

If the CD contents are rearranged and listened to in the chronological order of historical provenance, a sweep of history begins to emerge. The salon songs “Darling Nellie Gray” (1856, sung in 1931 by James Roberts and Asa Martin with fiddler Doc Roberts) and “The Poor Old Slave” (1851, performed in 1929 by the Foreman Family) were, in their time, “Ethiopian Laments” that acknowledged in indirect genteel manners what was wrong about slavery. Two other salon songs, “Lorena” (1861, sung by the Blue Ridge Mountain Singers in 1930) and the “Faded Coat of Blue” (1865, sung in 1928 by Buell Kazee) are sentimental looks by white folks at the impact of the war. There are seven examples of what I categorize as “backyard” or “campfire” wartime repertory, some recorded by real veterans (Bonner, Gilliland), others by descendants who may have played for veterans (Ernest Stoneman, the Grant brothers, the McGee brothers). Two postbellum salon songs are “He Is Coming To Us Dead” composed by the African American songwriter Gussie L. Davis (recorded in 1927 by G. B. Grayson and Henry Whitter), and the 1876 song “Cruel Slavery Days” (recorded in 1929 by Fields Ward and Ernest Stoneman), and two period dances are performed by Da Costa Woltz’s Southern Broadcasters in 1927. Civil War nostalgia persisted through the turn of the century, as heard in the 1904 song “Sweet Bunch of Violets” in a 1927 performance by Ernest Stoneman. When certain white Southern values reasserted themselves during the 1910s and 1920s with the revival of the Ku Klux Klan and the implementation of Prohibition, “Dixie” was recorded quite often, including the 1927 version by the Red Mountain Trio and the “Dixie Division” medley by Fiddlin’ John Carson in 1924 included here. Given the scarcity of true veteran performances that were recorded, the selections of ante- and post-bellum repertory give an ample context, and these performances before 1932 convey the prevailing notions of how people in the 1860s may have sung and played their music. Highly recommended to Johnny Rebs and Billy Yanks alike. *Reviewed by Edward Komara*

Bali 1928 – Volume III: Lotring and the Sources of Gamelan Tradition. World Arbiter 2015 (1 CD).

Although routinely classified as “world music,” Balinese gamelan music has a lot in common, structurally, with Western classical music; it has a repertoire and native systems of musical notation, named composers, and analogues for orchestral or chamber mediums. As Bali belongs to such a remote part of the world, the music was little understood or studied by Westerners prior to the arrival of German painter Walter Spies, who was the “man on the ground” in Bali for Odeon when it instituted there an extensive series of recordings in 1928–29.

The Beka label was also employed for this series of Balinese discs, and though both companies were once part of Lindström, Beka’s involvement in the project is a little less clear, although Balinese musician Ida Boda may have helped to coordinate the latter series. E. F. Hornbostel included five of these sides in his groundbreaking 1931 collection *Music of the Orient*,¹ and some others were carried in Western catalogs, but the commercial thrust of this venture was to market Balinese music to the Balinese, who were little interested in phonographs and had easy access to the music as a live experience. As a result, the 1928–29 Odeon/Beka Balinese recordings were a crashing failure, and the vast majority of discs that survive reside in institutional collections only. Working within

the auspices of a Mellon Foundation grant awarded to CUNY, anthropologist Edward Herbst has collaborated with Arbiter to collect the 111 surviving 1928–29 sides resulting from this undertaking and to release them on five CDs, of which this is the third.

The time period during which Odeon/Beka chose to make their Balinese recordings is of great significance, as the music was changing then and would change even more drastically after, owing the gradual influx of tourists, the effects of the Japanese occupation of Bali in 1942–45, the eventual incursion of pop music, and the advent of non-Balinese gamelans, such as those of Mantle Hood in Hawaii and Lou Harrison in California. In general, this collection focuses on smaller groups – the “chamber” side of the equation – and in particular the compositions of I Wayan Lotring (1887–1983), who was on the leading edge of more modern forms of Balinese gamelan music and is revered yet today as one of the great twentieth-century innovators in the style. Lotring is heard leading twelve selections with two different ensembles, a *palégongan* and a *gender way-ang*; their performances are fast and fleet, with pinpoint accuracy as to the “soft” and “loud” aspects of gamelan performance.

Other groups on the disc are a bit more arcane, particularly an unidentified *Gambang* preserved on wax Deceliths in the Colin McPhee collection at the UCLA Ethnomusicology collection. While Herbst rightly describes their performance as “erratic,” the rhythmic profiles of these performances are fascinating and provide an insight as to what gamelan sounds like when the all-important interlocking, individual parts of the music do not quite line up. The sole performance by the Gamelan Palégongan of Kelandis, Denpasar, recorded by Beka, is notable for its foreground duet between *suling* and *rebab* – played in this instance by another legendary figure in Balinese music, I Nyoman Kalér (1892–1969) – combining in an eerie, otherworldly wailing; it lifts the listener off to another world.

Recording quality is quite good for most of the selections, and of surprising consistency, especially in comparison to most field recordings made at this time or even after. McPhee’s Deceliths perhaps sound the worst among the items here, and even those are not too bad. For those wholly inexperienced in gamelan, the music may sound hypnotic and the same from track to track, so it may be advisable for interested listeners new to gamelan to compare these recordings with later ones to grasp the sense of forward development that occurred after these 1920s recordings. To the gamelan faithful, this collection should be viewed as essential. Some may quibble with the shortened presentation of the notes within the package, which works for me, though there is a much longer text available, with many more photographs, as part of a PDF file included on this Enhanced CD. I did not make a note of how many pages the PDF runs to, but it is a lot of reading.
Reviewed by David N. Lewis

Endnote

1. US release Decca 20120-20131 (12 discs); reissued as a two-LP set in 1951 (Decca Gold Label DX-107). Currently available as a custom CD, cassette, or download at <http://www.folkways.si.edu/music-of-the-orient/central-asia-islamica-world/album/smithsonian>.