

be traced historically (see my article "The original African mbira?", *African Music*, 5/2, 1972). Unfortunately in museum instruments it is not always possible to perceive this, due to their condition. All the instruments described under Group IX can probably be ascribed to one of the types discussed in this article, which could be done with even more safety if what remains of the original tunings could have been recorded in the book.

The 'square cross section' of the pressure bar is a feature which identifies instruments from this area, as also the method of holding it down not with wire, but with solid or bifurcated rivets, the type of decoration on the pressure bar and keys, the presence of a protective metal plate on the back, and so on. But the primary method of identification, and this is true for the players too, remains the layout of the keys. The zone which Group IX comes from could be described as central Mozambique, approximately from the Zambezi to the Buzi rivers, and from Tete to the coast, and the peoples concerned are primarily the Barwe, Gorongozi, Sena and Nyungwe.

No. 76, described as being of 'Tshopi' origin from Maputo, is in fact a *mana embudzi* type, found mainly at the Tete end of the above area. The Chopi do not play, and say they have never played an instrument of the lamellophone family. Their well-known xylophone, however is called *mbila* (plur: *timbila*), linguistically the same word as *mbira*, the name used for the lamellophone in parts of the above area. (The other general name here is *nsansi*, note not 'sansa', the name mistakenly taken down by Livingstone in this area, which, having been spread by the publication of his travel diaries, became the name by which the world knows this African instrument, viz. the title of the book under review).

The keyboard of No.79 is not in fact 'divisé en deux parties', but just a matter of 2 or 3 keys missing! The instrument could be a *nyonganyonga* type, played by the Barwe, Gorongozi and Sena peoples.

Apart from the care in presentation and the quality both of the photographs and the instruments they show, a valuable bonus of this well-documented catalogue is the clear descriptive system used and the publication of the technical terms in French for the taxonomy, body parts, etc of the lamellophone.

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IKOLI HARCOURT WHYTE, THE MAN AND HIS MUSIC: A CASE OF MUSICAL ACCULTURATION IN NIGERIA by Achinivu Kanu Achinivu, 2 vols. Beiträge zur Ethnomusikologie, No.7. Hamberg: Verlag der Musikalienhandlung, Karl Dieter Wagner, 1979. Vol. 1: 456 p., music; vol.2: 194 p., music, texts.

"African musicologists are surely better equipped to handle their own music". (p.29). With these words ends the *Introduction* to Achinivu's two-volumed Ph.D thesis submitted in 1978 to the Freie Universität Berlin and written under the supervision of the late Kurt Reinhard. I do not know any Africanist who would not subscribe to this statement and probably agree about its *de jure* rightfulness. For an Africanist like myself who went through the same school under the same teacher just a few years earlier and who writes from a country in Africa where racist ideology still dictates that Africans are ill-equipped to look after themselves, it is hard and may appear unjust to contradict such a statement. Achinivu's book, however, bears testimony to the contrary, despite the fact that its author hails from Nigeria.

This is all the more regrettable since ethnomusicologists interested in urban African music have begun to assess the role and work of such eminent musicians and composers as Ephraim Amu (Agawu 1984, July 1983), Reuben T. Caluza, Benjamin Tyamzashe, or J. Mohapeloa, and Achinivu is certainly correct that the "awakened interest in African music" has unduly given a great deal of attention to "elements of music...musical instruments...but very little, if anything at all, has been written on any of the very many talented African composers". (p.11) Indeed, to the

present reviewer it comes as no surprise and seems to be perfectly fitting that Achinivu quotes exiled black South African trombonist Jonas Gwangwa in this connection: "...to really get down to our thing, to retain the African heritage, we have to start to study some of the black composers, and African composers..." (p.12).

Ikoli Harcourt Whyte is such a composer. Born in 1905 in Abonnema in the Rivers State, Nigeria, Whyte's parents "might have engaged in some form of the slave trade" (p.57) and in Whyte's own words, "they led the middle-class life of their time". And so did Ikoli Harcourt Whyte himself for the rest of his life. Attending a variety of schools such as the Bishop Crowther Memorial School between 1915 and 1918, Whyte (strange parallel between the American South, Nigeria and South Africa) played flute and side-drum in the school brass bands. In 1918 Whyte contracted leprosy and after being transferred to a Port Harcourt hospital became the leading figure in the resistance against attempts by the colonial government to rid the hospital of leprosy patients, a struggle which was eventually successful and led to the foundation of the Leprosy Hospital Uzuakoli in 1932, and Whyte's own hospital school in 1933. During the official opening ceremony for the hospital, the hospital brass band played the Welsh tune "Ar Hyd y Nos". (p.78) and sometimes during evenings "the band gently played for evening prayers. The scene was an evening vesper, and the tune *Abide with me*". (p.80) This was the beginning of Whyte's career as a composer, encouraged by a new arrival, T.F. Davey, a doctor-reverend-musician from England. Davey encouraged Harcourt Whyte, took him on village survey tours where Whyte collected traditional music (p.85), and finally cured and discharged him as "clean" in 1949. Working as a teacher for most of the rest of his life, and interrupted by the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970), Ikoli Harcourt Whyte died in 1977, having composed an estimated 600 sacred hymns and anthems.

