

Notes and News

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Information on Current Research in African Studies

'Notes and News' endeavours to provide a comprehensive coverage of reports on current, prospective, and completed field research projects, special study courses, conferences, and other activities relevant to African studies. Effectiveness in making such information generally available in this way must largely depend on the co-operation of university and other study centres and of individual research workers in sending reports promptly and on their own initiative. We would therefore greatly appreciate the assistance of all organizations and persons actively concerned with African studies. Items for inclusion in 'Notes and News' should be concise, but should indicate the name and address of the organization, the scope and area of the study, names of participants, time-table, and plans for publication. Reports should be in English or French and, save in exceptional cases, should not exceed 500 words. They should be addressed to Miss Barbara Pym, the Assistant Editor of Africa.

The Historical Society of Nigeria: 14th Annual Congress

THE 14th Annual Congress of the Historical Society of Nigeria was held at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, from 1 to 4 January 1969. Papers presented and discussed included: The influence of Arab traders in Kano in the 19th century (Malam M. U. Adamu); The Benin kingdom and the eastern districts of the Yoruba country (Dr. S. A. Akintoye); Oproza and early trade on the Escravos river (Dr. E. J. Alagoa); The Eseyin Okeiho Rising of 1916 (Dr. J. A. Atanda); Islam in the Itsako Division of the Mid-Western State (Dr. I. A. B. Balogun); Hausa influence in North Africa (Alhaji Hasan I. Gwarzo); Rabeh in Bornu (Mr. J. E. Lavers); Notes on the Lagos branch of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (Dr. G. O. Olusanya); Problems of labour migration in the era of British colonial rule (Dr. S. O. Osoba); Some considerations relating to the formation of states in Hausaland (Professor H. F. C. Smith).

Discussions on the bibliography of Nigerian history, the study and teaching of pre-nineteenth century and nineteenth- and twentieth-century Nigerian history, and the non-political history of Nigeria were led by Professors J. F. Ade Ajayi, I. A. Akinjogbin, H. F. C. Smith, and A. B. Aderibigbe, and were partly based on the following papers: The importance of Arabic sources in the study and teaching of Nigerian history (Mr. M. A. Al-Hajj); How truly Nigerian is our Nigerian history? (Dr. E. A. Ayandele); A plea for the teaching of technological history in Nigerian universities and secondary schools (Professor R. Hill); A bibliography of Nigerian history (Mr. B. A. Oni-Orisan); and Suggestions for a more intensive study and teaching of Nigerian history in Nigerian universities (Dr. T. N. Tamuno).

The urgent need for improving and extending the teaching of Nigerian history in secondary schools and teacher-training colleges, and for the setting up of a committee to establish a central bibliographical service in the field of Nigerian history were included in the resolutions of the Congress.

East African Regional Conference on Languages and Linguistics

THIS conference, sponsored by the Survey of Language Use and Language Teaching in Eastern Africa, was held at the University College Dar es Salaam from 18-21 December 1968. It was attended by 106 participants from 35 institutions in African countries and 33 from 14

institutions in Europe, Canada, and the United States. Members of the International African Seminar on the Social Implications of Multilingualism in Eastern Africa—sponsored by the International African Institute in cooperation with the Survey (see *Africa*, xxxix. 2 (1969), p. 177)—also participated in many of the sessions. Subjects discussed ranged from the preparation of teaching materials and examinations, the teaching of languages in the region, to literacy problems, language in adult education, and linguistic description. Arrangements are now being made for the eventual publication of a selection of the papers presented.

The formation of the Language Study Group of Ethiopia, the Kenya Language Association, the Language Association of Tanzania, the Uganda Language Society, and the Zambia Language Group should be of considerable assistance to the Survey in continuing at least some of its activities, and a Regional Language Association Steering Committee, consisting of a representative from each of these five national organizations, has been formed to draft a constitution and to present its programme to the next meeting of the Survey Council.

The Collection of African Oral Traditions

A MEETING to discuss the co-ordination and planning of the collection of African oral traditions was held in Ouagadougou, Haute-Volta, from 29 July to 2 August 1968, under the joint organization of the Government of Haute-Volta and the Cultural Division of UNESCO. UNESCO was represented by Maurice Glélé, Organizer of programmes for the study of African cultures, and Enrico Fulchignoni, head of the section for creative arts. Joseph Ki-Zerbo of Haute-Volta was elected president, J. F. Ade Ajayi of Nigeria and Jean Rouch vice-presidents, and Dijbril Tamsir Niane of Guinea official reporter of the meeting. The aim was to provide an outline of work for those in charge of centres, institutes, and research programmes. Most of the countries officially represented came from the West African region and discussion was concentrated on problems of historical research in West Africa.

The first plenary sessions were occupied by a discussion of Joseph Ki-Zerbo's paper on 'Oral traditions as a source of African history', followed by progress reports on the collection of oral traditions presented by those responsible for national research programmes. One working session was concerned with the association between the cinema and oral tradition. Papers by F. N. Agblemagnon, J. F. A. Ajayi, E. J. Alagoa, R. G. Armstrong, O. Ba, T. Boly, K. Dittmer, J. A. Djivo, J. D. Hargreaves, J. Hébert, J. J. Holden, A. Iliasu, M. Izard, M. Johnson, D. H. Jones, D. T. Niane, R. Pageard, M. Posnansky, W. Rodney, A. Salifou, B. B. Some, S. Tall, and J. Zwernemann were presented or distributed *in absentia* at the meeting. The final report, distributed at the end of the meeting, listed a number of agreed projects. Those for the southern borders of the Sahara and the savanna zone included: the Peul, the Mossi-Dagomba group, the Hausa, the Kanuri, the 'River Niger-Songhai' project, the 'Gourmantché' project, the 'Kurumba-Tellem' project, and the 'O.E.R.S. project', presented by the Organization of Senegal River States. Those for the coastal and forest zones were: the Mande-Gonja, the Borgu, the Ewe-Adja-Yoruba-Fon, and the Western Akan-Agni-Baule. Collecting operations will be co-ordinated from Niamey, with a subsidiary centre, perhaps Accra, for the forest zone.

It was proposed that the Centre voltaïque de la recherche scientifique in Ouagadougou should set up various historical card indexes and publish a bilingual information bulletin on historical research in West Africa. A further proposal was for special efforts to be made in collecting the oral traditions of groups with specific social and economic functions—blacksmiths, potters, musicians, etc. Two further meetings in this series have been agreed in principle: one on the problems of applied linguistics in historical work; and the other on the standardization of personal and place-names in West African history.