

storytelling session are not familiar with the song, the narrator teaches them briefly to ensure adequate choral response. For the instrumental accompaniment of *okpobhie* one of two instruments is used: the *akpata*, a seven-string bow-lute, or the *asologun*, a small box-resonated lamellophone with nine notes made from umbrella ribs. Professor Ben-Amos devotes a most informative section to these instruments which are nicely illustrated on pages 27 and 28. Benin, he says, is the northwestern tip of a wide distribution area of the bow-lute. (The south-western edge is in Botswana where G.T. Nurse found it among "Bushmen", who had probably adopted it from Bantu-speaking neighbours. See Nurse in *African Music*, 1972. Otherwise it is an instrument widely known in Zaire and Angola.)

Ben-Amos presents evidence of the use of the bow-lute in Benin history, including two seventeenth-century bronze plaques, where it can be seen. In contrast to the bow-lute "the *asologun* is mentioned neither by eyewitness accounts nor does it appear on indigenous commemorative art . . . even today there is a ban on the *asologun* in Benin city itself." (p. 33).

The next section discusses the position and role of the storyteller and the learning process. "When learning from a teacher who is neither a member of the family nor a personal friend, the pupil enters into a contractual apprenticeship, which is typical for Benin society in other cases of extra-familial professional instruction . . . Such relationship lasts from one to three years . . ." (p. 39-40). This section finishes with some historical speculations: Ben-Amos quotes Bradbury who regarded Benin society as a combination of two cultures, an age-graded village-based society upon which a centralized, hierarchical royal structure was superimposed from Yoruba society. He argues that "the fact that the *akpata* players are not well integrated as a group into Benin society may be a result of the fact that the *akpata* is part of the rural culture, which preceded the imposition of the urban Yoruba-type structure." (p. 43). He further discusses a myth about the origin of *akpata* and *asologun* and the tendency of the storytellers to "view playing the *akpata* or the *asologun* as psychological therapy." (p. 45).

The book concludes with some well-done transcriptions and translations of Edo texts by Rebecca Agheyisi, one of Professor Ben-Amos' co-workers, and with — unfortunately — very poor musical transcriptions by Judith Irvine.

GERHARD KUBIK

THE KACHAMBA BROTHERS' BAND: a study of neo-traditional music in Malaŵi by Gerhard Kubik. University of Zambia, Institute for African Studies, *Zambian Papers* No. 9, P.O. Box 900, Lusaka, Zambia, 1974, pp. 75, x, plates, diagrams, bibliography, K2.50, £2.25. Related disc (same title): A.E.L. Series Phonographica No. 1, Institute of Ethnology, University of Vienna, Universitätsstrasse 7, A-1010 Vienna, Austria.

The original German text of this monograph was published in Vienna in 1972 (under the same English title) in *Acta Ethnologica et Linguistica*, No. 27. The present English version is in fact rather more attractively produced: the eight photographic plates are much clearer, there are three additional diagrams, and the bibliography has been slightly expanded. We are unfortunately unable to comment here on the accompanying disc as the review copy was damaged in transit and rendered unplayable, and a replacement has not yet come to hand. The quality of some of the original tapes, however, which the author played for me several years ago, seemed to be of high standard.

Dr. Kubik's output has been prolific in the field of African music and his valuable contributions to this journal over the past seventeen years will be well known to readers. While his major writings in the past have mainly been concerned with indigenous music (from a surprisingly wide range of territories) the present monograph is devoted to what he calls 'neo-traditional' music, in Malawi. The subject is handled with that characteristic thoroughness, precision and practicality which one has long come to expect from Gerhard Kubik. The fact that he displays such enthusiasm for 'acculturated' music will cause no surprise among those who already know that, as he says in his own words, he was 'introduced to African music and African musicology through jazz: after the break-up of my New Orleans Jazz Band, in which I played the clarinet, in the autumn of 1959, I went to Africa'. Since that date, Kubik has probably spent far more of his time roaming around Africa, conducting field research, than at home in his native Vienna; but he has never outgrown his earlier love and enthusiasm for jazz and popular music, and the present work represents a most successful blend of deep personal involvement and serious scholarship, in a field that has far too long been neglected by past researchers.

