

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

OF

THE AZANDE

OF

THE BAHR-EL-GHAZAL PROVINCE

OF

THE ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN

INTRODUCTION:

This thesis represents part of my Ethnological research carried out in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan in the years 1926 and 1927. After having worked for three months in the area between the White and Blue Niles, mainly amongst the Ingassana People of the Tabi Hills, and later for some seven weeks on the West Bank of the Nile, amongst the Moro Peoples, I arrived in that part of the Bahr-el-Ghazal Province which is inhabited by the Azande towards the end of March 1927. I left for England at the end of August, thus completing a residence of five months amongst the Azande.

The Thesis is arranged in two books. The first book is a condensed analysis of the structure of Zande society. In the second book I have taken native customs or institutions, divination, magic, dancing and obscene songs, and I have endeavoured to interpret them by showing their contexts, associations and functions. It is by the method exemplified in the second book of this thesis that I hope to explain one by one the institutions of the Azande. In the parts on magic and obscenity I have used the comparative method of analysis. It is this method which must eventually be applied to all institutions if Social Anthropology is to put forward general statements, or laws, and so take its place in the ranks of other inductive sciences.

INTRODUCTION

FIRST BOOK

Social Structure

Social Structure

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1. HABITAT:

The Zande Nation is a conglomeration of different linguistic and ethnic units which have been either wholly or partly assimilated into a common culture. It is probably no more an amalgamation of many different peoples and cultures than other African nations, but in the case of the Azande Europeans conquered the Country when the process of linguistic and cultural assimilation could be observed in many different stages. Some attempt has been made by Vanden Plas and Calonne-Beaufaict in the Congo and by Larken in the Sudan to catalogue the various linguistic and ethnic and cultural units which were once separate but now form part of the amalgam, but I shall not enter here into the problems which arise from such an historical method of investigation.

The common features by which I will define the Zande nation are language and tribal or political institutions. These features stretch over a vast area, roughly from the Nile (Mekataka section of Rejaf-Yei District) to the main Congo River towards Bumba and over the S.W. of the Ubangi-Shari Colony of French Equatorial Africa.¹ The nation comes under three different European Governments, those of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Congo Belge and Afrique

¹ Capt. Philipps' Journal of the Royal Geographical Society 1926 "Geographical names in the Zande Country"

Equatorial Francaise. Its population has been variously computed at two to four millions.¹

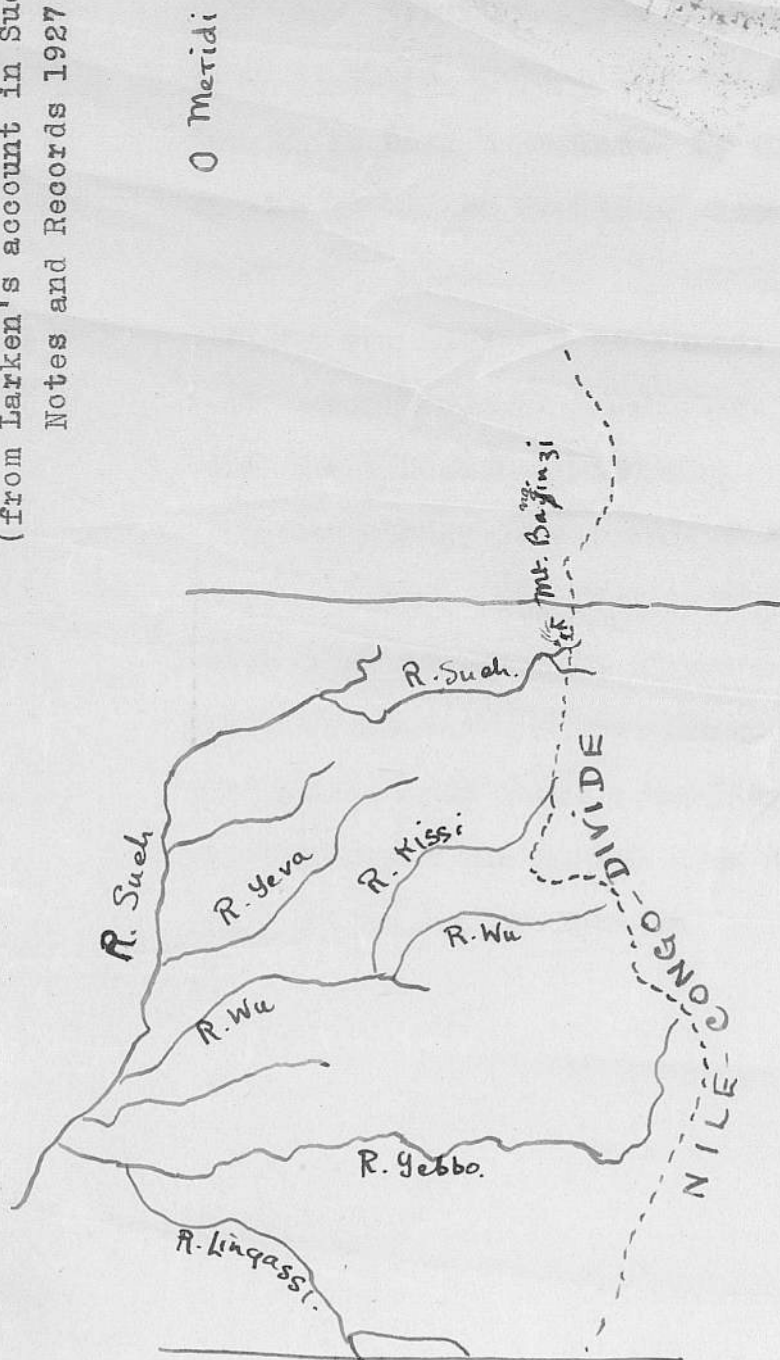
The section of this area in which I have worked is restricted to the Yambio district of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. Here the country is of typical African bush, impassable except along the paths during the greater part of the year, until the high grasses are burnt.

Water is plentiful, the district being the watershed and providing the sources of the Sobat river, and it is hard to go a mile without meeting a stream. However there are no large rivers which make crossing difficult.

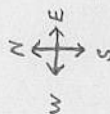
Owing to Sleeping Sickness regulations the district is cut off from other districts around it as well as from the Belgian Congo, no native being allowed to travel into these areas.

¹ According to a statement by the late Catholic Missionary Van den Plas. Quoted by Phillips. *Ibid.*

SKETCH MAP OF YAMBO DISTRICT
(from Larken's account in Sudan
Notes and Records 1927)



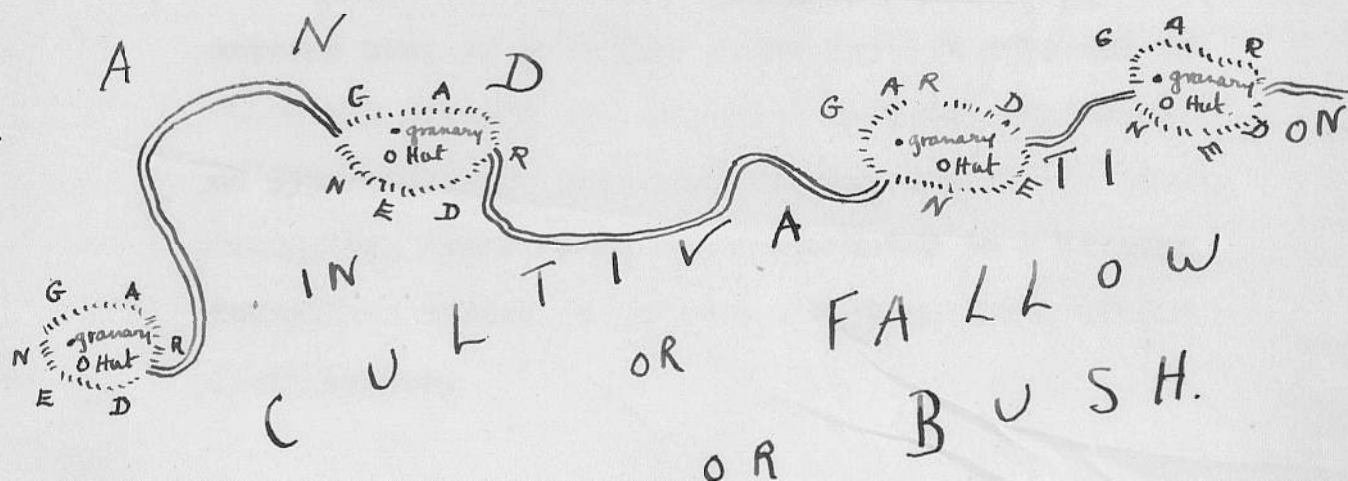
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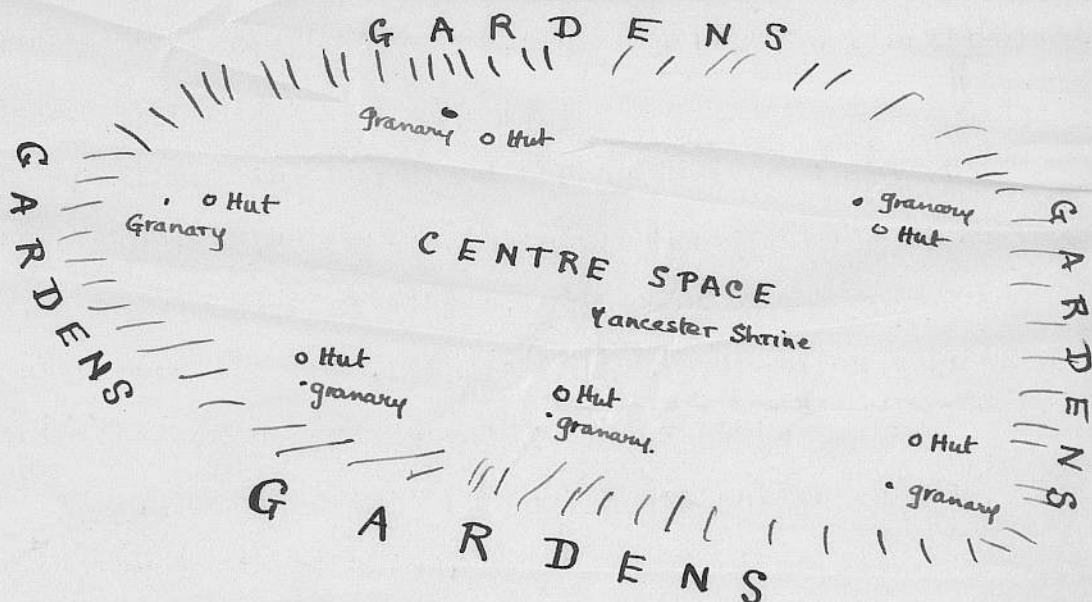
2. TERRITORIAL DISTRIBUTION:

In these natural surroundings are the Zande homesteads. The word kpolo refers to the collection of huts in which dwell a man and his wives and children, and it is here translated by HOMESTEAD. The distribution of the huts, the dwelling place of a wife, within a homestead follows two distinct types, probably representing two distinct cultures, the one which I shall call the STRAGGLING HOMESTEAD, the other which I shall call the CIRCULAR HOMESTEAD.

The straggling homestead has no fixed form of hut distribution. The sketch shows a homestead of four huts, each occupied by a wife, with some 150 to 300 yards between the huts. These huts may or may not be visible to each other according to the state of the vegetation. The sketch does not represent an actual but a typical distribution.

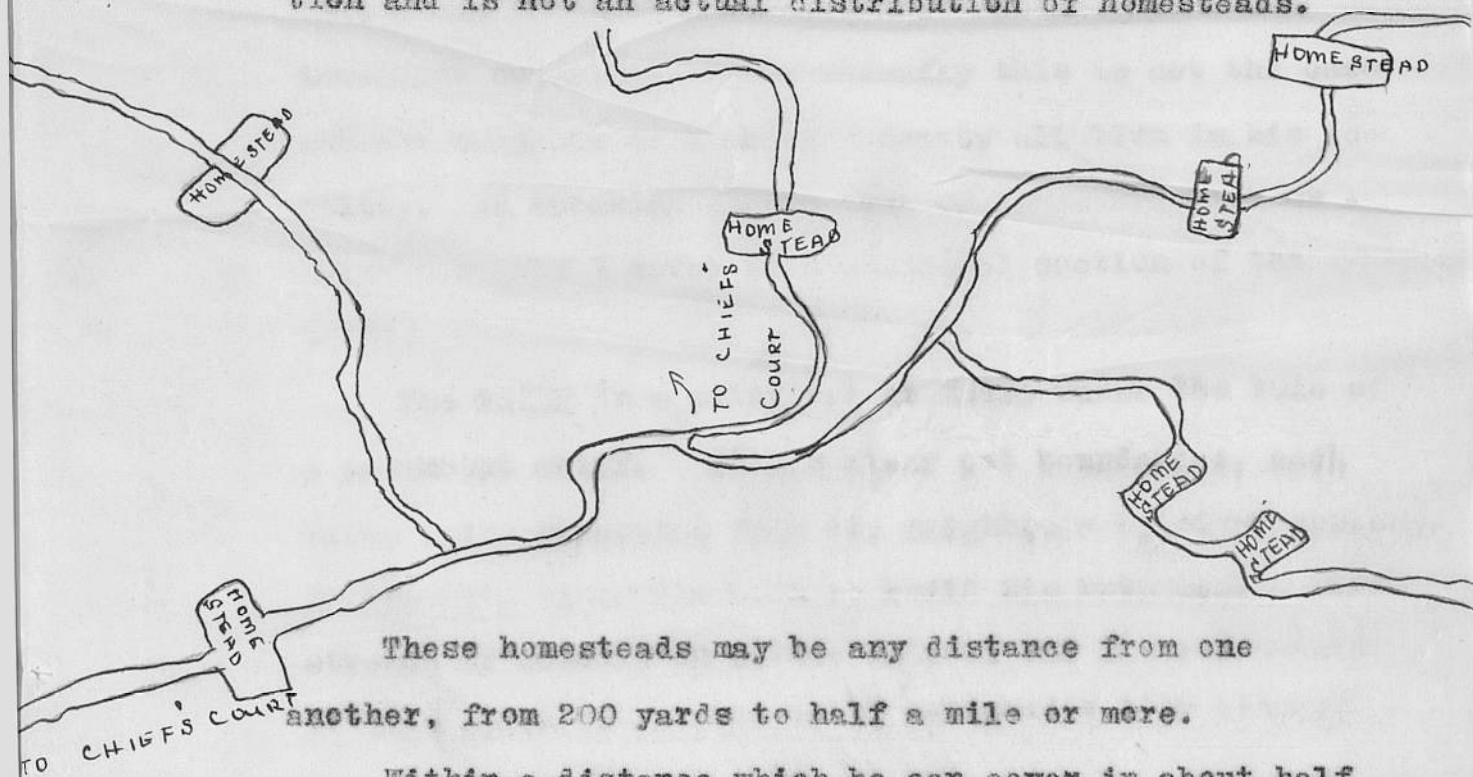


The circular homestead, of which a sketch is given below, is not found as often as the other type. The sketch shows six huts, each belonging to a wife, with some ten to twenty yards separating one hut from the next. The homestead is seldom quite round but is generally of a lozenge shape. The sketch does not represent an actual but a typical distribution.



In the concentrated villages, which cover the greater part of Zandeland under British rule and in which the natives are compelled to live, they have no opportunity to make their normal homesteads of the straggling type. Some are constructed in a lozenge formation, others in various anomalous forms of hut distribution.

The Azande have no grouping of homesteads into the larger social unit of the village. But they are loosely bound together by a system of winding paths which find their way sooner or later to the home of a chief's deputy or to one of the main paths which lead to the chief's court and enclosure. The following sketch is to show the type of homestead distribution and is not an actual distribution of homesteads.



These homesteads may be any distance from one another, from 200 yards to half a mile or more.

Within a distance which he can cover in about half a hour to an hour's walk, some two to four miles, a man will know all the occupants of the homesteads and it is amongst these people that his social life is staged. When I refer to the LOCALITY of a man I shall not mean a clear cut social group such as is implied by the

homestead or the tribe, but I shall refer to the many homesteads which are in his vicinity and which are joined to each other by paths which run through them.

A man's locality will correspond unevenly with the administrative area of a chief's deputy. As the relation between a chief's deputy and his subjects is a personal one and is not based upon tenure, it sometimes happens that a man lives at a considerable distance from his immediate superior. But normally this is not the case and the subjects of a chief's deputy all live in his locality. In speaking of the AREA OF ADMINISTRATION OF A CHIEF'S DEPUTY I refer to a political section of the tribe.

The TRIBE is a political grouping under the rule of a paramount chief. It has clear cut boundaries, each tribe being separated from its neighbours by river courses. No one will clear the bush to build his huts over a wide stretch of country on either side of the river boundary, so that there is an expanse of unoccupied bush between the territories of two tribes.

This territorial distribution of homesteads strung out along the paths, of political areas administered by chief's deputies, grouped into tribes ruled over by a paramount chief, is the historic mode of Zande social distribution. To-day, however, the natives have been

concentrated into settlements along the Government roads over the greater part of the district in which my work was done. Since these settlements present no similarity to an African village they will be referred to by the expression CONCENTRATION SETTLEMENTS. Usually a mile or two apart they allow of no expansion since no one is allowed to dwell outside their boundaries. Whilst it is now possible for a man to change his concentration settlement on the payment of a small sum, his new life is repugnant to the Zande for magical and religious no less than for economic reasons. I shall give no special consideration to this artificial distribution save where it is necessary to refer to it from time to time to illustrate some aspect of native life.

The historic mode of territorial distribution amongst the Azande was noted by early and observant travellers, by the distinguished botanist Georg Schweinfurth¹ and by Dr. Wilhelm Junker,² but neither attempted to explain it.

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1. There are certain difficulties in Schweinfurth's account. He says "Dorfer oder gar Städte in unserem Sinne gibt es im Gebiete der Niam-Niam nirgends. Die Hütten zu kleinen Weilern gruppiert, finden sich weithin über das Kulturland der bewohnten Distrikte zerstreut. Letztere sind voneinander durch Wildnisse von oft mehreren Meilen im Durchmesser getrennt" (p. 297). Also he says (p. 233) "Jeder Weiler gab die im ganzen Niam-Niam Lande beobachtete Anordnung zu erkennen zwei, höchstens drei Familien wohnen beieinander, d.h. es gehören zu einem Weiler 8 bis 12 Hütten, die im Kreise um einen Freiplatz errichtet sind. There are no doubt differences of distribution in the

3. ECONOMIC ASPECT OF TERRITORIAL DISTRIBUTION:

The diffuse distribution of homesteads in bush clearings over the country side is primarily an adaptation to economic needs. The Zande possesses no cattle and wild game is not plentiful. He is essentially an agriculturist. The centre space of the homestead is enclosed by a garden, cultivated year after year and bearing his permanent crops such as sweet potato, arrowroot, banana, and the fig trees from which he makes his waist cloth. Outside this garden stretch his cultivations intermixed with virgin bush and with land lying fallow which will later revert into bush. In these cultivations are grown such plants as beans and peas, oil-bearing plants and cereals maize and millet.

The Zande is not only an extensive agriculturist but he is also aware of some of the primary rules of successful culture. He knows that land cannot be cultivated profitably for more than two years in succession and during

different geographical areas of Zandeland, but except where it is in an area between two tribes I know of no instance where tracts of bush many miles in extent separate homesteads from one another. Also in the part of Zandeland with which I am acquainted not more than one family lives round a common open space, and such a grouping is uncommon compared with the straggling homestead. Though I had the problem in mind I failed to find a single instance in which two or three families lived together.

this period he generally plants different crops in a recognised rotation. As land which has been cultivated for two years is left fallow until it reverts again into bush after about five years, the Zande needs consequently a large area of land surrounding his homestead and separating him from the cultivations of his neighbours. On a rough estimate half the land which separates one Zande homestead from another is cultivated or in the early stages of fallow and half is bush or in the later stages of fallow. However one sometimes passes from homestead to homestead without meeting bush on either side of the path which joins them. On the other hand bush sometimes intervenes between the garden of one wife and the garden of another wife in the same straggling homestead.

We may consider that the distribution of Zande homesteads which at first sight appears haphazard or unsociable is primarily an adjustment to economic needs.

Though these needs are in the main agricultural there are other contributory economic requirements which are adverse to concentration. For some four months from the beginnings of the rains in March or April the winged females of the termites swarm and their bodies provide the native with an important article of food. Around these termite hills, which are usually near his home, he will spend all night waiting for the insects to swarm. When

the termite season is over he will collect the delectable mushrooms from his private beds on these private termite hills. There are also several wild plants which, unimportant individually, collectively form a welcome addition to the native's meagre daily menu. A man likes to gather these plants in the bush near his house and will not go far afield to collect them.

For his hunting activities the Zande requires bushland near his homestead. The usual method of hunting is to make rough paths round a large square of bush so that after rain it is possible to see from the spoor marks whether an animal has entered and remained in the square. A man visits his hunting ground after a fall of rain and if he finds that there are animals in it he goes to fetch his nets and to wait until the sun is well up in the sky and the animals are drowsy. He then carries his large and heavy nets to the hunting ground and commences his catching activities which may last until sun-down. The nature of these operations necessitates the hunting grounds being within easy reach of the homestead of their owner, and this is permitted by the sparse distribution of the population.

This economic aspect of territorial distribution can be discussed from any view-point of economic life. A man requires near his home timber and the earth of untenanted

termite hills for building purposes; he requires a large and near supply of cut or fallen wood for his womenfolk to gather for firewood - but it is not necessary to stress the point further that the area round a Zande's homestead supplies him with food and all the requisites of his family life (*Lebensbedürfnisse*).

Lord of his private estates, with abundant land for cultivation, with bush for hunting grounds, with his own termite hills and mushroom beds, with wood for building and for fires, property which he alone can use and with the minimum of labour, the Zande has been moved into concentrated settlements along the roads.

If their historic territorial distribution is in part an adaptation to economic needs their concentration should noticeably affect their economic life. Though the Azande who have undergone this change have been concentrated for only three to five years there is evidence of economic deterioration but it is difficult to estimate the extent. There is a growing tendency to cultivate land for more than two successive years. I think also that less land is worked in the settlements than in the bush dwellings. Hunting activities are undoubtedly on a decline.

In saying that Zande special distribution is an adaptation we are relying on a contention, so-far unproved, that population tends to increase to the limit of its

possibilities and that these possibilities are determined by geographical endowment, cultural equipment and racial intelligence. We recognise, however, that this is only a hypothesis.

4. THE SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECT OF TERRITORIAL DISTRIBUTION.

I have shown that the distribution of Zande homesteads is not a chance dotting about of bush clearings but must be described in reference to the economic life of the people. I wish now to show how the occupants of the homesteads are bound together by social ties other than those created by common social intercourse arising from proximity of dwellings and the system of paths. These other ties are those reciprocal duties and rights which membership of a social group involves.

There is no stereotyped mode of social distribution but variation will be found throughout.

By degrees boys accustom themselves to leave their mother's huts, by sleeping under a grass shelter in the cultivations to scare away the guinea-fowl, by building a small grass hut outside their father's home and there playing at 'households' with little girls of their own age, by serving in a chief's court and finally by a six months residence in the circumcision camp from which they emerge as "men". They will not live again in their father's homestead but will build a hut some 50 to 100 yards

outside. Amongst a man's immediate neighbours therefore are his sons who have reached the age of puberty.

Daughters also play at 'households' but at the age at which their brothers are circumcised girls are affianced generally to some man in a neighbouring homestead. Parents do not wish their daughters to reside far from them. Sometimes, and in the past often the girl's future husband would build his hut near his future father-in-law's homestead and from there take her to wife. The relationships of father - daughter, father-in-law - son-in-law are generally found in neighbouring homesteads.

Boys and girls thus build up new families near their parents' home. From time to time they will make new clearings but they will not usually depart far from the place of their birth. Almost invariably one finds a man surrounded by his brothers and married sisters. If a man were to leave the locality his brothers will leave with him. "If I go" he says "We all go".

Sometimes a youth on leaving his father's home will clear a space in the bush for his hut and gardens near the homestead of his maternal uncle. But no further detail need be given to illustrate the fact that close relationship, more particularly close blood-relationship is localized.

As the point is developed more fully later I will only mention here that a man is almost certain to be bound

to each one of his neighbours, if not by blood or marriage relationship, then by common membership of some social grouping such as those created by circumcision, blood-brotherhood, and the Secret Societies, and always by common allegiance to one chief.

We may say therefore that there is a far greater moral density than wide spacial diffusion and poor means of inter-communication would lead us to suppose.

We must point out that by moral density we do not refer to any metaphysical concept but we use the term in the sense in which we say that a group has moral density and not spacial density when its members are closely bound to one another by mutual sentiments and reciprocal obligations even when they live widely separated from one another. As Durkheim pointed out material density is a very good, if not exact, measure of moral density - an invaluable principle for field-work.

5. THE FAMILY GROUP.

The homestead, such as I have described, is the spacial equivalent of the social group of the polygynous family. It is natural for European writers to regard the polygynous family as several monogamous families with the husband as common factor but such a view often obscures the fact that the polygynous family is in many ways a special social group with its own rules of conduct, allotment of duties and privileges and has a moral cohesion

which a collection of monogamous families with a common husband would not possess.

In the sketch of the circular homestead, given above, we have seen how several huts are built round a cleared space. Each of these huts belongs to a wife and each wife does her cooking separately in her hut. Nearby stands her own special granary in which she harvests millet grown on her strip of land. At the back of each hut is the garden cultivated by its occupant and there are boundaries which mark off the garden of one wife from that of the next one. In the bush each wife will have her own area of cultivations of ground nuts, beans, peas, sesame, millet and so on. That this division is not merely a conventional division of labour in the family but also represents rights of use or ownership is clear. To begin with each wife has her own granary and harvests the food from her gardens and cultivations. These she cooks for herself and her children and for her husband but not for the other wives. Sometimes one sees women's magic in the gardens, particularly those in the enclosure of a big chief, and the object of the magic is not to protect the plants from thieving outsiders but from thieving co-wives. Ownership is illustrated from another

point of view. When a wife dies her husband surrenders all the food crops which have been planted and weeded by her labour as well as all gourds, pots, hoes and so on of which she has made habitual use.

The small children of various wives sleep in their mother's hut. The husband himself does not generally possess a hut for his private use but sleeps always with one of his wives.

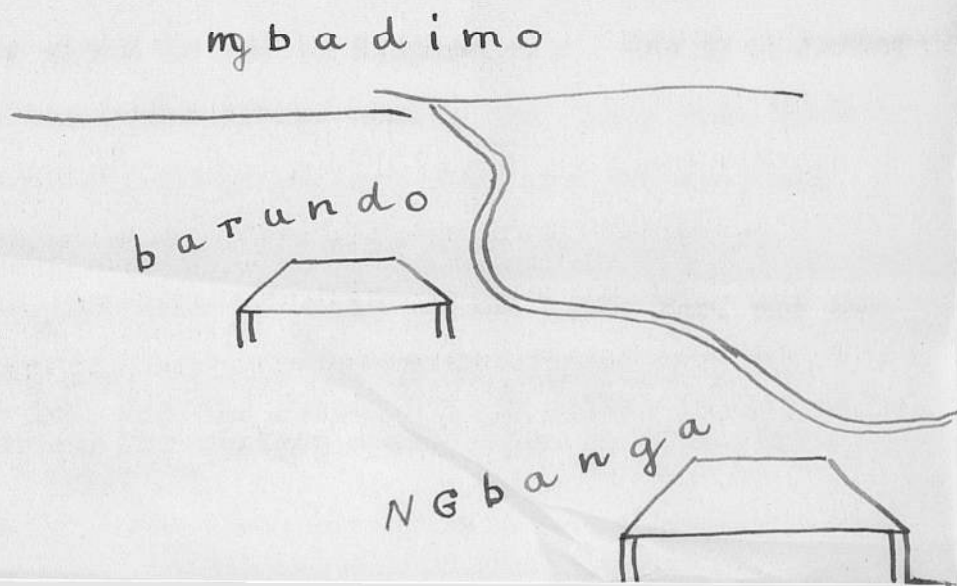
But though there is usually a clear division of rights of use amongst the wives, there is also communal life necessitated by spacial condensation and daily intercourse. The centre space of the house is shared in common and the wives sit and talk together outside each other's huts. The children of one wife are welcome to partake of the food cooked by another. Also the wives will help each other in carrying on much of the work of the homestead. Generally in the clearing of the millet patch of each wife, all the other wives will take part in the labour, and it is the same sometimes in sowing ground-nuts.

The husband is the source of authority in the household and it is he who will direct its labour. But he will share this authority to some extent with his first wife. Her millet area must be cleared

before those of the other wives. She alone can make an offering of food to the ancestral spirits. The actual degree to which her position relieves her of labour will depend upon the size of the homestead. The more wives there are the more organization of labour is required and the more division of labour can take place. For this reason it is easier to study the structure of the polygynous family in the homestead of a chief.

The only difference between the internal distribution of huts of a chief's family and a Zande's family is that the former being more numerous cover a larger area. ⁽¹⁾ A chief's homestead may be very extensive, that of the late chief Gbudwe or Yambio is said to have stretched for five miles. ⁽²⁾

An enclosure of grass or banana leaves shuts off a chief's homestead from the eyes of those who are present in his court. The court, as is shown in the diagram, is divided into two parts called barundo and ngbanga.



The barundo is used by the chief's grown-up sons. They eat there and can sleep there. Here also the chief will summon his deputies or Abakumba, either singly or together when he wishes to speak with them. But unless they go to the Barundo to speak with the chief they will remain in the n^ggbanga which is occupied also by any Zande who is visiting his chief. Even to-day the ngbanga is often crowded, but it has lost its martial appearance and men heavily armed with shields and spears and throwing knives who once guarded their chief are now no longer to be seen.

I shall be touching on the relation of a chief to his subjects later but I want here to show the organization of his ^{ng}mbadimo of polygynous homestead.

The chief wife is called ne gbia and she may be his first wife but is not necessarily so. She may be the sister-wife of the chief or possibly his mother. She is the leader of the women in the chief's household and is relieved from manual labour. All food brought as tribute to the chief is given to her to dispose of. She will direct the labours of the other wives, seeing that they make beer and food for the chief and so on. Her own hut work and the weeding of her garden, which is also her husband's garden, will be performed by girls placed under her, and her

(1) Schweinfurth says "Dieser Hof eines Negerfürsten war bescheidenster Art, und die Hütte, die er selbst innehatte, von den Behausungen der übrigen sterblichen im Lande kaum zu unterscheiden." *ibid.* 229.

