

Congress of Orientalists

THE 23rd International Congress of Orientalists was held at Cambridge from 21–27 August 1954, and, for the first time, included among its groups a section on Africa. Led by Professor M. Guthrie of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, the section was attended by some two dozen members, including delegates from France, Holland, Belgium, Germany, and the Soviet Union.

The establishment of the section on a geographical basis meant that some divergence of interest was apparent: while many of the papers were specifically linguistic, a number of delegates offered contributions of an anthropological or more general nature, so that the technical terms of one discipline may have been unfamiliar to members of another. Some disadvantages arose from the practice whereby papers followed one another virtually without a break, and discussion provoked by the many stimulating contributions had necessarily to be strictly limited, even though opportunities for further discussion were available during the afternoons and evenings.

Some idea of the range and specialization involved may be gained from the following titles: 'Is Somali a Tone Language?' (B. W. Andrzejewski), a technical paper on the tonal features of the language and problems of classification; 'Dravidian Elements in Egypt and Africa' (L. Homburger), a more general consideration of the affinities of Dravidian elements with those in Egyptian and African languages; 'The Social and Economic system of the S. Bantu at the beginning of the 19th century' (I. Potekhin); 'The specific contents of Swahili culture viewed against the background of the culture area concept' (A. H. J. Prins), an introduction to Swahili culture; 'Word-tone and Sentence intonation in the Brass-Nimbi dialect of Ijaw' (E. C. Rowlands), a specialist linguistic study; 'Eine bisher nicht beachtete Nominalklasse des Ful' (H. A. Klingenheben); 'The Classification of African Languages' (J. Berry).

In all, some fifteen papers were presented, giving a valuable conspectus of research being undertaken in the African field. *Communicated by* Wilfred Whiteley.

Séminaire semestriel des Sciences humaines de l'I.R.S.A.C.

POUR la quatrième fois les spécialistes en sciences humaines de l'Institut pour la Recherche Scientifique en Afrique Centrale se réunirent au Centre d'Astrida de l'Institut du 28 juin au 4 juillet. Prirent part à cette semaine de travaux: MM. J. J. Maquet, Chef du Centre, D. Biebuyck, J. Vansina, L. de Heusch, ethnologues; J. Hiernaux, anthropologue physique; A. Coupez et J. Jacobs, linguistes; C. Dereine, bibliothécaire de l'Institut; R. de Wilde et R. Thys, assistants de recherche.

Chaque participant donna un rapport sur l'état d'avancement des recherches poursuivies sur le terrain et exposa son plan de travail pour le second semestre 1954.

Les communications suivantes furent présentées et discutées: Structure politique des Kuba (Vansina); Parenté morphologique des populations du Kivu et du Ruanda-Urundi, État actuel des connaissances sur la préhistoire du Ruanda-Urundi (Hiernaux); Composition et migrations des groupes Bazyoba, Babembe et Balega, Quelques aspects de la structure du bwamé chez les Balega (Biebuyck); Mot étranger et onomatopée monosyllabique en tetela, Radical verbal en tetela et son aspect dialectologique, Langue tambourine et anthroponymie (Jacobs); Sociologie du deuil (de Heusch); Existence de y et w comme phonèmes autonomes en rwanda, Résultats provisoires de l'application de la lexicostatistique de M. Swadesh à des langues du Congo Belge (Coupez); Techniques d'enregistrement et de conservation du son (Thys). *Communicated by* Jacques J. Maquet.

Rhodes-Livingstone Institute

THE eighth conference of research officers was held at Lusaka from 14 June to 19 June 1954.

The main topic discussed was the changing position of the Chief and the type of leadership emerging in towns. Dr. T. C. Mitchell, Director of the Institute, presented a paper on 'The Conflict of Roles in Intercalary Statuses', illustrated from the position of the African Chief who, under a system of indirect rule, occupies an intercalary status between the Administration and the people. Other papers discussed the co-existence of political organizations in Lusaka, the system of government of the African urban area of Bulawayo, the standard of living of Africans in the copper belt, the structure of authority in a mining district (Luanshya). An analysis of ritual symbols at various levels of interpretation, a study of the Chief in relation to the Administration, and of the emergence of leadership among the Lakeside Tonga, all gave rise to discussions in which the main theme of the Conference was elaborated. The last day of the Conference was devoted to discussion of the proposed symposium on 'The Industrial Revolution in British Central Africa'.

Program of African Studies: Northwestern University

AMERICAN interest in African studies is now both widespread and intense, but its rapid growth dates from the post-war years. At Northwestern University interest in Africa has been active since 1927, being then mainly associated with the department of Anthropology directed by Professor Herskovits; a grant to the University from the Carnegie Corporation of New York has made possible a greatly expanded program of studies which was initiated in 1949 by an interfaculty seminar on Contemporary Africa. Speakers at the seminar included, besides members of the different faculties at Northwestern, United States Government officials, members of the United Nations and representatives of Colonial powers. A report by Professor Herskovits on the work of the program during the last five years describes the courses of study pursued, the development of the library, which now includes more than 8,000 volumes, as well as maps, music recordings, and collections of African art, and the field researches carried out by students. The holding of inter-faculty seminars has continued to be a feature of the program, and thereby has secured the co-operation of the various departments. The report envisages, in the future, the publication of monographs as well as a microfilming program to make available the results of field researches.

Graduate Study Program on Contemporary Africa

THE School of advanced international studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C., held a summer session from 25 June to 25 August 1954 on Contemporary Africa. Speakers included Dr. Vernon McKay, of the School of Advanced Studies, Dr. H. A. Wieschoff, Mr. Kenneth Robinson, of the Oxford Institute of Colonial Studies, Miss Peter Ady, Professor Keppel-Jones of Queen's University, Canada. Among the subjects discussed were race relations, economic trends, British, French, Belgian, and Portuguese Africa.

International Committee on Christian Literature for Africa

THE International Committee (now known as ICCLA) celebrated the 25th anniversary of its foundation by a dinner at the Royal Empire Society, London, on 8 October 1954. The Rev. T. A. Beetham, Africa Secretary of the Methodist Missionary Society and Chairman of ICCLA, presided. Speeches were made by the Rev. H. D. Hooper, former Chairman, and Dr. Wilson, first Chairman, as well as by Mr. G. Wilson of the Rhodesia and Nyasaland Publications Bureau and Mr. Peter Abrahams, the South African author. Most of the speakers dwelt on the work done for Africa by Margaret Wrong, to whose vision and enthusiasm the Committee owed its existence, who had, till her death, served it as its secretary, and who was still its inspiration. Mr. Abrahams made an urgent plea for the foundation of a newspaper, written for Africans by Africans and treating of current topics from a Christian standpoint.