

Notes and News

International Seminar on Ethno-History in Africa

THE fourth of the Institute's series of International African Seminars, which have been organized with the aid of a grant made by the Ford Foundation, was held under the auspices of the University of Dakar in December last at the Ethnographical Museum of the Institut Français d'Afrique Noire. The meetings were organized by M. R. Mauny, Director of the Section of Prehistoric Archaeology, IFAN, and Professor L. V. Thomas, Professor of Sociology in the University. Over fifteen specialist participants and a number of observers attended the ten days of the meetings. The former included research workers engaged in field studies in ethnography, archaeology, linguistics, and documentary research in Africa attached to various African universities and research institutes, together with others from institutions in Europe and America.

The discussions included sessions on the recovery and analysis of oral traditions and written documents, the use of linguistic evidence in studies of the development and inter-connexions among peoples, problems of dating and interpretation of cultural material from archaeological sites, methods of historical reconstruction concerning techniques, art forms, and changes in social organization. Further sessions were devoted to the consideration of wider problems concerning the pre-colonial history of various regions in Africa and finally of attitudes towards the study and understanding of various aspects of historical development in Africa among both scholars and the public.

The participants had prepared in advance a series of papers presenting significant aspects of their own researches and these provided a basis for the discussion of the topics considered.

Conclusions and recommendations of the seminar stressed the importance of drawing the attention of African governments to the urgency of collecting oral traditions. It was proposed that a register of all concerned with this field of study should be compiled and maintained, liaison being established through correspondents in Africa. The various African governments should be urged to encourage the provision of training and facilities for ethnographers and historians in this urgent field of study. It was recommended that African universities should be invited to include, if they did not already do so, the history of African peoples in their programme of higher education, and that universities outside Africa should give more prominence to the study of African history. In view of the limited facilities for exchange of information and delays in publication it was urged that scholars engaged in studies in African history should from time to time inform their colleagues of the scope and progress of their researches by means of multigraphed reports.

The papers presented to the Seminar, together with an introductory survey that will consider historical methods in African research and the analysis and interpretation of economic, political, and other aspects of African history as well as the position of the historian in modern Africa, are being prepared for early publication.

African Studies Association: Annual Meeting, 1961

THE Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association for 1961 was held in New York from 20 to 22 October. In addition to papers relating to the Congo, Ethiopia, South Africa, Portuguese Africa, the Central African Federation, French Africa, and Ghana, there were discussions on the following subjects: The role of American colleges and universities in

African educational development; Demographic problems of Africa; Art, music, and literature; Geographical studies; Linguistics in Africa; Political events and analyses; African history; Research in newly independent African States; and Inter-group relations in African culture. Films by Marshall Segal and John Marshall were shown. Dr. Vernon McKay, Professor of African Studies at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, was elected President of the Association. Dr. McKay also served recently as Congress Chairman for the Eighth National Conference of the United States National Commission for Unesco in Boston, attended by 2,000 United States and African delegates, which discussed the theme 'Africa and the United States—Images and Realities'.

The Afro-Asian Research Department of the Polish Institute of International Affairs

AN Afro-Asian Research Department was established at the Institute in April 1958. The staff consists of seven research workers, headed by Dr. Boguslaw Mrozek and his deputy Dr. Jerzy Prokepozuk. Its work includes research into the problems of national liberation movements in Asia and Africa, the development of the newly independent states, and the foreign policies of the neutralist states and the policies of military blocs in Africa and Asia, as well as the collection of material on and analysis of contemporary social and political developments. Mimeographed publications of the Department include the following: 'Ghana: Problems of internal and foreign policies', by I. Dembinski; 'Political and economic situation of the Congo', by E. Szymanski; 'Nigeria on the Eve of Independence', by S. Chodak. Research articles dealing with topical aspects of the Asian, African, and Middle Eastern countries are also published in the Polish Institute of International Affairs monthly journal. Work on the preparation of a collection dealing with African problems is to include: Crisis of Colonialism in Africa and Neo-Colonial Concepts, by J. Prokepozuk; Political systems of contemporary Africa: formative factors, by S. Chodak; 'Foreign policies of African States', by T. Lebocha; and 'International relations of African countries', by H. Dobroczyński. Topics to be studied in 1962 include: French Colonialism in West Africa after the Second World War; Vistas of Guinea's development; African States' role in the United Nations Organization; and Cairo's policy *vis-à-vis* African States.

Publication of Catalogues of African Collections at Northwestern and Boston Universities

THE African collection of the Northwestern University Library, whose catalogue is to be published early in 1962, consists of over 20,000 volumes and is concerned primarily with Africa South of the Sahara and surrounding islands. The subjects covered include anthropology, linguistics, history, political science, travel, economics, education, trade, commerce, health, hygiene, and demography, and the collection is particularly strong in publications on the Congo and on former British and German colonies. The catalogue, containing approximately 27,000 cards, will consist of an author card for monographs, some title entries, and a main entry for serials.

The Boston University's Catalogue of African Government Documents contains about 2,000 titles covering all areas of Africa. It is an author catalogue of monographs and serials but does not include serial holdings. The African Area Index—an alphabetical list of all material on Africa in the Boston University collection—is also being published.

Further information on these catalogues may be obtained from the publishers: Messrs. G. K. Hall & Co., 97 Oliver Street, Boston 10, Mass.