(2) *Stephenson MS.* In possession of Prof. C. G. Seligman. F.R.S.

millet crop is planted by labour of young men amongst the chief's subjects conscripted for this purpose. The great chief Gbudwe had three ne gbia of more or less equal standing. Under each were placed ten or more girls to do her bidding. Actually Gbudwe's settlement was so large that it appears that some wives created a certain pre-eminent position for themselves in various sections of the settlement by bringing the other wives into dependence on them.

But Gbudwe's settlement was of unusual size and generally there is only one ne gbia. The girls who work under her are of two denominations though their status does not seem to differ very widely. The ti ne gbia, 'those under the chief wife', are young Zande girls who hoe her garden and who when they grow up are either married by the chief or given in marriage by him to some one of his sons or subjects. The akanga were also young girls who, as far as I can gather, were generally captives of war. (1) They carried firewood and water and did the sweeping under the directions of the chief wife and when they reached puberty they were often taken over as wives by the chief himself. In every big polygynous family of a chief or of an important chief's deputy there

(1) According to Hutereau akanga were of either sex and slavery was a widespread institution of the Azande, commoners possessing slaves as well as the chiefs. According to my informants akanga were invariably girls. This difference in account is possibly due to regional differences.

will be one wife deputed to cook for her master and she alone will exercise this function. Another woman will also cook for the chief's sons in the barundo and for retainers in the ngbanga, though this latter service may fall on the other wives equally. These special cooks are called na gbindi and in a large establishment they also will have girls working under them.

When a paramount chief travels he will take several of his wives with him and these will be the younger and better-looking ones and accompany him everywhere. They are called awilizere, the children of coldness, because they sit behind him in a semicircle away from the fire.

When the chief finally leaves his residence to build a new settlement the older and uglier wives remain to till the cultivations which he has left behind. These too have a name, ^{ng}namgbwasolo.

There appear to be other degrees of status amongst the women in the chief's household in the Congo area ⁽¹⁾ but here I only wish to illustrate that in the polygynous family there are special problems of organization which have to be studied. Actually this is one of the most difficult groups to investigate and at present I am not very confident that I have understood its workings.

(1) Lagae and Plas in their dictionary give other terms, adegbere, prostituées, que le chef garde a la disposition des visiteurs; musonosi, jeunes fillette généralement non nubiles, que le chef a achetées ou recues, et qui plus tard

The Zande family, as I have already pointed out, is the chief economic unit of the social life of this nation. All work which can be done by its members is done by them. The nature of some kinds of work however either necessitates assistance from outside or is greatly facilitated thereby. It is possible for a man and his wife to build their house and clear their millet patch, but this involves greater and lengthier labour than they are often prepared to undertake. In these instances a man will provide a quantity of beer and food and his neighbours are expected, though not compelled, to assist him in his work. The same obligation will fall upon him at another time and he will be similarly regarded by food and beer. The method of hunting with nets employed by the Azande also generally requires greater organization than it is possible for the ordinary family to undertake by itself, so that a man will arrange with one or two of his friends for concerted labour. Generally speaking however we may regard the family as the economic unit of Zande life.

Religious ceremonial is also largely associated with the family group, but not exclusively. The ordinary family has a small shrine in the centre of its cleared space

enteront dans une des categories ci-dessus mentionnees: enattendant elles aident au travail: wilimofu, qui sont des enfants de femmes, qui furent jadis des femmes du chef, et qu'il a cedees a ses hommes; ceux-ci, en retour, rendent au chef le produit de les femmes."

or near the hut of the master of the homestead. From time to time offerings are placed in this shrine and an address is made to the ancestors either by the husband but more often by his chief wife. The spirit addressed is almost always the dead father of the master of the homestead but the natives have in mind also other close relatives on father's and mother's side and the wife has in mind her own relatives. I think that the extent to which a man, when making an offering, does so to other relatives than his parents corresponds more or less with the relative solidarity of the restricted family to the solidarity of the extended family. He extends the same pattern of behaviour to his relatives when they are dead as he did when they were alive. At important religious ceremonies such as those at death and those held in honour of the spirits a man's kin have important duties to perform and will always be present as will be shown later.

The kin group will form the next section of this thesis and in our discussion we shall examine the behaviour of members of the restricted family to one another as well as their attitude to the members of the Cross-familie.

6. "MEANING" OF KINSHIP NOMENCLATURE.

We have seen that one of the social groups which

amongst the Azande tends always to become localized is that of the kin and to a lesser degree the kindred grouping. We shall now approach the kindred from the terms by which they address and refer to each other. We shall not, of course, explain the kinship relationships by explaining their nomenclature but such an approach is an excellent starting place for our investigation and at the same time gives us an opportunity to throw fresh light on one of the oldest and most debated problems in Social Anthropology. In considering the kinship nomenclature of the Azande we are combining a linguistic problem with a sociological one. Little harm is done by this combination so long as the problems are kept distinct. Rivers⁽¹⁾ formulated a theory that kinship nomenclature is rigidly determined by social structure. This might be conceded but Rivers went on to deduct from this conclusion all sorts of sociological facts without first attempting to analyse the process by which the determination of nomenclature by social structure took place.

How is it that word-symbols come to extend their meaning so that the same phonetic sounds have many different referents, and how is it that a word-symbol becomes attached to its referent at all? These are

(1). Kinship and Social Organization. 1914.

questions which cannot be restricted to the small number of relationship terms alone but must include all similar linguistic phenomena.

Moreover there is only one possible way of investigating the problem as to whether and how kinship terminology is determined by social structure and that is by an intensive study of the use of the terms of nomenclature in their social milieu. To do this it is necessary to know a native language well and anything I say on this question must be qualified by the fact that I have only spent five months amongst the Azande. But it is necessary to plunge into the problem as an understanding of the use of terms of relationship will give us a deep insight into Zande social structure.

A word has phonetic values determined by the position of the tongue and lips and tone and stress, any of which may be significant, i.e. distinguish it from other words. But sound alone gives a word no meaning, i.e. does not attach it to any referent. Meaning is given to a word by its context for the context attaches it to its referent. This context may be grammatical, a word may have meaning in virtue of its relationship to other words; or it may be factual, a word may have meaning in relation to one of the senses: or it may be psychological, a word may have meaning in relation to the psychological attitude of the

By context therefore I shall mean all events which are taking place objectively or in the minds of the speaker or of the listeners which link the word symbol to its referent. This point of view has been fully expressed by Prof. Malinowski in his terminal essay to the "Meaning of Meaning"⁽¹⁾ and is mentioned here solely because unless it is realised that the social and psychological context is just as an essential part of a word as its sound my analysis of Zande relationship nomenclature will be misunderstood.

I will now give a list of Zande relationship terms used in the extended family.

(1) Meaning of meaning. Ogden and Richards. 1923

7. SALIENT POINTS OF THE SYSTEM.

I will note here the salient points of this system without attempting to explain them before I have shown the manner in which they are used. The Zande system of nomenclature is essentially a so-called descriptive (1) system. Most of the words given in the chart embody an exact description of the relationship they denote e.g. unwuru fu nina is simply the elder of my mother, my mother's elder sister; tame re is simply my younger, my younger brother; wili dewili is simply child of my sister. The terminology makes a clear distinction between relatives on the father's side and relatives on the mother's side. The age distinctions are also well marked.

But though a typical descriptive system it makes certain classifications which our English, French and German systems do not allow. All parents of both father and of mother to an indefinite number of progenitors are classed together without reference either to generation or to sex under the one term tita. The same term tita designates all children of son or daughter to an indefinite number of descendants without reference either to generation or to sex. Consequently all members of the family

(1) This is according to Rivers' definition.

two or more generations removed use a reciprocal term tita.

Also attention must be drawn to the fact that all children are classed together under the term wili (child) without regard to sex differentiation. The same applies to all other terms in which wili forms a descriptive part, e.g. wili tame buba (the child of my father's younger brother) may be either a male or a female child.

Before attempting to explain these terms it will be necessary to examine their uses. To do this I shall have to discuss their use as terms of address separately from their use as terms of reference.

8. TERMS OF ADDRESS.

When, after much perseverance, I had elicited from my informants the terms given in the chart above, I was deeply disappointed by not having the daily experience of hearing persons addressing their aunts by the expressions dewili buba, unvuru fu nina and tame nina and their cousins by wili tame buba, wili andomi, etc. However my informants asserted that such terms were used.

I am afraid that it is necessary, in the present state of my research, to discuss these problems in terms of my own experience, what I have heard when listening to natives talking to one another. When a man is addressing

one of his relatives in the daily routine of his life what term does he use?

Often he will use no term whatsoever. Sometimes he will use a proper name. When he uses a term of address this will not usually be a term of relationship but a term of polite address. All the males of his father's generation he will call ba (father), all the women of his father's generation he will call na (mother). These are the terms used in everyday greetings by the Azande. If a man wishes to be especially polite he will use the term gbia (chief) instead of ba (father). Out of respect a man will also use the words ba or gbia in speaking to an elder brother or cousin. A man will commonly call his children and those of his brothers and sisters gude as some people use the word "kid" in our own society.

Such are the expressions usually spoken to relatives. Also when a man uses a term of relationship he generally does so in a so-called classificatory sense, e.g. Instead of using the descriptive terms as given in the chart he addresses his father's brothers by the same word as he addresses his father, buba; he addresses his mother's sisters by the same word as he addresses his mother, nina. He addresses all his paternal cousins by the same words as he addresses his brothers, unvuremi and tanere according

as to whether they are older than himself or younger than himself. In the same way he will address all the children of his mother's sisters as wili nina (child of my mother) and he will call all the children of his brothers by the same term as his own children, wili.

Some of these terms will, I think, always be used in a descriptive sense, e.g. I believe that a man would always refer to his sister's sons as wili dewili (son of my sister) or wili andoni (son of my mother's brother) or dewili buba (sister of my father) but I cannot be certain since many of these terms are used with very great freedom. For instance I have heard a girl address her elder sister regularly as nina (mother) and men address their mothers-in-law by the same term. The words mean nothing unless we know the context of their utterance. However I shall be returning to this point later.

Here I wish to emphasize the fact that though the Zande kinship nomenclature is essentially a so-called descriptive system nevertheless many of the terms are actually used in the extended family in a so-called classificatory manner. Moreover every one of the terms given in the chart above has a classificatory existence in the structure of the clan⁽¹⁾, e.g. to Ego all male

(1) The system of nomenclature might therefore according to Morgan's definitions be regarded as a "classificatory" one. Ancient Society, 1877. and Systems of Consanguinity etc. 1871.

members of his father's clan are unduru buba or tame buba (my father's elder brother, my father's younger brother respectively), all male members of his mother's clan of his mother's generation are andoni (my mother's brother), all members of his sister's son's clan of a generation younger than himself are wili dewili (my sister's child).

We have seen that when a man addresses a relative often he will use no term of address at all, that generally he uses a term of polite address not a term of relationship or that sometimes he will use a proper name. We have seen that when a man uses a relationship term he does so as often by using an extended term as the descriptive term.

How then are these descriptive terms used? I shall make a cautious and tentative answer to this question.

First of all one hears these words used to a greater degree by children than by adults. One will often hear a child call out terms such as nina (mother) or tita (grandparent) for example. Also the native will tell you that unvureni (my elder brother) is commonly used by children and seldom by adults who use a term of polite address, either gbia (chief) or ba (father) to denote their elder brothers. I think that when children use these terms there is usually an emotional situation.

I did not often hear adults use these descriptive terms and towards the end of my stay I found it no great labour to jot down the context when I heard them used. I have found generally that there was a psychological situation in which the terms were not simply used as address but were intended to recall to the hearer his social obligations to the speaker. I will give some instances when discussing the functions of the clan organization.

The extension of these terms of address takes place in two different ways. Firstly, as I have already explained they are extended along the lines of social structure of the extended family into the clan organization. Secondly some of the terms are extended in what we may call an anomalous manner. Thus it is quite customary for a man to address his mother-in-law as nina (mother). In doing so he is being very polite in suggesting the respect and love of the mother-son relationship, though personally he may be very angry with his mother-in-law. The case of the girl whom I have mentioned who always addressed and referred to her elder sister as nina (mother) is a special instance of this extension. She had lost her mother as a baby and had been suckled and brought up by her sister and she applied

the term nina (mother) to the woman who had acted towards her as such. It is not uncommon for a man to apply the term dewili (my sister) to persons who have no blood relationship to him whatsoever - as for instance his lover. It is a common motif in songs to refer to one's lover as dewili (sister). In speaking thus a man uses a term of endearment such as is implied in the protective relationship of brother-sister. The term tamere (my younger brother) is used as a term of comradeship by a man or woman to any friend of their own sex and of about their own age both within and without the circle of relationship, suggesting the conventional idea of the elder-younger brother relationship within the family. In talking to children of no relationship to himself a man often says wili (my child) thus extending the relational aspect of Father - Son relationship without also extending the obligations of such. Terms which are extended in this way are those which in strict usage apply to the restricted family of father, mother, and children. They have, in their extension, either an actual psychological context or a stereotyped psychological connotation.

The difference between the extension of kinship nomenclature to the kindred and the clan and their extension to persons outside these groups lies in the fact that in the first instance the terms are extended according to

traditional usage along the lines of social structure and that to some extent they also represent an extension of social obligations, whereas in the second instance they are used without any counterpart of social obligations. But, to my mind, not only the form but also the psychological context or stereotyped psychological connotation of the extensions is the same in both instances.

9. TERMS OF REFERENCE.

I now come to perhaps the most debated problem of relationship nomenclature. When a person uses these terms in address there can hardly be any doubt as to whom he is referring, but do the natives always understand who is being talked about when the speaker is using these terms in reference to a third person ?

I will give here a list of the nomenclature of the restricted family to show the different people to whom the terms can apply. I have left out any anomalous cases.

buba (1) My biological male parent. (my father)
 (2) My father's brothers.
 (3) All male members of my father's clan of
 my father's generation.

nina (1) My biological female parent. (my mother)
 (2) My mother's sisters
 (3) All female members of my mother's clan of
 my mother's generation.

- unvuremi (1) My elder brother, son of my father or of my mother.
- (2) My father's brother's and sister's sons older than myself.
- (3) All male members of speaker's clan older than himself but of the same generation.

- tamere (1) My younger brother, son of my father or of my mother.
- (2) My father's brothers' and sisters' sons of my generation younger than myself. Also ? sons of mother's sisters.
- (3) All male members of speaker's clan of his generation, younger than himself.

(The words unvuremi and tamere are also used simply in the sense that a man is older or younger than the speaker).

- dewili (1) My sister, daughter of my father or of my mother.
- (2) My father's brothers' and sisters' daughters.
- (3) All female members of my clan who are of my generation.

- kawili (w.s.) (1) My brother, son of my father or of my mother
- (2) My father's brothers' and sisters' sons.
- (3) All male members of my clan of my own generation.

- wili
- (1) My biological son, (my son)
 - (2) My biological daughter, (my daughter)
 - (3) My brothers' male or female children.
 - (4) All members of my clan, of either sex, of a younger generation than myself.

When a native uses one of these terms do his hearers understand to whom he is referring ? To answer this question a real knowledge of the language, and by that I mean the ability to understand the natives talking amongst themselves, is necessary. I can therefore only give my impressions based on a limited knowledge of the Zande language.

I can usually tell from the context whether a man in speaking of buba (my father) is referring to his real father or to some member of his father's clan. But sometimes there is no context, for me at any rate. For instance in travelling about the country and talking to the natives I mention someone's name and a man says 'buba du'; 'he is my father'. I then ask him 'boro bamu du?' 'Is he your real father?'. He may then reply 'oo unduru buba du'; 'no he is my father's elder brother'. I then ask him 'boro unduru bamu du?' 'Is he your father's real brother?', to which he may reply 'oo ngbwatunga rani sa'. 'No, our clan is one'. By the

the use of kinship nomenclature the speaker can tell me the age relationship of the person in question to his own father but he has no terms by which he can give me the degree of relationship. If I want to know the exact degree of relationship in which the person in question stands to the speaker's father I would have to listen to a long and complicated explanation which would leave me with the knowledge that the relationship was distant though I could seldom follow to what exact degree.

But the Ethnographer is always to a varying extent outside the social milieu of the native. He is never acquainted with relationships like the natives who know the genealogy of everyone in their locality. I feel certain that there is never doubt in the mind of the native as to whether a word refers to the actual father or uncle of the speaker or to some more distant relative. On the other hand it is clear that the native could not tell, any more than I could, if a distant relative is being referred to, who the man actually is, unless he had a clear context. But this does not in the least trouble him. If he particularly wants to know who the person is he can always ask his name. The speaker would generally mention it. But I believe that as a rule he is no more interested in the exact degree of relationship of other peoples' aunts and uncles and cousins and

grandchildren than we are.

The conclusions which we can draw from this discourse are :

- (1) That these words of kinship nomenclature are only sounds which derive meaning alone from the context in which they are uttered and that the context distinguishes clearly whether they are being used in their first sense or in an extended sense.
- (2) That consequently it is a mistake to say that a word^d symbol means several persons. It does not. Different symbols refer to different persons and whilst their phonetic values are the same, their meanings are differentiated by their contexts, e.g. buba does not mean father, father's brother or father's clansmen but there are several different words buba each referring to a different relationship.
- (3) That whilst the expressions "Classificatory System" and "Descriptive System" and "Family System" may be useful distinctions in general form, i.e. for purposes of classification, they should never be used as distinctions in function as Rivers used them; for amongst the Azande, and I believe in all nomenclature systems, a term can through its context and by the aid of circumlocutions be used in a descriptive or in a classificatory sense.
- (4) That the systems I have just described differentiated

relationships just as far as the social function of the relationships is differentiated. Beyond this point the native's interest does not carry him and where differentiation of social function ends so then the terms cease to differentiate between degrees of relationship but are used in what is known as a classificatory sense.

10. DIFFERENTIATION OF NOMENCLATURE & DIFFERENTIATION OF SOCIAL FUNCTION.

This last assertion requires demonstration. Though context makes clear the meaning of words there is reason why in some societies we find two relatives equated with two distinct sounds and in other societies we find they are equated with only one sound. Personally I believe that often we must admit that we do not know why the same term becomes associated with relatives with quite different social functions. But we can often obtain some idea why certain relatives are classed together under one symbol whilst others are distinguished by two separate symbols.

In the chart of relationship terms employed by the Azande, it will be seen that all grand-parents and all grand-children are classed together under the one symbol tita. A man is very little interested in his progenitors or descendants of two generations removed. As likely

as not he will never see them and in any case their relationship to himself will not be associated with any clearly defined reciprocal obligations. A single symbol suffices for them all.

The Zande system, like most Ba-ntu systems or indeed like many systems all over the world, makes a well marked terminological distinction between ages but not between sexes. Thus there are separate terms for ego's elder and younger brother and there is a similar separation in the terms for father's brothers and mother's sisters. He makes no such distinction between his own sisters and his father's sisters or his mother's brothers. Where Ego is female she makes an age distinction between her own sisters but not between her own brothers. She makes a similar distinction between her father's brothers and between her mother's sisters, but not between her father's sisters nor between her mother's brothers.

The problem can be simplified by pointing out that children of either sex simply take over the distinctions in age which are employed by their parents. Their father distinguishes between the ages of his brothers and not between the ages of his sisters, whilst their mother distinguishes between the ages of her sisters and not between the ages of her brothers, and the children do

the same. The succeeding generation takes over the distinctions of age made amongst brothers and sisters of the preceeding generations. The problem of age distinctions can therefore be discussed in the speakers generation alone and we need not trouble about their use in denoting members of the preceeding generation. Also it is thus clear why, for instance, there is an age distinction made by the speaker in addressing his mother's sisters which does not correspond to a differentiation of social function in regard to the speaker.

In the same manner we may interpret the use of the terms dewili (my sister) and kawili (my brother) without any fantastic and forced theories such as we are accustomed to in reading about kinship nomenclature. A man addresses his sister as dewili, my woman child (de = woman: wili = child) and a woman addresses her brother as kawili, my man child (ka = man (presumably it is a male prefix): wili = child).

The use of such terms is understood when we realise that parents use the term wili to address all their children of either sex and that the children take over this term used by their parents and apply it to one another. A differentiation is made by use of prefixes to mark the psychological attitude of children to siblings of the

opposite sex which differs from the attitude of parents to the ^{Sexual} ~~biological~~ factor in their offspring.

For we have already noticed that parents use a term for children which makes no sex differentiations and the same is true of grandchildren and grandparents. We can, I think plausibly, explain the absence of reflection of the all-important biological division created by sex in the terms which denote children, grand-children and grandparents, by the simple explanation that sex is not an important factor in children and the age^d. (2)

Leaving the specific terms for father and mother, buba and nina on one side we find that there are still two important terms which we have not yet accounted for, unvuremi (my elder brother M.S. my elder sister W.S.) and andomi (my maternal uncle).

In the Zande household the elder brother occupies a position privileged above his younger brother. He will have a right to the lobola¹ handed over on the marriage of his first sister. In consequence he will be married some time before his younger brother. Almost always I have found that an elder brother has more wives than a younger brother and in consequence holds a higher social position. The elder will receive a larger share of the inheritance than the younger. Within the household a man

(1) I am using this term instead of the more familiar "bride price". See Junod Life of a South African Tribe.

(2) See also Thurnwald Die Gemeinde der Banaro, p. 150. ff. 1921.

is a second father to his younger brothers. He orders them about, he beats them occasionally, he also teaches them and assists them in any difficulties. From babyhood his subservience to his brother is impressed upon his mind.

Moreover the brother is also the priest of the family, the practitioner of the familial rites in honour of the spirits of the dead. When a man builds a shrine in his cultivations it is his elder brother who must first perform the rites.

Moreover we must never forget the well-known psychological fact of jealousy which is a necessary consequence of the mother - son sentiment and which is invariably found between brothers in a family.

Between the mother's brother and the sister's son we find that curious lack of respect of a boy for his maternal uncle which is familiar to students of Anthropology from descriptions of tribes in every part of the world. Amongst the Azande a boy may and does take property from his mother's brother, often property of considerable value, and he is not held to have committed a crime in doing so.

To interpret this custom I think we must remember that sentiments are formed in the family and handed down

from parents to children. A child looks at its relatives through the eyes of its parents. The place of his maternal uncle in a boy's system of sentiments rests not so much upon his own social relations with his uncle as upon the social relations between his uncle and his mother on the one hand and his father on the other hand. We have to examine not only the obligations and privileges which exist between mother's brother and sister's son but also the social relationships from which they spring, those between brother and sister and between a man and his wife's brother.

The brother-sister relationship is an intimate one. They grow up together with common sentiments towards father and mother and home. The brother is enabled to marry by his sister's lobola and will become her protector. If a married woman is offended with her husband it is to her brother that she will turn. It is quite a common sight to see a man angry with his sister and abusing her for unfaithfulness to her husband or for laziness. But the role of lord is always subsidiary to that of friend and helper.

The relationship of a man to his brother-in-law is of a very different nature. That in all societies the relations between a man and his wife's family are never

cordial but that there is an underlying hostility between them is admitted by every observer. The girl is wrenched from her parents, her home, her daily and familiar associations. To her husband's people she is always to some extent a stranger and a servant. The husband on the other hand has not only handed over his lobola in compensation for the loss of their daughter to his wife's family, but he is constantly in danger of losing the economic and sexual services of his wife. A Zande is always being troubled by his parents-in-law to perform services on their behalf and to make them presents and to allow himself to be worsted in ceremonial exchange. If a man shows any disrespect to his relatives-in-law then either the marriage will be broken off or more likely the wife will take up residence with her parents or brother until reparation has been made. The Zande therefore treats his relatives-in-law with the greatest respect and conceals his anger and resentment. In no instance is this deference more irritating to him than when he has to show it to his wife's brother, a man of his own age. I have seen a man who was inwardly boiling with anger wipe the ground in front of his brother-in-law who was little more than a boy and call him chief.

We know that in many societies the antagonism between the family of the bridegroom and the family of the bride

has given rise to marriage ceremonies and is sometimes associated with strange and picturesque customs such as "mother-in-law avoidance" and "marriage by capture" which we have to interpret in terms of compensation.

I think that ceremonial stealing by a boy of his mother's brother's property must be interpreted in the same manner. The attitude of his parents towards this one relative (1), the mother's brother is quite different in the father's case and in the mother's case. In the case of other relatives there is not this same opposition of sentiments. A child therefore derives from his parents two mutually opposed attitudes towards the mother's brother and I think probably that the ceremonial to which I have referred is a result of this clash.

Radcliffe Brown² has put forward the following explanation. The social life within the restricted family produces a special pattern of behaviour between a son and his mother and this pattern, which is characterized by the

¹ It may be said that surely this ambivalent attitude should be above all shown to the mother's father. This is so, if I am right in supposing that it results in the type of ritual licence which we are examining, in parts of Polynesia and also in South Africa, as is shown in Brown's paper. (See F.N. 2)

² Radcliffe Brown's paper on the Mother's brother is in the Journal of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science, 1925.

freedom and absence of fear with which a child treats his mother, is extended to the mother's brother and through him to all the maternal relatives and to their spirits. This special type of behaviour has its ceremonial expression, the function of which is to fix and perpetuate this special type of behaviour with the obligations and sentiments involved in it.

With this view I am in entire agreement but I think that it does not take into consideration the pattern of behaviour dictated by sentiment towards the father must also be extended towards the mother's brother. And after all, amongst the Azande at any rate, it is the father who tells the boy that he may steal the goods of his maternal uncle and sometimes incites him to do so.. Nor must it be thought that the maternal uncle maintains an attitude of passive acquiescence. If he can catch the boy he will give him a hiding though he will not take away the stolen article from him and he will also make an offering to the ancestral spirits explaining why he beat his sister's son so that they will not be angry with him for having done so.

However I have certainly not attempted to put forward any special theory to explain this customary licence which is permitted to the sister's son. There is not sufficient comparative data to do this. I wished only to indicate

the lines upon which I think that the explanation will lie so that I shall have definite lines to work upon.

There can be no doubt that the attitude of a child ~~to~~^{is} towards his maternal uncle formed, in the manner I have described, in the close circle of the restricted family and his whole life relations with this man are coloured by this early association of him in the father and mother sentiments. The problem before us is to find out to what extent and in what way this attitude of childhood is modified by intercourse in later life¹.

Finally we must give a short reference to the terms buba (my father) and nina (my mother). Our account will be condensed and even if full would be all too short to show the supreme importance of the relationships of Mother-Child - Father. For, as will be more fully explained later, the restricted family is the core of the whole system, the nucleus from which all other relationships are an extension and on which they are built up.

For nine months before birth of a child has not only intimate relations with its mother but is actually part of her organism. After birth it is entirely dependant upon her for food and warmth and bodily cares. The Mother is

¹ I am indebted to Professor Malinowski for pointing out to me that I had not given sufficient consideration to the ~~possibility~~^{possibility} of profound modification

the sole centre of the child's thoughts, the sole satisfaction for his innate desires. As the child grows up it continues to receive intimate attentions from its mother and it is a common sight to see children running to suckle their mothers. To a Zande his mother is always a person apart and he always shows her tender and deep affection and cares for her in her old age. Wili nina (child of my mother) stands to him as someone much nearer than wili buba (child of my father). It is one of the results of the polygamous system, somewhat paradoxically, to give special predominance to the mother's relatives in a child's sentiments.

The Zande father also shows a lively affection for his infant. He nurses it and plays with it. As the children grow up they begin to see the father as the wielder of authority in the family, they see that it is he who gives orders to their mother and domineers over her. Later they will themselves come under his discipline and he will exact obedience from them. I think that the Zande father is always feared and respected though his children also often have considerable affection for him.

Upon father and mother the child depends for all its early care, for its education and for the moulding of its sentiments. It sees that its parents treat and

speak of different relatives in different ways and the child adopts their attitude.

We shall leave our discussion of the father and mother here to remark upon a final problem of kinship nomenclature.

We may say then that we have reached a preliminary conclusion that the relatives who stand out on account of their special social functions in an individual's perspective are father, mother, mother's brother, elder brother. In this analysis we find welcome corroboration from the use of pronominal suffixes for different relatives. The greatest caution has to be exercised in using such data,^a but where it finds support in observable social behaviour we are on fairly safe ground.

Now in speaking of ordinary things the Zande indicates possession by the use of a preposition combined with a pronominal suffix, as gimi sape = my knife, ga mu sape = your knife, or by the use of the preposition alone, as gi sape = my knife, ga sape = your knife. The preposition with pronominal suffix always precedes the object possessed. When speaking of relatives and friends, names, the homestead, the clan, and parts of the body the Zande uses a different method of indicating possession by a pronominal suffix of another kind, as badiya re = my lover, ndu ru = your leg and so on.

and so on.

Now most relatives when they are referred to in the first two persons are coupled with this last type of pronominal suffix. We say for instance tita re = my grandparent, tame re = my younger brother, and so on. But for the relatives mentioned above a special suffix is used in the first and second persons, thus :-

ba mi = my father (alternative to buba)

na mu = your mother (I do not think that one ever says na mi instead of nina, but the derivative, children of my mother = awili na mi.)

ando mi = my mother's brother

unvure mi = my elder brother

It is not necessary here to show the exact grammatical place of these pronouns in the Zande language. What we wish to point out is that differentiation of linguistic terminology corresponds with differentiation of social function and that therefore, as Rivers held, nomenclature is a rough guide to social function.

When we begin to examine the same phenomena outside blood relationship the question becomes more difficult. Thus whilst a man calls his wife diya re, the woman refers to her husband as kumba mi. A man refers to his tutor in the circumcision ceremonies as semba mi = my helper. The same term is also used for a man's tutor in some of the

secret societies. Nasamba is the word for the midwife. A man also uses the same suffix when he speaks of his "blood-brother", bakure mi.

I mention these other instances to show that the distinction of use between the two types of pronominal suffix is not confined to the kindred. Its interest lies in the fact that it creates a linguistic division between two lots of kindred.

To sum up our analysis of nomenclature terms, we may say that the important biological distinctions of age and sex reflecting also important social distinctions are well marked when they are factors of significance for the speaker but not ^{well marked} when they are not factors of significance for the speaker, e.g. in the cases of elder-brother and sister but not in the cases of children, grand-children and grand-parents. The mother's brother is the only relative specially singled out not on account of his biological significance but on account of the peculiar position he occupies in the child's sentiments and the peculiar customs to which this position gives rise.

