



People of the Drum of God--Come

By Paul L Neeley

Summer Institute of Linguistics, Academic Publications.
 Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 298 pages.
 Dimensions: 9.0in. x 6.0in. x 0.8in. The beat of an nkul, a wooden slit drum, reverberates at dawn around and through the trees and houses of the Ewondo people of Mekomba, Cameroon. What is being communicated? The author's interest was sparked in this communication phenomenon when he recorded audio versions of a drummed message. Though the general message was the same for each performance, the differences were strikingly noticeable. It was apparent that this was not a recital of a fixed piece. He wondered how many different ways a text could be drummed and still be understood, and how exact was the correlation between speech sounds and drum strokes. By examining in detail the performance paradigm of Antoine Owono, a church leader who was involved in drumming for more than forty years, Paul Neeley presents a thorough analysis of this communication event. The analysis ranges from phonology of drumstrokes, to the discourse level, to the level of community comprehension. This study draws from such diverse disciplines as sociolinguistics, anthropology, semiotics, cognition, aesthetics, and ethnomusicology to make an invaluable contribution to our understanding of African culture and communication. Table...

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