'Pure' ethnic music which is in imminent danger of extinction has justifiably held highest priority heretofore among ethnomusicologists; yet in recent years it has become increasingly evident that new styles of popular music have meanwhile been growing apace in Africa, to the extent that the history of the present situation often cannot be clearly accounted for, owing to the absence of accurate observation during earlier intermediate phases. Roberts has neatly listed several factors that have contributed to the present confused situation: 'First, what was taking place was usually disapproved of by people who might have been in a position to analyze it. Second, it was only partially documented in some of its phases by commercial phonograph records. Third, most anthropologists and musicologists regarded it until recently as a disaster rather than an interesting phenomenon of social change' (John Storm Roberts: *Black Music of Two Worlds*, New York, 1972, 241). As a step towards the due recognition of what is going on here and now, and a serious attempt to trace sources of style, Gerhard Kubik's monograph is a most welcome contribution.

Though Malawi is specifically mentioned in the title, it should not be inferred that the musical styles under discussion are exclusively confined to that territory alone. The author points out that the music of the Kachamba Brothers' Band represents a Malawian version of several contemporary popular music forms of Southern Africa generally, especially those which became common a decade or so earlier in the Republic of South Africa under the names of Kwela, Jive and Simanje-manje, but that these various sources have been further shaped and transformed. It is interesting to note how various styles of pop music in Southern Africa have tended to drop out of fashion in one area, only to emerge elsewhere somewhat later as a new fashion, and it seems likely that this trend may well continue.

The first 44 pages cover biographical data about the players and a history of the band (including a vivid account of Kubik's first encounters with them): followed by chapters on their music, its place in relation to Southern African musical styles, and detailed notes on their musical instruments, the 'pennywhistle' or Kwela flute, the guitar, the one-string bass, and the rattle. The final 27 pages are devoted specifically to the musical examples on the accompanying record.

In discussing sources of style, Kubik briefly recounts the emergence of Kwela pennywhistle music, played by young boys in the streets of South African cities during the 1950s. He refers to the participation of Kwela groups in the film *Come Back Africa*, of 1957, as 'a lively testimony to this era'. In passing, perhaps one might add that an earlier film he does not mention may well have inspired the initial popularity of the pennywhistle; an article by the present reviewer, entitled 'The New "Town Music" of Southern Africa' (in *Recorded Folk Music*, Vol. 1, Sept.-Oct. 1958, 54-7) contains brief mention of pennywhistle playing having 'suddenly become popular in Johannesburg in 1950 after the success of a locally made film called *The Magic Garden*, which featured a pennywhistle boogie, played by a cripple boy', and the subsequent success on the British Hit Parade, in 1958, of a commercial Kwela record, *Tom Hark*, by Elias and his Zig-zag Jive Flutes (Columbia DB 4109).

Kubik's persistent efforts to trace indigenous elements in the material lead him to consider a number of traditional instruments and stylistic features as being possibly influential. There is inevitably a lot of speculation here which it may never be possible to substantiate fully. Nevertheless, his insistence that such 'neo-traditional' music draws deeply upon various local features (and is not just a poor imitation of Western forms, as has so often been asserted in the past) is, I am sure, justified. My own experience with other varieties of 'neo-traditional' music certainly confirms Kubik's claim that outsiders 'tend first to recognise in the "hybrid" forms the cultural traits of their own group, as they are familiar with them'. Only after becoming duly acclimatised to local styles and their autochthonous background can one get a less biased perspective. Gerhard Kubik, as he tells us in his Introduction, has taken pains, over a span of several years, to become personally identified with this Band as an active participant instead of remaining an external observer. There is much to be said for this approach, whereby the analyst gains his necessary insight through personal involvement. It may of course be objected that adaptation inevitably works both ways, and the musicians cannot escape being influenced in one way or another by the intruder, but allowing for this, worthwhile results are certainly still possible. Besides its sociological overtones, human interest (and also a good measure of entertainment value, which is seldom lacking in his writings) Gerhard Kubik's study of the Kachamba Brothers' Band brings a wealth of valuable information which will, one hopes, stimulate a lot of further studies of neo-traditional music in Southern Africa, where serious attention by ethnomusicologists is long overdue.