Achinivu's work contains three main parts: 1) Harcourt Whyte's biography occupying 53 pages, mostly based on interviews with Whyte himself, well-written and fascinating to read, 2) a "musical-analytical section" of 261 pages, neatly separated into chapters on "Harmony", "Melody, Rhythm and Text", "Performance practice" and "Forms of Harcourt's compositions", and 3) Volume 2 with scores of 50 of Whyte's compositions, 46 of which were previously unpublished, collected and rescued by Achinivu over the Biafra crisis.

The crux with Achinivu's work is that the author's allegedly advantageous cultural background is overshadowed by both insufficiently supervised training at Western universities and a middle-class ideology intermingled with Christian religious elements, Igbo consciousness, and bits of Nigerian nationalism. It is this unbalanced mixture of elements which makes the book boring reading for the greater portion of it, and which - in the final instance - fails to accomplish what it sets out to achieve: a critical appraisal of Harcourt Whyte's work (p.29). A few examples may suffice to illustrate this: Achinivu is aware of the fact that "it is in many cases difficult to express his (i.e. Whyte's, V.E.) chord progressions in terms of European functional harmony" (p.24) and devotes some pages to a discussion of the influences of traditional Igbo harmony and speech patterns on Whyte. But most of the "musical-analytical section" is preoccupied with what Whyte *did not know*, resulting in statements that emphasize the deviance from standard Western prescripts, rather than the originality of Whyte's compositions. In truly dated acculturationalist perspective, and despite his nationalist outlook, Achinivu looks for the model parent-culture first and then finds out how the acculturated reacts to it or "deviates" from it.

Achinivu is at odds with the concept "acculturation", and despite the subtitle of his work, acculturation is such a "monster-headed phenomenon" to him that he prefers to resist the "temptation to delve into Colonialism, Christianization and Politics in Nigeria" (p.31). Although he does not "claim to be a specialist" in these fields (p.31) he devotes some 22 opening pages to the topic. But it is certainly difficult to accept sentences such as the following as the scholarly result of such involvement with problems of musical acculturation: "The music of Harcourt-Whyte represents....a positive, progressive result of acculturation" (p.23). Un-

doubtedly it is the 'unpolitical', middle-class non-specialist, more than the African musicologist in general, who is always equipped to determine what is progressive, nationally acceptable and in accordance with the principles of (Christian) morals. This is why, for Achinivu, the popular music of Lagos, Ibadan, Benin, Enugu etc., that other product of 'acculturation' is only one of "the most effective agents of advertising and attracting customers to one's stall" (p.48). And this is the reason why Harcourt Whyte's music is "progressive", profit or not: "In Europe, Harcourt would have been one of the richest citizens but in his native Nigeria he lived in his fame and died a poor man" (p.28). This is what this wicked, "monster-headed phenomenon" of acculturation, more adequately called imperialism, can do! And it needs *more* than being African to be "better equipped" to understand this, it needs also a theoretical framework, whether African or other, which transcends middle-class ideologies of "fame", status or riches.

#### References cited

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VEIT ERLMANN

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\* MUSIC FROM MOZAMBIQUE, CHOPI TIMBILA. Two orchestral performances recorded in Zavala, Inhambane Province, Mozambique 1981, by Ron and Ophera Hallis. No. FE 4318, Folkways Records, 43 W 61st St. NYC, USA 10023.

Once again Folkways does it...a record of essentially good music that is presented unfinished, with a kind of half-hearted inattention to detail, consistency, accuracy, even typographical layout, that reminds me of the muddled folk guitarist trying to get his guitar in tune who finally sighs, "Well, it's good enough for folk". Perhaps it is good enough for 'folk' but it should not be good enough for Folkways. There are some good moments, both on the record and in the notes, but where is the scholarly and loving attention to detail that could have lifted this record out of the ordinary and done justice to the Chopi, the undisputed masters of xylophone orchestral playing?

The record contains selections from the complete performances of the *timbila* orchestras at Shissibuka (Chisibuka) and Zavale (Zavala). The Chisibuka orchestra, a small group of 8 players and 8 singers, is not outstanding as *timbila* orchestras go, but representative of many groups in out-of-the-way parts of Chopiland who would shine nevertheless in any other company. The recording was made at a special performance with the singers/dancers sitting on the ground, which allows the recordist to get a better balance on their voices against the xylophones, but also loses something of the ebb and flow of energy, the excitement of the full event, as well as the integral repeats, some of which must have been left out for the recording. The Zavala orchestra is one of the five or six top orchestras of the central Chopi, with a long tradition of excellence. It is good to hear their mellow sound in full performance, although they seem to be showing the untidy effect of lacking a powerful leader these days; Cambane does not have quite the brilliance of the famous Katini family, recent leaders at Zavala for nearly forty years.

The recording quality and balance on both orchestras are moderately good. Where was the recordist standing? It sounds to me mostly like the back of the orchestra, next to the *chinzumana* and *dibhinda* (double bass, bass), with occasional forays around the side. Although this is the spot reserved for VIPs, it means that the front-line leaders and the singers, the centre of musical action, are in the distance in microphone perspective. The importance of the songs is undervalued in these recordings; some are there, up front, many others are almost inaudible in the background. A Chopi performance is one of the hardest recording tasks, so I sympathise