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EDITED BY
BERNARD BLOCH
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Cornell University

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LANGUAGE DISSERTATION NO. 39

A DESCRIPTIVE GRAMMAR OF FANTI

BY

WILLIAM EVERETT WELMERS

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA DISSERTATION

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PREFACE

The study and analysis of Fanti, and the preparation of this grammar and vocabulary, were made possible by a generous grant from the American Council of Learned Societies. The work was part of the Intensive Language Program of that Council, and part of the project of supplying implementation for the study of African languages at the University of Pennsylvania. My deepest gratitude is due the American Council of Learned Societies, and Dr. J. M. Cowan, the Director of the Intensive Language Program.

It is hard to express my indebtedness also to Mr. Francis N.-K. Nkrumah and Mr. Kobina-Ahin Ahumanu Mbura, on whose speech this grammar is based. Both proved to be patient and cooperative informants, and their appreciation of the work that was being done made them much more than that. Both are remarkable in their ability to express in precise English the meaning of a Fanti expression. Work with them was no chore, but a pleasure.

Dr. Zellig S. Harris, of the faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of the University of Pennsylvania, is responsible in large measure for the accomplishment of the task of analyzing and describing Fanti. He shared in the initial phonological work, maintained a constant interest in the rest of the work, and contributed many valuable suggestions and, above all, an unfailing inspiration. I owe him my profoundest thanks.

Grateful acknowledgement should also be made of the entire class of eight which took the intensive course in Fanti offered at the University of Pennsylvania during the summer of 1942, when work on Fanti had just been begun. Their help in obtaining material can hardly be measured, and their patience with the unstable materials and methods of intensive instruction is not forgotten. Particular mention should be made of Mr. Kalman Silvert, who first recognized several Portugese loan-words in Fanti.

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