

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH REPORTS

WORK IN PROGRESS

I have been involved in the preparation of two papers which were fairly recently published in American symposia. One, on the development of political parties in Mali, which I wrote jointly with Ruth Schachter Morgenthau, was published in James Coleman and Carl Rosberg, Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa (California, 1964). The other was one of a series of five lectures at Swathmore, Pennsylvania, delivered in March, 1962, and published under the title "The Relevance of 'Western' Ideas for the New African States" in J. Roland Pennock, Self-Government in Modernizing Nations (NJ, 1964). I have also a paper, which I presented at the International African Institute's Fifth International Seminar at Zaria in December, 1963, on 'The Islamic Literary Tradition in Ghana' which should shortly be published as part of a collection of Seminar Papers on Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa under the editorship of Dr. Ioan Lewis.

Other work, of the kind that is politely referred to as 'work in progress' (a harmless description, provided the term 'progress' is flexibly interpreted, and is understood to imply the possibility of prolonged periods of regress) falls under the following heads:-

- (1) I have still to prepare for publication five lectures which I gave four years ago for the African Studies programme, Boston University, on 'Islam and Politics in West Africa'. These lectures attempted to discuss the interaction of Islam and the development of political ideas and institutions in West Africa from a historical point of view - from the Amoravids to Sekou Toure, so to speak. But a great deal of important new work has been done in many sectors of this field over the past four years, and the lectures will have to be entirely rewritten. I have also agreed to write an article for the journal Past and Present on 'Muslim Reforming Movements in 19th Century West Africa', which will be based on part of the same material, and will be primarily an attempt to summarize the present state of our knowledge of this phase of West African history, in the light of recent research.

- (2) I shall continue to collaborate with Ivor Wilks, Basil Davidson, S. Affrifah and others on work on this Institute's project, The People's History of Africa, which we hope to complete by the end of 1965. This is not, of course, a piece of research, but an attempt to produce a rational synthesis - making intelligible (as far as the evidence permits) the main processes of technological, economic, social, political and cultural change that have taken place in the African continent since the appearance of man, embodying (as far as humanly possible) in this account the result of recent research in all relevant fields. The material has then to be presented in a form which will interest, and even excite, students in secondary schools, training colleges, universities etc. (or adults working on their own), who are not specialist historians, in all parts of Africa. This is, of course, an incredibly difficult undertaking - and, to reduce the inevitable errors and misinterpretations to minimum, we will need the help and criticism of those working in various fields of African history - in the Institute and outside once a preliminary draft is available. I have also for some time been attempting to write, for the American Mentor series, another kind of introduction of African history more modest in scope, but more substantial in length. This will take the form of a series of studies, dealing with particular African states, or groups of states, and attempting to show how far their existing institutions, social relationships, policies, problems etc., can be explained in historical terms.
- (3) I hope also, in a somewhat dilettante way, to continue to do some work on the Institute's collection of Arabic manuscripts: particularly, in co-operation with Selah Ahmed Ibrahim, Dr. Kamali and others, on problems relating to the life and works of al-Hajj 'Umar ibn Abi Bakr of Kete Krachi.
- (4) I am supposed to be revising, in collaboration with my daughter Elizabeth, African Political Parties, for republication in a Penguin edition. I am frankly doubtful

whether it is worth revising. The important developments which have occurred during the past half-dozen years - affecting internal party organization, party-state relationships, inter-party relationships at the international level, ideologies, etc., as well as the emergence of a large number of new parties and the mutation of old (e.g. in the Congo, the Portuguese Territories, Southern Africa, Ethiopia, Algeria, etc.) would make it necessary to write what would amount to a new book. The increasing number of serious studies that have been published dealing with parties and party-systems in particular states would also suggest that what is needed is a new book rather than revision of the old. And I doubt whether I have either the energy or the competence for this.

Thomas Hodgkin

CONTACT WITH FRENCH ANTHROPOLOGISTS

Contact between British and French anthropologists in West African has always been slight and unsustained, partly, one supposes, because of the vast areas of savannah, if not the lagoons, which separate us. But Britain and France lie relatively close to each other, at least geographically, so last December I suddenly decided to fly from London to Paris (at my own expense, which is surely unique in these days of Foundation-sponsored travelling) to meet Dr. Marguerite Dupire, who was readily identifiable at Le Bourget airport by her black Basque beret. Though Dr. Dupire (whose masterpiece Peuls Nomades, 1962, has been rather neglected by Anglophones) is primarily interested in the pastoral Fulani (she happens, indeed, to be on camel back in Niger at the moment of writing), yet during her fifteen year connexion with West Africa she has also worked in the forests of the Ivory Coast and in Fouta Djallon. In 1958 she was studying migrant cocoa farmers in the south-east corner of the Ivory Coast while I was doing something similar in the south-east of Ghana, though we were unaware of this until some years later.