

logists, as lists of African musical recordings form a substantial part of it. The catalogue has been compiled on behalf of the International Folk Music Council and is supplementary to the *International Catalogue of Recorded Folk Music* (IFMC/UNESCO; London: Oxford University Press, 1954).

[Communicated by Mr. David Rycroft]

### *An Award to Professor Edward Ullendorff*

ON the instructions of the Emperor Haile Selassie, a gold medallion has been presented to Dr. Edward Ullendorff, Professor of Semitic Languages and Literature in the University of Manchester, in recognition of his book *The Ethiopians*.<sup>1</sup>

### *The Exhibition of Nigerian Tribal Art*

WE have to thank the Arts Council of Great Britain, the British Museum, the Nigerian Government, and a host of other museums and private collectors for an exhibition which has just ended at the Arts Council Gallery, London, and which now moves to the City Art Gallery, Manchester (26 Nov.–31 Dec.), and thence to the City Art Gallery, Bristol (26 Jan.–25 Feb. 1961).

It is by far the most comprehensive and representative exhibition of Nigerian sculpture that has yet been held and one that is not likely to be repeated for a very long time. The exhibits have been brought together from all over the world and from hiding-places as diverse as the Chicago Museum of Natural History and the City Museum, Ipswich. Mr. William Fagg, who was responsible for their selection and arrangement, has done a magnificent job and instead of producing a rehash of the old familiar masks and carvings has made a point of including as much new material as he could lay his hands on, and what a lot there is! Most people who are interested in African art can tell a Yoruba from an Ibo or an Ibibio mask, but very few have seen any examples of the lesser-known styles. We are now shown a representative selection of these and of other masterpieces which earlier collectors overlooked and which are now barred under the Nigerian Antiquities Ordinance from ever leaving the country.

They fall into three main categories: firstly a few stone and terra cotta heads and figures from the Plateau area and from Esie and Ife, secondly a representative collection of *cire perdue* bronzes from various localities from central and southern Nigeria, and thirdly a large number of carvings in hard and soft wood, mainly the latter, from the Western and Eastern regions. The Plateau heads are the only exhibits which can be dated by archaeological methods. Carbon 14 tests take them back to the end of the first millennium B.C. Some of the bronzes can be classified as Yoruba and Benin work or, like the Tiv examples, as recent local styles; the rest could have come from anywhere in the Niger-Benue valley or in the area south of it, and, like the Benin work, attempts to date them still remain hypothetical and based on inadequate typological analysis. The wood carvings are not much better documented, though we now know where most of them came from and can assume that for climatic reasons they are recent and unlikely to be more than a hundred years old at the outside.

The supporting catalogue is disappointing. The plates, with some notable exceptions, convey little of the beauty or the structure of the masks and statuettes, while some of them, notably plate xxix, are gross distortions. The text contains rather too many of Mr. Fagg's hypotheses and not enough ethnographical facts. However, it would be too much to hope for a catalogue as authoritative as the one which Olbrechts produced for a rather similar exhibition of the art of the Belgian Congo at Anvers in 1938. Indeed, the wealth, variety, and vitality

<sup>1</sup> Reviewed in *Africa*, July 1960, p. 296.