

HUMBI EN HANDA – ANGOLA. Recording and commentary by Gerhard Kubik. One 12” 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm disc, 1973. Belgisches Radio en Televisie 6803 044 (No. 9 of a series issued by the Koninklijk Museum voor Midden-Afrika, Tervuren). Notes in German and Flemish, with summaries in French and English, 80 pp., music, photos.

While the aims behind the Tervuren series of records seem admirable, in some cases the treatment falls behind in the matter of scientific rigour. I have a communication from the author of this record as follows:

“My notes in German on the recordings were so shortened (and all the illustrations on playing technique removed) that what remains appears indeed very superficial. And most of the photographs were printed *side-wrong* so all my musical bow players are now left-handed. The German original text has few misprints. A serious one is only found on page 21, 3rd paragraph where it should read: Es sind: 1 und 3 (Oktave), 2 und 4 (Quart), 3 und 5 . . . The word “Quart” was omitted. And *onkiti*, page 5, 5th paragraph, not: nonkiti. But the English translation is a terror . . .”

So much for the hazards of having records published!

The English and French translations are only résumés of the German (and Flemish) notes. Nevertheless, they contain enough musical information to be able to place the little-known Humber and Handa on the musical map. The notes are, in fact, the most interesting part of the document, hinting at far distant connections of this music with a Hamitic origin south and west of Lake Victoria, and with the slave-derived music of Brazil, even Cuba. The predominant musical instruments are stringed, i.e. an 8-string bow-lute and three types of bow, together with two types of drum. The name of the gourd-resonated bow, which can be fingered up a tone at one end, is *mbulumbumba*, cognate with the *burumbumba* mentioned by Ortiz for Cuba, and played with a technique similar to the *berimbau* of Brazil. The *pwita* friction drum, with the small head (20 cm.) typical of this part of Africa, produces a similarly varied sound as the Brazilian *cuica*. The scattered !Kung groups of the area are represented by two items, both Handa-influenced, one of which is an interesting sham stick-fight, controlled, at least in part, by commands on a drum.

The musical material is largely hexatonic, with vocal polyphony in neutrally-tuned thirds. A characteristic of the performances with bow is the humming and harsh throat noises which feature throughout – in one song I was reminded of the Tutsi whispering songs. The recordings and balance are good, if not particularly hi-fi. The notes on song titles and texts, however, are very sparse; one wonders if this is because of the Tervuren editors' preference for purely musicological data, as evidenced by the notes to several of the other records in this series.

ANDREW TRACEY

MUSIK DER GÖTTER, GEISTER UND MENSCHEN by Wolfgang Laade. Die Musik in der mythischen, fabulierenden und historischen Überlieferung der Völker Afrikas, Nordasiens, Amerikas und Ozeaniens. Eine Quellensammlung. Coll. d'études musicologiques, Vol. 58, Valentin Koerner, Baden-Baden 1975, 344 pp., 28 ill.

The book in question is a collection of stories which contain musical information. It is a by-product of W. Laade's ethnomusicological work up to this point, without claim to completeness in either motifs or ethnic groups. It contains 302 narratives, seventy of them from African states: Algeria, Senegal, Guinea, Nigeria, Cameroon, Zaïre, Angola, Zambia, Tanzania, Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia and South Africa. The stories have been reproduced in partly abbreviated form and are amplified and commented on by Laade in footnotes with remarks drawn from his own field research. The stories, however, are often a generation older than his comments. They are drawn without exception from available publications, particularly Frobenius (Atlantis series 1921-29). Thirty stories come from this collection. Others are Gardi (1954), Laye (1928), Meinhof (1921), Edwards (1961), Seidel (1896), Westermann (1921, 1938), Zemp (1971), Himmelheber (1951), Spieth (1911), Rattrey (1956), Schönhärl (1909), Herskovits (1938), Dennet (1910), Mockler-Ferryman (1882), Talbot (1912), Ademola (1962), Lane (1954), Mary Smith (1965), Wieschoff (1933), Schwab (1914), Sieber (1932), P.W. Schmidt (1933), Karutz (1929), Werner (1927), Held (1904), Lorenz (1914), Kootz-Kretschmer (1929), Rother (1932), Kebede (1969), Jabavu (1960) and Woldmann (1938). Fourteen stories were originally published in English and have been trans-

