

MUSIK IN AFRIKA is a true compliment to German scholarship in the field of African music. What must now logically follow is a work prepared as magnificently as this, that would include the most perceptive writings and recorded examples, produced by the international community of African music scholars — especially some of the fine studies by African musicologists. Such a publication, following the quality presentation of MUSIK IN AFRIKA would truly demonstrate that the field of African music scholarship has reached a new dimension.

MITCH STRUMPF

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MUSIKGESCHICHTE IN BILDERN — OSTAFRIKA. Vol. No. 10, Ethnomusicological Series of VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, Leipzig, 1982. By Gerhard Kubik with the co-operation of Jim de Vere Allen, Margot Dias, Ashenafi Kebede, Artur Simon and John Wembah-Rashid, general editor Werner Bachmann, pp.250, 170 photographs colour and BW, diagrams, music. DDR 48.00 Mark, Order No. 518 211 9.

This certainly ranks amongst the finest, most informative and exciting volumes not only in the context of this particular series, but also in the field of ethnomusicological studies in general. A first and perfunctory glance at the title "Music in East Africa" may well lead to a misunderstanding, and it is only when looking at the actual contents that one becomes aware of the truly enormous task the editor set for himself. "Music in East Africa" covers indeed the entire region from Ethiopia in the North down to Mozambique in the South. Consequently one finds detailed information on topics as widely differing as liturgical music in the Coptic church, court music in Uganda and music in the cultural region of Nyasa-Ruvuma. A major part of the various articles comes from the pen of Dr G. Kubik, undoubtedly the foremost expert on African music. One cannot help admiring the truly incredible amount of field trips and subsequent analysis of the collected material that has been done by Dr Kubik and his collaborators.

Considering the wealth of information contained in this volume, it is quite impossible to deal with each of its chapters in detail. Nevertheless, a few observations may be justified. One of the first points which comes to one's notice is the importance of the many migrations in the history of the African continent which affected large regions of Africa and led to a constant inter-mingling of different peoples, cultures and traditions. This fact becomes especially obvious in the detailed discussions on "historic and recent migrations of musical instruments", but also plays a major part in the variety of musical traditions found in Tanzania where Dr Kubik's research proved the existence of at least eight different "style regions". A chapter of particular interest is undoubtedly the detailed analysis and description of the court music of Buganda. It is one of the many tragedies in the long history of Africa that political radicalism destroyed a traditional form of music-making that represented one of the greatest achievements of African culture. It is in this chapter too that the author elaborates on the cypher system first developed by Evaristo Muyinda in Kampala in order to notate Kiganda music. Using the same system Dr Kubik then discusses in detail a particularly famous example of Ugandan court music in a version for amadinda.

However, research is by no means limited to past traditions and to historic developments; it also includes the influence of 19th century European army bands and the emergence of new developments since 1945. These latest developments are discussed under four sub-headings: the rise of political songs with a nationalistic content; the emergence of a new Christian church music; the formation of official music and dance ensembles as sponsored by the state; and the rise of a new East African "pop" music.

The various highly fascinating chapters mentioned so far form only the first and relatively

short part of the volume under discussion. The major part is taken up by a wealth of pictorial evidence, mostly in the form of excellent photographic material. Altogether 170 pictures are listed, but many more are added, together with explanatory drawings in the course of the detailed information that accompanies each picture. In this way one can study an enormous selection of musical instruments, often photographed from various angles and with special consideration for important details. On many occasions the material is brought to life by pictures which show the actual playing of, for example, a harp, a flute, a fiddle, etc. or which relate a group of instruments to the performance of a dance. Ensembles in particular feature most prominently, stressing the communal aspect of African music, and on many occasions the pictures convey the peculiarity of movement that forms such an essential part in the context of African music.

A detailed bibliography of almost 20 pages and a glossary of African terms form the concluding chapters in a book that can be regarded as a truly unique contribution to ethnomusicological research. May it find the wide market it deserves and may it cause many readers to discover treasures the existence of which they may not have known before starting their journey into the land of music in East Africa.

RUPERT MAYR

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AMADU BANSANG JOBARTEH; MASTER OF THE KORA, Eavadisc EDM 101,
Cambridge Audio-Visual Ethnomusicological Archive, 1978.

This record has been produced by the Cambridge Audio-Visual Ethnomusicological Archive in association with the visit of Mr. Jobarteh to England in 1978. At the same time a teaching film on the technique of *kora* playing was prepared, and apart from its general interest to African musicologists, it should act as an adjunct to the teaching film by demonstrating some of the repertoire available to a student of the *kora*.

The *kora* is undoubtedly the most frequently recorded African melody instrument, both because of the immediately attractive sound and because of the accessibility and articulation of its players. There is, in fact only one piece on this record which is new on disc: *Jula Faso* (B4). This should not deter potential purchasers, however, because Mr. Jobarteh has a highly individual technique different from most of the other musicians previously recorded, and because some other versions of these pieces are unsatisfactory. The emphasis on this record is on a virtuoso performance style, which might be expected from a musician who frequently records for the Radio, and it is worth comparing this performance style with the sound of a *kora* actually recorded in the context of village events (see, for example the recordings of Jali Bai Konte included in the anthology '*Music from the Gambia*', Vol. 1. Folkways FE 4521).

The notes on this record are more complete than on any of the other records I have seen. They were prepared by Lucy Duran, who studied under Mr. Jobarteh in the Gambia, and was instrumental in arranging his visit to England. They include both historical notes on the origin of the various items in the repertoire and explanations of the musical structure of the pieces. The four principal tunings of the *kora* are all included on the record and their characteristics clearly set out. It would be nice to see the *kumbengo* or ostinato patterns which underlie each piece set out in the text, as this might give the listener a better chance of making sense of the *birimintingo* improvisations.

Altogether an important addition to our knowledge of the styles of *kora* playing.

ROGER BLENCH