^{Köhler,} In conclusion we may say with regard to the theories of Morgan, and later of Rivers, that whilst we do not agree with their presentment of the problem of kinship nomenclature, we think nevertheless that there was a large element

of truth in what they said. We dispute rather their way of saying it, we hold not that nomenclature terms are determined by social structure but rather that they are part of social structure. The term is a part of the relationship which includes the person referred to as well as a whole series of social obligations and patterns of behaviour and sentiments. Looked upon in this manner the term necessarily reflects to some extent the relationship of which it forms part and may never be a useful guide for field-work investigations.

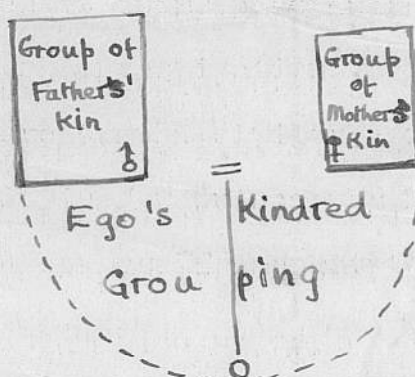
I believe that a similar conclusion has been reached by Thurnwaldt in New Guinea, by Malinowski in the Trobriand Islands, and by myself amongst the Azande.

11. FUNCTIONS & COHESION OF THE KINDRED:

The Zande family is like all families in all societies a bilateral grouping, i.e. a man or woman is bound to both Father's kin and Mother's kin by mutual sentiments and reciprocal obligations. But as the Azande are patrilocal the father's side is stressed and there is not a complete symmetry in the family. A boy grows up in his father's homestead and his neighbours as I have shewn earlier, will be his father's brothers and other blood-relatives. Therefore he will not only have a wider knowledge of

relatives on his father's side but also his relationship to these people will be re-enforced by stronger bonds of common intercourse and experience. The fulfilment of social obligations depends upon proximity of dwellings and strong sentimental attachment can only be built up under the same conditions.

We had better define clearly our terms and we will do so diagrammatically :-



The two groups of father's kin and mother's kin we call groups because all the members have a definite social pattern of behaviour in relation to one another and definite social obligations to perform. These two groups in relation to ego form a grouping. In the diagram Father's kin is represented as larger than mother's kin to illustrate unilateral stress.

I will give a resume of the nature of the obligations of kinship :

(1) There are only ECONOMIC obligations in a general sense. In such joint labour as clearing the millet patch, house building and hunting, relatives are expected to come and assist in the work if they live near and the same applies, if less strictly to neighbouring friends.

(2) The kindred play an important part in CEREMONIAL. There are members of the father's kin present when a new shrine is erected in the homestead or in a new clearing of land before planting millet seed. Members of the kin of a man or of a woman will attend their funerals. This duty includes persons who are genealogically far removed. When a man gives a feast in honour of the spirit of his father, his father's kin will attend and perform certain acts of ceremonial. If the feast is in honour of his mother's spirit then his mother's kin will attend and perform the ceremonial with his own brothers and sisters. When a boy is passing out of the circumcision camp his relatives on both sides of the family will attend, if they live near, and are expected to make presents to the boy's tutor.

(3) A group of obligations, not clearly defined which we can call SOCIAL. It seems that there was never any standardized allotment of contributions to assist in paying the bride Price of a man. The main

duty of supplying him with sufficient spears to get married fell on his father, or if he were dead then on his elder brother. But at the same time a man who wished to get married would beg from his father's brothers and mother's brothers also and that they would be expected to contribute a spear or two to the lobola. However there was no reciprocal duty involved thereby in that the spear need never be repaid. I have used the past tense in referring to these contributions because to-day the obligation to assist a relative in this matter is not so clearly recognised and this must be largely attributed to a weakening of the kinship bonds due to some extent to European innovations, e.g. the attempt to destroy the institution of the levirate, according to which a man's wife was inherited by his brother.

The kin also are expected to assist a man in the various difficulties of his life, such as in paying fines and court dues, giving him food, and so on.

(4) The kindred of a man have the duty of VENGEANCE for his death. They are a group of blood-revengers. Actually I think that this duty devolved on his brothers in the main but other relations also gave support and assistance.

Such is a brief resume of the social duties which

kinship involves. I will give an equally brief resume of the forces which act to maintain the solidarity of the kinship group.

(1) First of these I should be inclined to place MATERIAL DENSITY. The kin especially on the father's side build their homes near each other, so that, as I have explained before, the system of homesteads tends to form intersecting and straggling hamlets manned by relatives. The further away relatives live the less they are expected to take part in any of the social activities which I have just enumerated. Moral solidarity depends on spacial condensation. I think also that we must consider the father's kin to be a more cohesive group than that of the mother's kin; a fact which we refer to their spacial distribution.

(2) The kinship system depends essentially on a system of MUTUALITY. The main sanction for the performance of any of its irksome duties lies in the fact that a man who does not help his relatives will receive no help from them. Relatives amongst the Azande often dislike each other personally as much as we dislike our relatives. Nor do they by any means always carry out their obligations and they sometimes show their distaste at having to do so. But a man feels himself dependent

on his kindred and will help them so that they in their turn will have to help him. I believe that this selfish attitude is a powerful sanction for the carrying out of obligations and this sanction is supported by public opinion which censures the man who neglects to assist his kin.

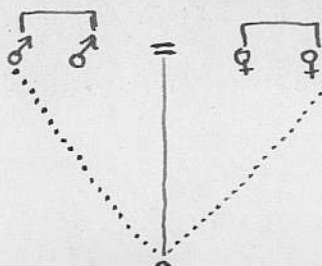
(3) RELIGION is also one of the forces making for solidarity in the kindred group. The Azande believe that the spirits of the dead will be angry with and will punish a man who wrongs or ill-treats his kin. This belief applies equally to members of the mother's kin as to members of the father's kin. I have already mentioned one instance of this principle in that the mother's brother may beat his sister's son for "stealing" things from him, but will afterwards explain the reason for his action to the spirits of the dead so that they will not be angry with him.

(4) At the basis of behaviour towards the kindred are the sentiments formed towards members of the restricted family by each member through close residence and social life within the family. The relatives come into the sentiments centred around father and mother and the behaviour shown by a child to its parents is extended to their relations. This does not happen automatically

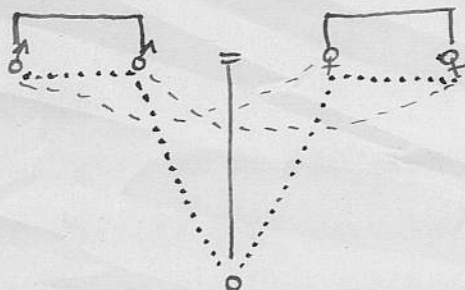
but by a process of education within the family group. I want to emphasize the fact that even in the restricted family there is no biological equipment which leads necessarily to the formation of mutual sentiments, but that these are built up over a long period of sharing the same residence and performing mutual services. The sentiments within the family are a product of social forces acting within the group.

The attitude of a man to his kindred is dictated by his sentiments towards father and mother. We should never, I think, regard the relationship of a man to his elder brother, to his mother's brother, to his father's sister as a direct relationship, the solidarity of which depends upon the mutual rendering of services alone, but we should always regard these relationships as indirect ones which are linked together through the father and mother. Other relatives are important to the individual because they enter into the sentiments to the father and mother.

I will illustrate the point diagrammatically. The pattern of behaviour of ego to his father's brother or his mother's sister for example is not built up directly as illustrated by the dotted lines in the first figure:-



but is built up indirectly as in the second figure along the dotted lines



There is nothing mysterious about this explanation. A child knows at first only its mother and later its father. Bit by bit it is introduced to its other relations and is taught by its parents to regard them as members of their family and to treat them with respect. It is within and by the small family that the child is by a slow education taught to regard itself as a member of a wider family and his membership of this wider family is reinforced by reciprocal social duties, by ceremonial, by mode of residence, and by opposition to strangers.

It is in this manner that I have tried to explain terms of relationship, by looking at the relatives of ego, not with his eyes, but with the eyes of his father and mother.

As in the case of the mother's brother so with other relatives of Ego, his attitude towards them, though built

up in the father and mother sentiments, will probably undergo modification in later life.

12. RELATIVES-IN-LAW.

Before we go on to consider the extension of the Zande Gross familie into the clan system we must give some attention to the nomenclature used in address and reference to relatives-in-law.

gbiöre = negbiöre

♂

♀

gbiöre = eriqö

♂

♀

dewill
kumbani

♂

tame
kumbani

♂

unvuru fu
kumbani

♂

Ego =
kumbani

♂

Ego =
diare

♂

unvuru fu
diare

♂

tame
diare

♂

(eriqö)
diare

♂

will de
kumbani

♂

will tame
will unvuru fu
kumbani

♂

will
kumbani

♂

will diare
will unvuru
diare fu diare

♂

will
diare

♂

will kawi
diare
(eriqö)

♂

If we study this chart we shall see that Ego (male) simply makes the same age distinctions as his wife when speaking of her sisters, and when ego is a woman she does the same with respect to her husband's brothers.

Any person on the chart can be referred to by a special descriptive term. Normally, however, a man addresses his relatives-in-law of the male sex, i.e. his father-in-law and brother-in-law by the complimentary term gbia (chief) or, if he uses a term of relationship, then he usually says gbio re (my brother-in-law) or (my father-in-law). I rather think that the word for Chief gbia and the word for male-in-law gbio are phonetically the same in origin though there appears to be a slight difference due to the absence of the pronominal suffix in the first case and its usual presence in the second case. If this is so then we may suggest that the similarity reflects a similar attitude of respect in both instances - but we do not stress this suggestion.

As I have explained earlier the mother-in-law is generally addressed as nina (mother). The descriptive term of reference na gbio re (my mother-in-law) mirrors the importance of the brother-in-law for na gbio re means the mother of my brother-in-law. I have already discussed the importance of this relationship.

A man will usually address his wife by her name and

she will generally speak to her husband as ba (father), a term of polite address. I regret to say that I am uncertain how a woman normally addresses her husband's relatives. She can use the long descriptive terms in the chart but I think it highly improbable that she actually does so.

In speaking to a third person husband and wife refer to each other respectively as diale (de-re = woman my) and kumba mi (kumba mi = man - my) in the same way as the German uses the terms Man and Frau for husband and wife.

The pattern of behaviour extended by the wife towards her husband's brother is obviously of importance in a Society with the institution of the leviate. But I regret that my data dealing with the question is insufficient and I cannot do more than formulate the problem for future investigations.

13. NATURE OF THE ZANDE CLAN GROUP:

Now we will approach the clan from the same angle as we have approached the kin and kindred. It is pertinent to ask at the outset what is a clan? Those who have given us accounts of primitive tribes have denoted almost anything from a large political grouping to a kin

group as a clan. Amongst men of science there is a similar confusion in terminology. It is not necessary here to enter into the many different senses in which clan, sib and gens have and are being used. It is sufficient to say that the terms have no one meaning.

(1)
According to Rivers we should define a clan as an exogamous grouping the members of which consider each other as related and trace their descent to a real or mythical ancestor or totem. We cannot however regard the clan as an organic entity of this description because the characteristics by which it is defined are not invariably found associated with the clan system.

It is now considered more convenient by way of a minimum definition to regard the clan as an exogamous unilateral group of relatives.

But confusion may arise from such a definition. Rules of exogamy should be regarded as a distinct social institution which is generally associated with the clan system, when it exists, for obvious reasons, but which is often associated with other types of social groups. Rules of exogamy are a separate social entity which may be associated with any segment and should certainly not be used to define it.

So that we are left with the description of the clan

(1) History of Malanesian Society . 1914.

as an unilateral group of distant relatives or supposed relatives. We shall here have to leave the problem until we have made a preliminary analysis of the clan system amongst the Azande.

We shall attempt to show the nature of the group which is called ngbwatunga in Zande, to discuss its functions and the degree of cohesion which it possesses, rather than attempt to correlate it with existing definitions.

We shall however endeavour to throw the light which is given by Zande data on to the problems and theories connected with the clan system and to make a contribution to our knowledge of the ^{is} social unit.

The Zande clan, ngbwatunga, has little solidarity. Localization upon which solidarity must depend is absent, the clan never acts together and there is no marked opposition of the members of one clan towards the members of other clans. The membership of any clan may stretch over an enormous area and the existence of many members will be unknown to others. Moreover if we include the clans which are not Zande in origin, and we are bound to do so in a non-historical treatment of this organisation, we shall find that there are several hundreds of clans.

It is not easy to classify these clans. Some of them have split up into sections and these have split again into smaller sections. Thus a man will tell you that he is a

member of A section of B section of C clan. It does not seem that these splits have taken place along the lines of social function, as I believe to be often the case in Africa, but are probably due to some historical cause now forgotten or to their wide territorial diffusion. Some clans, most I think, have remained intact.

Undoubtedly there is a tendency for the Zande system to absorb non-Zande clans. Through this incorporation their ethnic origin becomes lost and they become true Zande clans. Today in the Yambic area we can distinguish three distinct types of clan. To the Zande of this district the true Azande clans all belong to the section of the nation which calls itself A-Mbomu, the people of the Mbomu river, from which they moved northwards into the savanna of the Sudan. In contrast to the A-Zande A-Mbomu are the Auro or foreigners. Some of these peoples, such as the Babuckur, still retain their language and many of their old customs. Others such as the Bangbinda and A-Miangba are now practically indistinguishable from the true A-Zande but are recognised as foreigners. A third type of clans is sometimes referred to as ga A-Zande Auro seem to have been small and insignificant peoples now completely absorbed by Zande culture and scarcely recognised as being of foreign origin. In a survey of the clan system I shall treat as Zande clans all those clans which

have the characteristics of such without regard to their ethnic genesis.

14. SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE CLAN:

The clan system first began to intrude upon me when I was travelling about the country-side with informants and servants. I noticed that these sometimes stayed with or received food from members of their clans. I do not suggest that they were always given hospitality by members of their clans but they often expected to receive it. If disappointed they would say "Oh So-and-So, he's no good. He didn't give me any food. A man who knows how to do things properly helps his relative." "Social obligations are irksome and avoided where possible.

I found also that a knowledge of clan relationship gave me an introduction into a strange part of the country. I would always ask a man the name of his clan and if I knew one of his relations in a different part of the country this always made a good impression.

My observations have lead me to the conclusion that the social obligations of clan members to one another are never clearly defined but that they may be summed up in the attitude of preferential treatment. In a primitive society a stranger is an enemy and the clan name is a

passport and a surety of freindship. It is important to note that preferential treatment is extended equally to members of the mother's clan as to members of the father's clan. In asking for preferential treatment a man will be heard drawing attention to relationship through his mother as through his father.

To make the point clearer I will give one or two examples in which the demand for favour has been based upon clan relationship. On the occasion of a small feast in honour of the spirits of the dead I heard a boy asking for a pot of beer from the master of the feast, who was a distant member of his mother's clan and hence stood to the boy in the relationship of ande or mother's brother. Unfortunately there was no beer left, or the master of the feast said that there was no beer left, and he ran after the boy saying in a pleading voice "Oh my sister's son, alas my sister's son, there is no beer left, it is all finished. If there were any beer I would give it to you my sister's son, alas."

On another occasion I heard a youth, who was in my service, being asked by a woman for some salt. He was very reluctant to part with his salt and was in fact denying that he had any, when she said, "But we gave birth to you, you are my son", meaning that she was a member of his mother's clan.

I will give one more example. I was wishing to purchase some article and was having a long dispute with the owner as to the price. An informant acted as my adviser and I decided to leave the fixing of the price to him. During the bargaining I overheard a whispered remark from the owner of the article pointing out to my informant that they were members of the same clan the intentions of which observation being obvious.

These examples, though not all in the full context of native life will give sufficient illustration to what I mean by preferential treatment. The anthropologist is himself necessarily drawn by degrees into native life and assumes privileges and obligations accordingly. I have found that clan members, on either the mother's side or on the father's side, of my informants or servants expected preferential treatment from me. They would say "You are the father of So-and-So, well he is my son (of my clan or of my sister's son's clan) and you ought to do this for me."

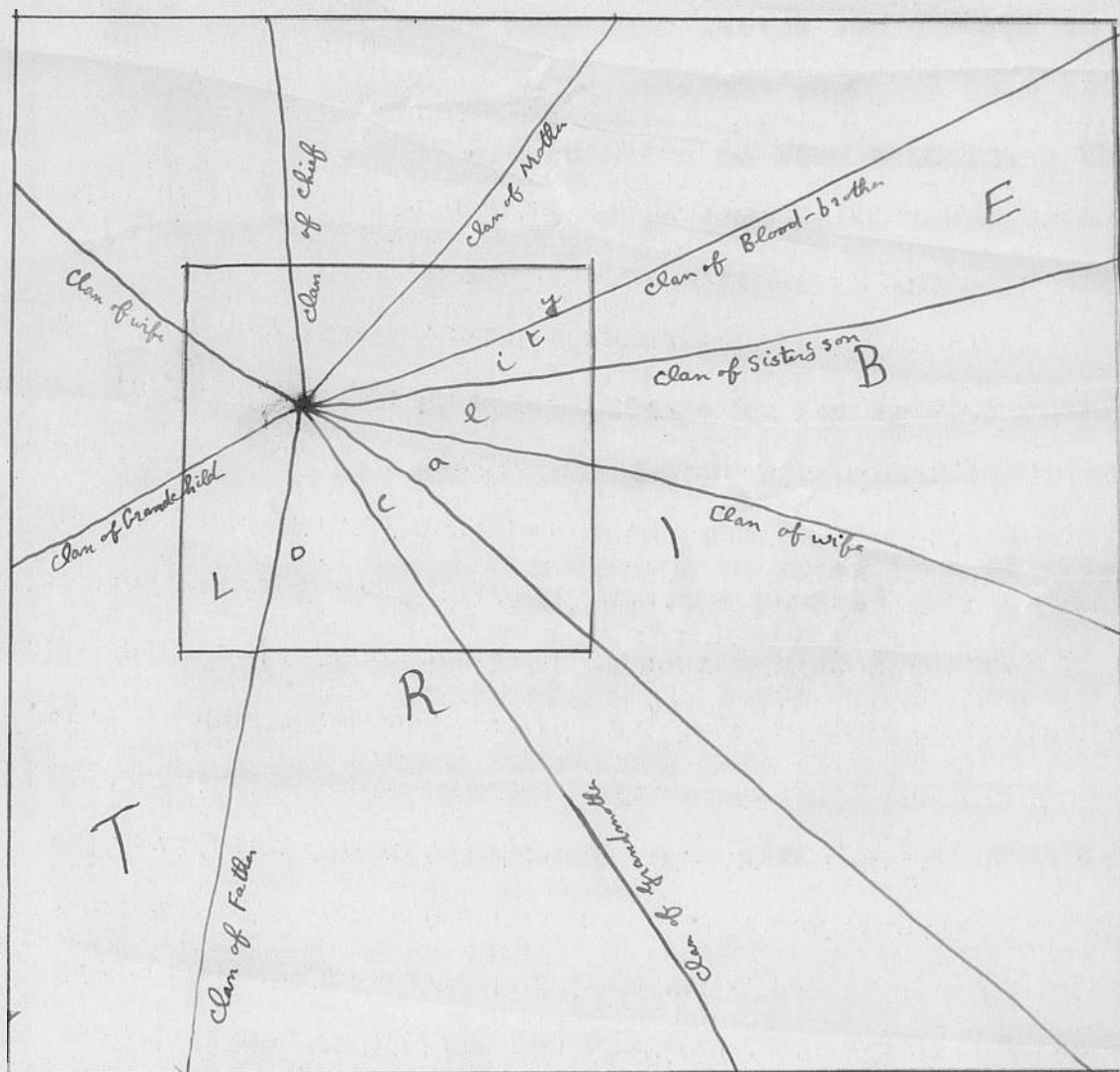
It is important to notice that clan obligations and privileges are undifferentiated by the degree of relationship and that this lack of differentiation distinguishes membership of the clan from membership of the kin from which it is an extended system. In the Kindred each relative can be defined by specific social obligations,

whereas in the clan all the members have only a general and undefined feeling of obligation to one another which I have summed up as reciprocal preferential treatment.

At the same time it must not be thought that the importance of the clan system rests upon the sporadic fulfilment of undefined obligations. It colours the whole weltanschauung of the native. Instead of his tribe consisting merely of many persons, some strangers, some with whom he has established a degree of acquaintance or friendship, himself living alone with his family in a world of ⁿenemies and doubtful friends, he can see himself in a known world linked together by innumerable ties of relationship. For not only are all members of his father's clan and of his mother's clan his relatives and friends, but also all members of the clans of his several blood-brothers stand to him as blood-brothers as well. The blood-brotherhood bond is essentially a bond between clans as well as between individuals. All members of the clans of his wives, or of the wives of his brothers, and husbands of his sisters, are relatives to him. He extends his friendship and respect to all members of the clan of his tutor in the circumcision ceremonies. He gives homage to every member of the clan of his chief.

We can conceive of the clan system in relation to the

individual diagrammatically as a number of lines intersecting at one point. At this point stands the individual, his world linked to him by a network of relationship. These strands run across other social groups, such as the tribe, giving them greater cohesion.



The clan system will only function objectively, that is to say that members will only carry out their social obligations, within a small radius. Whereas the kindred may travel a considerable distance to undertake their social duties, members of the same clan have no such strictly defined and mutual obligations and whilst if they live near each other they will assist one another on ceremonial occasions or in economic work, if they live far away they will not function as clan members. The social functioning of the clan depends in consequence upon the degree of its localization. I shall be returning to this point later.

Every clan is distinguished by its special name. These names are often sobriquets e.g.

avongara means the binders of power (a = pl prefix, vo = bind, ngara = power.)

abokundē means People who eat high food (a = pl prefix, bo ety. doubtful, kundē = high meats.)

amazungu means People who heal (a = pl prefix, mazungu = heal)

akowe means People who make fire (a = pl prefix, ko = rub, we = fire)

ambwēgē means People of a large gourd (a = pl. prefix, mbwēgē = gourd.)

when I say that this is what the names mean, I allude to their etymological construction or what is probably their

etymological construction. The native does not explain the names in this manner. With regard to the Avongara and amazungu clans, the names correspond with their social functions, as I will show later. But the other clans have not, to my knowledge, any differentiated social function nor any stories which explain their sobriquets. Many names do not reveal their etymological construction. It is quite possible that some Zande clans are names of foreign tribes or tribal divisions now absorbed into Zande Culture.

With the single exception of the chiefs' clan or class, the avongara, I have never been given any information about the clan ancestors.

Wherever we find the clan system we find it associated with different social functions according to the different developement of societies. It may have political or ceremonial or economic functions or none of these. Where the clan system exists, however, it is generally associated with descent and inheritance. Generally also the regulation of marriage and religious belief are orientated after clan membership by processes of extention and segmentation. Amongst the Azande, as indeed amongst all peoples, descent is traced through the father and the mother. The clan of the father is slightly emphasized

at the expense of the clan of the mother, the former being "my clan", the latter "the clan of my mother".

Inheritance of the clan name comes from the father alone and not from the mother. Inheritance of material objects passes to a man's children and not to the children of his sister. Inheritance of rank is always through the father and never through the mother. Only the sons of a chief or his brothers can succeed him.

The regulation of marriage or rules of exogamy are orientated after the clan system. No man may marry or have sexual relations with any member of his clan. The same prohibition holds for all members of his mother's clan. With regard to the father's clan and to the mother's clan these regulations are explicit, but some men will also extend the prohibition to include the clans of their grandmothers. Many men would not marry into the clan of their father's maternal uncle, though such a marriage would, I believe, be permitted by society. In any case this will not seriously curtail the wide choice of mates for the Zande clans are legion.

The attitude of man towards certain natural objects which is called totemism is another cultural characteristic associated with the clan system. All A-Zande metamorphize at death into some natural object, animal, bird, reptile, insect or meteorological entity, and they refrain from eating these objects even when they are edible. Just as

the sex prohibitions are defined by father's clan and mother's clan equally, so are the food prohibitions.

When a Zande dies his body is thought to decay with the exception of his right hand which becomes an animal of his clan totem-species, whilst his spirit goes away to the spirit land at the heads of streams. In the metempsychosis into the totemic entity males follow their father's clan, females their mother's clan. So that if a man of the Abokunde clan with the lion as totem marries a woman of the Avongara clan with the leopard as totem, all sons resulting from the marriage will become at death lions and all daughters will become leopards.

This belief was so startling and peculiar that I made persistent enquiries into the question. Though there was some valid variation of individual opinion about the matter there is no doubt in my mind that Zande theology holds that metamorphosis into the totem animal of the father's clan or of the mother's clan is determined by sex. We must not expect to find eschatological ideas other than vague and heterogeneous.

We shall find a similar orientation in Zande belief about witchcraft. Here again inheritance of witchcraft is handed down in sexual filiation from mother to daughter and from father to son. In the eyes of the Azande witchcraft is located in the abdomen where it can always be discovered

if the stomach is withdrawn. An accusation of witchcraft is an accusation against not only an individual but against a whole group of persons. However no man can inherit witchcraft from his mother nor woman from her father.

I will mention another characteristic sometimes associated with the clan system.

Some of the clans have name taboos. For example one clan will not mention the name of a certain vegetable because a member of the clan, who still lives, shot his son with an arrow near-by this vegetable. It was night and he thought a movement ^{of his son} came from an animal. Another clan will not mention the name of termites because one of their members once made the great chief ^{Gbudwe} ~~Abutiva~~ a present of a large pot of termites which turned out to consist of a few termites on top and underneath nothing but inedible wings of these insects. Gbudwe took a terrible revenge on the joker and his relatives for this insult.

In such cases if a man of the Clan concerned hears someone of another clan utter the tabooed name he will begin to wail and will only be quieted on the payment of a small present. Such taboos are, however, quite distinct from the totemic taboos. The object to which

the name refers may be eaten but not spoken.

15. BALANCE BETWEEN FATHER'S CLAN - AND MOTHER'S CLAN.

I wish here to draw attention to the balance between the Father's clan and the mother's clan. The balance which we find between the father and mother in a child's sentiments and in reciprocal duties in the restricted family is found also in the kindred. Why then should it be absent in the clan organization? A child thinks towards his kin and acts towards them with a pattern of behaviour created in his home life. He adopts the attitude of his parents towards these people. I believe also that his mother's clan members produce the same emotional response as his father's clan members.

For necessary social purposes certain social functions are orientated after the father's clan rather than after the mother's clan, and I believe that this tends to conceal the essentially similar attitude of the native towards members of both clans. It is true that a man when asked the name of his clan will give the name of his father's clan but it would be an error to suppose that he does not know or think less highly of the clan name of his mother. For obvious social purposes it is clear that inheritance of either name, wealth or rank can be transmitted by only one line and not by two lines.

But where social necessity does not enter in we find the balance between mother's side and father's side re-asserting itself. There is no essential reason why the clan of only one parent should regulate marriage. No confusion and disruption can take place in consequence. So we find not only amongst the Azande but commonly throughout Africa exogamous rules associated with the clans of both parents. Equally common and of great convenience is the observation of the food taboos of both clans. Amongst the Azande we have seen also that there is a religious partition between the clans in that females turn at death into the totem of their mother's clan just as males turn into the totem of their father's clan. Similarly witchcraft may be transmitted equally through father or through mother according to the sex of their children.

Linguistic evidence alone shows that the Azande do not trace kinship into the clan through one parent only. Nomenclature terms are extended equally through both parents e.g. buba (my father) is extended to all males of my father's clan of his generation, but no more than nina (my mother) is extended to all females of my mother's clan of her generation.

Moreover we have seen that the objective functioning of the clan in giving assistance in need and hospitality

displays an essentially similar subjective attitude of father's clan and mother's clan members. After all the relative solidarity of the clans of both parents can only be investigated by a study of the behaviour of their members to one another and we have already pointed out that these actions or modes of behaviour are the same amongst the members of both clans in their relation to ego.

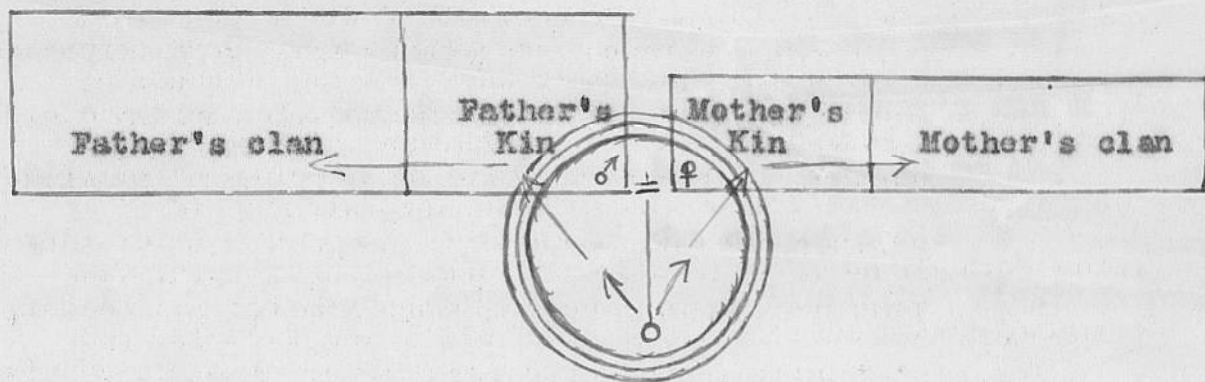
To my mind nothing can be more erroneous than the opinion that the clan traces descent through one parent to the total neglect of the other parent, which is Lowie's ⁽¹⁾ view and appears to be generally accepted. Even that bunch of functions which must be orientated after one clan exclusively may be shared by the two clans, e.g. inheritance of wealth may go through the father's line and inheritance of rank through the mother's line, as is the case amongst the Ba-Ila. ⁽²⁾ Where lack of necessity allows a social adjustment to individual sentiments there is always a tendency for the two clans to maintain a balance and Zande data shows this tendency quite clearly.

We began our analysis of the Zande clan system by noting the absence of any adequate definition of this protean social group. We decided not to attempt a definition until we had made our analysis of ngbwatunga.

(1) Primitive Society 1921.

(2) Smith and Dale 1920.

