

## NOTES AND NEWS

### THE INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY OF AFRICAN MUSIC

On the 30th May 1986, Article No. 10253 in the Government Gazette stated that the Section 21 non-profit company known as International Library of African Music (ILAM) had been deregistered. At that moment the long months of negotiation between ILAM and Rhodes University came to an end and ILAM found a permanent home. The ILAM, founded at Roodepoort in 1954 by Hugh Tracey, was a private institution depending mainly on the support of overseas benefactors such as the Nuffield and the Ford Foundation. By the 1970s political conditions in South Africa had already begun to deter overseas donations and the ILAM's work, indeed its existence, became increasingly precarious. Dr Jeffrey Opland, whose work on Xhosa oral literature is well known, and who had had contact with ILAM through his research, was aware of this and suggested an affiliation of ILAM to Rhodes University in Grahamstown. Then Dennis Etheredge who, as Secretary of the Chairman's Fund of Anglo-American Corporation, and then as Chairman of the Chamber of Mines, had frequently been asked to tide the ILAM over to better times, proposed that the long-term answer to the continuity of both ILAM and African music studies in South Africa was to bring it permanently under the wing of a university. The ILAM finally moved to Grahamstown in 1978, after the death of Dr. Hugh Tracey the previous year, and the building was officially opened by Dennis Etheredge to the sound of a full Chopi xylophone orchestra directed by Venancio Mbande.

The core of the archive is the recordings made from 1929 to the mid 70s by pioneer recordist Hugh Tracey, most of which have been published in the several ILAM record series, both 78 and 33 rpm, notably the 213-record *Sound of Africa* series which can be found in African studies departments at many universities worldwide. These recordings cover an area from South Africa to northern Zaire and Uganda, with their greatest strength in southern Africa. Now with the appointment of a librarian, Ms Gege Kekana, it is hoped that the entire ILAM collection including previously unpublished 78s, and recordings of black urban music, will be brought into the University's library system and then computerised according to an accepted international library system, thus making our holdings immediately accessible worldwide.

What future can the International Library of African Music have in South Africa and what role can it play? The function of the library is to spread knowledge of African music. It is a means both for Africans to get to know their culture better and for white people to gain a better understanding of black values. There is an increasing demand among black people in South Africa, in education, the church, cultural groups and the entertainment world for example, for a more informed approach to their traditional and popular music. The ILAM aims to teach methods of musical analysis which will allow students to do their own research. It provides a home and an inspiration for students and university fellows, the most notable of late being Fr. Dave Dargie of the Lumko Missiological Institute whose Ph.D thesis, "Techniques of Xhosa music, a study based on the music of the Lumko district", should contribute greatly to our understanding of traditional Xhosa music.

ANDREW TRACEY

\* \* \* \* \*

### **African music activities of the Department of Ethnomusicology at the Ethnographical Museum of Berlin (West) by Prof. Dr. Artur Simon**

The highlights of our concert activities in June 1984 were the second invitation to three former Buganda court musicians, Evaristo Muyinda, Ludvico Sserwanga and Hadisoni Kiyaga, and the first performance of the famous jali and kora-player, Jali Nyama Suso from Gambia. Additional

events of these "African music days" were two workshops for students together with these musicians and two lectures on African music cultures given by Dr Veit Erlmann and Dr Gerhard Kubik. We were able to make video and tape recordings of our African guests as in the previous year, for our archives of traditional music which now hold approximately 60,000 recordings.

Much additional information about the court music of Buganda was obtained and interesting cultural facts reconstructed. A great number of song texts of Evaristo Muyinda's performance were transcribed and translated into German by Dr Francis Bisasso.

Publications on African music include the book 'Musik in Afrika' and several record albums in our series "Museum Collection Berlin (West)": No.6 'Music of the Hamar/Southern Ethiopia' (recording and commentary by Ivo Strecker); No.9 and 10 'Music of the Nubians/Northern Sudan', and 'Dikr and Madih/Sudan' (recording and commentary by Artur Simon); No.11 'Mukanda na Makisi/Southern Angola' (recording and commentary by Gerhard Kubik). An album about 'musician-composers of Southern Malawi' (recording and commentary by G. Kubik and Moya Aliya) and another on 'African music in Brazil and Angola' (by G. Kubik) are in production. A book on 'African string instruments' (together with a cassette) by Ulrich Wegner was published in 1984.

Field research had been carried out in 1982 and 1983 by Artur Simon in the southern part of the Blue Nile Province/Sudan among the Berta, who live on both sides of the Sudanese-Ethiopian border. This was a joint project together with the Institute for African and Asian Studies at the University of Khartoum.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Research project on "Systems of traditional education in Malawi" (the continuation: September 1983 to February 1984) by Dr. Gerhard Kubik**

Since my first report on the research in Mangochi District July/August 1983 (see: *African Music*, Vol. VI No.3 pp.132-137) our team, now comprising four members: Mr Moya Aliya (cultural research student), Mr Donald Kachamba (musician) and Miss Lidiya Malamusi (assistant) besides myself, has been able to continue studies in more districts. These were carried out with permission granted in a letter by the Secretary of the National Research Council, Lilongwe, dated Nov.16, 1983. The financial basis of our research was secured through an additional grant we were able to obtain from the Foundation for the Advancement of Scientific Research, Vienna (Austria) to enable us to extend our project No.4977 to a total of eight months. In various combinations members of our team then visited villages in Mulanje, Mwanza, Chikwawa, Nsanje and Lilongwe District during the next few months. In all these districts we met with interest, help and cooperation on the part of the people and officials alike. The District Commissioners in some areas, for example in Mwanza District where some villages are difficult to reach during the rainy season, also helped us with transport.

In material terms alone, our collection has become quite comprehensive. Before the project even ended, by mid-February we had some 78 hours of tape-recorded material (oral traditions, music, ceremonies etc.) and over 60 cine films of similar content. The photographs, mainly Mr Moya Aliya's work, go into several thousands and will have to be evaluated in detail. Moya Aliya plans a travelling exhibition if possible in cooperation with the Department of Fine and Performing Arts of the University of Malawi, with captions in Chichewa and English. Our written notes, including text transcriptions of interviews in Chiyao and Chichewa now comprise some 400 type-written pages (single-spaced) which will form the basis of publications we intend to produce. With regard to the outcome of the research in Mangochi District on *jando* and *lupanda* we have nearly reached this stage and I was able to give a lecture with an overview of the preliminary results on "Islamic and non-Islamic elements in *jando* and *lupanda* initiation schools of the Yao" for the Department of Religious Studies of the University of Malawi. Our major findings on the history of these institutions may be summarised as follows: