

Western music (even referring to Bartok, Schönberg and Stravinsky; compare p. 8/9, p. 64). Rhythm, melody, harmonies, scale, orchestral music, parallel fourths and fifths, organum, a *capella*, *sprechstimme*, these categories and others form Akpabot's descriptive musical vocabulary. On page 80 he says that the "woodblock rhythm" combines "three Greek rhythmic modes most commonly found in African music: the *iambic* – short, long; the *trochaic* – long, short; and the *spondee* – long, long". On page 64 he writes: "When the music is at its highest point, one or two members of the group may decide to enrich the music even further by holding the tonic and dominant notes in a kind of drone so reminiscent of the instrumental drone in Bartok's string quartets".

Akpabot's photographs present little evidence of authentic performance situations. On the contrary, almost every picture in the book is posed, instruments are standing in some room or are lined up in open air display, people dress up for the author to be photographed, gazing into the camera, and there are everywhere these nameless, anonymous faces.

While the book contains some interesting information on masquerades (pp. 25-37) female puberty customs and women's societies (pp. 48-60) the reader would like to know those people whom Mr. Akpabot says he interviewed in greater detail than is given in the acknowledgements. One would also like to know the *places*, *time* and *circumstances* of the interviews and exactly what they said (in quotation marks) and not only be given 98 pages of mean-value descriptions and summary statements about Ibibio culture.

The neglect to indicate sources is a major deficiency of this book. Another is that the author once again indulges in petty criticism of various musicologists born outside Africa. Though criticism is a healthy institution within any human enterprise, in his case it is beginning to be tiresome and counterproductive because all too often is it based on misreading the authors. (Compare, for instance, what he has to say in "A re-assessment of some popular theories on African music", *Proceedings of the Lusaka International Music Conference*, June 1971, published Lusaka 1974.)

His attack on The Rev. Dr. A.M. Jones, p. 66, is merely opportunistic and even libellous. He does not understand Jones, and he does not understand Bemba music of Zambia. And further, he does not know how to quote: those *fractions* of sentences he attributes to Jones are altogether *deformed*, and they were taken from page 39 and not 27 of Jones' article "African Rhythm", *Africa*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1, January 1954. Finally, what he says against the Sachs' classification of musical instruments (p. 11) is a platitude.

I have a feeling, after reading this book, that Mr. Akpabot's soul is much more at home in the sounds of Bartok, Schönberg and Stravinsky than in the music of African communities with all the exigencies of doing field-work there, and he might perhaps consider as his next work to write about those composers or some related subject in the rich realm of Western Historical Musicology.

GERHARD KUBIK

AFRICAN MUSIC AND ORAL DATA, A catalog of field recordings 1902-1975 by Ruth Stone and Frank Gillis, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and London, 1976, pp. 412.

This imposing volume represents the completion of one part of an exhaustive five-part bibliographic project originally organized by the Committee of Fine Arts and the Humanities of the African Studies Association in 1964. The authors' debt to Professor Willard Rhodes, who initiated the project twelve years ago, has surely been more than repaid by the scholarly care with which the catalogue has at last been brought to publication. I avoid the word "completion" here because, as the authors state, the computerized organization of the survey allows for the continual updating and correction of listings. As Professor Merriam notes in his foreword, this conception of the project as "never ending" is an important advance in bibliographic technique which largely compensates for the tendency of bibliographies to be out of date at their moment of publication.

Merriam also discusses another unique aspect of the catalogue; its listing of "noncommercial" collections of African music. With the aid of carefully constructed questionnaires the compilers have elicited information about personal collections in private hands as well as listings of

catalogued collections in archives, libraries and universities. Unlike standard bibliographies of written materials, the present volume fills an important gap in concentrating upon "unpublished" sources.

Altogether the book includes four main sections; a main catalogue of collectors and repositories, cross-indexed by country, culture group and subject. The preface explains the coding and listing procedures and samples of survey questionnaires. The bulky, computerized format may appear somewhat forbidding at first, but finding what you need becomes relatively easy after a few trials. Most readers will probably want to refer to the indexes for the countries or culture groups they are interested in first. These will refer them to the catalogue of collectors and repositories, where more detailed information about the content of recordings will be found along with its location and the restrictions on its use.

On the critical side I think the authors could have usefully prefaced the subject index with an alphabetical list of the subject categories employed. On one occasion I attempted to find collections of the music of African separatist churches. While I was not surprised to find that this category did not exist in the survey as such, it required several tries to discover that the only category which could possibly include such music was that labelled "hymns". A subject list would have revealed this situation immediately. In addition, the referents of some of the categories and subcategories are not entirely clear, due perhaps to the vagueness of the "subject" entries on the original questionnaire. For example the subject listings for Charles R. Adams' collection of Swazi music include "dance-social, social-dance". What precisely the difference is between these two is not apparent, and the content of the rather large category labelled "social" is not further explained.

Despite their slight tendency to vagueness, the compilers have placed an invaluable new resource for the study of African music in our hands. One hopes that the catalogue will not only encourage scholars with mutual interests in this field to communicate and share materials with each other, but also to contribute to the survey if they have not already done so. The study of African music should thereby draw vastly increased material benefit from the long term efforts of collectors and musicians throughout the continent.

DAVID B. COPLAN

LES MENDZAN DES CHANTEURS DE YAOUNDE: Histoire – Organologie – Fabrication – Système de Transcription, by Pie-Claude Ngumu, No. 34, Acta Ethnologica et Linguistica, Vienna, 1976, pp. 81, photos, diagrams.

Directeur-fondateur de la Maîtrise des chanteurs à la croix d'ébène de Yaoundé, l'auteur de ce livre, Pie-Claude Ngumu, nous introduit progressivement dans la culture musicale des xylophones du pays Beti (Ewondo), du Cameroun. Nommé vicaire et maître de chapelle à la cathédrale de Yaoundé, le père Ngumu fonde la Maîtrise et l'ensemble des *mendzan* pour lequel il compose plusieurs morceaux en fonction des cultes religieux. Le présent ouvrage traite surtout des xylophones qui sont en usage dans la dite Maîtrise.

Dans une première partie, il nous présente les musiciens de son ensemble, tandis que, dans la deuxième, il décrit en détail la technique de fabrication des *mendzan* par un de ses instrumentistes. Le texte (souvent dans un style trop narratif) est illustré de dessins et croquis qui montrent les différents stades de fabrication.

Une troisième partie est consacrée aux noms des xylophones *mendzan* Beti, à leur rôle et à leur relation interne dans l'ensemble musical. L'auteur distingue le *omvek*, l'*akuda-omvek*, le *nyia-mendzan*, l'*endum* et l'*ololong*.

La partie intitulée "Problèmes ethnomusicologiques" la plus importante de cet ouvrage, nous explique d'abord l'échelle et la place successive de chaque lame des différents *mendzan*, pour arriver aux intervalles utilisés et aux mesurages des tons en v.p.s. et cents (Jones; Kubik).

Ensuite, une partie importante est réservée à la "Transcription" pour laquelle l'auteur se base sur le système Kubik qu'il intitule la "Vedette pionnière de ces transcriptions". Il donne quelques exemples de transcriptions d'un morceau de *mendzan*, d'une batterie Beti (tambours, hochets) et