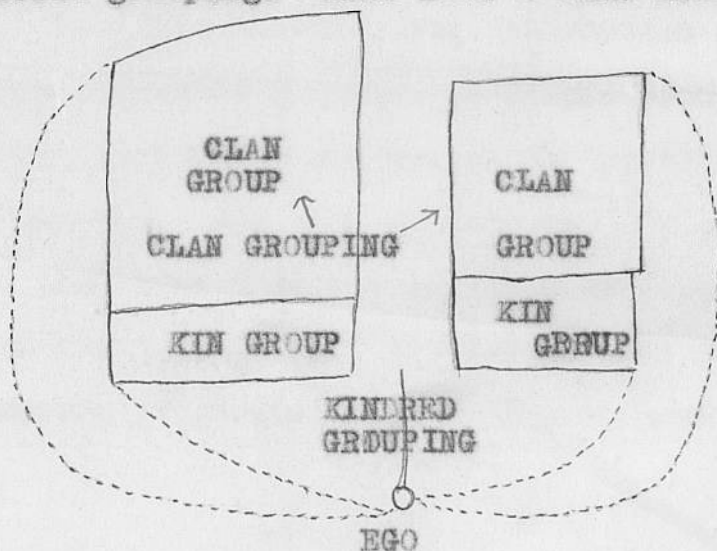
the Zande clan. We tried to show that the attitude of a man towards his fellow clansmen arises out of the nuclear family sentiments. Ego has no specific clan sentiment, but the clansmen enter into the father sentiment and into the mother sentiment. The clans are my father's relatives and my mother's relatives. I will now illustrate this extension of the sentiments diagrammatically.



In this diagram I have made the kin and clan groups on the mother's side rather smaller than on the father's side to represent a society in which the male sex is socially predominant, in which the father's line is stressed at the expense of the mother's line, and in which the special grouping is patrilocal in principle.

or to put it in another way the symbiosis is unilateral.

Now if what I have said is true and my diagram represents real social values then it will be seen that the clan is essentially bilateral in its relation to the individual. A man extends to his father's clan members a certain pattern of behaviour and he extends a similar pattern of behaviour to members of his mother's clan. How this is so I have already endeavoured to show in an analysis of the clan system amongst the Azande. To a lesser degree this is true also of the clans of a man's relatives-in-law, of his blood-brothers, of his circumcision tutor and so on. Now just as we call the kin a social group, so we may also call the clan a social group in a formalistic sense. In the same way just as we call the father's kin and the mother's kin a bilateral grouping in their relation to ego, so we may also call the father's clan and the mother's clan a bilateral grouping. This idea I will illustrate diagrammatically.



16. THE PLACE OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE CLAN SYSTEM.

I have said advisedly that we may regard the clan as a social group in a formalistic way of speaking or for purposes of classification by form. But what is a social group and is the clan one? What is a Zande clan to a Zande?

It is perhaps too obvious to state that to the native there are no groups, that is to say that there is no clear conception of a group such as there is to our minds when we make an abstraction of family, or kin, or clan. I mention this only because one would gather from some writers, such as certain French scholars, that primitive man thinks in groups, in kins and clans and so on. But being a practical and not a mystical being he thinks in terms of individual relationships. The group is rather a useful sociological abstraction than a concept of native thought.

Now this sociological abstraction of the social group refers to a number of people bound together by common sentiments and mutual obligations, e.g. the family or the kin. But when we come to consider the clan we must see that even from the formalistic point of view the clan group is largely fictional. The Zande clan is composed of hundreds of individuals who never come into

contact with one another. It may be said that if they did come into contact with one another they would have certain general mutual duties but the whole point is that they never do come into contact with one another. Now the Zande cannot have any attitude to the clan as such, because he does not think in groups, but he has only an attitude of recognition and friendship to persons who are more or less distantly related to his father and mother and in a less degree to his wife and blood-brother and nephew and chief, with whom he actually comes into contact within the restricted bounds of his locality or tribe, the ~~total scene~~ ^{mise en scene} of his life and death. The clan is a lot of more or less distant relatives of those persons to whom he has a deep attachment or who are socially important for him. He is inclined to be friendly and helpful to those distant relatives on account of their relationship to those near ones. Also he will be friendly and helpful to them so long as it does not involve much trouble or expense.

I do not wish to underestimate the social importance of such extensions and have earlier in this thesis, attempted to demonstrate the importance of the Zande clan system both as a subjective force giving the native a feeling of support, safety and confidence in a known

world, and also its importance as a system of binding strands which by linking together individuals increases the cohesion of other social groups, such as the tribe.

The formalistic classification of the clan as a social group is a useful method of anthropological abstraction but I think that had there been a clearer analysis we should not have had so many fantastic theories in which the clan plays on paper a role which is quite different to that which it plays in native life. Also I think that had theorists generalized on African data instead of on Australian and Melanesian data we should have received a rather different impression of the nature of this group.

In Australia¹ and Melanesia clans are generally localized or sections of them are localized as segmented groups in a large territorial unit. The great cohesion which we are inclined to ascribe to the clan or clan-segment in these parts is in reality cohesion created by symbiosis (see Seligman, Brown, Malinowski^w, Landtman and other writers on this part of the world).

Many writers are inclined to regard the clan as a special type of political grouping.⁽¹⁾ But in this case what becomes of our ngbwatunga?

I have attempted in this section of my thesis to

(1) See Art. Klan by Thurnwald in "Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte."

analyse the nature of the ngbwatunga and what it means to the Zande and have ventured to suggest that we must get away from the formalistic attitude towards social groups and see what they mean to the native, what is their place in the real and vital values of native life. I think that to a Zande ngbwatunga means the more or less distant relatives of those who are near and dear to him.

Looking at the clan, ngbwatunga, as we have endeavoured to do, through native eyes, as also the family and the kin groups, it is important that we should state how the native refers to such groups.

(1) kwurani (our house). By this term a man refers to his family, all those persons who occupy his homestead. The word may, however, be extended so far as to all Azande in distinction to other peoples.

(2) agumere (my relatives). Thus a man says agume buba (my father's relatives), agume nina (my mother's relatives), agume diare (my wife's relatives). The term can include relatives to any degree removed from the speaker.

(3) ngbwatungare (my clan). This word refers to the speaker's clan. However it may be used in a narrower

sense for a man on being asked what is his clan sometimes gives the name of his father or grand-father

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17. THE CLAN SYSTEM. Political leadership is one of those social functions which must be clearly restricted in filiation through one parent to the total neglect of the other. Amongst the Azande political leadership is not only restricted to inheritance through the father's line but is also rigidly restricted to one clan. This clan, the Avongara, in spite of a myth in which they spring from Zande stock, claim to be foreigners. Whether they are really Azande or whether they represent a conquering stock is a matter for interesting historical speculation but as there is no reliable evidence which will give more than a small degree of probability to any solution, the problem need not detain us here. I may however mention in passing that in my opinion, powerful chiefs amongst the Azande and throughout Africa arise as an adaption to needs of warfare rather than to any other cause.

The weakness of the Zande clans is, I think, due primarily to the absence of localization. But we must also consider as one of the factors which undermines their solidarity the existence of this clan of chiefs which we

may call a CLASS. The genesis of a class in social structure is generally fatal to the clan system though the clans may retain a limited independence of social function as castes or as ceremonial segments.

18. MYTH OF CLASS ORIGIN. Presumably the Zande class of chiefs has an historic genesis by conquest or usurpation but, as I have remarked, little is to be gained by speculation. The myth of their genesis is however of importance for though it probably does not describe an historical event, it does represent an actual condition of affairs. According to this myth there was a time when there was no developed chieftainship such as there is to-day, though the clan of the abokunde possessed a certain preminence over the other clans. At this time the avongara clan of the chiefs was known as Akulangba. A man of this clan married a woman of the Abokunde by whom he had a son named Basenginonga. When this young man grew up he went to stay with his maternal uncle. While staying at his uncle's residence he heard an adultery case in which his uncle gave verdict to the effect that both of the litigants were right. His sister's son, Basenginonga then spoke out and said that this was a very bad judgement and that the men would only resume their quarrel on the way home since both of them would declare "the chief said I was right". So Basenginonga heard the case himself and ordered one

of the parties to pay 20 spears in damages to the other party. His decision met with public approval and after that he often heard cases and gave judgement. As his judgements were good ones people began to take their disputes before Basenginonga and his maternal ^{uncle} quite willingly surrendered his position of arbitrator to his sister's son, Basenginonga, from whom have sprung all the chiefs.

A similar story recounts how in the past there were no chiefs and how the clan of the Abokunde used to go hunting with their sister's son, Basenginonga. When the Abokunde killed meat they used to eat it all themselves but when Basenginonga killed meat, and he was a renowned hunter, he used to give it together with big bowls of gruel to the men who came to visit him. As his reputation for generosity grew his followers grew in numbers likewise and they used to come and sit round his hut and partake of his hospitality. They also began to bring their disputes before him and accepted his decisions because of their merits.

Now these two myths are not known to all Azande and their contents live not so much as stories but as active forces in determining their attitude to their chiefs. The Azande obey their chiefs implicitly and to

an European observer their subservience appears humiliating. If you ask a Zande why he is so subservient to his chief he will tell you either that the chiefs are generous and sometimes give him food or that the chiefs are courageous in settling disputes and do not mind giving their decisions quickly and straightly. Their answers embody the moral of the myths as well as a statement of fact, for myth lives by perpetual re-enactment.

It is not so easy to see this today when a curtailment of many of the class privileges of the chiefs has a counterpart in the dwindling of their obligations. Indeed to account for the development of such powerful authority it is necessary to refer to the historic circumstances in which the Azande nation conquered, colonized and assimilated such a vast territory as that which is now characterized by their language and political institutions. The savanna of the Sudan was overrun from the area of the Mbomu river. Ambitious sons and brothers of paramount chiefs would carve out independent kingdoms for themselves by conquering new territory and bringing foreign peoples into subjection. This does not seem to have been done at the instigation of the paramount chief, whom we may as well refer to as king, and who, so I was told, invariably opposed new annexations, knowing that the more powerful his relatives became the more dangerous

they became also. But a chief who was acting governor of a province was often powerful enough to defy the wishes of his superior. If he were not he would employ the methods of Basenginonga in the myth. He would keep 'open house', as it were, and at his homestead the old men were always certain of respect and young and old alike were sure of hospitality. When he had won over a sufficient number of followers who were prepared to give him allegiance rather than the king, his superior, he began his subjugation and annexation of new territory.

This was sometimes accomplished by warfare, in which the Azande seem to have been invariably successful, and sometimes the foreign people were induced to accept his rule without fighting. In this latter case the young chief went to live on the borders of the foreigners and a few old men would build their homesteads near him. The prestige of the Azande and of their ruling Avongara class was great and it appears that the foreigner was won over by degrees by much the same methods as the Azande were in the myth. Bit by bit the chief placed deputies further into their midst thus rewarding his followers by giving them the rank of bakumba and deputing to them the rule over a district.

Whether the people were subjugated by this method of slow assimilation or by warfare the system of administration remained the same. The chiefs of the conquered people

would often be given deputyships and their sons would receive education at the court of their lord. The people would bring their cases to the Vongara chief to receive verdicts, they would fight under him in war, and their young men would till his cultivations. More and more Azande would spread into the occupied area and the chiefs do not seem to have differentiated in their rule between their fellow countrymen and their foreign subjects.

Wherever the "Bax Zande" spread, rapid cultural assimilation took place. It would be difficult to shew a parallel instance of such rapid and complete assimilation of many cultures such as we find in Zandeland to-day. Certainly the Azande conquerors took over much of the culture of the conquered but their language and political institutions always predominated over those of foreign peoples. However I do not wish to discuss culture contact in this place.

Kingdoms established by these means often possessed little cohesion and their permanence seems to have depended more upon the cunning and ruthlessness of the king than upon any other factor. Generally these kings, as the saying is "bit off more than they could chew". The kingdom was divided up into provinces, defined like the tribe by rivers and there was always a tendency for these provinces to break away under the brother or son of the king who acted as its

governor and to become an independent political unit, a new tribe. It was impossible for the King to maintain an effective control over so extensive an area.

The dynastic quarrels of the Avongara are as violent and sordid as such quarrels can be. Rebellion, civil war, murder, treachery, mark every page of their annals. Primogeniture was not recognised in theory far less in practise and on the death of a king the nation was plunged into civil war until one of his sons was able to establish himself in his father's position. These processes of integration and disintegration form the history of all Zande tribes. It is not surprising that we find no word in Zande to describe the Tribe, but have to say *lingaraga* (= territory of) and ask the name of the chief.

I have given this brief survey of Zande history, partly because because I think it is impossible to understand fully the structure of Zande social organization without it and partly to show how the myth of the genesis of chieftainship was continually being re-enacted throughout their history. Actually to-day the process goes on though it is opposed to the stabilizing forces of European administration. The process of winning over followers by hospitality, justice, character and prestige is called in Zande *ka zoga aboro*. The senior chief in the Yambio District, Rikita has tried on several occasions to obtain a small portion of ground near

or in the tribal territory of another chief in order to win over his subjects from their allegiance.

Within the tribe itself the process goes on. For example the local control over the various districts of a tribe is in the hands of abakumba, or chief's deputies and these men, who are commoners and not chiefs, receive the support of the ^{European} government. But their subjects are not defined and can transfer their services, the nature of which will be explained later, from one bakumba to another bakumba. Now the king has many sons who in the past would have governed large provinces or carved out new kingdoms for themselves and become the rulers over tribes. The European occupation has made conquest and expansion impossible and so the young men have to content themselves with limited authority within the tribe. Here however they find that the authority over districts is in the hands of Zande deputies, who cannot be removed for fear of the government. In order to gain authority these young men go and live in the locality of some bakumba and by slow degrees they win over first one man then another to their allegiance until the bakumba finds that his subjects are all deserting him for the young man. Further on we shall try to estimate the forces which produce and maintain the class system amongst the Azande when the importance of this process

of winning over men, ka zoga aboro will again be illustrated.

19.SPACIAL DENSITY OF THE TRIBE AND ITS EQUIVALENT ~~///~~ IN SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP.

The little history which I have given is, as history should always be, an introduction to and not an attempt at an explanation of the problems of leadership.

True to the general plan of this thesis I am going to sketch out the spacial density of the area of chieftainship and correlate this with its moral density. Just as has been done with the family, the kindred and the clan, even though this means some repetition.

The area ruled over by a paramount chief is a tribe, its boundaries being defined by river courses and extents of uncleared bush on either side of the river boundary. Tribes are thus demarcated from one another by a clear spacial or material division. The tribal area is divided into a number of provinces, each of which is ruled over by the son or brother of the paramount chief and appointed by him. The provinces are sometimes marked off from each other by river boundaries but this is not always the case. Provinces run consecutively and are joined by paths. There is no clear spacial division between one province and another such as we find between one tribe and another. These

provinces are secondary areas of political administration, each chief administering his province from his court which forms the local centre of the province just as the paramount chief directly administers his own special province, the collection of districts or localities around his homestead.

The provincial areas of administration run by the paramount chief and his sons and brothers are divided into tertiary political area^S, administered by chief's deputies (abakumba^A).

The area of administration of a chief's deputy is only roughly defined by spacial boundaries. You cannot say that the boundary of a chief's deputy runs here or there with more than approximate accuracy, but you can say that such and such a man is the subject of such and such a deputy. The relation is a personal one and not a feudal one based upon tenure. The abakumba in each province are appointed by the provincial governor and not by the paramount tribal chief. The people in each province are only indirectly bound to their paramount chief through direct responsibility to his sons and brothers.

I want to make the territorial basis of tribal life clear from the outset and most people can see such things more easily by means of diagrammatic representations.

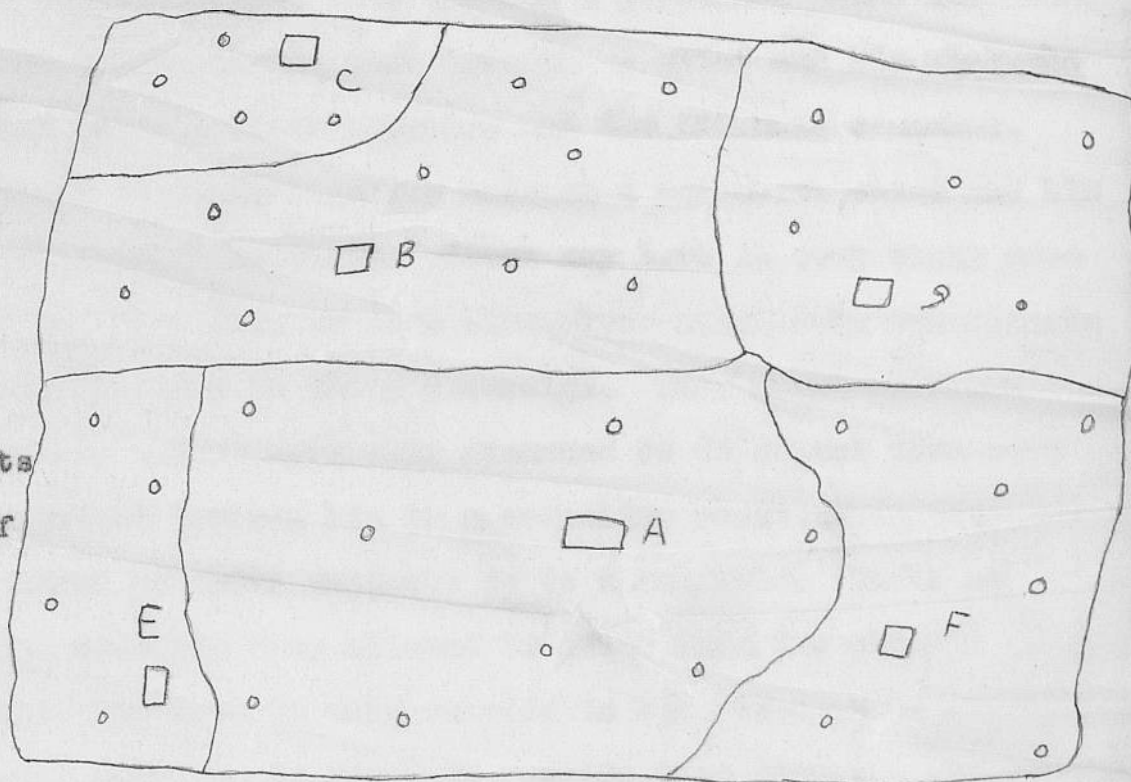
A, B, C, D, E, F,

Provinces

collectively =
Tribe under
paramount chief
residing in A

□ = Chief's Courts

○ = Homesteads of
deputies



Material density is of course relative to means of communication. The Zande road system corresponds to the system of political partition. In any province are paths which lead eventually to the court of the provincial governor. That is the heart of the province from which arteries run in broad and well cleared paths into neighbouring provinces. Into these main paths run many small

bifurcating paths, the ^dveins of communication [^]leading to the homesteads of individual Azande and their deputies.

This spacial distribution represents three types of social relationships, that between a paramount chief and his sons and brothers, that between a chief and his abakumba and that between these deputies and the ordinary commoner.

There is no familiarity between a paramount chief and his sons and younger brothers. These may lord it over their provinces but they have to show themselves completely subordinate in their attitude to their suzerain. They never approach near to him unless specially summoned to do so and then they will approach towards him in a crouching position in the same manner as their subjects do to themselves. Under no circumstances are they allowed to enter into the chief's homestead but have to wait outside in the inner court (barundo) until he is ready to receive them there. The sons of a chief fear their father greatly and they are subjected to severe discipline. A chief is often seen to joke with his old Zande deputies, with whom he has been brought up as a child in his father's court, but towards his own sons he maintains an unrelaxed expression of severity. Tradition and custom keep the commoner to his allegiance but fear and rigid discipline seem to be the main bulwarks against insubordination and rebellion on the part of

sons of the chiefs.

Between a chief and his deputies there is not the same strain. The barrier of rank is insurpassable. Before changes brought about by Europeans administration it was impossible for any man not born into the clan of the chief's to become a chief. The greatest power to which a commoner could attain was the investment of an important deputyship with a small court of his own modelled on that of the chief's court. Always he was directly and completely dependent upon his chief. The number of his wives and sons and followers raised him above the level of having to work with his own hands and enabled him to give his time to organizing the affairs of the chief. He makes frequent visits to the court of his lord to report upon the state of his district and the loyalty of his subjects. He sees to the collection of dues, to providing labourers on the chief's estates, to supplying his household with meat, to the apprehension of criminals, to the calling out of the district for war and the leadership of the warriors, to arranging the ceremony of offering fruits to God and the spirits in the event of drought, to keeping the paths from being overrun by bush. If the chief himself initiates and organizes activities it is his deputies who give personal superintendence to the carrying of them out.

When we consider the wide territorial distribution of Zande homesteads and the vast areas which form primary political units we can understand that administration is only effective through these sheriffs or baillifs, the abakumba.

In his district court the Bakumba may attain to considerable local eminence. Like the chiefs he will have an outer court (ngbanga) where his dependants will come to pay him visits and are given food, just as he must pay visits to the court of his chief and will be given food. He also will settle minor disputes. Upon his generosity and his ability will depend the number of his followers, who will pay him dues, assist him in labour and hunting and follow him in war. They never however, pay him the respect due to a member of the chief class. To-day the insurpassable barrier of rank having broken down there is sometimes considerable friction between the more important deputies and their overlords.

20. MAJOR FUNCTIONS OF THE CLASS.

What are the functions of the chief class amongst the Azande. Any joint undertaking requires organization to some degree or other and organization pre-supposes leadership of a simple or developed nature. The actual role of the leader obviously depends upon the nature of the undertaking.

Now the problem which I put to myself was this - firstly what are the activities which the class of chiefs definitely initiate and organise and secondly whether chiefs always took precedence over commoners in every kind of activity in which they took part or whether some other qualifications besides rank played their role in determining the personnel of leadership.

This problem is one of the most difficult of all to investigate both because of the fact that the data for its solution has been largely destroyed by the undermining of the position of the chiefs as part of European political centralization and partly because the chiefs are obstinately hostile and disinclined to speak openly to an European.

However even if we had never seen the Azande chiefs we could make an accurate deduction as to their main functions. The social functions of the tribe are political, that is to say the organization of the members against other groups and the maintenance of some degree of order and peace within the group itself. The role of the paramount chief will be found to lie chiefly in these two channels, the organization of war and the maintenance of peace.

Chiefs did not themselves fight in war unless it was necessary to flight. Their position was like that of a general staff. They organised the expedition, the number

of fighting men, the commissariat, the objective, the order of battle, the use of magic, the consultation of the oracles, the disposal of prisoners - but during the actual fighting they remained some way in the rear with a picked body of well armed men to protect their persons. No doubt younger chiefs who held no political position took part in war but the Zande does not seem to consider it the duty of any member of the class of the chiefs to take part in fighting.

His role in war is that of initiator and organizer of the undertaking in which he is not otherwise a participant.

The second main role of the chief is the maintenance of peace within his borders. This he does through his court by settling disputes and allotting fines and penalties.

All chiefs have the title of gbia which was explained to me as meaning one who puts himself between two disputants. European administration has so altered and complicated the performance of the chief in his role of arbitrator that it is very difficult to unravel the exact manner in which justice was administered in the past. On the other hand we can see almost daily disputes and quarrels in the ordinary routine of life being settled by any son of the chiefs who happened to be present. I was always greatly impressed by the immediate acquiescence which the disputants gave to

their words. I have on several occasions attempted to settle violent disputes and whilst the natives were always polite enough to give me a hearing they did not pay any attention to what I said, whereas if I asked the son of a chief to settle the affair even though he were only a boy, no one ventured to criticise his judgment.

Here again I will remind you of the myth of the origin of the chief class. The role of arbitrator played by Basenginonga which we are told lead to his acceptance by the people is now performed by everyone of his descendants. In myth we hold up a mirror of the past to reflect the life of the present.

We have stated shortly the two main fields in which the chiefs are leaders in organisation, war and the maintenance of peace. It is more difficult to answer our second question, do chiefs lead in every activity in which they take part? They take no part at all in agricultural labour and the role of a paramount chief in this respect is limited to initiating the joint undertakings of planting his millet and maize crops. He appoints ba ira aparanga, leader of the young men who will superintend the work and he instructs his deputies to furnish the labourers. Hunting on the other hand was considered an honourable occupation for members of the upper class and we are told by Schweinfurth that the big elephant battues were organized by the

chiefs who took part in them.

But chiefs do not lead in every activity in which they take part though they always enter into them with their rank and privileges. To take one example, the dance. The main performer in any dance is the soloist, balango, whose pre-eminence in this activity is fully recognized on account of his abilities of Composer and singer and his possession of song-magic. A chief would not attempt to play his role in the dance unless he possessed these abilities and magic in addition to his rank.

21. THE FOUNDATIONS OF LEADERSHIP:

Upon what does this differentiation of function, which we call leadership, depend for its development. How is it that amongst the Azande we find a large class who do not till the soil. What circumstances allow such a segmentation to take place.

Here again I think that the best way of answering this question is to make a logical deduction and then see how it fits the facts. We cannot have any developed form of leadership, that is to say that there can be no marked division of social labour unless man is placed above the state of affairs when all his energies are directed towards the procuring of food, and leadership is less developed the nearer the

society is to this what we might call subsistence level of culture. The accumulation of wealth is therefore a circumstance necessary for the development of leadership.

But this is only one way in which wealth acts in respect of leadership, namely that the leader is free from the need to produce the necessities of life in order that he may carry out the cultural needs of society. Wealth acts in another way no less important. For over and above the wealth devoted to the necessities of his life the leader possesses another kind of wealth which is devoted to enhancement of his position. Thus the very wealth which he acquires in virtue of his position of leader acts by the process of its consumption as one of the strongest bulwarks of his ^rperogative. This process of consumption of surplus wealth is that of gift and display.

Display will take many forms, the public destruction of wealth as in north America and Melanesia, in pageants and feasts, in personal adornment, and in many other ways. Though the consumption of wealth in display instead of in a more utilitarian manner the destruction of blankets, for example, instead of their utilisation for protection, the destruction of food instead of its accumulation for periods of scarcity and so on, appears to be illogical and ridiculous, yet I doubt whether any other force is more powerful for maintenance the privileges of leadership than such

display. Instead of such waste by the privileged class evoking anger and scorn in their inferiors, nothing evokes more admiration on their part and nothing makes them more acquiescent of wide difference in status. The display of rank is mesmeric.

Another manner in which the leader consumes his surplus wealth is by the giving of gifts. He derives his wealth by the work of his subjects and he returns this wealth to them in the form of gifts. Now I want to point out two ideas in this place. Firstly the gifts are not associated in the mind of the native with the labour which has produced them but they are regarded as signs of the bounty, favour and generosity of the chief. Secondly he does not give back all he receives from the community but only part. And this leads to the end of our theoretical deduction. The relation between leader and subordinate, between chief and subject, between capital and labour, like all other social relationships is based upon mutual exchange of services. But this system of reciprocity is not symmetrical, the balance always being on the leader's side. The leader receives from the lead more than he gives them and this balance is the stimulus, the incentive, the prize and fruits of leadership.

Let us examine this general statement in the light of Zande material. The Azande certainly do not live on

a level of bare subsistence since they know how to grow a large number of cultivated plants, many of which can be garnered. Now the chiefs never cultivate the soil. No son of a chief would deign to use a hoe or an axe. All his agricultural work is done for him by his wives and by his Zande subjects and in the production of food he devotes himself solely in adding to the food supply by hunting.

The more wives a man has the larger his surplus of food. The role of polygamy ⁿ is enhancing the position of leader is important. Also it must be remembered that the large families of chiefs lead to an extensive system of relationships-in-law which both socially and economically add to the chief's prestige and power. The greater is his province the more young men he can conscript to hoe his maize and millet plantations and to build his huts. Also he receives food as dues. Every one of his deputies has to pay him a quantity of ant-oil each year and every Zande is expected to give his chief a moiety of all the beasts which he may kill.

Consequently the chief's court is a place of plenty. There is always gruel to eat and usually plenty of beer. Meat also which one rarely finds in the homesteads of commoners is often to be found in the homesteads of chiefs.

Apart from contributions of food the chief will receive all his pots, his spears and so on without giving

any immediate return. It is the same today with the piastre coinage which is current in the Southern Sudan. The chief sometimes exacts part of the earnings of carriers. Though in these instances the Chief gives no immediate return nevertheless there is a reciprocity of services. A Zande makes gifts to his chief either in the manner described here or on certain ceremonial occasions, in order that his chief may take notice of his loyalty and shew him favour when he needs it in the future - as assistance in paying lobola, in gifts of food, in judicial cases, in promotion to a deputyship and in other ways.

Now it cannot always be said that the chief makes no immediate return for these varied services. He gives gruel to the men who till his maize and millet crops, he gives gruel to the man who brings him in an animal. Those who pay dues in ant oil are rewarded with a beer dance and there is above all open hospitality at his court. But the chief does not pay back all he receives. There is never a perfect symmetry in the reciprocal services between chief and subjects. I have often been amazed at the manner in which the Azande accept this inequality of services without demur. A man will bring his chief a large wild pig and he receives a bowl of gruel in grateful recognition

of which he crouches down to the ground and wipes the earth with his hands and in this manner expresses his thanks. The amount of work done on the chief's cultivations by young commoners is incomparably greater than the labour spent on the small portion of food which they receive at the hands of the chief. The native does not, of course regard the exchange of services in this light. I have sometimes asked Azande why they are so subservient to the despotic rule of their chiefs and they have replied that he settles their quarrels and gives them food.

We see then that the chiefs through the labour of their wives and subjects have greater wealth than the commoners. This wealth consists mainly in food and is partly consumed by the chief's family and is partly consumed in the form of gifts (or display) by his subjects and this is one of the main processes by which he holds their allegiance.

But there are other methods by which a chief maintains his supremacy, of which means we may here mention education, monopoly of legal machinery, the use of magic, war, and individual character.

To some extent to-day and far more so in the past Azande boys receive their education in the chief's court together with his own sons. They act as his personal servants and messengers, accompany him wherever he goes,

attending to his every want. The discipline is strict, every order of the chief being at once and quickly carried out. The boys remain in the chief's court until they reach the age of puberty so that from early childhood his power and dignity is impressed upon them and they never depart from their attitude of subservience acquired during these years of training. In this manner the forces of tradition brought to bear on each child in its family circle are further strengthened by a system of education at the chief's court. ¹

The Law is entirely in the hands of the chief. He alone can give judgments or can make official divination tests which is what legal machinery means to the Azande. Disputes which do not rest upon a question of fact are arbitrated by the chief and his verdict is accepted as final. Disputes which rest upon a question of fact are decided by divination tests carried out by the orders of

¹ According to Col. Bertrand "Les enfants males, aux approches de la puberté, sont enlevés à leurs mères et, jusqu'à leur puberté sociale, c'est-à-dire le mariage, se confient au chef, au bakumba, au voisin, auquel, sous le nom de palanka, ils servent de gardes du corps, de serviteurs. In the Sudan there is no system which could be described in this manner, in the preface xxiii of Calonne's Azande."

the chief by his special diviner. The monopoly of legal decisions is obviously a powerful weapon in the hands of the chief for it can always be wielded in the interests of its privileged holder with the backing of traditional justice. Moreover heavy court fees were one of the main sources of income amongst Zande chiefs, supplying them with a quantity of spears for paying lobola and for gifts. The chiefs like any other aristocratic monopolisers of justice find "Justitia est magnum emolumentum."

Magie ka zoga aboro, to make dependents of men, which a chief in the past used to place in the food and beer which he gave to his subjects undoubtedly played a role in enabling him to maintain his power, for his power was largely attributed to the possession of such magie. Today chiefs do not use such magie as they are well aware that magie does not achieve the impossible and cannot increase the number of their followers since the Government has limited and confined their domains.

Wars do not seem to have caused great loss of life nor does their aim seem ^{generally} to have been the acquisition of new territory and a white observer would probably have called them pointless affairs. But we all know how war re-enforces the solidarity of a political group and tightens the reins of government. The Zande wars of the past between chief and chief presumably had this function,

though the process like most processes relating to chieftainship cannot be observed today.

Lastly, and this is a point which is often forgotten in such discussions on leadership, we must remember the factor of individual character. Major Larken, Capt. Philipps and myself have all noticed that on the whole the chiefs are far more intelligent than the average Zande. This, I think, must be attributed to the fact that sons of chiefs, have not only leisure, but also accustom themselves from childhood to display, to take the initiative in all their pursuits, to give orders and to settle disputes. This is to say that leading is a less specialised activity and is therefore conducive to intelligence whereas being lead is a more specialized activity and is therefore conducive to stupidity. I may here say also that the better physique of chiefs can be accounted for by their leisure and more and better food, without having to hypothesize a different racial origin.

But besides the higher display of intelligence on the part of the chief class generally it is remarkable what judges of character paramount chiefs show themselves to be. One notices at once that out of several men they will choose the brightest and most capable to act as a deputy though he may not be the senior. They act in the same way with their own sons, appointing those most capable of ruling to administer

their provinces, even though they may not be the elder. In this place I will not enlarge further upon the importance of individual character in the role of leadership.

22. MEANING OF CLASS DISTINCTIONS:

We have seen that it makes the whole difference to a man's life whether he is born into the class of chiefs or into the class of commoners. The children grow up together and no one questions the right of the one to exercise authority and the duty of the other to obey. Herein we see one of the most important functions of the clan system amongst the Azande, in that it makes a clear social division between the classes, all members of the Avengara clan being members of the upper class, all members of other clans being members of the lower class.

But a reading of history shows us that social divisions, unlike the biological divisions of age and sex, are liable to become blurred or even wiped out altogether. It is the function of a large body of social facts to make a clear demarcation between class and class. Some of these facts such as the distinction between those who labour and those who do not labour, and distinctions in legal status we have already drawn attention to, but there are others the similar significance of which is not so easily perceived. For example the chiefs have a different type of grave - commoners erect over the grave a large mound of stones as a permanent memorial to the dead,

whereas chiefs are buried in secret in the bush and without any memorial. Or to take another example; the exogamy rules by virtue of which a Zande may not marry into the clans of either parent are not binding for members of the chief class, who may and do marry their sisters and daughters. Or again, in the past sons of chiefs dressed differently from sons of commoners.¹

I have mentioned a few differences between the customs of the upper class and the customs of the lower class.

This point is of particular interest because it shows a sharp distinction between the historical and sociological methods of interpretation of customs. The characteristic customs of the ruling Avongara class amongst the Azande have been interpreted by most writers as evidence of distinct ethnic origin. We pass over this explanation as being incapable of verification and as being in any case beside the point since it does not account for their survival, and we explain their existence as functioning parts of the social organism by their role in keeping the two classes distinct and so preventing confusion and the consequent decay of leadership which would follow from one class merging with the other.

23. SANCTION OF AUTHORITY:

But in spite of their greater wealth, in spite of the forces of tradition, in spite of the many customs which

¹ Schweinfurth Im Herten von Afrika p. 481. Vol. i. Keane's Translation.

maintained the independent status of the chief class we find that their power was limited and that it was sometimes even defied. We therefore must look to discover the sanctions upon which their domination rested. Disloyalty to a chief, striking any member of the upper class, speaking against the ruler, using magic against him, having sexual intercourse with one of his wives, - the sanction for such offences was death. The offender would be summoned to the chief's court and there hacked to pieces^s by his deputies. The descriptions which natives give to-day of the court of a paramount chief before the European occupation sounds incredible. One gains the impression that he was a complete autocrat who never hesitated to have all executed who stood in his way or frustrated his slightest whim. Unfortunately the evidence of Schweinfurth in its relation to the problem of real rather than of theoretical authority invested in the Zande chiefs is contradictory. The impression of wholesale executions which one gets from accounts is probably due to the fact that the few executions which actually took place remain imbedded clearly in the native's mind.

My informants all agreed that a chief who acted arbitrarily in the past ran a grave risk of losing his subjects. A man who was wronged by his chief would go with his relatives

to seek protection under and take allegiance to another chief. It was consequently the effort of a chief to remain popular with his subjects and he would punish offenses committed against commoners by members of his own class, such as adultery by one of his sons with the wife of one of his subjects.

It appears that in the case of the Adie section of the Azande who live in the Yei District of the Sudan that they threw over the rule of their chiefs in a body and migrated Eastwards towards the Nile.⁽¹⁾

That the power of the chief was really limited is shown also by the fact that even so great a chief as Gbudwe was unable to prevent the introduction and spread of circumcision and secret societies to which, according to all native accounts, he was strongly opposed.

Also if the bonds uniting a king to his subjects was ~~in~~^{ir}refragible, ~~the~~^{the} magic employed to attract and keep followers would have no function to fulfil^a the existence of such magic alone would tend to give one the impression that the king was never too certain of keeping his followers.

But really it is not possible to reconstruct the past with more than a degree of probability. It is true that we have native accounts of to-day but they are coloured by new values and cannot be relied upon as an estimate of what actually used to take place in general but only in particular

1 According to Brock: "Some notes on the Zande tribe". etc. Sudan Notes & Records. 1, 1918. 1/1. 249, ff.

instances. Even to-day when the power and credit of the chiefs is broken their popularity remains and the Azande are intensely loyal to them. No white man receives the homage and respect which they render to the chiefs.

It has been our endeavour to sketch the main outlines of Zande social structure, to show where its strength and its weakness lies. Throughout our analysis we have tried to see two main forces acting to ensure cohesion running through the structure of Zande life - the nuclear family sentiments with their extensions and modifications and the symbiotic sentiments which tend to take the place of, or merely modify, according to individual circumstances, these earlier social attitudes.

In conclusion we will stress once again the view-point of culture.

24. THE IMPORTANCE OF SYMBIOSIS: THE ZANDE LOCALITY:

There is always a tendency for moral solidarity to depend upon spacial solidarity, that is to say that strong social bonds are built up between persons who live near to each other and that the more they are divided the more they weaken. This I suppose is true of any society but it is worth while again drawing attention to the fact amongst the Azande.

The Zande family has greater solidarity than any other social group and it is also spacially the most condensed. This is not a mere chance association for the sentiments which act as the binding forces of family life depend upon spacial condensation for their formation. People do not come into the world with ready-made sentiments towards their parents and brothers and sisters but these sentiments are formed only by long years of intimacy and mutual dependency and can take place only when people live close together.

I have shown also how there is always a tendency for close relatives to maintain these active sentiments by building their homesteads close to one another so that what looks at first sight to be a haphazard distribution of homesteads over the country side turns out to be rather straggling hamlets manned by relatives. There is always a tendency for the Cross families to become localised.

Once formed the family sentiments are strong enough to defy territorial diffusion and close relatives will travel considerable distances to fulfil their social functions but members of a man's kin who are genealogically more removed from him will not do so.

The clan, also, which when localized has important political and economic functions is amongst the Azande a loose grouping with hardly any moral solidarity. A group, the members of which live sometimes hundreds of miles apart,

cannot conceivably have important social functions and a man's clan relatives only count and act as such when they live in his locality.

We have seen also that the tribe is not a permanent but a variable group. There is always danger of its disruption because wide spacial extension allows provincial independence and cleavage.

But it is not only blood-relatives who function locally but also other social groups into which a man enters in the course of his life. When we think of such institutions as circumcision or secret associations we think of them as stretching over the whole of Zandeland but to the native they mean his local circumcision lodge or his local secret association lodge. Such institutions function in bits and such bits are active units because they are localized for a man could not take part in them if they were not.

Thus to take circumcision for example. There are perhaps twelve boys and twelve tutors, that is to say that possibly twenty-four homesteads partake in the ceremonies. For ceremonial and economic reasons these homesteads must all be fairly near to the circumcision lodge and therefore near to each other. It is necessary for food to be brought to the boys from their parents and to some extent from their tutors. It is necessary for these latter to be near their homes to assist in garden and other work which they carry on along side their ceremonial duties and in which their ~~protoges~~

protoges help them. The ceremonies moreover include two visits to the homes of each of the boys. The circumcision camp is consequently manned by members of one locality and in one tribe there may be two or three such camps at the same time.

It is the same with the secret associations. In the past, before they were prohibited by the Government, a hut was built in the bush and here the ceremonies took place. Again the associations function locally and a man will know all the members of his own lodge but will not know who are members outside his own district.

Also, as we have seen, the political grouping of the tribe functions largely through the locality by means of chief's deputies. If a chief requires labour for his cultivations he informs his deputies who impress the young men who live in their district. In war a chief's forces were organised under these deputies so that men who lived near each other fought side by side in war. Also when the magicians dance to exorcise evil spirits and to reveal the future, it is a local event to which neighbours, who hear the sound of their drums, will come.

It is reasonable to suppose that if moral solidarity depends largely upon spacial solidarity then spacial solidarity should tend always to create moral solidarity even when there are no other social forces at work. And I think this

is so. If you go to a funeral or to a circumcision ceremony or to a feast in honour of the dead or to some big economic undertaking such as a clearing of the millet cultivations, you will find many persons who are quite unrelated to the master of the house and who are not there by virtue of membership of some common social group. These people are neighbours who have come to look on, to dance, to eat and drink together, to gossip and to meet their friends and lovers.

All that we mean by social life is the life of the locality. Its paths course like veins through the country, winding in and out, going north, south, east and west, twisting and twining till they reach one of the main arteries which run to the chief's court. All who wish to travel must tread these paths, women carrying water and firewood, men going out hunting with spears and nets, chief's messengers hurrying to a distant deputy, the chief himself followed by his wives and retainers, magicians in their strange dresses who have been summoned to some bed of sickness to exorcise the evil spirits, boys and girls with freshly oiled skins and hair newly dressed on the way to a dance, suitors going to the chief's court or taking him tribute, boys with fine new barkcloth, their shining necks and arms covered with women's ornaments, walk proudly by since all the world knows that they have passed through the circumcision camp and are now men. All pass along these paths, chatting to each other when they

meet, sitting in the homesteads through which they pass to smoke a pipe or partake of a meal. The paths pass from homestead to homestead so that anyone who is going to a hunt or to a dance or to a lawsuit will of necessity call upon many of his neighbours with whom he will gossip. For these people are his friends who will help him in his economic undertakings, will be present at the feast in honour of his father's spirit, will come to express their sorrow at the death of his child and their congratulation at the initiation of his son and the marriage of his daughter.

A man is united by the strong bonds of common experience which he shares with his neighbours. He has lived with them in the circumcision camp as a child, he has been educated with them in the court of his chief as a boy, he has worked together with them on the chief's cultivations as a youth, he has fought side by side with them in war as a man.

Against this real and strong bond of common experience and mutual services the fictitious and weak bond of the clan gives way. Only when a man's clansmen are members of his locality do the clan ties function. When his tribe goes to war with another tribe clansmen will fight against clansman whilst men of the same locality who are not fellow clansmen will fight in unity.

That the clan gives way to the local group, whether it

be communal dwelling houses, or villages or localities can be demonstrated from any part of the world. Common interests are stronger than mere blood relationship.

SECOND BOOK

SECOND BOOK

Part 1 Oracle magic of the Azande

Part 2 The morphology & function of magic. *A comparative study of Zande Magic.*

Part 3 The dance (Gbere buda)

Part 4 The social function of obscenity in relation to certain Customs of the AZANDE

BOOK II - PART I.

ORACLE - MAGIC

of

the AZANDE

ORACLE - MAGIC.

A preliminary descriptive and analytical account of some Oracle-Magic of the Azande.

1. Introductory Note.
 2. Account of the benge oracle by description.
 - (a) Gathering of the benge.
 - (b) Consultation of the oracle.
 3. Account of the benge oracle by analysis.
 - (a) Administration of benge.
 - (b) Interpretation of difficult verdicts.
 - (c) Contradictory verdicts.
 - (d) Acceptance of verdicts.
 - (e) Analysis of the magic.
 4. Account of the dakpa oracle.
 - (a) Descriptive.
 - (b) Analytical.
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 - (a) Descriptive.
 - (b) Analytical.
 6. Account of the mapingu oracle.
 - (a) Descriptive.
 - (b) Analytical.
 7. General analysis of Oracle-Magic.
 8. Social function of Oracle-Magic.
 - (a) Descriptive account of function.
 - (b) Account of benge as machinery of law.
 - (c) Legal functions of Oracle-Magic.
 - (d) Social contexts of Oracle-Magic.
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1. INTRODUCTORY NOTE:

~~In the Second Book of my thesis I have from time to time in a description of Zande Ceremonial made reference to Consultation of the oracles.~~ I shall ~~now~~ devote a special section of the thesis to an analysis and description of the oracle-system and attempt to answer the difficult psychological problems which arise from native belief in their magic and to show how the machinery of oracles is adapted to sustain their faith ^a ~~it~~ so carry out useful social processes.

2.(a) GATHERING OF THE BENGE:

Amongst the many forms of divination ⁽¹⁾ employed by the Azande, benge holds a place apart. This will be seen clearly when I give the social contexts in which it is used. Firstly, however, the method of use must be described. Benge is a red powder obtained from a forest creeper which when mixed with water forms a paste. This paste is administered to chicken and causes spasms which according as they are fatal or passing determine the answers to the various questions addressed to the magic.

(1) Divination and oracles are words taken over with classical associations. Whether the distinction in classical usage is really applicable to Zande Culture or not need not be discussed here.

To keep to chronological order in description - benge must first be obtained. This is a dangerous and arduous task as the plant does not grow in Zandeland but in the more wooded regions to the south of the great Wells river, in the homelands of the Mangbettu and Abarambo. The distance alone, one of some hundreds of miles from the Azande of the Sudan, made the journey arduous and the hostility of the Mangbettu and Abarambo involved continual danger and humiliation. For these peoples, as owners of the forests, often killed and always exacted large presents from the benge gatherers. Apart from these hardships the travellers had to endure the privations of abstinence demanded in all important magical endeavour. Throughout the entire expedition from the setting out to the return, the traveller must avoid all sexual cohabitation, his daily routine and enjoyment; he must abandon the habit of smearing his body with oil which to the Zande is to abandon cleanliness and the comfort of having a good appearance. He must refuse all dark-skinned animals such as the favoured flesh of the bush-buck and of the red wild pig and of the wart-hog and of the kob and of the buffalo and of many other beasts. Also he must not eat the strong-smelling white flesh of the elephant nor the odorous flesh of fish for these are smelling animals and unclean to men associated with the

the magic benge. Likewise he must shun some of his favourite vegetables such as the morombida and mboiyo for these are 'loosening vegetables' and are unclean. To deny himself these additions to his daily gruel for a long period is a trying restriction for a Zande.⁽¹⁾

Owing to prohibitions of a medical and political nature the Azande of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan may not cross into the Belgian Congo and in consequence it is no longer possible to observe journeyings in pursuit of the benge magic on the British side of the political boundary, and their organization as well as their romance have to be woven together from the recollections of old men and from Belgian accounts. I will commence with a native account told to me by an informant.⁽²⁾

"You consult the oracle about your affair, as 'I am going to dig up benge, if I will die on the way benge kill

(1) Bishop Lagae has written an article in Congo.1921.Tome 1. on 'Les procedes d'augure et de divination chez les Azande'. His article is a short one and although in some respects inaccurate it was a considerable assistance to me in that I was acquainted with the methods of augury before making enquiries from the natives. In noting the taboos which have to be observed he says "La non observation de ces prescriptions en leverait au benge toute sa force et toute sa valeur."

(2) I have given this and other native texts in a free English translation as I do not wish to overburden the narrative with either long texts in the native language or with literal transcriptions.

the fowl, if I will not die benge you spare the fowl'. If benge spares the hen, you get together about 20 men. You tell your chief that you are going to dig up benge. The chief collects dogs' teeth and giraffe-tails and gives them to you. He says 'you go with these presents and buy the way to the benge with them. Thus you go to the chief in the benge country and give him the dog's teeth and giraffe tails and baboon legs. He will show you the way to the benge and you listen to him, do you understand?' You go away to this chief and give him a baboon's leg. You tell him that you will drink blood with him and that if he hides the benge from you he will die from the blood, but that if he shows the benge to you he will be well with the blood. He says to you 'Alright, sit down, we will drink blood with you'. You drink blood with this chief and he shows you the way to the benge. You go with men to the benge.

Bishop Lagae says that in the past the Azande did not dare to enter into these hostile and gloomy regions without a knowledge of the tongues of the foreigners. In later times a chief would organize an expedition, equip it with presents of ivory and girl slaves and send it into the stranger lands of the south. Individuals, he says would also make these distant journeys. (1)

(1) quand le souvenir des batailles était encore vivant les Avongara (chiefs) craignent d'envoyer des hommes en groupe pour aller couper le benge Les Avongara

The accounts which the Azande of the Bahr-el-Ghazal have given me, such as that already quoted, differ somewhat from that of Bishop Lagae. They have told me that several men, often under a bakumba or chief's deputy or under someone who had made the journey before, would club together to make a benge expedition. They would then inform the chief and receive his permission for the journey. He would give them presents such as hairs of the red-pig and of the giraffe, legs of baboon and dogs' teeth with which to trade.⁽¹⁾ They used not only to bribe the owners of the soil to allow them an unmolested passage to and from the woods in which the benge creeper grew, but also to exchange their presents for the mamberi, a broad-bladed knife of Mangbettu workmanship, the emblem of chief's deputyship; spears made by foreign smiths; for the curved knife zékuda of the Abarambo and Mangbettu as well as for a red paste procured from the zali tree with which they daub their black hair.

envoyaient des individus isolément. Ils faisaient un choix judicieux parmi leurs serviteurs les plus dévoués, au courant de la langue de la région où ils devaient se rendre. Ces envoyes avaient soin de ne point se faire passer pour des Azan

In all matters which concern the gathering of the benge plant Bishop Lagae was better placed in the Belgian Congo than an investigator can be in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

(1) There is a considerable difference between these small presents and the slave-girls mentioned by Lagae and the ivory mentioned by Junker. Junker says that the chief Mbio sent an embassy to the chief Ansea to procure benge for which they gave 15 loads of ivory, which to me sounds incredible. Junker, Vol I. p.436.

Before going to their chief the adventurers consulted the benge-oracle as to the chances of the journey, whether they would die or whether they would come home laden with baskets of the precious magic root. If benge agreed to their project and their chief gave his permission for their expedition and provided them with presents, they set out. Many surprises awaited the new members of the party, the pygmies of the Congo, the artificially-deformed heads of the Mangbettu and their carved wooden figures whilst the new customs which they observed, the changes in vegetable life and the greatness of the river Wells left lasting imprints on their minds. They will tell one to-day of the ferocity and cannibalism of the Abarambo and how they were greeted with cries of *nombi ! nombi !, flesh ! flesh !*

Once in foreign territory they sought out the chief and made him presents in exchange for his permission to collect the benge root free from the attacks of the inhabitants. In spite of this protection many parties never came home but were murdered by the Mangbettu and Abarambo. They then sought out men of the country, gave them presents and made blood-brotherhood with them. These men showed them the way to the dark woods, often near streams, in which the creeper thrives. The creeper appears to be of two kinds, the nawada and the andehe, of which the

birds are said to eat and die in large numbers from its properties. Lagae describes these creepers thus; "Le Nawada, liane de 2 à 3 centimetres d'épaisseur, la racine rouge de cette liane fournit un benge qui, réduct en pâte, perd vite sa force et ne peut servir qu'un jour; le benge andehe ce benge est plus fort que le nawada. La pâte en est utilisable pendant deux ou trois jours. C'est aussi le plus recherché."

They dig up the roots of these creepers, clean them and scrape them with a knife into a powder which remains for three days in the sun. Rain is always a danger as a wetting would spoil the benge powder and if the wind is threatening they remove it to the little hut which they have constructed as a 'pied à terre' in the benge country. At the end of a few weeks they have collected enough of the powdered root to return home with it in baskets covered inside and outside with the leaves of the banana or of the ngmongborongba. They do not carry the baskets on their heads as their hair would fall out owing to its proximity to the benge, but they bear them on their shoulders. At the crossing of each river, says Bishop Lagae, the bearers must draw a little water and sprinkle it over the baskets - he quotes a Zande as saying:

"ka i asi nga hime gbwa

ki he ukidi benge naniya"

"They must not simply cross water but they must sprinkle the benge with it."

On their return they all make a contribution from their baskets to their paramount chief, and his puta benge, the official consulter of the oracles, will make a trial test. He will ask benge if all is well, if the taboos have been observed and if indeed it is true magic they have brought home and not merely a red powder. If Benge agrees then the chief will send them home but if benge says that the taboos have not been observed then heavy punishment will await the gatherers.

I have described the collecting of the benge magic but not from observation. Since to-day no-one is allowed over the Anglo-Belgian boundary and since no boundary markets have been established, the Azande in the Sudan find great difficulty in obtaining the magic and the quantity is always insufficient for social needs. However, men are always prepared to run the risks of a sentence of imprisonment to obtain this powder of such great social value, and a system of 'benge-running' has, amongst the Azande with whom I worked taken the place of the former expeditions (1)

(1)

How benge is of social value is a theme which is developed in the latter part of my paper. Lest however it should be thought that I am laying too much stress on its value I quote Bishop Lagae whose experience of the Azande is great and who says "En un mot, l'angure est l'une des institutions les plus importantes de la vie sociale."

2(b) THE CONSULTATION OF THE BENGE-ORACLE:

Every paramount chief had two or three Putu benge, the regular officiators of the oracle and the benge was always kept in a lonely hut in the bush under the charge of one of these officials or under the care of small boys called awili mweoyo. little ones in the bush, (2) the children of Azande under the leadership of one of the chief's small sons.

The Putu benge officiates for about a month at a time and during the whole period he must observe the taboos rigidly. He must have no sexual intercourse, he must avoid all unclean food, the strong smelling flesh of certain animals and the putrid flesh of all beasts, and those vegetables which cause wind. In the past the puta benge sometimes had his testicles crushed on the orders of his chief so that he would not break the sex taboos.

I wish to emphasize the extreme care taken with the chief's benge, the preliminary test of efficacy made with all the newly gathered magic substance, the isolation of the benge hut in the bush, the strict taboos of the

(2) Lagae calls them azaungu and quotes a Zande as saying, i ki songo wa gilo benge, wagila pa kpya, which means they remain under the taboos of benge as under the taboos of death.

puta benge which made his life during his period of office like that of a man in mourning for death, because as we shall show later the chief will consult the oracle officially in matters of public interest, such as war or the offering of first-fruits to God in drought or in all legal disputes, whilst the Azande will only consult the oracle on matters of private or family concern⁽¹⁾. This difference of function will however be discussed in a later section.

If a Zande has no benge he can usually, even today, buy a little or beg a little or get a chief's deputy to consult the oracles for him. The price of benge is high but it is very difficult to say what price is actually paid as the whole transaction is in secret and if anyone has benge to-day he will not generally admit his possession of it as he fears imprisonment. Lagae says that in the Belgian Congo, where there are no restrictions, "Le benge a une valeur marchande très élevée. Il n'est pas rare

(1) The chiefs say that they are not Azande. When I use the word 'Azande' in a general sense I shall, however, be referring to chiefs and commoners alike. When I contrast the Azande with the chiefs I shall be referring to the commoners in contrast to the noble clan of chiefs. The context will always make clear in which of these two senses the word is used.

qu'on remette une femme en échange d'un grand panier de benge. Une bonne poignée de benge se vend actuellement (1921) 1 franc." The price is certainly higher in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

When a Zande and not a chief, wishes to consult the oracle, he has to find a man who has kept the taboos, to give the poison to the fowls and another man, who must also have observed the sex and food taboos to address the benge in the stomach of the hen. This may not be easy, as most men will have either had sexual connection within six days of the morning on which he wishes to consult the oracle, or will have eaten some of the forbidden meats or vegetables within three or four days. However, he will usually be able to find a boro gila, or a man who is wearing a waist-band of cord made from the inner bark of the dakpa tree as a sign of mourning and who must have observed the ritual prohibitions for the regulated period. A man who had not observed the taboos would not carry the benge or even go near it, far less would he think of officiating with it. It must be noted here that the length of the time in which a man must observe the taboos is not rigidly defined and different men will give one different estimates. So that although sexual connection has been said to be prescribed for six days previous to the oracle, many men will be content if they have been chaste for five or even four days.

There is no rule against the man himself addressing the benge or even acting as puta benge. The latter course however is very unusual and generally a man asks two friends to act for him. He does not pay them. Having found a man or two men who have observed the sex and food taboos the Zande can, so long as it is not the day after the new moon, take his doubts with him to have them quieted by benge. The ceremony will always take place in secrecy in the bush, either in a clearing made in the grass or in the already cleared corner of an out-of-the-way cultivation. The time of the ceremony is in the early morning, though they will often wait until the sun has dried the grass as the Zande hates damp.

I will let a Zande describe first what happens when the oracle is consulted.

"They observe taboos for five days. They consult benge. That man who has observed the taboos of benge goes to consult the oracle. Men capture some chickens to go after him. They arrive at the place of benge. The officiator takes a fowl from the basket, places it between his toes, takes the brush and soaks it in the benge, opens the mouth of the fowl and pours the benge into it. He addresses benge saying 'Benge, you are benge, in the throat of the hen; I will die benge kill

the hen; I will not die benge spare the hen.' Benge kills the hen. That is you will die. He takes another fowl saying 'As I have spoken my affair, I will not recover benge kill the fowl. Benge spares the fowl. He goes to his house and sends a man with the wing of the hen to where that man is for whom benge killed the fowl.

It is finished." (1)

I will now describe the procedure myself from observation. The Putu benge goes on in front with the benge to prepare the customary articles necessary for the ceremony. He clears a small space in the grass and then goes and plucks a big leaf, some blades of grass, two oval leaves of the muwe tree and some other leaves. He will also cut some branches of near by shrubs. Water he will have brought with him in a gourd. With these objects he returns to the small clearing he has made in the bush by treading down the grasses and sits upon the ground. He makes a small hole in the earth in which he places his big leaf and the benge powder on the leaf. He then takes the blades of grass and cuts them across in two places leaving a little bundle of

(1) All other texts in this paper were taken down by myself. This one however was written by a Mission boy. I have written it as he wrote it, but the description is inaccurate. He should have said "I will recover" and not "I will not recover". Also if, as above, a man were addressing benge on his own behalf he would keep the wing of the fowl and not send it anywhere. Accounts by Mission boys need very careful checking.

stalks some five or six inches long which he binds round with another blade. He places this brush, on the big leaf near the benge powder. He takes the two leaves of the muwe tree and placing one in the other he cuts the ends of both into a point at tips and stalks. This is for pouring the benge into the mouth of the fowl. He takes two other leaves and fastens them together, using the stalks as pins, into the form of a cup which will be used to transfer a little water from the gourd to the benge powder. Next he takes his branches and with a knife removes the outer covering of bark leaving the bast in his hands. This he puts on one side to be used later as cord for tying the legs of the chicken. All is now ready and he sits down to await the arrival of the others who are to be present and who are bringing the chicken.

There may be only one man or there may be several men who have questions to put to the oracle. Each comes with his chicken in an open-wove basket bent in and tied at the top. They follow the Putu benge to the chosen spot in the open bush and lay their baskets by his side. One of them who has observed the food and sex taboos now goes and sits opposite the puta benge a few feet away from him. This man is the sima benge and it is he who will address the benge in the stomach of the fowl. The other

men, if they have not observed the taboos, or if they have wives who are in their menstrual periods, will not approach the benge but will sit down a long way off, though near enough to hear the words with which the sima benge will address the oracle.

They now commence to consult the oracle. The Putu benge takes a chicken and drawing down its wings he fastens them with feet enclosed between his big and next toes. He sits with the left leg outstretched holding the chicken, and tucked under it his right leg bent at the knee, ~~(see plate No.)~~. He lifts the gourd at his side and pours some water into the leaf cup and thence into the leaf basin containing the benge. He pours just enough for the benge, after effervescence, to form a paste by absorbing all the water. He takes the little grass brush and twirls it round in the benge which adheres to it and places it on the leaves with ends cut into a point and folds the edges of the leaves together. He holds the grass brush enclosed in the leaves in his left hand and opens the beak of the chicken with his right hand. He tips the end of the leaves into the chicken's mouth and allows the juice of the poison to run down the leaves into the throat of the fowl. He squeezes the leaves to press all the juice out of the benge and whilst laying the brush on the ground he bobs the fowl's head up and down to assist

swallowing. The chicken remains between his toes, with its rump on the ground, facing him. ~~(see plate no.)~~

At this point, the sima benge, having been previously instructed as to the facts of the case to be laid before benge, begins to address the magic in the stomach of the fowl. Henceforth until the first part of the ceremony is over he will continuously address benge. After some two minutes of address the chicken will be given another dose of the poison. If it is a tiny chicken this will suffice and the sima benge will continue to address the benge in its stomach. Larger fowls receive three or even four doses.

There is no defined set of words in which the sime benge will make his address. Indeed, as he speaks for some five minutes and as the subjects of consultation vary, this would not be practicable. But the address, nevertheless, runs in traditional phraseology and these phrases will be heard whenever benge is consulted, the rest of the address depending upon the nature of the case. There is no formula (1).

The man who is addressing the magic in the stomach of the fowl must ensure that it shall have all the facts of

(1) I have in this article used the native word 'sima' or the English word 'address' for the speech of the sima benge. The words 'spell' or 'question-spell' might legitimately have been used. The spell in all Zande magic is variable and contrasts with the set-formulae of Polynesia and Melanesia.

the case put before it so that it may reach a decision based on full knowledge. Thus he is careful to mention over and over again the name of the man who wishes to consult the oracle and he points him out to the benge with his outstretched arm. He will also mention the man's name and his father's name and his clan name and where he lives. So also they inform benge of like details concerning any other persons of whom they may speak in the sima. They must lay clearly before the oracle all the other circumstances of the case and exactly what question they require an answer to.

