

I would add that we have always tried to keep the I.L.A.M. out of polemic and politics. It was founded as a research and resource centre for African music and this is how I would like it to continue. You may wonder why it stays here, in view of the obvious difficulties of the local situation. There have been suggestions that it move elsewhere. The main argument against this, of course, is that the collection is primarily of South and Southern African music and this is, therefore, where it ought to be. My own research area is the same, and I still feel that one can do much more here, with the disadvantages, than elsewhere. As long as you can continue writing here for your subscriptions, you will be helping me to keep the Journal going as a service to all concerned with African music. Also please feel free to offer suggestions, opinions or noteworthy items; I shall appreciate your ideas on how best to serve your interests.

HUGH TRACEY 1903 – 1977

Dr. Hugh Tracey, the founder of this journal and of much else besides in the study of African Music, passed away at his farm, Saronde, Krugersdorp, near Johannesburg, on 23rd October, 1977.

Personal tributes have come to the I.L.A.M. from so many people that I cannot have thanked them all. I would like to do so now.

My father had started to work on an autobiography, which he entitled "A river left for me". We are fortunate to have found a biographer who has undertaken to complete the task in the person of Anthony Trowbridge, a personal friend, author and educationalist.

Hugh Tracey came out to what was then Southern Rhodesia from Devonshire, England after World War I to farm with his brother. Very soon he learned to speak Karanga and sing Karanga songs, and discovered to his amazement that no one in authority believed that there was such a thing as African music or that it was deserving of attention. Thus it was towards these two aims that his life's dedication gradually developed: revealing the extent and the nature of African music, and initiating his own and others' research, in order to establish it in its rightful place in Africa.

His first recordings were made in the early 30's. Then finding it impossible to continue in the face of indifference and lack of support he switched to broadcasting in South Africa. While director of the Durban broadcasting studios he was responsible for introducing the first local broadcasting in African and Indian languages. He recorded extensively among the Zulu and started his deep interest in the Chopi of Mozambique. In 1947, after World War II, realising that if something was going to be done about African Music, he would have to do it, he managed to obtain the support he needed to start full-time recording and research (at first from Gallo (Africa) Ltd., the record company, subsequently from the Nuffield Trust, the Ford Foundation, and many other sponsors). From that time until 1966 there was hardly a year in which he did not undertake a major recording tour. He touched on fourteen of the fifteen countries from Uganda and Zaire southwards, and although he sometimes said he had recorded perhaps a tenth of one percent of what *should* be recorded, nevertheless the hundreds of records in the several series he published for the I.L.A.M. have already provided the fundamental survey of knowledge about the traditional music of this half of Africa, most of it previously completely unknown and unrecorded. His recordings will continue to serve as a historical base line for future generations to refer to and build on. They also stand as his personal memorial.

He founded the African Music Society with Dr. Winifred Hoernlé in 1947, and soon after produced the first Newsletter. There were six of these, until it grew into this journal in 1954. He wrote many of the articles himself, and also by voluminous and assiduous correspondence built up a wide network of contributors and friends.

He did not really retire at any point, energy of mind and body being one of his characteristics. By 1975 he had effectively handed over the running of the I.L.A.M. to me.

As for the rest of what should be said about Hugh Tracey, a giant in many ways, I should recuse myself as being much too close to him. We are hoping that his biography, which will be published jointly by the I.L.A.M. and an international publisher, will go far towards revealing more of his humanity, his vision of Africa, his sense of discovery and adventure, and place his life and achievement into perspective.

Andrew Tracey

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