

OCORA OCR 43. *Musique Centrafricaine*. Charles Duvelle. LP 12".

The items featured include music from ten different tribes within the République Centrafricaine, mostly from the regions around the capital Bangui. The descriptive matter is printed in both French and English.

The quality of this recording as well as its presentation is well up to Ocora standards. The music is interesting and the photographs of the performers admirably illustrate the text.

There are, however, one or two points which would have made the disc far more interesting to the collector of African music. Charles Duvelle fades in and fades out nearly every item. Both the beginning and ending of a piece of African music are interesting and should be featured. Most of the items are recorded at too great length for this type of publication which is, or appears to be, directed to the general public rather than musicians or musicologists. The performers might well have been asked to start and stop for purposes of the recording as their music is too good to be featured casually.

Another point which Ocora might correct is the omission in every case of the title of the piece of music, and the name or names of the performers. The day of the anonymous item and equally anonymous musician is long since past.

Another point which might well be corrected in future publications is the use of the wrong term *sansa* for the plucked reed instruments which are nowadays always called by their correct generic name, such as *Mbira*, or *Likembe*, together with the local name of the particular type recorded. As far as is known, the name *sansa* has never existed in Africa and was mistakenly used by David Livingstone who started the misnomer (see *African Music*, Vol. II, No. 4, p. 17).

Apart from these few points and omissions the recordings themselves are worthwhile additions to the expanding series of discs from the Office de Coopération Radiophonique, Paris.

OCORA OCR 44. *Ethiopie, Polyphonies et Techniques Vocales*. LP" recorded by Jean Jenkins of the Horniman Museum, London.

The 44th publication in this series is equally well recorded with high fidelity equipment. However, in the published version the disc suffers from the same omissions as the previous one, No. 43. Most items are both faded in and faded out. Titles of items and names of performers are not given, which considerably reduces their value as library items. However, the descriptive text and four photographs compensates in some degree for the lack of detail in the titles.

What is most striking about the whole disc are the many similarities in style of the non-liturgical music of Ethiopia with that of countries further south.

This illustrates clearly that much of the music of Ethiopia must be included in any Sub-Saharan survey, particularly in its relationship with the musics of East Africa, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania, and possibly as far south as Malawi. The yodelling in Items A 6 and B 6 not only resembles that of the Pygmies in the Ituri Forest, but also the familiar *maguri* yodels of the Shona of Rhodesia. Moslem characteristics can be detected in many of the items featured from both northern and south central Ethiopia.

SWAZI VOCAL MUSIC. David Rycroft. No. 1 of Series of African Music Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren and the Belgische Radio en Televisie.

The advent of a series of this nature is warmly to be welcomed. The selection of Swazi songs is as representative as possible of the styles of Swazi singing collected by an expert in the Nguni languages. What a great pity that most of the recordings have been taken out of their proper environment by being recorded inside a building with such a degree of added reverberation that it is difficult to distinguish the several voices apart, or to hear the words. Most Swazi songs are essentially outdoor music whose timbre is falsified by being enclosed in a hall. Even the lullabies would have sounded better in the quiet atmosphere of a hut and not a public place.

The booklet which accompanies the disc is issued in four languages — English, French, Dutch and German — with a full commentary by David Rycroft. From the evidence of the recordings alone it is difficult to comment upon his musicological conclusions and it is regrettable that his notation is not accompanied by a more scientific assessment of the actual pitches employed. However, it may be adequate for general purposes, though it is understood that the series is issued primarily for a connoisseur audience rather than for the general public and tourists.

It is surprising to note that here again the items are not adequately annotated or the names of the performers given. This impersonal approach is particularly regrettable and leaves the impression of casual contact with the musicians, which we happen to know is not the case with the present recorder.

We look forward with keen anticipation to the next in the series as the staff members of the Musée Royal have at their disposal perhaps the largest collection of Central African musical instruments in the world and several of them are already acknowledged authorities on many aspects of Congo music.

H. T.