Thus we will take an instance of a man who wishes to marry a girl. I will give an actual case though the words used in the address are only a précis of the speech actually delivered. The man would not undertake matrimony without the assurance of benge that it would be a successful and enduring bond.

The sima benge tells the oracle that Zingbondo of the Ambadimo clan the son of Perenge has come to consult it about his marriage. He lives in Ango's country and wishes to marry Auwa, the daughter of Ngere of the clan of the chiefs. Linde of the Avundua clan, the son of Bangbi has already paid ten spears for the girl, but she does not wish to marry him. She wishes to marry Zingbondo.

Well, shall the father of the girl, Ngere, send back to Linde his ten spears and accept the ten spears of Zingbondo instead? Well, if he does this will his daughter die when she goes to live with Zingbondo or will she live with him for five years, for ten years, always.⁽¹⁾ Now benge you hear the position, you tell us the truth. If all is well, if Auwa is Zingbondo's wife you kill the little chicken, benge you hear it, kill the little chicken, chief you hear it, kill the little chicken:

(Benge mo gi e imi wili kondo, gbia)

(Benge you hear it kill little fowl, chief

mo gi e imi wili kondo.)

you hear it kill little fowl)

But if all is not well, if Auwa is not Zingbondo's wife, if she will die when she goes to live with him in Ango's country, you spare the little chicken, you hear it benge, you hear it chief, you spare the little chicken.

(Mu kusi wili kondo, mu gi e benge,)

(You spare little fowl, you hear it benge,)

mu gi e gbia, mu kusi wili kondo)

you hear it chief, you spare little fowl)

Now, benge it is a lie, you tell us the truth:

(Zile du mu gumba ni lengo.)

()

(Lie is you speak with truth.)

⁽¹⁾ Though two questions are asked, whether Ngere shall return the spears of the first suitor and take those of the second suitor, and whether the marriage will prove successful, actually these are all part of the same question and there is no chance of confusion arising.

There is no witchcraft here (he plucks grass and casts it behind him), you tell us the truth, Auwa is Zingbond^co's wife, benge do you hear it, benge you kill little chicken.'

It is in this vein that the sima benge will address at length the magic inside the chicken. I have given in Zande one or two phrases which occur again and again in the sima, terminating each bout of oratory.

Now if Benge in the above instance, consents to the marriage by promising its success, for benge can see into the past and the future, it will kill the hen. After the last dose of the poison, the hen, by this time in a very perturbed state, is taken by the puta benge from between his toes and held in the hand of his outstretched arm. Held by its feet, the chicken, overcome by the poison, will often fall backwards and the puta benge will jerk it forwards so that it faces him. The sima benge during this critical minute presses his address with more insistence, putting the case again to the magic and urging it vehemently and with gesticulation (~~see Plate No.~~). If the hen is to die it will soon give a few spasmodic shudders and then is thrown into the grass where it expires in spasms.

In this case it is well; Zingbondo can marry Auwa without any doubts as to the future. But if Benge sees trouble

If Zingbondo was to marry the girl, the spears would have first to be returned to the former suitor and benge would have to agree to the newly proposed marriage. Zingbondo would have obtained the father's consent before consulting the oracle.

ahead, that Auwa will sicken and die in her new husband's home (1) then benge will spare the hen.. For if the hen, held in the puta benge's outstretched arm and jerked backwards and forwards, is not to die, it will show no great signs of distress nor will it be seized with severe spasms. In this event the puta benge will take a strip of bast and will tie it round the fowl's leg, so that it can easily be recaptured later, and will then toss it to the ground to run about and recover from the poison.

But in this case Zingbondo will not marry Auwa. It is unfortunate but benge knows that only disaster will come from the marriage for benge has seen it looming ahead.

The verdict of the oracle is not, however, final until a second and corroborative verdict has been obtained from benge. A complete oracle consists of two tests. The first test described above is called bambata sima(2) The second test is known as gingo. The second test may

(1)

My friend, Dr.R.W.Firth, with whom I discussed parts of this paper, suggested to me that the consulter of the oracle had in mind not only the death of his wife but also such defects as laziness, temper and other forms of incompatibility. This is probably so but I had not made special inquiry into the question.

(2) When pressed a native told me that bambata sima was the term for the first test. I am not sure that the term is always or even generally so used. The phrase means first address, and is useful to denote the first test in contrast to the gingo or second test.

take place directly after the first test or it may be delayed for a considerable period. In one instance I have known two years to elapse between the first test and the gingo or second test.

Now in the gingo the action of the benge must be opposite to its action in the bambata sima. If in the bambata sima the hen dies, then in the gingo the hen must live. If in the bambata sima the hen lives then in the gingo the hen must die. In the gingo or second test the question is always asked in a negative form. Thus to take the case already mentioned in which Zingbondo wishes to marry Auwa. In the first test, as we have seen, benge killed the fowl and consented to the marriage. In the second test they will say the oracle 'No, it is a lie which you have told us (1), Auwa is not Zingbondo's wife. If you have lied to us kill the fowl, if you have told us the truth spare the fowl.' If benge has lied then it will kill the fowl again, if benge has told the truth then it will spare the fowl. If the oracle had not agreed to the marriage in the bambata sima and shewed its disapproval by sparing the hen, then they would have addressed it in the gingo thus, 'Benge you have lied to us, Auwa is

(1) In using the word "lie" to translate the Zande word zile, it should be borne in mind that the more correct translation would generally be "mistake". It means that the person who is referred to is in error and one must judge from the context whether he is in error by ignorance or by intention. It is not impolite to say to a man zile du, it is untrue.

Zingbondo's wife. If you have lied to us then spare the fowl; if you have told the truth then kill the fowl.'

The killing or sparing of the fowl do not give either a positive or a negative answer - that depends upon the form of the question asked.

If benge makes two different actions by killing one fowl and sparing the other it is a valid verdict, whether negative or positive; but if benge spares both fowls or kills both fowls then its decisions are invalid for reasons which will shortly be explained.

3(a) PROBLEM IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE BENGE:

There is little chance for the Ethnologist to see benge by accidentally finding it in operation as it is always held secretly in the bush in the early morning. The questions asked the oracle-magic are strictly private and only the consultant's private friends are permitted to be present. But as the Ethnologist gets to know a few of the natives well he will find that, so long as he is prepared to observe the rules of taboo and respectful behaviour in the presence of the oracle and does not laugh at its findings, he will soon be able to attend these ceremonies without great difficulty.

When he has attended several benge he will find that certain problems connected with the administration

of the magical root and with the interpretation of its actions force themselves upon his mind. I always asked about these problems either directly after the oracle had finished or even whilst it was in progress, from the bystanders.

The European who witnesses the administration of the doses of the pison may soon notice that the number of doses given to fowls of the same size vary. Normally two doses are given to a tiny fowl, three doses to a pullet or cockerel and four doses to a fully grown bird. But the observer will notice, that the puta benge sometimes gives three doses to one poulet and then on the same morning two doses to another poulet of a similar size. Or he gives two doses to one tiny fowl and three doses to another.

Now at first I thought that the natives were 'cheating' and that wishing a positive rather than a negative verdict they deliberately 'got round' the chains of tradition whilst at the same time leaving the procedure intact. I had, however, entirely misjudged the natives or rather I had read into their culture my own scepticism. For on my suggesting that the benge was not being administered properly, that if they gave three doses of benge to a tiny

fowl, whereas two doses was the normal number, it might be expected to die from the poison, and that if they gave two doses to a poulet when three was the normal number, it might be expected to live, I was informed that this was due to my ignorance of the magic and that however much benge one gave to a tiny chicken it would not alter benge's verdict. If, for instance, you said to benge, 'X is ill, if he is to live you kill the fowl, if he is to die you spare the fowl,' and the magic saw that X was to die, however many doses of benge you gave to the fowl it would still be alive at the end of the oracle.

The discrepancy in the number of doses given to the fowls is due to a certain conventional rule in the administration of the poison and not to any attempt at influence the verdict of the magic. Thus if the benge does not seem to have affected the bird at all after two doses, although this is the normal number, they will give it a third dose. For they must see that "benge na manga kondo," that is to say that the oracle must be seen working in the hen if there is to be an answer to the enquiry.

On the other hand, if for instance during the bambata sima or the first consultation of the oracle benge kills the fowl so quickly and surely that the certainty of its answer is made manifest to the observers, although they

make a second or confirmatory oracle, the gingo, they may only give one dose to the tiny chicken instead of the normal two as it would be merely waste of valuable benge to give it a second dose since they know that benge would certainly spare the second hen since it had previously given so quick and definite an answer by the manner in which it killed the first hen.

It will be seen that by this plasticity of rule it is easier to account for the greater number of valid benge, that is to say benge in the first part of which the hen dies and in the second part of which the hen lives, or in the first part of which the hen lives and in the second part of which the hen dies.

It also shows that whilst it would be wrong to suppose that in varying the number of doses the Putu benge is trying to 'get round' the oracle, it is nevertheless true that the traditionally prescribed procedure of consulting the oracle allows a certain plasticity which the consultant makes use of. Thus if "A" wants to marry a girl and benge kills the hen at once, thus giving a certain and favourable answer to the first part of the question (Shall "A" marry the girl), he will probably give a dose less than the normal number, since he wishes the hen to live, in the second part of the question (if you have lied

to us kill the hen) - but he will be acting quite properly in doing so; whereas if benge spared the first hen and thus gave an unfavourable answer in the first part of the oracle, he will probably give the full number of doses in the second part of the oracle, as he wishes the hen to die, and again he will be acting quite properly.

Or to take another example. "A" wishes to marry a girl and consults benge 'If the girl is mine benge you will the fowl, benge you hear it, you kill the little fowl.' Now if the fowl shews no signs of distress at all after consumption of the normal number of doses of the poison but acts as though it had never swallowed any at all, he may give it one more than the normal number of doses on the grounds that the oracle is not in operation. This will probably affect the fowl and possibly kill it, which is the action "A" desires, but he is observing the traditional rules in giving the fowl the extra dose.

On the other hand if this strange indifference of the hen occurs in the gingo or second test, benge having agreed to the marriage in the first test, then he will not trouble to give an extra dose to the fowl and again he will be acting by the traditional rules in omitting to do so. For the gingo has not the same importance as the bambata sima and if benge agreed to the marriage in the bambata sima it may be presumed to have given a correct

answer unless a taboo has been broken or witchcraft has been at work, and therefore the second verdict may be assumed.

Thus in our first problem, concerning the variation in the number of doses (they never vary by more than one dose) we see that in this way traditional usage by allowing a certain degree of plasticity gives greater social utility to the oracle.

I may add that without special physiological observations it would be impossible to explain the manner in which benge works in chicken. As fresh water is added generally between two tests and as the poison has been exposed for the period between them, it might be supposed that the poison would be more likely to kill in the first instance and to spare in the second instance. But often benge will kill the first fowl, spare the second and kill the third, so that the explanation does not seem to hold. But I have certainly noticed that when there are four or five separate questions to put to the oracle the natives are inclined to ask all the bambata sima first and afterwards all the gingo instead of alternating them. In this case the physiological working of benge might be expected to give a larger number of valid verdicts than if another method was adopted. However this point has only occurred

to me when writing up my notes and I have made no special observations in the "field" to elucidate it.

There is a section of benge root in the British Museum which has been marked strychnine by the donor.

I shall have to make a short digression to discuss whether benge is to the native a poison at all. We have seen that the native will tell us how birds eat the flowers or fruit of the benge creeper and die from the effects. Also we shall see later that the natives will sometimes be heard to discuss whether their benge has deteriorated with age. Also any Zande will tell us that if we were to give a fowl which had died in the oracle tests to a dog or if we were to eat it ourselves, the dog or we would die. These statements lead us to suppose that the Azande regard benge as a poison in our sense of the word rather than as a 'magic'.

However I was once, with some freedom of imagination, trying to explain to a native that we like themselves have two kinds of 'medicine' which would kill men and that to the first of these the white man's government had no objection for example the blowing of a magic whistle whilst uttering a spell. On the other hand the white man's government had strong objections to the second kind of 'medicine', which you could just put in the victim's food or beer -

as for instance, I ventured to suggest, if a Zande put a handful of benge into a man's beer. The native replied at once that if you did not utter the sima (spell) the benge would not kill him. Whenever afterwards I put this question to a native whether ~~it~~ directly or indirectly 'Would Benge kill without the sima?', I received the answer 'no'.

When I publish my full notes on magic I will shew how many 'medicines' which work naturally, such as the lethal medicine of the hair of the red ant-eater which is placed in the victim's beer and sticks in his throat, or such as the fish-poisons which are used to kill fish in a pool, are all accompanied by the spell (sima) and the taboos (sino) and the traditional procedure of the magic without which they are useless.

It will be seen that the statements of the natives that benge does not kill in a natural manner but by aid of the spell is contradictory to their knowledge that birds and dogs die from it and that it loses its power through age. Such contradictions are frequent in native thought and we must not attempt to exclude them for the sake of symmetry.⁽¹⁾

(1) It is commonly asserted by Europeans that the Azande are possessed of numerous malignant poisons. However I believe these assertions to be quite incorrect.

I will suggest finally that the native in many of his customs and beliefs possesses knowledge which is sufficient to enable him to see that many of his beliefs are erroneous. The contradiction between knowledge and stereotyped and socially prescribed beliefs is common enough in our own society and the process by which they are both kept intact is well known to psychologists in the phenomenon of dissociation. However I hope to deal with this question in another place.

(3)(b) PROBLEM IN THE INTERPRETATION OF THE ORACLE.

A second problem which arises from a descriptive account of the oracle is how the native under certain circumstances interprets its findings. The observer would be unlucky if he watched half-a-dozen benge and did not notice that on occasions benge will spare the hen which is then tied by the leg with the bast of a tree and let loose to run about in the grass but later is found to have expired in spasms. To my knowledge the contrary never occurs, a hen which has fallen as though dead never revives.

When this happens the native is somewhat perplexed for above all he likes a clear answer to solve his doubts and to decide his course of action. Whereas if Benge first spares the hen and then kills it after the oracle

has been given and accepted, he is once more thrown into doubt and indecision.

The first time I saw this doubtful oracle occur was in the case of a youth who very much wanted to marry a certain girl. In the first test benge spared the hen and gave a verdict against marriage. The boy was very distressed and those present consoled with him. In the second test, however, when the oracle was directed to give a confirmation of its previous verdict, it spared the hen again, that is to say that it contradicted its previous decision. This contradiction, as will be explained later, was considered as being probably due to witchcraft and the oracle was consulted a second time, its first statements being regarded as null and void. In the second oracle benge consented in both tests to the marriage. The youth was delighted, but on his return home the fowl spared in the gingo of the first oracle died from the after effects of the poison. Its earlier death would have meant a clear decision against the marriage and the boy was uncertain how its belated death was to be interpreted. He consulted the older men who said that it would be correct for him to marry as benge had given a contradictory decision at first and this contradictory decision held good even

if the chicken died later. But the youth was not satisfied, dread of the death of the girl if he married her, with all its unpleasantness and expenses, was too great for him to rely upon oracles in which there was any degree of doubt. He must have a clear decision before he undertook the marriage and he determined as soon as possible to consult benge again.

I have seen several instances such as the one just quoted, and I have reached the conclusion that, according to native opinion, when benge acts in this manner, it is because it must give a reply to the question as put to it by the sima benge in his address, but also wishes to say that it sees something outside the question. The native is not therefore satisfied with a verdict of this nature, even where it is in his favour. Benge sees something, he may not know precisely what, which modifies its answer. He came for a clear lead from the oracle and he has received a modified verdict to his question. His doubts are not dispersed and he will consult the magic again after some days or weeks, for a clear answer.

3(c) THE PROBLEM OF CONTRADICTORY VERDICTS:

To give a valid verdict benge must kill one hen and spare the other. If it kills both hens or spares both hens then its verdict is null and void. I do not know how it is that some hens die from the effects of benge and that other hens survive the poison, but it might be surmised that frequently it kills both fowls or that both fowls survive and such a surmise would be correct. This is very annoying to the native because he has gone to considerable trouble and expense for no purpose whatever. He is not nonplussed, however, For one of three reasons benge has lost its magic, it may be too old, or a taboo may have been broken, or witchcraft may have been in play.

About the first explanation little comment is needed. The benge has been kept too long and they must procure fresh benge to consult the oracle again. Age is sometimes given as reason for the failure of benge to give a clear verdict if in the first three or four questions of the morning it fails to kill a fowl.

More serious is the breaking of a taboo. To understand this explanation of benge's deterioration it is necessary at the outset to grasp a fact, to be laboured again later, that benge is not to the native a 'natural force' which can distinguish between truth and error, nor is it

simply a powdered root which when mixed with water will sometimes kill domesticated fowl and will sometimes fail to kill them and that as the fowl dies or lives so the natives agree to abide by the verdict. Benge is not a 'natural force' at all, nor do I believe that it is regarded clearly and consistently as a poison capable of causing death by natural means. Nor is its trial upon a chicken a matter of luck by which they agree to abide. It is a treasured cultural possession, the knowledge of which was given to the Azande by God (mboli), which gains its magical power, the power which enables it to inform men about events in past and future hidden from the human mind, by its being gathered and kept by men who have observed all the restrictions of the food and sex taboos and by its being administered by the traditional procedure. If these taboos have not been kept then benge is not 'benge' at all, it is just a powdered root of a forest creeper found in the wooded regions to the south of the Welle River.⁽¹⁾

I cannot do better than let Bishop Lagae, my predecessor in the study of Zande Customs, state the native view-point. Says he, "Le benge n'a donc de valeur aux yeux des Azande, que s'il est pur, indemne de toute souillure, cueilli et

(1)

Benge should not be regarded as being in any way personified.

conservé avec toutes les prescriptions rituelles. Dans ce cas seulement il peut donner un oracle véridique. Si l'on n'observe pas ces prescriptions, le benge n'est qu'une poudre rouge vénéneuse, inapte à distinguer le vrai du faux, la culpabilité de l'innocence. L'observation des prescriptions prohibitives fait partie de son entité réelle. Le benge n'est spécifiquement du benge, que dans l'hypothèse où sa force n'a pas été étouffée par la non observance des prescriptions rituelles. En dehors de ce cas, le benge ne distingue rien, il ne dit pas la vérité".....

Today when all benge is acquired by an illegal and heavily punished system of 'benge-running' between the British and Belgian possessions and exchanges of spear-money and goods for the magical substances have often to take place quickly, in secret and at night, it is not always possible to test the benge by a trial oracle. In consequence the Zande traders of the Belgian Congo have not always observed the taboos of abstinence incumbent upon anyone who touches the benge and the purchaser in the Sudan finds that he has been swindled, for instead of receiving a precious magical substance he has received a worthless red powder. He discovers this too late when consulting the oracle. I have twice seen large quantities of this useless powder, purchased at considerable cost and at risk

of imprisonment. It had to be thrown away as it was not magic and as there is no means of rehabilitating the powder with magic. The breaking of a taboo is sometimes the explanation put forward if contradictory verdicts are given by newly acquired benge.

A grasp of this fact, that benge is not a natural force, but is magic or a cultural force will also help us to understand the third possible and more generally accepted explanation of its failure to record valid verdicts.

Benge may be defeated by witchcraft - that is, the purpose of one great human possession may be defeated by another great human possession. The White Magic of benge acquired by the perseverance and courage as well as by the self-sacrifice and abstinence of man may be negatived by another heritage of man handed down by him from generation to generation, Black Magic. Reference to mangu (withcraft) is usually the explanation given to account for the contradictory verdicts of benge.

In this case the consultation of the oracle will have to be abandoned upon that issue. However, it need not follow that witchcraft will interfere with other issues nor that it will interfere with the question in hand upon another day or even upon the same day if the baneful influence of Black Magic has passed.

A fourth possibility may be mentioned here, but as it only arises in legal disputes it is discussed more fully under the heading of 'benge as legal machinery' towards the end of this paper. Some men, very few, possess a type of magic, called Zelengbondo benge, which is able to influence the magic of benge so that a false decision is given in their favour.

3(d) ACCEPTANCE OF VERDICTS:

As will have been seen from my account the Zande puts his full trust in benge. For him it is a great heritage and he will often tell one -

benge na gumbanga zile te, ga ani

benge does not speak error of us

waraga du

paper is,

benge does not err, it is our paper, for the native has learnt that the European is accurate because of his paper.

We have also seen that the findings of the oracle are as it were 'fool-proof' and that whatever happens in the oracle-consultation has its explanation at hand.

Other oracles may make mistakes, but benge never. But it will naturally occur to the white man to ask what happens when the oracle gives a verdict which subsequently is

proved to be wrong. Now, although what we have to say on this point, also applies to a lesser degree to the other oracles, it had better be dealt with briefly and at once.

Firstly, most oracles of benge are given about questions to which its answers cannot well be proved incorrect, for in the case of one answer the enquirer never makes the test whereas in the other case the findings of the oracle are largely in accord with the workings of nature. Thus if a man says to benge, 'I shall build my homestead in this place, will I die,' and the oracle says, 'Yes, you will die,' then the native is not such a madman as to take the risk so that its verdict is not tested. On the other hand if benge says, 'No, you will not die,' the probability is that benge will be usually right because benge is speaking of the next few years and cannot be expected to vouch for the distant future.

Secondly the questions which are asked of benge are mainly stereotyped, they occur in set social contexts. A Zande would not for instance ask of benge, 'will I kill meat if I go out hunting to-morrow?' This is not one of the questions which one puts to benge.

Thirdly were benge proved in error by a test case to the White Man, to the Native it would be an instance of witchcraft. For example if benge said that "A" had

killed "B" by mangu (witchcraft) and "B's" relatives killed "A" in revenge and then cut his stomach open and found no mangu (which is always located in the stomach), then I think that they would say that witchcraft was present at the oracle. I suppose that such cases do actually occur but if you ask a native what they would say in this event he will always tell you that such an example cannot occur, for if benge says that "A" is a witch then on opening his stomach you will find mangu. It is one of those many questions which seem so stupid to a native wherein the White Man asks what would happen if such and such a thing occurred when in his opinion such and such a thing never does occur.

3(e) Analysis of the Magic:

Before I go on to describe other methods of augury, I will make a short analysis of the morphology of the benge magic showing what are its essential characteristics.

- (1) The Taboo: It has to be gathered and kept and afterwards consulted under strict taboos of sex and food. If one of these taboos is broken benge ceases to be magic.
- (2) Traditional Procedure: Benge must be consulted in the traditional manner, the withdrawal to the bush;

the stereotyped mode of mixing the benge paste and of administering it to the fowls; the regulated number of doses; the sima or long address to the magic; the gingo or second and confirmatory part of the oracle; the prescribed mode of interpreting the action of the magic on the fowl.

(3) Social context: Benge is not consulted haphazard upon all matters but always in certain stereotyped social contexts. This I consider to be the most important aspect of our subject but its discussion is postponed till later in the paper so that the social custom of all means of divination described in this paper can be treated together (1).

It may also be especially noted here that the magic of benge is known to all and that all who possess the powder by purchase, loan, gift or by any other means of acquirement, can use the magic and that any male, small boy or old man or adult, may administer the benge so long as he has observed the food and sex taboos, and all have the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the traditional procedure. Women, however, are excluded (2).

(1) See page 71-ff

(2) Actually there is a woman in Ngere's country who practices benge but she is the only one I have heard about. As far as I can remember she is a widow who lives by herself. The reason given to me for the exclusion of women was that it must be assumed that women will always have had sexual connection with somebody, if not her husband. This, however, was only the statement of one man - possibly a cynic.

They are not even allowed near the magic for fear of depriving it of its powers. Benge is not therefore an 'owned magic' and the only restriction upon its use is that of sex.

(4)(a) DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT OF THE DAKPA ORACLE:

We shall now proceed to the description of another method of augury, that known as dakpa (sorokana dakpa = consult oracle with dakpa) The procedure of the augury is very simple and its description will be brief. Moreover I have only seen the oracle in use once and my information is neither full nor well checked. It may be supplemented however, from Bishop Lagae's account.

A person who wishes to consult the oracles upon some important matter and he cannot obtain benge, or upon some less important affair, or often as a preliminary to benge, will consult the 'white ants' by placing branches from magical trees, the dakpa and kpoiyo, in an ant-hill and seeing which of the two the termites will eat.

This method of consulting the oracles is very popular amongst all Azande, especially amongst women, partly because it costs nothing and is simple, needing no elaborate apparatus such as benge necessitates and partly because it is reliable. Many methods of augury require human agency

to manipulate them or are themselves a form of human activity. This, the Azande realize, has its drawbacks: whereas the ants, as they say, do not listen to all the talk which is going on outside in the homesteads but only hear the question put to them and will give an unbiased verdict.

The oracle must be consulted under ritual restrictions. The observances are less strict and less clearly defined than those governing the procedure of benge. No one would be so stupid as to consult the termites on the day after he had had sexual intercourse or on the day after he had eaten the mboiyo or morombida vegetables or smelly flesh such as the elephant or fish or indeed any meat kept for two or three days and inclined to smell. But still many men would risk consulting the oracle if they had abstained from such forbidden foods for 24 hours. Others would prefer to allow two days to elapse after indulgence in the tabooed foods or sexual intercourse. Also most men would be content if they abstained from the more risky dark-skinned animals such as the water-buck, the wild pig and the eland, whilst others, more careful, will extend their range of restriction.

They always consult the Termites in the evening

towards sunset. The man will go to a termite-hill near his home and one which he knows has not been deserted by the Termites. He will not take branches of the dakpa and kpoiyo shrubs with him as these are very common and he will be certain to find them near the Termite-mound, but arrived at the mound he will look round for these two trees and will cut a branch from each. Then, taking the iron-hafted shaft of his spear he will dig in the top of the hill and remove the surface earth, thus exposing the blind termites which much resent this disturbance. He will be careful to avoid their sharp claws and will look for one of those big downward-running tunnels which are found in these hills and he will take one branch in one hand and the other branch in the other hand and on seeing the termites:

<u>i</u>	<u>na va</u>	<u>we</u>	<u>ako</u>	<u>angbali</u>	<u>u</u>
They	say	thus	oh	Termites	he
<u>akpi</u>	<u>gi</u>	<u>gana</u>	<u>dakpa</u>	<u>li</u>	<u>u</u>
will die	this	year	dakpa	eat,	he
<u>ekpinga te</u>	<u>kpoiyo</u>	<u>li</u>			
will not die	<u>kpoiyo</u>	eat			

This is what a man will say is addressing the termites if he has come to consult about a sick friend as to whether he will live or die. When he has addressed the termites, he places the sticks, one in each hand, into the

tunnel and there leaves them, placing a few lumps of termite-earth round them, and returns home.

He digs a hole in this manner if he is to consult the termites called akiedo and the termites called abariba but if he is to consult the abio and ngbaiimo termites he will not dig a hole, but will simply place the branches on the path near the termite-hill, on that side where he sees that the termites have a run.

Early next morning he will go to the termite-mound to see whether they have eaten the dakpa and left the kpoiyo or eaten the kpoiyo and left the dakpa or whether they have eaten both branches or have eaten neither of them.

If they have eaten the dakpa alone it is invariably a bad omen. In answer to the sima above it is a reply that the sick man will die this year. If the termites have eaten the kpoiyo alone it is invariably a good omen. In answer to the sima above it means that the man will not die this year. In either of these two cases the oracle should be consulted again, this second consultation corresponding to the gingo in the benge oracle. I believe that the same form holds for both so that if the termites have eaten kpoiyo in the bambata sima, then they must eat dakpa in the gingo. When the gingo is held it will take

place preferably in another termite-hill as it is not wise to ask the same termites too often or they will not give an oracle at all.

If the termites do not eat either of the two branches, then the Zande says ami na ka ka, "they are doubtful", and therefore will not give an answer, or even that they just do not wish to give an answer. In this case the man will go another night to a different termite-hill and repeat the sima and procedure of augury.

Or it may be that the termites will eat both the dakpa and the kpoiyo. Lagae says that in this instance "Si les deux bâtons sont rougés inégalement, la présomption penche du côté de celui qui a été rougⁿé le moins. Si donc le kaow (dakpa?) est attaqué moins que le kpoiyo, l'augure est plus ou moins favorable d'après la différence qu'on constate." I was told that if both shrubs were eaten then the oracle was invalid and that this might be due to the breaking of a taboo but that it may more generally be attributed to witchcraft, or that it might just be due to the fact that the ants were hungry and were more intent on satisfying their hunger than answering the oracle. (1)

(1) Here again we have a rational reason amongst irrational ones just as in benge age as well as the breaking of a taboo and witchcraft was a reason for the invalidity of the oracles.

If the Zande considers that it is Black Magic working against him he will be very angry and consult first the iwa, another process of augury presently to be described and then benge as to who is using magic against him and when he has discovered the name of the man he will ask a friend to take the dakpa and kpoiyo branches with him to the owner of the witchcraft. He will ask him why he wishes to do ill to the man who is consulting the ants and will get him to blow water on to the dakpa and kpoiyo to remove the black magic before a new attempt is made to address the termites.

It seems, however, that some men lose faith and temper with the particular ants of a termite-hill and after they have eaten both dakpa and kpoiyo twice, he will then proceed to give them the branches without first pronouncing the address, (sima). If they eat both again he believes that he has 'scored off' the ants by deceiving them. He says that they just eat because they are hungry and have not listened to his question.

If a man has not observed the taboos he may consult the oracles by proxy. A boy will go with him and will cut the dakpa and kpoiyo, will place them in the path or within the termite-hill and will address the termites. Next morning however, the man himself will come and see what verdict the termites have given him.

Whilst the branches are in or near the termites-hill the consulter of the oracle will not talk about the affair at all as to do so might disturb the termites and involve a wrong verdict. Also when the verdict has been given it would be highly improper to throw away the pieces of branches into the bush. They will be taken home and placed in the roof of the hut, or in the verandah, or better still in one of the ancestral shrines, where the visitor to a native homestead will often see them. If a man, who had received a favourable omen about a future event, were to throw away the dakpa and kpoiyo sticks he might easily affect the manner in which the event will actually turn out.

4) b) ANALYSIS OF THE MAGIC:

We shall now, as with benge, make a short analysis of the main characteristics of the magic of dakpa.

- (1) The Taboo. As in benge, the oracle must be carried out under the observance of taboos. If the taboos are broken the termites will not give a valid verdict.
- (2) The Traditional procedure. The oracle must be consulted in the stereotyped manner; namely at nightfall; with the dakpa and kpoiyo and with no other tree; with the correct type of sima, corresponding with the exact

method of inserting the woods; the prescribed means of interpretation of the action of the termites must be used.

(3)Social Context: This must be left for discussion in conjunction with other methods of oracle-takings when its importance will at once be seen.

Here again, as with benge, the magic is known to everyone and everyone may consult the termites without payment. In the case of benge there was an actual bar to women using the magic. In the case of dakpa this is not so and the magic is very widely used by women in their affairs owing to its ease and cheapness. Even children ask the termites about their little troubles.

(5)(a)DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT OF THE IWA ORACLE:

In many ways the next type of oracle to be described is the most interesting. In benge appeal is made to a magical powder administered to hens. In dakpa appeal is made to the termites. Whereas in iwa appeal is made to a small wooden instrument into which magic has been rubbed and which is made by man and worked through his agency. All Azande agree that it is not so reliable as benge and dakpa, "iwa makes many errors," they say. But then it has one great technical advantage over benge and

dakpa for they can only answer one question and in the case of benge there is the cost of valuable magic powder and two fowls, and in the case of dakpa the oracle takes a whole night to function, whereas - "iwa tells many matters."

For instance if a man thinks, as he generally will in any misfortune, that someone is injuring him with black magic he can always consult benge or dakpa or both and receive confirmation or rejection of his suspicions. But he cannot very well go through all the names of the people whom he thinks may be injuring him to discover whether each one is using black magic against him, by these long, and in one instance expensive, methods of augury. This is where the little wooden instrument iwa comes in useful. He can run quickly through the names of suspected users of Black Magic and having discovered by this means the responsible individual he can either inform him or, if he considers the affair important enough and wishes to be on sure ground, he can first check the verdict of iwa by using dakpa and checking dakpa by consulting benge. For the different oracles have their order and system and one always consults iwa before dakpa and dakpa before benge and never in a reverse order. Benge is always final.

The iwa is a miniature table-like construction ~~(see plates)~~; it is carved out of the doma tree, so often used in magic, or from the kuf-kurahu tree. It is cut from one piece of the tree and has a round or oval flat surface, incised with knife-cuts, and is supported by two legs and a long tail. It stands about six inches high and in length is from 6 to 12 inches. The instruments vary in size. The two legs are called undu hu, its legs, and the long tail which is used as a handle in manipulating the instrument is called sa ha, its tail. Over the table-like surface of the instrument is fitted a little round head, to which its flat surface is neatly proportioned. A barkcloth covering is tied over the head of the iwa. The iwa is also sometimes called gbaga and bulu though I am not certain whether these are the names of trees or not. The main piece of the instrument is called na ha (its mother) and the moveable head is called wi-li (child).

While the instrument is being made, from the moment when the man goes into the bush to look for a suitable tree from which to carve the iwa with an adze, he should observe the taboos of food and sex as we have seen in the cases of benge and dakpa. He must avoid ^{sexual} connection, the eating of pungent flesh, and loosening vegetables.

Lagae says that after the wood has dried in the sun he will take some gum which flows from the kpay and pluck a small shrub, called banzwa. He burns the banzwa and mixes its root with the kpay gum and rubs this carefully over the iwa and then places on it the wooden lid-head and binds it round with barkcloth. It must be placed apart for two or three days where no one who has not observed the taboos will touch it, after which it may be used. To use the iwa it is necessary to have observed the restrictions with regard to women and food. A man must not have had connection with a woman for four days previous to manipulating the instrument, and he must not have eaten fish nor elephant flesh for a like period, nor mboiyo and morombida vegetables for two days. However these periods of abstinence are variable.

Lagae says, " On peut néanmoins se libérer des prohibitions alimentaires par la précaution suivante: on calcine un morceau de viande d'éléphant et on frotte le iwa avec les cendres. On peut faire de même pour le poisson. Cela se fait une fois pour toutes." This practise is unknown amongst the Azande of the bahr-el-Ghazal, perhaps because they very rarely see the flesh of elephant or fish.

Bishop Lagae also says that the Azande, in the Congo,

having taken off the cord and cloth, previous to manipulation, scrape the bark of the mbugare with a knife on to the surface of the iwa already smeared with the gum of the kpay. Others use the cinders of the willizagan-duhu, a little thorny brushwood which grows on the termite-mounds. Both of these substances cause a froth on the surface of the iwa and such a froth must be raised for proper usage. He says that these are only two of the many medicines used for this purpose.

The Azande of the Bahr-el-Chazel, use the small yellow fruit of a wild tomato, gbakatuna, which they squeeze, or the twigs of the yudepia tree, which they grate with a knife on to the table.

Then they take the head of the iwa and dip it into a gourd of water and apply its flat bottom to the table-top of the iwa. The moment the water touches the medicine squeezed or grated on the table, it causes it to froth and bubble violently.

This is the moment for usage. The operator sits down with his legs bent and his right foot resting on the handle or tail of the instrument to keep it steady whilst he uses his right hand to take the head of the iwa between his thumb and first finger, firmly, and to make a few preliminary jerks which send the head slithering easily

over the table (~~See plates~~). The question is now put by the operator to the oracle. He taps iwa on the head and says, perhaps:

"iwa mi akpi gi gana?"

"iwa I will die this year?"

He then makes short jerks with his right hand and the lid will either slither easily over the table of the iwa, in which case the answer is 'No, you will not die this year,' or the lid will stick and no amount of similar jerks will remove it and it has eventually to be pulled upwards with considerable force, in which case the answer is "Yes, you will die this year." That is to say that if the lid sticks the answer is in the affirmative, if the lid does not stick but slides easily the answer is in the negative.

Or the little lid may run about from side to side and round and round instead of going straight forwards and backwards. This means that the oracle is uncertain: "Si na ka ka" they say.

Strictly speaking as in benge or in dakpa, a second and confirmatory trial should be made. In this case he will ask, if the lid has stuck in the first trial signifying that the answer to the question 'Will I die this year?' is 'Yes,' the question again in a negative form. 'It is untrue, I will not die this year?'. The wood runs smoothly backwards

and forwards giving the confirmatory verdict of 'No,' that is, 'No, it is not untrue you will die this year'. Just as in benge if the first hen dies then the second hen must live or vice versa if the first hen lives then the second hen must die, for the verdict to be valid; so in iwa if the first jerks with the lid result in sticking then the second series of jerks must run smoothly backwards and forwards, and conversely if the first series of jerks make the lid run smoothly then the second series of jerks must result in a sticking of the lid, for a valid verdict.

Strictly speaking this is the correct procedure but in daily use one of the oracles is generally held to be sufficient and the next question is then asked. This omission of the second part of the oracle is partly due to the fact that in all very important matters the confirmation of iwa is sought by dakpa and by benge, and partly owing to the fact that the second trial invariably upholds the verdict of the first trial for a reason soon to be given.

Thus in contrast to the lengthy processes of benge and dakpa, iwa gives the oracle in a few seconds and a large number of questions dealing with a variety of subjects can be answered quickly in succession.

There will often be two or three persons near by when

the iwa is being consulted and each will take the opportunity of consulting the oracle about their affairs. One will want to know who has been using witchcraft against him resulting in a sore foot, another who has been preventing him from killing animals by witchcraft, another who has been using the same malign power to hinder his wife from having children; for iwa is 'par excellence' the oracle for discovering the boro mangu, or witch. Marriage-affairs, journeys, illness and many other matters will similarly be asked.

Whatever questions a man wishes to put subsequently to the oracle, generally he will, as a matter of course, begin by asking; mi akpi gi gana ? (I will die this year ?) or simply mi akpi ? (I will die ?). Such a question has a traditional technique of its own. The operator plucks a few blades of grass and makes with them a circle in the air, just above the earth, to indicate a grave to the iwa, and then casts the grass behind him, before working the magical instrument.

At this point I had better draw attention to the fact that the sima is not always spoken to the instrument directly. When the man who is manipulating the instrument wishes to address it he taps it on the head and asks it the question. Often however the man who is manipulating the instrument will not address the iwa which hears the question

put by the enquirer to the manipulator. On the other hand the manipulator will often make a long address to the iwa.

I will now give an example of a consecutive series of questions concerning the same affair, which were asked at an oracle consultation at which I was present.

The wife of Zingbondo, the son of Bagbe, both father and son being chief's deputies, wished to consult iwa about her daughter who had refused to marry her espoused husband, had been beaten by her father for this obstinacy, and had, much to her mother's anxiety, run away from home and had not been seen for two or three days. The first question put to the iwa was, "Is the girl dead?" The lid went smoothly backwards and forwards giving the answer 'No.' She next asked, "Has the girl gone to stay with relatives?" The lid stuck and refused to move to the operator's jerks, thus giving the answer 'Yes.' She next asked, "Shall I go and try to find her?" The iwa answered 'No.' Her last question was, "Will she return home within three days?" The lid stuck giving 'Yes' as an answer. The oracle was consulted in the afternoon and the girl came back to her mother the same evening.

This example gives us an excellent illustration of

the somewhat wide question^s put to the iwa. Having been informed by the oracle that the girl had run away to her relations I suggested we should ask it which relations, giving the names in turn of those who lived near. I was, however, informed that this was an improper question to ask iwa and that the oracle could not be expected to know the affair in such detail. In the same way no native would have asked iwa whether the girl would return to her mother to-morrow. They will always ask a question of this nature to within two or three days. I have seen a large number of iwa oracles and when I was able to follow the questions in the native language I found that they were always of this general wide nature. I used to test this opinion by asking straight-forward narrow questions, such as the native does not ask. For example :- 'Will it rain to-morrow?' or 'This afternoon I am going to see the chief Gangura, will I find him at home?' or 'I am going out shooting to-morrow will I kill meat?' The answer to these questions was usually, "I do not know," that is, the head of the iwa went from side to side and round in circles; whereas if I asked a general question, such as the native always asks, I invariably received a straight-forward oracle of 'Yes' or 'No' and usually the subsequent event proved it to be a correct one. It must be remembered

that unless the questions were put in a stereotyped form as in benge the oracle would lose its social utility.

THE PROBLEM OF CHEATING:

I have not the slightest doubt that the operator of the iwa cheats. Firstly the second confirmatory oracle, unlike benge and dakpa, invariably supports the previous verdict. This in itself is convincing enough. Moreover, the answers are always given in accordance with the findings of a reasoned consideration of the questions asked; that is to say that the iwa answers 'Yes' or 'No' just as I should have answered when, knowing all the relevant facts, I had made a decision on the grounds of probability. I used to test this when watching the oracle upon many occasions by making a quick judgment on the grounds of probability and by seeing whether the oracle agreed with my conclusions.

Also, having learned to use the instrument, I have discovered that it is possible to regulate the movements of the lid on the table-surface of the iwa by means of pressure and the manner of jerking the lid in such a way as to make it go round or from side to side or straight forward or stick firmly. Such cheating is beyond detection

by the observer.

Now, if the operators do intentionally cheat it must be borne in mind that they do not cheat themselves but other people, which, of course, is quite a different matter. Only a small percentage of the population are possessors of the iwa and, though they may oblige their friends by consulting the oracle free, they may normally expect a small payment before they begin to operate the instrument. If this small source of income is to be kept their iwa must have a local reputation for the correctness of its oracles and I am convinced that the owners regulate the oracles in accordance with a reasoned judgment of what will in all probability happen.

At the same time I should not like to say how far this 'cheating' is 'unconscious,' that is how far the nervous jerkings of the instrument, held between the thumb and forefinger, and the mental reaction in the mind of the operator to the question which he has just heard work in concord without the intermediate mental process (as 'I must make the lid stick') corresponding with the purposive manipulation of the instrument. This is a very difficult problem. I believe that the owner of the iwa also consults it about his own affairs.

Naturally the question of cheating is a very

interesting one and I made many enquiries into it. The observer will soon realize that such oracles as iwa which function directly through human agency and still more those oracles, not described in this paper, in which man himself or the spirits are the source of inspiration, have a place in native culture far below the greater oracles which function through non-human agency, such as benge and dakpa.

To what extent does this cultural arrangement of the oracles in order of merit correspond with the individual's outlook ? Every Zande will tell you that iwa is in no way reliable like benge and dakpa. It has to give so many oracles and sometimes an iwa will make mistakes. They will also all admit, if asked directly, that some operators cheat but that no good operator will cheat and if a man did so his iwa would not tell him the truth and no one would go to it for an oracle. Their answer amounts to no more than that they know that it is possible to cheat but that people do not normally do so. Their reaction to the question is quite different from their shocked negative to the question whether a man would cheat with benge.

But only some aiwa (plural of iwa) make errors, others will always be correct. The correctness of an iwa depends upon the instrument not becoming cold (zele), - (that is lose its magic), and upon the operator possessing

correct magic to enable him to operate the instrument successfully .

If a man's iwa makes many mistakes he will realize that it has become 'cold' and being zele, has lost its magic. This may be due to the breaking of one of the food or sex taboos, or it may be due to the operation of the iwa too often with women looking on, but generally this 'coldness' of the instrument is attributed to mangu (Black Magic or witchcraft), that malign influence by which all man's cultural ends and ambitions are likely to be thwarted. However, in this instance, the injury can be remedied, the 'coldness' removed and the magic rehabilitated.

They take the iwa and place ngwa iwa (medicine of iwa) between the lid and the table surface, and they bind it round with barkcloth. They dig a hole in the path along which people are often passing, or better still at the cross-paths and place the iwa in the hole and cover it up with earth and smooth down the place so that no one will see that a hole has been dug there. Before covering the iwa they address it saying, "You are iwa, why do you lie, tell the truth." The many persons who pass unwittingly over the instrument remove the 'coldness.'

If a man is aware that the iwa lies buried he will go round the spot and not over it since he does not wish to take part of the 'coldness' on himself.

After two days the owner will dig up his iwa and having burnt some benge in the fire he rubs the soot of it on the iwa so that it may tell the truth just as benge tells it and he addresses to the instrument the sima or spell thus :-

"iwa mu gumba lengo na benge."

"iwa you speak truth with benge."

He then puts some fresh benge on the table-surface, binds it up with barkcloth and places it under the verandah of his hut for five days. After this the magical instrument may be expected to work properly and to tell the future or past correctly.

I believe that this method of burying the iwa is also used sometimes, either alternately or complimentary to, I am uncertain which, observation of the food and sex taboos whilst carving out the instrument with an adze and drying it in the sun.

MAGIC OF WORKING THE ORACLE:

A man cannot expect the iwa to tell the truth unless he has himself received the proper magic to operate it.

For unlike benge and dakpa a man must first have acquired the magic to operate the oracle successfully. Here again it may well be pointed out that the oracles do not in themselves possess the virtue of telling hidden matters but that iwa only acquire^S_A such virtue through the observance of the full ritual restrictions, through adherence to the traditional usage, and through the possession by its operator of the right magic.

A man who wishes to operate the iwa will therefore first buy the magic from some man who possesses it, probably from a binza or professional magician. The owner of the medicine will place some of it in a small pot and bring it to the boil, in oil, over a fire. Whilst it is boiling he will utter the spell. He repeats over and over again the name of the man who wishes to buy the magic and makes movements over the pot with the thumb and fore-finger of his right hand as though he were operating the instrument iwa. He addresses the magic in the pot with much repetition and variation on the following theme:-

<u>ngwa</u>	<u>nga</u>	<u>mo</u>	<u>ngwa</u>	<u>iwa</u>	<u>nga</u>	<u>mo</u>	<u>mo</u>	<u>gumba</u>
magic	are	you	magic	iwa	are	you	you	speak
<u>lengo</u>	<u>a</u>	<u>gumba</u>	(<u>limo</u>	<u>ho</u>	<u>nga</u>	<u>liwe</u>) ⁽¹⁾	<u>liwe</u>	<u>mu</u>
truth		speak	name	its	is	<u>liwe</u>	<u>liwe</u>	you

(1) An explanatory interpolation by my informant. Liwe and hanzua are two of the medicines in the pot.

gumba lengo a gumba banzua mu gumba lengo
 speak truth speak banzua you speak truth
a gumba mu gumba unzunzu. kara hara mu
 speak you speak correctly. it boils. you
gumba unzunzu mu gumba lengo a gumba
 speak correctly you speak truth speak

The receipt of the magic now pays a half-piastre or a piastre or a small ring or a small knife which is dropped into the pot (2). Without this payment the operations cannot be continued as the pot will break and the magic will be lost. The purchaser then begins to stir and to utter the spell over the magic in a similar manner. As in all such magic amongst the Azande the stirring of the magic (i na woraha) in oil is a very important part of the proceedings and when magic is being paid for the payment precedes the privilege of being allowed to stir the magic and utter the spell.

When it has boiled for some time the unabsorbed oil on top is poured off into a gourd or leaf-cup and the solid part of the mixture remains in the pot. The owner of the magic now takes the oil which has been drawn off and rubs the purchaser's hands with it and also his own hands and the hands of any other person present who has

(2)

It is a very common feature of Zande magic that the payment is part of the traditional procedure having its set place in the sequence of the ceremony.

in the past received the medicine. They all drink some of the oil from a little leaf-cup and finally he rubs the iwa with the oil.

If he is a binza or professional magician, the owner of the magic will possess a horn of waterbuck or hartebeests, or of some other large animal of the bush, which is filled with a black paste composed of roots of plants and oil. He takes a long spoon-stick into the black medicine, and drawing some of it out, mixes it with the magical substance in the pot and then eats some of it himself and gives some to the purchaser to be eaten from the spoon drawn across his mouth.

The main part of the ceremony now commences. The owner of the magic takes his knife from its sheath and makes incisions with the point on the right hand and right foot, near the big toe, of the purchaser, for these parts of the body come into contact with the iwa. He makes incisions in his left foot since he may meet with evil influences on the path before operating the instrument. Into these incisions he rubs a little of the medicine from the pot as also into the table of the iwa. He himself will also take the opportunity of making fresh incisions in his own hand and so also will any persons who have been through the ceremony

in the past and who wish to take the opportunity to absorb fresh magic. They then eat the remainder of the magical substance.⁽¹⁾

(5)(b) ANALYSIS OF THE MAGIC:

An analysis of the iwa oracle magic shews us a similar structure to those of benge and dakpa.

- (1) Taboo: The food and sex taboos must be observed during the making of the instrument and prior to its use. A breach of these taboos will destroy the power of the magic which can then be resuscitated only by a new and complete magical process.
- (2) Traditional Procedure: The traditional technique and order in working the oracle must be upheld. The correct medicine must first be given to the iwa; it must be addressed in the stereotyped phraseology of the oracle; the traditional interpretations must be adhered to.
- (3) Social Context: The social setting in which the consulting of the augury iwa plays its part as a preliminary to certain social acts. This is to be discussed presently.
- (4) The operator must have taken the proper magic to enable him to manipulate the oracle.

(1) The purchaser only receives magic of the iwa. He is not taught the composition of the medicine for which he would have to make a large payment.

Iwa is not itself an owned magic. On the contrary the taboos, the traditional procedure, the sima, many of the medicines for placing on the oracle table are known to all. But the medicine of the operator is known only to a limited number of men and its use must be bought by a small payment. Once more there is an actual sex division in the use of the magic, women being acquainted with it but not using it.⁽¹⁾

(6)(a) DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT OF THE MAPINGO ORACLE:

There are as many means of telling hidden affairs in which man is the agent, such as the medicine-men and men in whom the spirits of the dead dwell, as there are means in which some external agent is the oracle-giver, but they are outside the scope of the paper.

(There are also several machine-oracles little used amongst the Azande such as the makama and the doma fruit, the former being part of the equipment of the binza or medicine-man which we will not describe here. Also we shall here pass over the oracles which are in use amongst the Azande who border on foreign lands, such as those employed by the Baka, Moro, Bellanda and other tribes.

The only other oracle which we shall describe in

(1)

One woman in Ngere's country is said to use it.
See page 40.

this paper is the mapingo. The mapingo is so simple that it is widely used either to enquire into small matters or more especially as a preliminary to one of the greater oracles. Women use the oracle much and even children make it to enquire into their little affairs. Lagae says "Les Azande ne pratique pas le mapingo, très en honneur chez les Mangbetu et les Abarambo," but it is in common usage amongst the Azande of the Bahr-el-Ghazal.

All the machinery needed are three little pieces of wood, about half an inch long and with rounded sides, from the bilikpa tree (the oracle is sometimes called bilikpa) or the badangi tree, or the magical tree doma, or the magical tree zelengbonde, or the homely vegetable gbanda. If there is only one question to be asked three small pieces of wood are sufficient but if there are two problems, then six pieces will be required, and so on. But one of these trees always grows near the homestead and no trouble is expended in providing the material of the oracle. The consulter takes the little pieces of wood and places them two, side by side, as a base, and the third piece resting on the other two. He then addresses it:-

bilikpa nga mu du le. mi akpi gi
 bilikpa are you here I will die this
gana si (a) gbata ka mi akpinga te si
 year it will scatter I will not die it
ra uru za
 remains sun in position

The oracle is consulted in the evening just before night-fall and the little wooden piles, in number according to the number of questions asked, remain in a clearing at the edge of the hut-space bordering the garden, till morning comes. If during the night something has scattered the pieces of wood so that the little piled-up structure has fallen, then, if addressed as above the answer is 'You will die this year.' But if the night has passed without the little sticks having fallen from their previously arranged position, then the answer is 'You will not die this year.'

6(b) ANALYSIS OF THE MAGIC:

As the oracle conforms in its structural characteristics to the characteristic form of benge, dakpa and iwa, we may condense the analysis.

- (1) Taboo. Mapingo must be carried out under the observance of sex and food taboos.

(2) Traditional Procedure. It must be made with the usual woods proper to the oracle and must be carried out in the stereotyped manner and time with sima and method of interpretation.

(3) Social context. It has its social milieu. (See H-71-66.)

It is like benge and the other oracles in that it is 'unowned magic.' It is known to all. No expenses are involved and there is no sex bar to use.

7. GENERAL ANALYSIS OF ORACLE-MAGIC.

We have described four methods by which the Azande discover matters hidden to man. We have tried to show what the Zande thinks and does in the many peculiar occasions which arise from the natural workings of the oracle. We have tried to estimate his trust in the various forms of oracle and to show how the plasticity of the rites maintains his confidence in, and upholds the social utility of the magic.

We have seen that none of these oracles have magical powers in themselves, neither the scraped and dried roots of the benge, nor the wooden instrument iwa, nor termites, nor the three sticks of the mapingo, but that they exercise their magical powers only as a result of man's abstinence and knowledge of tradition.

We have remarked that the oracle-magic is not owned magic but that knowledge of benge, dakpa, iwa and mapingo is known to all or can be learnt without payment. All adult Azande know what taboos they must keep, and how to manipulate, address and interpret the oracles. In iwa alone is there a slightly different connotation, for in iwa there is a special magic in which lies success in using the oracle, and that can only be acquired by purchase. But this is a quite separate magic from that of the oracle itself.

We have noticed that the morphological structure of all these oracle magics is the same, that they all depend for their virtue upon knowledge of the correct implements, upon their being carried out under taboos and in the traditional sequence and manner of use, upon the sima or address being uttered to the magic in stereotyped phraseology and form, but not in fixed formulae, and upon the findings of the oracle being interpreted in accordance with a definite set of rules.

We shall now see that the occasions of the consultation of the oracles are a social setting wherein the oracle has its special ceremonial place in the oracle of economic, legal, religious and social acts of everyday life. We shall do this by first giving as briefly as

possible two descriptive examples of the way in which one finds the oracles functioning in their social contexts and then by giving a condensed analysis showing the large range of economic and ceremonial acts with which the oracle-magic is associated and in which it plays its role.

8. SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF ORACLE MAGIC:

(a) Descriptive account of function.

I give the matrimonial history of Kamunga to show how benge plays its role in the social context of marriage, but I must point out that he was in my service and consequently far wealthier than the ordinary Zande who has not the means of becoming such a Don Juan.

Kamunga is about 16 years of age. When I met him first he had been married for about two years to a girl, called ^NKabani. Benge had in the bambata sima agreed to the marriage and for some reason the gingo had been postponed. Nabani had only lived with Kamunga for a few months during these two years because her brother (her father was dead) would not let her remain permanently with her husband but had exacted many presents from him upon the promise that Nabani would shortly take up residence with him as a permanent union. In this way he had exacted from Kamunga clothes, a box, tin cooking vessels and other articles of trade. When Kamunga became

impatient and asked his wife's brother why his wife had not come to join him, he replied that he had consulted benge in the belated gingo and that it had said that Nabani would die if she went to live at Kamunga's home at Yambio.

Kamunga now entered my service and changed his residence and demanded his wife. Her brother said that he had twice consulted benge with reference to new addresses and still benge said that his sister would die.

Whilst affairs were in this impasse Kamunga decided to take another wife, Nalihe, daughter of Bambina in the district of Bagomoro (Place of Hunger) where we were then living. The consultation of benge with regard to this marriage has ~~twice~~ ^{referred to already} been ~~given in different contexts~~ in this Paper.

- (1) Benge spared the first fowl and the second fowl was also spared in the oracle but died later in Kamunga's home. The verdict was, therefore, considered as invalid (see page 3()
- (2) Benge was again consulted and killed the first fowl and spared the second fowl thus consenting to the marriage. But the belated death of the fowl in the first oracle made Kamunga nervous and he decided to ask benge again (see pages 31 and 32).

Such was the position when Kamunga and I went to stay in the neighbourhood of the homestead of Nabani, his first wife. Nabani's brother tried to extract more gifts from Kamunga which he would have given had I not, unwisely as an anthropologist, forbidden him to do so. I suggested he should consult benge again but he said that this was quite useless as benge was quite clear in its verdict against the marriage. Kamunga said that he would himself consult benge and the brother of his wife agreed to let his sister live with her husband for a few days. At the same time the brother of Nalihe, his second wife, came to see him, so that he had the opportunity of consulting benge about both marriages.

- (1) benge by sparing the first fowl and killing the second fowl once again reiterated its refusal to the marriage. Kamunga was very upset, but as Nabani was unwell at the time he feared that she might die whilst living with him and next morning he sent her home for good and demanded the return of his 20 spears.
- (2) benge agreed to his marriage with Nalihe, his second wife, by killing the first fowl and sparing the second fowl. The marriage to Nalihe was thereupon confirmed and settled. Kamunga was thus left with one wife and about three weeks later he decided to take in

marriage another girl whose name I forget but whom we will call No.3.

- (1) Benge on being consulted spared both hens and its verdict was invalid. A taboo had been broken and benge was zeke (cold)
- (2) On another day benge was again asked and killed the first hen and spared the second hen, thus consenting to the marriage. Kamunga paid 8 spears to the girl's father and became affianced to the girl.

Wife No.1, Nabani, has returned to live with her brother and Kamunga is trying to regain his other 13 spears. Wife No.II, Nalihe, is now living happily with Kamunga. Wife No.III had not, on my departure from the country, yet come to live with her husband.

Before we go on to describe a second example of the social role of the oracle there are a few points in the above account which require elucidation. Firstly we see how benge acts as a legal force in giving validity to the bond of marriage. I have heard discussion on marriage in which the parents have been trying to regain their daughter - (not all the spears having been paid - but in which the husband points out the fact that benge has definitely consented to the marriage as his strongest argument for his retention of the girl. Benge acts

as a binding force to the social contract of marriage. Conversely, as in the case of Kamunga's first wife, where the oracle has not been completed the girl's guardian is able to keep her at home and exact presents from her husband. I may add that there is no ceremonial of marriage amongst the Azande.

Secondly we see another means by which the oracle allows the native to elude its findings without breaking any traditional rule. He may take the girl to his home upon the verdict of the bambata sima and indefinitely postpone the gingo. Also in the sima they will always mention the place of the husband's home, so that if the benge declares against the marriage they can consult it again on the grounds that change of residence alters the circumstances which were mentioned in the original sima.

Thirdly it appears that the Zande is not above saying that he has consulted the oracle and has a verdict for or against the marriage when he has never asked benge at all. It is therefore thought better either for both parties to consult the oracle or for a representative of one party to watch the oracle of

the other party.

In the case just considered we have described the function of benge in the most important of human social bonds, those of marriage. This is a clear matter-of-fact reality. In the second example which we shall give we shall describe the function of benge in a case outside actuality but in the realms of emotional life.

I was staying in the homestead of a blind and aged man, named Gami, an important chief's deputy. During one of the public dances and seances given by the medicine men of the district, one of the medicine men said that he saw by his magic that Gami would die this year and that his death would be due to his wives who wanted to be rid of him. News of this declaration was brought in the evening to the old man who at once consulted iwa as to which wife was trying to kill him by mango (witchcraft).

This is as far as I followed the affair but as it was known to the natives I had no difficulty in receiving an account as to what would happen in the future. Gami will consult dakpa and benge to check iwa's accusation of his wife.

If dakpa and later benge support iwa then he will consult iwa as to who shall inform his wife. He will also ask benge whether his wife stands alone in this matter or whether there is someone behind her. If she stands alone he will enquire whether he will live if his wife blows water (the Zande method of counteracting witchcraft).

We suppose that benge says 'yes' to these questions, that his wife stands alone and that he will live if she blows water. The friend, an elderly man, chosen by iwa,
(1)
now goes with the sve kondo (chicken's wing) on the end of a stick and places it on the ground in front of her. He tells her that benge says that she is injuring her husband and that she must show her goodwill by blowing out water from her mouth on to the wing of the fowl. As she does this she says 'if indeed there is mango (witchcraft) in me then may it be cooled.' When she has blown the water on to the wing of the fowl she tells the messenger to go back to her husband and say to him that he must consult the oracles again.

If after some days benge tells him that his wife is still injuring him with mango the process is repeated. This may happen two or three times and the woman will

(1) When any benge is finished the consultant places one wing of the dead bird on the end of a stick. The feathers of the wing are spread out like a fan. He always takes this to his hut and, in the case of ordinary questions, it remains stuck between the grasses in the roof of his hut. In cases of witchcraft it is always sent to the witch to be dealt with as here described. In cases where the consulter of the oracle is not present at the oracle the wing is sent to him to inform him of the verdict as in the text on page 13.

feel so miserable that she will go to a distant bakumba or chief's deputy and ask him to make an gbo benge or special test with the benge.

The bakumba will tell her to go home and after a few days he will either send to Gami to tell him that benge spared the fowl and that his wife is no longer acting against him, or he will send the wing of the fowl to the woman showing that benge has killed the fowl and affirmed her guilt. In the former case the husband Gami will have to pay five spears to the bakumba for making the test, in the latter case the burden of payment will fall on the wife's relations.

