

Grupo de Estudios Afro-Hispánicos (GEAH), B.P. 2007, Kisangani

AN Afro-Hispanic Studies Group was established at a meeting in March 1970 in Kisangani, République du Congo: the Director is Profesor Luis Beltrán and the Secretary-General Professor Manuel de Esteve-Sabater. The aim is to bring together Spanish and Hispanic-American Africanists and African Hispanists and institutions with related scholarly and research interests. Its activities will include the encouragement and facilitation of research, the establishment of a documentation centre and the publication of a bulletin and monographs: it will act as an intermediary in the collection, exchange, and dissemination of information and publications and collaborate with other centres with particular reference to problems resulting from processes of modernization, and will hold conferences on subjects within its field. The official languages of the group are English, French, Spanish, and Swahili. Its first publication issued in April 1970, 'La Cultura Hispánica en Africa Negra', gives an account of Hispanic studies in Black African Universities and outlines proposals for a cultural policy; publications on African Studies in Hispanic America and a Directory of Spanish-speaking Africanists are in preparation.

Traditional Attitudes, Beliefs, and Practices Relevant to Family Planning (in East Africa)

THIS project has been initiated by the Ford Foundation, which finances it, with the approval of the Kenya Ministry of Health, the Institute of African Studies of the University of Nairobi, and the Family Planning Association of Kenya. Dr. Angela Molnos, Ford Foundation project specialist, is directing the survey and is seeking the co-operation of social anthropologists with field experience in East Africa as well as family-planning field-workers.

The objectives of the survey are twofold. One aim is to find out whether there are traditional attitudes, beliefs, and practices of East African peoples on which modern family-planning communication can be based. If so, an attempt will be made to reformulate arguments and create a new African image of family planning as having at least some roots in cultural traditions instead of being an utterly alien, 'imported' practice. The other aim is to process the findings and present them in a source book for those seeking first-hand information for use in family planning communications in East Africa. The book will contain social anthropological material as well as information from family-planning field-workers.

The formulation of the research questions will be based on the analysis of the available attitude surveys and on a preliminary inquiry among family-planning field-workers. Among the phases and methods to be used are the following:

1. Selection of those ethnic groups on which the social anthropological part of the survey will concentrate. Compilation of a comprehensive bibliography on traditional attitudes, beliefs and practices of the selected ethnic groups relevant to family planning (values attached to children; fertility; the nature of contraceptive practices, etc.). Preparation of an annotated address list of social anthropologists who have first-hand knowledge of the selected ethnic groups.
2. Survey among family-planning field-workers about their experiences with patients, potential users of family planning, drop-outs, opponents, etc.
3. Evaluation of the survey among family-planning field-workers.
4. Extracting from the social anthropological literature all available answers to the research questions.
5. Survey among social anthropological experts with first-hand knowledge of the selected ethnic groups.

6. Evaluation of the survey among social anthropological experts. Since the statements sought from the experts will not differ in substance from the published material, the same evaluation system will be applied to this survey as to the social anthropological literature.

7. Preparation of a 3-4-day workshop to be held at the end of July 1971. Participants: family-planning field-workers and social anthropologists who have co-operated in the project.

8. Reformulation of the existing arguments in favour of family planning in East Africa. Compilation of the cross-indexed, annotated source book (see above). Suggestions as to other possible applications of the findings and lessons from the methodological experience. Formulation of a detailed programme of suggested research and action projects aimed at understanding the cultural and social-psychological obstacles.

Child Development Research Unit, University College, Nairobi

THIS Research Unit, one of two units financed by the Carnegie Corporation and established in 1966 under the direction of Professor John W. M. Whiting of Harvard University, is now in its fourth year of operation and has presented a progress report to the University College which will shortly be published. The aim of the Research Unit is twofold: to select and train African behavioural scientists and to carry on a continuing programme of behavioural research. The training programme is being carried out in the field by recruiting and associating East African University students to work with established social scientists on a wide range of projects. Some of them were recruited before entering the university and have worked on the projects during long vacations through the university course. The Kenya unit has collected data on fourteen communities belonging either to different points on the transition from rural to modern conditions. The units of study have been sets of households whose women knew each other, participated in activities, and formed a social network and included a hundred or more pre-adolescent children. The particular problems and topics selected for research have ranged over a wide field, namely: physical growth and health; cognitive development and abilities; motivation; behaviour; institutions. Outlines of the research design and findings of each project are summarized in the report which is to be published in Nairobi by the Child Development Research Unit and distributed by it.

Association of Africanists in Germany: First Annual Conference

THE recently founded Association of Africanists in Germany, Secretary Dr. Hermann Jungraithmayr (see *Africa*, xl, January 1970, p. 79), held its first annual conference in Marburg/Lahn from 18 to 20 July 1969 on the subject of 'Problems and Implications of Interdisciplinary Co-operation within African Studies'.

In his opening address Professor Ernst Dammann (Marburg) welcomed the possibility of closer co-operation between the various disciplines engaged in African studies in Germany. Papers were presented on a variety of topics, including 'Some aspects of the theory of interdisciplinary co-operation' (Wilhelm Seidensticker, Hamburg); 'The distribution of Swahili in Western Kenya' (Bernd Heine and Bernd Wiese, Cologne); 'Proposals for new university curricula for M.A. degrees in African studies and in the history of religions' (M. J. Greshat and Thilo C. Schadeberg, Marburg); 'The problems of interpretation presented by oral tradition' (Brigitte Hennen-Benzing, Mainz); 'A semantic analysis of the membership in different noun classes of kinship terminologies among the Dciriku of South-West Africa' (W. J. Möhlig and J. C. Winter, Cologne/Oxford); 'The phenomena of spirit cults among the Digo of Tanzania' (Thomas Maler and Artur Simon, Marburg/Hamburg).