lated by Laade himself (there is no note to this effect). It is clear that the value of the individual stories as source material is likely to be diverse – the spectrum goes from P.W. Schmidt to Kebede. In his chapter “Zum Inhalt der vorliegenden Erzählungen” Laade only goes into a comparative inter-continental study of motifs, without, in the ethnohistorical sense, closely describing the quality of the sources. He occupies himself at length with the necessity of stressing primarily non-musical oral tradition as a basis for understanding extra-European music, a necessity which has already met with general understanding. He describes his book as an attempt at initiating the onslaught on this work, which may be deemed a worthy aim. The reason why one so seldom meets publications of such scientific applicability is connected with the immense amount of labour that source examination requires. Oskar Elschenk discusses the difficulties which arise, with examples, in his thoroughgoing paper “Historische Quellentypen der Instrumentenkunde und die ihnen angemessenen quellenkritischen Methoden” in *Studia Instrumentorum Musicae Popularis IV*, Stockholm, 1976. Yet Laade is right in one respect: what is the use of scientific accuracy and the realisation of a need when so little (not to say almost nothing) has been published in this field. So praise for the bold venture and the impetus.

RUDOLF BRANDL

DANCE AND SOCIETY IN EASTERN AFRICA 1890-1970 – The Beni Ngoma by T.O. Ranger, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1975, pp. xiv and 176, maps, index.

Those interested in African music may be deceived by the title of this book. It is not a work of musicology, but a piece of social history from the expert hand of Terence Ranger, formerly of the University of Dar-es-Salaam and now Professor of Modern History at Manchester in England. During a six-year period, teaching history at Dar-es-Salaam, in the 1960s, Professor Ranger collected, personally and with the help of other researchers, a considerable amount of material about the Beni *Ngoma* or dance mode and a number of other related dances. Taking the carnival traditions of Europe as a starting point for his interpretation, Ranger sees Beni as a form of “inarticulate response”, through informal and festive activity, to the experience of colonialism. The basic symbol of the dance, the European military band, was characteristic of Beni in all its forms, but the dance mode was creatively integrated in the popular cultures of Eastern Africa during the period under discussion.

Beni originated on the Kenya coast, encouraged alike by colonial administrators and missionaries as evidence of education and modernization. However, it soon became apparent that its danced drill and mimic combats, and above all its highly organised, rival dance-societies owed as much to long-standing competitive dance traditions on the Swahili Coast. The First World War gave enormous impetus to the spread of Beni, prolonging into civilian life the prestige of the returning soldier. In what is now Tanzania the characteristic German ranks and titles, no less than the celebration in the dance of the victory over the Germans, were an embarrassment to the British administrators, aware of Beni's ambivalence. When Beni became popular among the clerks and young, educated urban elite, Government officials were often alarmed. Beni aped the colonial hierarchy and all its paraphernalia. On the one hand, the dance was an expression of an increasing desire for modernity on the part of the younger generation, while on the other, it was a commentary on the experience of colonialism. In the towns it often became a welfare organization, but British opposition to Beni also forced government employees into new forms of association which helped awaken a pan-tribal political consciousness.

In the countryside it was principally the Christian missionaries who opposed Beni and who saw in it a subversive organization. Missionaries in the 1920s and 1930s principally objected to the wearing of European clothes by the dancers, and Professor Ranger is right to see the contest as one about the right to share in the use of colonial symbols. The clash with the missionaries touches on some of the central issues of colonialism, the denial of African aspirations. For all that, it was only on the Copperbelt that Beni was associated with explicit protest against colonial exploitation.

Beni died in the 1950s, partly because the colonial regimes came to an end themselves during that period. Partly also, the wider cultural experiences of the Second World War generated new interests and new forms of musical expression. Jazz, and particularly Congo Jazz, took on some of the functions of Beni as a running commentary on social and political life. Competing dance bands