⁵ Alan P. Merriam, "An annotated bibliography of African and African-derived Music since 1936", *Africa*, XXI, No. 4 (October, 1951), pp. 319-329.

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¹ For the most part, the spellings used in this index are those used in the articles themselves. In cases where another spelling might be more familiar to some readers, or where such a variant spelling is already in the index, Cross-references are given.