

de nouvelles, rassembler les archives d'origine africaine, former les chercheurs spécialisés dans les sciences humaines, faire appel à des chercheurs scientifiques de tous pays. Il peut proposer toutes mesures concernant la sauvegarde des monuments naturels, des sites et des monuments de caractère historique, scientifique, artistique ou pittoresque, de même qu'il a à sa charge l'inventaire et le classement des objets d'intérêt préhistorique, archéologique, historique et ethnographique de la République du Tchad. Le Directeur Scientifique peut entretenir des relations suivies avec les autres Centres de Recherche Scientifique, afin de faciliter la coordination des recherches relatives aux sciences humaines en Afrique, et il est habilité à étudier la création du futur Musée Tchadien.

### *The First West African Languages Congress, Legon, Ghana*

THE first of a series of three projected West African Language Congresses was held at the University College of Ghana from 26 to 28 March, in conjunction with the Institute of African Studies, University College of Ghana. These congresses have been made possible by a Ford Foundation grant to the West African Languages Survey, which began its work in 1960.<sup>1</sup> The meeting at Legon was attended by about one hundred persons, about a quarter of whom were professional linguists and phoneticians, the remainder being Africans associated with language work and missionaries who had made serious studies of various West African languages. The Congress was splendidly entertained at a cocktail party organized by Dr. Nana Nketsia for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Ghana Government.

The meeting was attended by Professor Joseph Greenberg, who was Chairman, and Professor Welmers, from the U.S.A., and by Professor J. Berry, Dr. R. C. Abraham, and Mr. David Abercrombie, Head of the Department of Phonetics, University of Edinburgh, from the U.K.; Professors Alexandre and Lacroix of Paris, and Professor Köhler of the University of Cologne, came from Europe. MM. Houis, Sauvageot, and Manessy represented the linguistic section of IFAN, Dakar, and the University of Dakar. The Phonetics Department of the University College, Ibadan, and a group of students also attended. The Congress was divided into plenary sessions, at which papers were read, and working seminars—one each on the Chadic, Central Branch, Kwa, and Gur groups—in which the specialized problems of translation, orthography, and the classification of linguistic data were discussed.

Professor Greenberg presented a critique of glottochronology as applied to the study of the Bantu languages. Professor Welmers, now of the University of California, Los Angeles, led a series of discussions on the study of the tone systems of West African languages. Among the other papers given were: Professor Köhler on his classification of the Gur languages; Professor Robert Armstrong on the relation of Yoruba and Idoma; Professor Alexandre on the present state of African linguistic studies in France; M. M. Houis on the criterion of tonality in Soso compound nouns; and Mr. I. G. Wilks, of the Extramural Department, University College of Ghana, on 'Ghana and Mande: some historical and linguistic considerations'.

About a third of the papers were in French, and about a third of the participants spoke French. It must be said that the language problem was severe and reflected the relative isolation in which most workers in West Africa work. It is a prime objective of the West African Languages Survey to help in some measure to break down this isolation. It also aims to train Africans in linguistic work, to build up the West African Universities as repositories of knowledge and centres for the study of local languages, and to increase the knowledge of West African languages by regional surveys, by comparative historical studies on a restricted basis, and by descriptive and lexical studies of important but second-rank languages.

<sup>1</sup> See *Africa*, July 1960, p. 275.

The Council of the West African Languages Survey consists of Professor Joseph Greenberg, Chairman; Professor Robert Armstrong, Field Director; Mr. John Spencer, representing the University College, Ibadan; Professor Peter Shinnie, representing the University College of Ghana; Mr. David Dalby, representing the University College of Sierra Leone; M. M. Houis, representing I.F.A.N., and M. G. Manessy, representing the University of Dakar. The Council held its annual meeting during the course of the Congress. The Survey has awarded three fellowships for field research this year: Mr. David Sapir is studying Dyola and related languages of the Casamance River region of Senegal; M. Luc Bouquiaux—Berom and other languages of the Nigerian Plateau; and Miss Margaret Hoffmann—the Togo 'Remnant' languages. In addition, Dr. Walter Pichl of Vienna is studying Serer in Senegal, on a grant-in-aid from the West African Languages Survey.

(Communicated by Professor Robert Armstrong and Mr. A. H. M. Kirk-Greene)

### *Margaret Wrong Memorial Fund: Award for 1960*

FOLLOWING the meeting held at Edinburgh House on 1 February 1961 the Administrative Committee of the Margaret Wrong Memorial Fund agreed that the Medal and Prize for 1960 should be awarded to Mr. Shaaban Robert of Tanganyika for his outstanding contribution in the field of Swahili fiction and Swahili poetry. For many years he has devoted himself to composing works in Swahili, including poems, essays, stories, and an autobiographical work, and has consistently maintained a very high standard. Since his retirement from Government service Mr. Robert has rendered further assistance to African literature by establishing a small publishing house.

### *Symposium on Migrations in West Africa<sup>1</sup>*

A SYMPOSIUM on Migrations in West Africa was held in Niamey from 13 to 25 February at the premises of the Niger National Assembly. It was an outcome of the recommendation made in 1955 at the first meeting of the Inter-African Conference on the Social Sciences of CCTA that 'a joint study of migration from the interior of West Africa towards the coastal areas should be undertaken as a matter of urgency'.

The Symposium was organized by CCTA and led by M. Jean Rouch, the Scientific Director of Joint Project no. 3. Also present were a number of his co-workers and Ministry of Labour officials from the Ivory Coast, Dahomey, and Niger, the Assistant Labour Adviser to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Director for Native Affairs in Angola, and an observer from the World Health Organization.

The purpose of the Joint Project was to make a comparative study of the statistical, sociological, and economic aspects of migratory movements to the Ghana coast and the lower Ivory Coast during a period of one year. Outbound and returning migrants were questioned at check-points as to their ethnic group, sex, age, family status, number of wives and children accompanying them, residing in the lower coastal areas, or remaining in the country of origin and place of birth. The Joint Project also included comparative surveys of urban sociology, with particular reference to the problem of migrants in Bouaké, Kumasi, and Abidjan; and of the trade in Ghana and the Ivory Coast in livestock, dried fish, kola nuts, and food produce.

Publication of the results of the Project was recommended, together with that of a second volume to contain other studies, whether already published or not, dealing with various aspects of these migrations.

(Communicated by Mr. Hans E. Panofsky)

<sup>1</sup> See *Africa*, April 1957, p. 193; April 1958, pp. 156-9; October 1959, pp. 417-19.