

gal, who closed the meeting, it was heartening to hear generous tribute paid to our collaborative role. The next joint CEPCEP/IAI conference is planned for late September 1986 and will be concerned with the changing rights of women in Africa.

Staff

More than routine tribute is due to our Secretary, Jackie Hunt, and her colleague Belinda Okonweze, as well as to our Research Officer, Robert Dodd, who have all shown much appreciated devotion to the Institute in the difficult phase of relocation at LSE. We owe much to the energy, resourcefulness and commitment of our Honorary Treasurer, John Pike, and are particularly pleased to record that we have now also secured the expert accounting services of Brian Parkin (formerly accountant to the London School of Economics).

The Institute owes much to all those concerned with its publications over which Dr Elizabeth Dunstan has presided energetically. We are grateful to Dr Paul Richards, Reviews Editor, and to Professor J. D. Y. Peel, Editor of *Africa*, we owe a special debt of gratitude. After serving as Editor since 1979, he now feels it is time to hand on the baton. We are very sorry that he is relinquishing this key role in the management of the journal to whose reputation he has contributed so much. I am pleased, however, to report that Dr Murray Last, of University College, London, has agreed to be our new editor.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that our new home and Research Officer appointment give the Institute a better chance of survival. If that chance is to be realised, it will require a great deal of imaginative effort from all members of the executive council. We *must* secure more funds. It may be that this could be achieved in the context of a 1986 anniversary appeal focused on establishing our research officership on a long-term basis, possibly jointly with the Suntory-Toyota Centre at LSE. In the meantime, I welcome the formation of the new 'Action Group' of executive council members, consisting of Dr Anders Hjort, Professor John Paden, Professor Franz Rottland, Robert Dodd, John Pike and myself, which held its first meeting in London on 19 August under the chairmanship of Professor Frej Stambouli.

I. M. Lewis

AFRICAN STUDIES IN ITALY

Professor Bernardo Bernardi writes:

From 25 to 27 June 1985 Italian Africanists – historians, anthropologists, linguists and others – took stock of the state of African studies in Italy over the last twenty-five years. The meeting was organised at the Istituto Italo-Africano, Rome, which, under its President, the Hon. Tullia Caretoni, and the competent direction of Ambassador Luigi Gasbarri, has grown into the major centre for Italian cultural interest in Africa. Each day was devoted to a particular branch

of African studies, with a main speaker followed by a discussant. Although we might have wished for more time for general discussion, the aim of the conference, to review the work that Italian scholars have produced in African studies and to promote further development by exchange of ideas, was definitely achieved.

Historical and political studies were the subject of the first day. Salvatore Bono spoke with reference to Mediterranean Africa, followed by Biancamaria Scarcia, their emphasis being on Islamic societies and their relations with Italy rather than ancient classical Africa. Teobaldo Filesi, seconded by Alessandro Triulzi, spoke about work on sub-Saharan Africa. Their discussion emphasised the need for fieldwork to complement more traditional archival research. Romain Rainero and Giorgio Rochat opened a debate on the history of Italian colonialism, stressing the need to approach the subject with an objective historical attitude rather than an emotional one. Anna Maria Gentili, fresh from a long field experience in Mozambique, with Gian Paolo Calchi Novati considered political and institutional studies on independent Africa.

Next day the main subject was linguistics. Lanfranco Ricci and, after him, Paolo Marassini looked forward to new developments in Ethiopian studies where there is a well-established Italian tradition of scholarship. The name of Enrico Cerulli, a distinguished scholar and still one of the main authorities on Ethiopian studies, who although unable to attend in person was very much present in the thought of all participants, was highly honoured together with the memory of Carlo Conti Rossini. Roberto Rubinacci and Clelia Sarnelli Cerqua spoke on Arabic and Islamic studies, while Luigi Serra contributed on Berber studies. Giorgio Cardona and Alberto M. Mioni reviewed the situation with regard to the study in Italy of the languages of sub-Saharan Africa, both Bantu and non-Bantu. They should have been followed by a presentation on the promising new field of African literature, with Elena Bertoncini Zubkova on vernacular writing, Itala Vivian on writing in English and Franca Marcato on francophone literature, but this had to be postponed to the next day. Instead, Rodolfo Sacco and Marco Guadagni spoke on studies in legal systems.

The final day was devoted first to the situation of anthropological studies, reviewed by Bernardo Bernardi and Vittorio Maconi. In the afternoon Mario Cataudella and Roberto Aliboni introduced the discussion on problems of development. The last item, African studies in the Italian educational system, was examined by Maria Luisa Paronetto Valier with regard to the schools, and by Gian Luigi Rossi with regard to the universities. They showed how much Italian school syllabuses needed to be updated to accommodate our present knowledge of Africa, and new specialist courses on African studies needed to be promoted in the universities. Here their remarks responded directly to one of the aims of the conference: to enhance the interest of Italians in African cultures and history. A common will to revitalise the existing Association of Italian Africanists emerged as a fitting conclusion to the conference.

The conference was attended by a member of distinguished scholars from Africa and Europe, including members of the executive council of the International African Institute, guests of the Istituto Italo-Africano. Their presence served to emphasise the place of Italian scholars in the international community of Africanists.