

*Experiments in Fundamental Education in French African Territories*

A RECENT publication of UNESCO, in the series Educational Studies and Documents,<sup>1</sup> gives an account of experiments in fundamental education carried out in a number of centres in French West Africa, French Equatorial Africa, French Cameroons, and Togoland. The account has been compiled by the French Information Centre on Fundamental Education from material supplied by the Fundamental Education Sub-Committee of the French Republic's Commission for Education, Science, and Culture. The foreword emphasizes that the term 'Fundamental Education' must be understood in its widest sense; the combating of illiteracy being only a very limited aspect of the chief aim, which is to preserve life, to improve material conditions, to promote the development of economic activities and to assist the process of political and social development. The accounts of the various experimental missions include descriptions of the staff and equipment used, methods of establishing contact, timetable of the various activities carried out, specimen lessons in reading and arithmetic, &c. Some give accounts of co-operative activities undertaken—such as the building of slaughter yards and drying yards (Daron-Mousti, Senegal), the building of a school (Oubangui-Chari), of a workshop for rural crafts (Tchekpo, Togo); most of the experiments included health lectures, medical treatments, practical instruction in carpentry, agriculture and horticulture, physical training, domestic education, and child welfare.

A Federal Seminar held at Dakar in 1953 attempted an assessment of the results of the several experiments carried out in French West Africa, and also gave the thirty-seven participants an opportunity for group work and further instruction and training in various specialized fields.

Certain conclusions arrived at after a consideration of all the experiments described are summarized at the end of the publication. Recommendations are made with regard to the recruiting and training of fundamental education teams and the effectiveness of various techniques employed is discussed. It is considered that pilot experiments, research, and short-term plans can now be replaced by large-scale and long-term campaigns, and the Government of the French Republic has therefore voted funds for a wide extension of fundamental education work in all oversea territories.

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Du 27 au 31 décembre 1954, s'est tenue à Astrida la 6<sup>ème</sup> session du Séminaire qui réunit deux fois l'an les chercheurs de l'I.R.S.A.C. spécialistes en sciences humaines. Un sujet avait été proposé aux participants: la contribution que chaque discipline peut apporter à l'étude des migrations de populations en Afrique Centrale.

M. L. de Heusch indiqua ce que, du déplacement des traits culturels, on peut conclure au sujet des migrations; M. J. Jacobs traita de l'apport de la géographie linguistique et de la toponymie à la solution du même problème; M. J. Hiernaux passa en revue les informations que l'anthropologie physique et la paléontologie humaine peuvent fournir sur les mouvements anciens de populations; M. J. Vansina exposa comment l'on peut appliquer la critique historique classique aux traditions orales; M. J. J. Maquet esquissa une méthode d'étude des migrations contemporaines tandis que M. R. de Wilde donna quelques résultats provisoires d'une enquête d'émigration.

A côté du thème principal du Séminaire, d'autres sujets furent abordés, notamment l'étude de l'évolution économique des pays sous-développés. M. V. Neesen parla de l'interdépendance des facteurs économiques et démographiques; M. Ph. Leurquin, d'un plan

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