

instruments are treated than I would have expected: no reed instruments are mentioned. In chapter 6, only a single type of stringed instrument is treated, and, as the author admits in the last chapter, there is no sample of polychords.

As I mentioned at the beginning, the book has a unique approach. There are, however, a few points that bother me. First of all, neither the author's motive for undertaking this research, nor the conclusion he draws from it, is given; as a result, the author's purpose is not clear. Chapter 7, "Review," is only one page and four lines long. Secondly, limiting the source of materials to Karnataka State is too restrictive; reference must naturally be made to the many sculptures in other districts, such as Ajanta and Ellora (as the author admits).

This small but unique book provides a wealth of systematic information on the musical instruments of India.

REFERENCES CITED:

DAY, C. R.

1977 *The music and musical instruments of Southern India and the Decan*. Reprinted with new introduction. Delhi: B. R. Publishing Corporation.

KRISHNASWAMI, S.

1971 *Musical instruments of India*. Revised edition. New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

Midori D. HIMENO

Shōwa College of Music

Atsugi, Kanagawa Prefecture

FUCHS, STEFAN. *Das Leben ist ein Tanz. Lieder der indischen Ureinwohner* [Life is a dance. Songs of the tribals of India]. *Klassiker der östlichen Meditation—Spiritualität Indiens*. Zürich: Benziger Verlag AG, 1990. 206 pages. Illustrations, glossary, bibliography. Hardbound SF26.—; ISBN 3 545 20709 9. (In German)

The Indian sub-continent has always been famous for its folklore. Ancient collections of stories and fairy tales, like the Pañcatantra or the "Ocean of Stories," have been translated into many languages and have greatly influenced Arab and European literature; modern authors are publishing stories collected among different Indian communities. Indian folks-songs, on the other hand, have been badly neglected by scientists. We must therefore be grateful to Stefan Fuchs for having given his attention to this branch of the oral lore and for having collected a great number of songs among four Indian tribes. Many of the songs are dancing-tunes, but some of them are sung as well at other occasions.

Through the medium of the songs in his book, Prof. Fuchs gives us the opportunity of getting to know these four groups of *adivasi* (aborigines), i.e., the tribes of the Bhil, Gond, Korku, and Baiga, in a very personal and intimate way that is different from the knowledge gained by reading an ethnographic description. It certainly adds a lot to the liveliness and accuracy of the translation that Fuchs knows the tribal languages and could himself translate directly from them into German. Another point has to be taken into consideration: many of the songs collected by Fuchs are songs of women, and we thus get a chance to hear Indian village-women articulate themselves. It has often been pointed out that in India women are part of the "little

tradition" only, whereas the "great tradition" is represented by men of the upper castes, who are literate and have access to Sanskrit literature. To Indian women this type of knowledge was forbidden until a short while ago. But, as everywhere in the world, the women kept the traditions much more alive than the men—traditions not only in the form of customs and manners but also in the form of stories and songs sung with simple, ancient tunes on special occasions like festivals, marriages, or the birth of a child, and even on very ordinary occasions like flour grinding or working in the fields.

There are few anthropologists who would be able to develop the collected material the way Stefan Fuchs has developed it. He has studied Indian tribals over years as extensively as few other scientists. On the Gond and Korku he has published monographs, and he has a thorough first-hand knowledge of the Baiga and Bhil as well. The introduction on Indian *adivasi* in general and the short descriptions of each of the four tribes at the beginnings of their respective chapters are concise and informative. His knowledge permits Fuchs to point out the Hindu influences in the tribal songs, and to understand the songs the way the *adivasi* mean them to be understood. For the reader there are explanatory remarks for each and every song, explaining the concepts, beliefs, and rituals to which certain words or stanzas refer. Without this background information most of the songs would remain meaningless for the majority of readers, they would merely be short poems in a simple language, often with many repetitions. It is only by a careful reading of the remarks that the songs make sense, come to life for us, and reveal their beauty.

In their songs the *adivasi*, who are still true children of nature, reveal feelings for which they otherwise cannot find words: love, sexual desire, jealousy, loneliness; worries about the family's financial situation, about the future, about adultery, and even about joy felt while dancing. In the four chapters—one for each tribal group—the songs are grouped together according to themes: marriage songs describing the feelings of the young bride and her family members at the time of her wedding, when the girl has to leave her father's house; songs sung when a child is born and female friends and relatives gather to help the woman in labor; love songs, religious songs, songs sung at certain festivals, songs that describe life in the family.

In a few instances the texts of songs for which explanatory remarks have been given are missing, such as song 3 on page 51 and songs 6 to 9 on page 99. These last seem to be invocation songs sung to call the tutelary divinity into the body of the Korku religious practitioner, who, in the state of trance, may help the people of his tribe by giving advice and finding out the reason for diseases. Since there is only one invocation song of the Bhil *barwo*, and none of the *panda*, the Gond religious practitioner, it is therefore all the more pity that the Korku songs have been left out.

It would perhaps have been useful to put a map into the book to show the areas where the tribes live, and it would have been nicer to use as illustrations drawings of one of the four tribes discussed in the book instead of drawings of the Maharashtra Warli-tribe. But these are small shortcomings in an otherwise special and beautiful book that had to be written now; for Fuchs himself is convinced that modern civilization with radio and television sets even in remote villages will create a worldwide pseudo-culture and ruin every type of genuine folk art. Anyhow, as long as the *adivasi* sing their songs and dance the communal dances that give them a strong feeling of "belonging together," there is hope that they will survive as ethnic groups.

Traude PILLAI-VETSCHERA
Wien, Austria