We need not go into other aspects of this case than the use of the oracles. I have said that the story was outside the realm of actualities and in the world of emotion. Old age, blindness, sexual impotence, and the youth of women are indeed facts from which spring the fear of death, jealousy of wives, suspicions of sons and neighbours, all the emotional setting in which our story is woven.

In the case of Kamunga we saw how benge acted as a binding force in the social contract of marriage. In the case of Gami we see also how benge acts as a legal force regulating the means by which an old man renews his hope

and conquers his fear. Benge gives authority to each step he takes, decides who is the witch, whether she is alone, who shall go to her, will he die if she blows water and makes the dangerous accusation of witchcraft into a socially controlled procedure at which no one can cavil. We see also how it calms the emotional unrest of man. Nothing is more restless, helpless and dangerous than a man racked with fear, doubt and hesitation, bound to engage himself in some activity to settle his fears but not knowing what form of activity will disperse them. But benge dictates to him his course of action along traditional and socially harmless lines and benge gives him an object upon which his emotional unrest can spend itself.

We shall shortly return to this point when we will discuss the social function of oracle-magic, but first we must describe one aspect of benge which we have barely mentioned.

(b) Benge as legal machinery.

We have left the legal functions of benge till the end of our paper in order that the account may run consecutively with the other social functions of the oracles and because the benge oracle in cases of law presents certain peculiarities. We shall begin by giving a descriptive

account of benge in its role of law, in the narrow sense in which we use the term in Europe, before we discuss its role of law, in the wide sense of binding sanctions.

We have already pointed out that only a chief can make an official oracle in cases of civil and criminal dispute. Any Zande can indeed consult as many oracles as he pleases but he may not act against another man on their findings. His chief must first make an official test with the benge.

All that we mean by Courts of law, charges, counsel for prosecution and for defence, juries and verdicts are for a Zande summed up in the procedure of benge. The chief does not hear the case, he does not call witnesses, he does not balance evidence nor pronounce the verdict. All these processes he leaves to benge.

We will describe what happens in one of the most serious and one of the most frequent civil actions in Zande society, the action against witchcraft. Now, to the Zande, disease, wounds, death are due not to natural causes but to the malign activities of 'witchcraft' or to the power of 'medicine'. If a man dies he has been killed either by mangu (witchcraft) or by ngwa (magic). The oracles are consulted and benge will - say that the dead man was a victim of mangu, whereupon his relatives

prepare to avenge his death. But the highly complex and organised Zande society allow no one to take vengeance on his own initiative or on the initiative of his social group, but vengeance is directed along prescribed channels. For the relatives of the dead cannot act on their own benge verdict but will inform their chief who makes an official test of the case with benge. If benge kills the first fowl and spares the second fowl then the puta benge will send his chief the wing as a sign of guilt and the chief will authorise the injured relatives to take revenge or accept compensation. The verdict of the oracle is checked eventually by the opening up of the stomach of the man and within mangu (witchcraft) will be discovered, either after the man has been killed in revenge, or in the event of compensation being accepted, then at his natural death.
(1)

I will give one more example for purposes of subsequent analysis. A. says that B. has committed adultery with his wife and B. denies the charge. A. goes to the chief and upon B. reiterating his denial benge is left to decide which of the two is speaking the truth and which the lie. The loser will have to pay the expenses of the oracle, being a fee of 10 spears or even 15 spears to his chief.

(1) Of course today the white man allows no killing in revenge nor payment of compensation. I have never seen a stomach opened to discover mangu but it is still frequently done in secret.

I do not wish to discuss features of these cases which do not concern our subject of oracles.

Sometimes in the past a man or woman would drink the benge himself or herself instead of the fowls. My notes on this ceremony are incomplete and I shall, on my return to Africa, obtain a first hand account from a very intelligent native who himself underwent the ordeal. Meanwhile I shall rely very largely upon Lagae, his contributions to our account being easily marked by the tongue in which they were written. Says Lagae "L'épreuve du benge se fait parfois directement sur un homme ou une femme, soit parce qu'ils contestent la réponse d'un augure véridique qui a proclamé leur culpabilité, soit, parce que le fait dont ils sont accusés est d'une gravité exceptionnelle. Cela dépend, en somme, de l'appréciation et de la sévérité du chef.

Cette épreuve se fait comme suit. L'accusé s'assied à terre. On fait une préparation de benge plus dilué que s'il agirait d'une épreuve sur les poulets. Le putabenge prend une feuille, la replie pour en faire un godet, puise de jus de benge, environ cinquante centimètres cubes, sans y mêler la marc, et fait boire cette potion.

Le Suna benge commence alors à interpeller le benge,

en disant benge, benge, qui est dans le ventre de cet homme, dévoile la vérité. Si cet homme est vraiment coupable, tuez le, qu'il tombe. Si c'est un mensonge, s'il n'est pas coupable qu'il survive, qu'il ne chancelle pas et aille ramasser une à une les ailes de poule plantées à terre.

Entretiens on a placé, à une distance de quelques mètres un nombre variable d'ailes de poule, ou même des bâtonnets. Selon la sévérité du chef, on en met un nombre qui varie de dix à vingt, à une distance de quelques pas l'une de l'autre.

L'accusé est tenu d'aller les ramasser. S'il chancelle et tombe au cours de cette opération, il est reconnu coupable. S'il réussit à ramasser le tout sans tomber, son innocence est claire et nette. Dans les deux cas, l'oracle est définitif.

S'il tombe en proie à des conclusions, le chef a le droit de la faire achever sur place. Généralement il autorise les amis du coupable à l'emporter et à lui administrer un contre-poison, on utilise, à cet effet l'écorce du kpyo pilée pour en dégager la victime. Le jus de l'écorce du kpyo est, paraît-il, un vomitif. Si la victime parvient à rendre le benge assez rapidement, il a des chances d'échapper à la mort. On va également coucher la victime dans la vase, ayant soin de recouvrir

tout le corps sauf la face. Ce procédé est jugé assez efficace par les indigènes. Néanmoins la mort est fréquente.

Celui qui a résisté à l'épreuve du benge et n'a pas chancelé, conserve toute assurance. Sa palabre est bonne; le benge n'a pas voulu le tuer. Il s'en va toutefois se coucher au frais, près d'une rivière, dans un endroit vaseux, et y reste jusque dans la soirée. On n'omet généralement pas de lui administrer une potion de jus de kpyo, en guise de vomitif."

I will supplement this account with notes from the Ceremony amongst Azande of the Bahr-el-Chazal. I was told that a person would drink benge only in grave issues such as adultery with the wife of a chief or plotting against the life of a chief with black magic. They first unwind the coils of the man's hair and ruffle his hair so that it all stands up. They then place a log of wood on the ground. The man drinks the benge, the Putu benge rings a bell and then utters the Sima or address to the magic in the stomach of the man. They then threw the bell to a distance and whilst they beat on the wood the man ran to pick up and return with the bell. His failure or success in doing this proved his guilt or innocence. If the man returned with the bell and later died there was apparently no redress, but my informants would not readily

admit that such an event ever occurred. I was told that if the man was proved guilty he was usually hacked to pieces there and then by the chiefs' deputies, since the crime was a grave one. But I must add that I never found it of much value to enquire into past events which it is impossible to observe to-day since the native has only a limited interest in them.

There is a magic, z e l e n g b o n d o benge, which can be used to influence benge. All my informants agreed that it is never used except in legal disputes or Criminal actions. The magic is cooked in oil and as the magician stirs it he says the spell

<u>zelengbondo</u>	<u>benge</u>	<u>nga</u>	<u>mo</u>	<u>i</u>	<u>sima</u>	<u>kondo</u>	
magic	(of) benge	are	you	they	address	fowl	
<u>tipa</u>	<u>re</u>	<u>pati</u>	<u>benge</u>	<u>yo</u>	<u>i</u>	<u>di</u>	<u>gi</u> <u>konoo</u>
about	me	near	benge	in	they	take	this fowl
<u>ti</u>	<u>li mo</u>	<u>li</u>	<u>i</u>	<u>di</u>	<u>ru</u>	<u>u</u>	<u>kura</u> <u>a kura</u>
in	name	my	they	take	you		survives
					(benge)it		
<u>ni</u>	<u>wene</u>	<u>sale</u>	<u>i</u>	<u>di</u>	<u>gingo</u>	<u>u</u>	<u>ima</u> <u>a ima</u>
with	good	for me	they	take	<u>gingo</u>	it	dies dies
<u>ni</u>	<u>wene</u>	<u>sale</u>					
with	good	for me					

The magic is known to few and is regarded by the Zande

as Black Magic. Though it is powerful I was told that it would not help a man in a case where he had, himself, to drink the benge and my informant quoted the case of a bakumba who had sexual intercourse with one of the wives of the great chief Gbudwe (d.1905). This man was known to possess the magic zelengbondo benge but he died in the oracle nevertheless.

Also there is always a danger of being discovered in using the magic where the oracle is giving its answers through fowls. The hen will show peculiar distress and will keep on falling as though dead and then getting up again. Such behaviour may lead to puta benge to suspect that the magic zelengbondo benge was used by the accused to influence the benge. He will at once put the question to benge whether the accused has used this magic. If benge kills the fowl immediately thus giving an affirmative reply, then the puta benge will inform the chief, I was told that death was the invariable punishment for tampering in this manner with the machinery of justice.

There are two points in this description to which attention must be drawn. Firstly we must note the position of the chiefs in the benge context. Chieftanship amongst the Azande is very pronounced and in consequence we might expect to find, as we do, that the mould of society

leaves its form on the institution of the benge oracle.
 Lagae says that in the past, so the Azande told him, benge
 was known only to the Avongara chiefs and he commendably
 quotes his information:

gu pay nga pa benge si aenge ti
 that affair is affair benge it originated from

ki na agbiya kungbwe Azande gbwa
 only chiefs ordinary Azande just

i ahinanga pa benge mbata te
 they did not know affair benge before

This statement is probably incorrect. It is denied
 by all my informants and Lagae himself adds "peut-on
 prendre cela a la lettre?" However this may be, the
 chiefs have a leadership in the benge magic. Only they
 can make an official test by the oracle and for this they
 are paid ten spears or sometimes fifteen spears. ⁽¹⁾ The
 Zande chiefs, like other aristocratic possessors of the
 legal machinery, find 'justitia est magnum emolumentum.'
 On other occasions such as in war or in public religious
 ceremonies the chiefs consult the oracle officially.
 Moreover the chiefs possess the actual material of the
 magic in far greater quantities than Commoners or even
 than chief's deputies. We have seen that either the

(1) To give some idea as to the value which this sum represents
 I will add that 20 spears is the normal number handed over
 in marriage in compensation to the parents of his bride.

chief organised the benge expedition into the Congo or he was a part shareholder in the undertaking. There is no doubt that the special association of benge with chieftainship greatly enhanced the power of the Avongara.

The second point to which we shall draw attention arises from the white man's attitude towards the oracles. I have sometimes heard white men say "but there is no justice in the benge method." We need not here enter into the ethics of justice but one can restate this Criticism in another and more scientific form. What is the social utility of benge as legal machinery? It is true that the judgments of benge are always accepted as final, but if the Evil doer and the righteous men stand an equal chance of civil and Criminal Conviction, however satisfactory in other respects the legal machinery of benge may be, it would hardly be socially useful but the reverse. The answer to this difficulty is to recall a phrase already quoted and which I have so often heard on Zande lips, benge na gumbanga benge does not speak
zile te, ga ani waraga do.
error of us paper is.

In our own society the guilty man can make a reasoned calculation that he always has a chance of escaping conviction, whereas no Zande would admit that the guilty had a

chance of eluding conviction unless they possessed the magic of influencing the oracle. They will tell you if you press the question that a man who is clearly guilty is not such a fool as to allow the case to go to benge as he will then have to pay not only compensation to the party he has injured but also the heavy court fees to the chief.

But we cannot dispose of the problem quite so easily because if the Zande criminal knew that he had no chance of hiding his guilt there would appear to be no reason for legal cases, whereas these are frequent. We must remember, however, that probably by far the greater number of cases concern Black Magic. Now in these cases the accused naturally believes himself to be innocent, as witchcraft is probably never practised at all, and he is willing to make the benge test. What are the feelings of an innocent man when benge denounces him it is difficult to say. If you ask him he will probably say "if there is witchcraft let it be cooled. I have no ill will. See I blow water. It is finished." I do not think the native is sceptical of the findings of benge, indeed all the evidence goes to show that he is not. Men and women have been eager, not reluctant, to drink the magic themselves to show that they are not witches, or to cut open the stomachs of their beloved dead ones to prove that the family are not a family of witches, for witchcraft is hereditary.

The fewer number of cases concern such actions as adultery. Here the accused can have no doubt as to his own innocence or guilt. But if guilty and he agrees to the benge test, it must not be supposed that he is in any way sceptical about the oracle for to think this would be to imagine that man's actions are based solely upon reason, which we all know by introspection and observation, is not so. He emotionally rebels against submitting to punishment or death without a struggle and it is to this emotional reaction and not to a reasoned scepticism that we must attribute the contradiction between his beliefs and his behaviour.¹

LEGAL FUNCTIONS OF ORACLE-MAGIC.

We have already given consideration to the manner in which the oracles act not only to tell hidden matters and to give to man confidence in his undertakings but also to direct his activities into ordered social channels and to give sanction to activities which are binding on himself

1. I have already pointed out in this paper that we shall often find a mixture of rational opinion in conjunction with irrational beliefs, and I call attention again to another example here. I once asked a man, named Bagbiyo, a man considered by everyone as a witch, whether he was one or not. He indignantly denied the impeachment, and when I asked him how it was that his neighbours were always sending him the wings of the fowls killed by benge in affirmative answer to the question "is Bagbiyo using witchcraft against me?" he replied

and others. We have shown in the case of Kamunga how the consultation of the oracle acts as a stabilising force on the bonds of marriage (see page 76). We have shown in the case of Gami how emotional unrest finds its outlet not in activity disruptive to society but in a manner sanctioned by the social institution of the oracles. Indeed in whatever instance we find the oracles at work we shall find that they not only act as passive informants but that they are active agents amongst the binding social sanctions which compose Zande law. I will give one more example of the manner in which the sanctions work and will then leave this aspect because it requires discussion in connection with the entire range of Zande magic, which we do not attempt to describe in this paper. I have explained how the relations of a dead man act (page 81). They perpetrate what in another context is a heinous crime, killing a human being by magic. But in the context of death this is a pious and laudable action which they are compelled by social usage to undertake. If you ask a Zande whether the relatives of the man who is slain by magic will not take a similar line, he will reply that they can do nothing because benge had told the avenger that their relative was a witch and that the avengers could have acted

that the reason for this was that they always asked benge about him and not about other people.

in no other way than the way in which they did act. In this manner the oracle gives sanction to social acts.

Social contexts of oracle-magic.

This we regard as the most important aspect of our subject, but it is also the most difficult and the one in which we feel the least satisfaction in having attempted to elucidate. As the magic is practised in secret it is always difficult to find out which type of oracle would be used in any particular social context and its exact place in the sequence of events which form the contexts. We know nevertheless, that oracle magic forms the prologue to all the more important social, economic, legal and religious acts of a native's life. Without the oracle no economic work of magnitude can be started; no crisis in man's biological and social existence is unaccompanied by one or more forms of divination; no big religious ceremony would be held without first consulting the oracles; the oracle-magic forms the whole machinery of justice.

But since these oracles have their order and sequence in the complicated social structure of the Azande, so they should be described in relation to the activities in which they play their role. It is only in their full context in actual life that this function can be clearly demonstrated..

But it is important to bring all these social occasions together into a condensed analysis to focus sharply the part which the magic plays in everyday-life.

In the crisis of biological development, the "rites de passage" of life, one of the major oracles is always consulted. Before the birth of a child both father and mother will consult benge and dakpa as to the dangers of delivery of mother and babe. Before the father takes the step to giving a name to his infant he will ask benge to assure him that it will live. Before the cutting of the fore-skin in the circumcision ceremonies, sometimes a mortal operation, the boy's circumcision tutor, and, I believe, the father and the operator also, will consult benge whether the boy will survive the cutting. No man will ever enter upon the contract of marriage, nor will any girl's parents allow her to live with her husband, without first having consent from benge. No man will enter the secret society of bili without benge's assurance that he will pass safely through the rites of initiation. When sickness and pain threaten a Zande he will at first have recourse to iwa, dakpa and benge to discover who is injuring him with Black Magic, so that he may be cured and healed. When the cloud of death is hanging over him

he will ask the oracle whether he will die. When a man has died his grief-stricken relatives will rely upon benge to tell them how he has died so that they may be avenged and later to assure them that vengeance has been made.

In the important economic undertaking of building a new homestead a man will probably consult mapingo, dakpa and benge before he decides on a site. He will always consult the oracles before planting his main crop of Telebun upon which he relies for his daily gruel and his beer, and often it will be necessary to find out by the same means who is responsible for the failure of any of his domesticated plants so that he can arrange for the evil influence to be withdrawn. The Zande will ask iwa where he is to make his gbaria or hunting-square, a task involving a great labour. Again if his hunting is unsuccessful he will have recourse to the oracles to know why.

In time of drought the chief will obtain advice of benge before he orders the solemn and communal ceremony of offering the first fruits upon the rocks to God.

In time of wars or migrations, the direction of advance the day of fighting, the success of the venture will all be foretold by the oracle-magic.

There are many other occasions of less moment upon which the oracles, particularly the lesser oracles, are consulted.

But the social contexts I have given, embodying as they do, the main biological, social and economic activities of a Zande's life sufficiently illustrate the function of oracle-magic in its social milieu.

In all the situations I have given the Zande must consult the oracles, not only to satisfy his own cravings, when doubt and hesitation shake his resolve and paralyse his actions and when his aims and ambitions are threatened by the dark cultural force of evil, black magic, which is for ever frustrating his designs, not only do the oracles give him assurance that he may proceed to his work and social ventures with confidence, but also they give him sanction or legal power to begin them.

For it is not only from choice but from social compulsion that he consults the oracles and their dicta are for him binding social obligations.

BOOK II - PART II

THE MORPHOLOGY

&

FUNCTION OF MAGIC

A Comparative Study
of
ZANDE MAGIC

THE MORPHOLOGY & FUNCTION OF MAGIC

1. The use of comparative method
2. Function of Magic
3. The Spell
4. The material element in magic
5. Tradition
6. The rite, the conditions of the rite, the conditions of the performer
7. Group ownership of magic
8. Possible results of diffusion of magic
9. Creation of new magic
10. Functional occasions of magic
11. Summary & conclusions

I. THE USE OF COMPARATIVE METHOD:

It is not wise in an attempt to create working-hypotheses to end with settled convictions and final theoretical conclusions but it is necessary to reach some preliminary opinions as a basis for future research. In making this attempt I shall have especially in view the entire range of magic in two societies.

Very little work has yet been accomplished by specialists in the field towards presenting a full descriptive and analytical account of magic. One cannot therefore make wide comparisons which would yield general principles based on an intensive study of many primitive communities. Moreover the work which has been accomplished has been done mainly in Melanesia and the social incidence of magic in Melanesia appears to differ considerably from the social incidence of magic in Africa. This is due in general to the difference in form between the two societal types and in particular to the bias given by a strict association of magic with a definite social grouping which profoundly affects the structure and the functional occasions of the magic. I shall attempt to demonstrate in this paper that the principles of magic deducted from Melanesian data and formulated as general laws for all societies have, in view of a study of African peoples to be refined and possibly modified.

I shall shew how this is so by a comparison between the magic of a Melanesian society described by Prof. Malinowski and the magic of an African society investigated by myself. The Melanesian society is found in the Trobriand Islands, a coral archipelago lying to the north-east of New Guinea. The African society is a section of the Azande Nation which lives in the Bahr-el-Ghazal Province of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. I shall illustrate the argument of the Paper from the magic of other societies of which there is a good account, but will rely mainly upon the Trobrianders and the Azande to furnish most of the data of comparison.

In order to understand the argument it is necessary to know the sociological distribution and balance of these two societies and their main food-procuring activities. The Trobrianders live in villages which act together in communal undertakings in agricultural labour, trading expeditions, warfare and public ceremonial. The villages are also largely political units, though the chief may rule over the wider area of a district. Many of these chiefs are little more than village headmen, others have great prestige in virtue of belonging to certain families of the four totemic clans. None wield great executive power. The four totemic clans are scattered but the families or sub-clans are localised. The Trobrianders are patrilineal and matrilineal, the girls

going to live in the village of their husbands, but membership of the clan group and inheritance of wealth and rank being passed to a man's sister's son instead of to his own natural offspring. Girls are married from their father's home whilst boys return to their mother's village before marriage. The main economic activity of the Trobrianders is cultivating his gardens. Fishing plays a great place in maintaining his food supply and is of far greater importance than hunting owing to the absence of mammalian fauna in these coral islands. (See Seligman & Malinowski⁽¹⁾).

The social organisation of the Azande is as different from that of the Trobrianders as are the islands of the South Seas from the vast inland tracts of Central Africa. The Azande have no village life but live in homesteads widely separated from each other. In consequence they have fewer communal undertakings. Politically they are organized into tribes which stretch over an enormous area and are governed by one chief. The tribes are divided into a number of ill-defined sections under the leadership of a chief's deputy. The chiefs all belong to one ruling class and exercise great power. There are a large number of totemic clans which are scattered all over the country and possess little social solidarity. The Azande are patrilocal and patrilineal. Girls live in the homesteads of their

(1) Seligman: The Melanesians of New Guinea. 1910. Chap XLIX.
 Malinowski: Argonauts of the Western Pacific. 1922. Passim.

husbands and inheritance of wealth and rank pass from a man to his sons and brothers. Garden work forms the main work of a Zande. Hunting and the collection of edible termites are important activities, fishing contributing little to the food supply. (See Book I of this thesis)

If we study such institutions as magic, religion, law, economic life, we shall find that they take on the form of the mould of the society in which they have their place and function and that where the morphology of society differs as between the Trobrianders and the Azande we shall expect to find that the sociological role of magic amongst these two peoples differs accordingly.

2. FUNCTION OF MAGIC:

Professor Malinowski was the first writer to demonstrate clearly from a detailed study of one society wherein lies the function of magic. ⁽¹⁾ He showed how magic filled a gap *left* by lack of knowledge in man's pragmatic pursuits e.g. Wind magic, and how it provided an alternative means of expression for thwarted human desires e.g. Black magic. His general conclusions as to the function of magic in society are fully borne out by a study of Zande data.

For example the Zande uses magic to protect himself, his children, his agricultural and hunting activities from the malign power of witchcraft. He uses productive magic

(1) In Magic Science and Religion. References will be to this paper when not otherwise stated.

to multiply his crops, to ensure success in netting game, in encouraging the termites to embark on their nuptial swarmings, in smelting and forging iron, in increasing the number of his subjects. He uses magic to give him confidence in love or in singing, to protect his property from theft and his wife from illicit intercourse. He consults the magic of the oracles to give him confidence before circumcision, before marriage, before building a new homestead. Magic plays its part in all the main biological and social occasions of a Zande's life. I could multiply examples and an analysis of the social context of each would endorse Prof. Malinowski's conclusions as to the psychological and sociological role of magic.

But suppose that a Trobriand islander were to make an unusually long and perilous argonaut, were to paddle his dug-out canoe two thousand miles up the placid and dreary waters of the Nile, were to make his way to Zandeland, were to learn the tongue of the Azande and enter into their customs, how would he find that their magic conforms to or differs from the principles of his own society.

He would find that Zande "white" magic, whether protective or productive in character, like his own is never looked upon as one of the forces of nature which can be utilized by man, but is regarded as a cherished cultural possession which derives its powers from man's abstinence

and from his knowledge of tradition. He would find that the Azande, like his own people, believe magic to have come into the world with man and not to have been acquired by subsequent discovery in the world of nature. The Zande would reject as strongly as himself the idea of magic as an universal impersonal power such as the concepts mana in Polynesia and wakan and orenda in North America. Also neither the Trobriander nor the Zande consider magic to be a gift from the spirits of the dead.

The sex and food taboos which precede all acts of magic would conform to the tradition of the Trobriand visitor. Nor would he find anything in the rites of magic which would appear to him to be inconceivable or unreal. But where the Trobriander would be confused would be in noticing that whilst in structure Zande magic is similar to his own, it stresses some of its component parts which he regards as of less importance than others, whereas some of the parts upon which he lays the greatest stress in his island home are performed by the Zande with a shocking freedom and carelessness. In both societies all important acts of magic consist of the rite, the spell, the condition of the performer and the tradition of the magic, but the emphasis placed on each by the two peoples is different.

3. THE SPELL:

To peoples such as the Trobrianders and the Maories

- (1) I do not wish to state that these forces are conceived of as impersonal, but that they have been described as such.

the spell is a rigid unalterable formula which is transmitted intact from generation to generation and the slightest deviation from its traditional form would invalidate the magic. The spell is "occult", handed over in magical filiation, known only to the practitioner." Knowledge of the magic is knowledge of the spell, the ritual centres round it, it is always the core of the magical performance. (p. 68.) Now to the Zande the spell is nearly always essential to the act of magic in all forms of 'white' magic, but it is not stressed in the same way as in the Trobriand Islands or in New Zealand. Indeed the qualities of the spell in Zande magic are in a direct opposite from those which we have been told characterise Trobriand magic. It is a saying rather than a formula, it is familiar, it is handed over without strict reference to genealogical ties, the knowledge of it is not confined to the practitioner.

I will give an example of owned Zande magic from my collection of texts. It is a typical hunting spell which is pronounced over a pot in which the magical ingredients are being cooked in oil. The practitioner stirs the pot and says :-

<u>bingia</u>	<u>nga</u>	<u>mu</u>	<u>mi</u>	<u>ye</u>	<u>ka</u>
name of magic	are	you	I	come	to
<u>ra</u>	<u>ru</u>	<u>ware</u>	<u>mu</u>	<u>ti</u>	<u>na</u>
cook	you	thus	you	fall	with

ana fo ri mi imi mbaga
 animals for me I kill bushbuck

ana dunduko mi are ru ti
 animals all I will cook you for
 (have cooked)

ana mi imi ana gbe
 animals I kill animals much

"You are bingia magic, I come to cook you thus. You bring me animals. I kill bushbuck - all animals. I will (have) cook(ed) you on my behalf. I kill animals much."

This spell is not a set formula learnt by heart and repeated without variation by all who use the same magic and which is handed down intact from generation to generation. It is a saying adapted to the purpose of the magic and uttered in the common form and phraseology of all Zande spells but it will vary in its word formation. The practitioner will change words on different occasions and different men will insert different details.

To make this variation in the spells quite clear I will give one more example which embodies two texts given to me by the same informant on different occasions. There is an oil-bearing plant, a species of Sesame, called kpagu which yields a regular yearly crop to the Azande. Its magic which is known to every one is a tall grass with a feather like form of its branching stems, called bingba. It is a common grass and is used for thatching the roofs

of the huts. Now a man who wishes to increase the yield of his kpagu will pluck some of these grass stems and hurling them like a dart will transfix the broad leaves of the oil-plant. The spell accompanying this action was given me in the first instance as follows :-

<u>kpagu</u>	<u>nga</u>	<u>mu</u>	<u>du</u>	<u>le</u>	<u>mu</u>
name of plant	are	you	is	here	you
<u>zunga</u>	<u>a</u>	<u>zu</u>	<u>wa</u>	<u>kina</u>	<u>bingba</u>
be	very fruitful	as		truly name of grass	
<u>ni</u>	<u>dungu</u>	<u>he</u>			
with	many	it			

"You are kpagu here, you be exceeding fruitful, indeed as bingba, with much fruit."

On a second occasion my informant gave me the spell for the same magic as follows :

<u>bingba</u>	<u>nga</u>	<u>mu</u>	<u>sele</u>
name of grass	are	you	oil
<u>idi</u>	<u>a</u>	<u>ida</u>	<u>wa</u>
consent	very much	as	truly
			name of grass
<u>gi</u>	<u>kpagu</u>	<u>mu</u>	<u>zungu</u>
my name of plant	you be	fruitful	much
			not
<u>mo</u>	<u>kanga</u>	<u>ya</u>	
you	refuse	not	

"Bingba are you, oil plant take very well, just like bingba. My kpagu be exceeding fruitful, do not refuse."

It will at once be seen by a comparison between these two spells that the words are more different than similar. The sense is the same but we find that the words are so little part of a formula that in the first spell the plant is addressed whereas in the second spell both the plant and its magic are called upon by name.

It is true that the example I have given is of an unowned type of magic and a type of magic which has no part in communal undertakings. As will be seen later it is consequent upon my argument that the more strictly owned is magic and the more the occasion on which it is practised is of common interest, the more it will tend to become formulated, the less it will vary from traditional form. But I will return to a consideration of this point later.

Here it is possible to make a useful distinction between the 'saying' spell and the 'formula' spell. The psychological background of all magic demands that utterance shall accompany the rite if its function is to be performed but it does not determine the form of the utterance. The form of the spell is dependent upon social causes not to be found in a study of the magic itself save in relation to the whole society and culture in which it is practised.

4. THE MATERIAL ELEMENT IN MAGIC:

But if the spell in Trobriand culture is the essential part of magic what takes its place in Zande culture ? In the morphology of Zande magic it is the material element in the magic which is occult and which is known only to the practitioner. Usually this consists of strange woods and rare roots. Indeed the Zande word for magic is ngwa which generally means wood and only in special contexts refers to magic. There is an interesting linguistic comparison in the Trobriand islands, for there, on the contrary, the native uses the same word for spell and magic, generally megwa, the material element in the ritual being of minor importance.

That it is to the material component in the ritual and not to the spell that the Azande attach main importance can be shown from many of my field-work experiences, but it is more satisfactory to illustrate their opinion from their own legends. Many of these legends, about the Zande culture here Ture, centre around once possessed magical powers. In one of these stories a man, called Yangayma possessed magical feathers which enabled him to fly after performing a ritual dance and chanting a song-spell "yu (untranslatable)

<u>yangayma</u>	<u>gi</u>	<u>swe</u>	<u>ku</u>	<u>ba</u>
(name of man)	these	feathers	of	father
<u>ba</u>	<u>fu</u>	<u>yangayma</u>		
father	gave	(name of man)		

"Yu Yangayma, these feathers of father, father gave Yangayama".

The culture hero Ture stole these feathers and chanted the song-spell, substituting his name for that of their rightful owner :- "Yu yu Ture, these feathers of father, father gave Ture. Yu yu Ture, these feathers of father, father gave Ture." In stealing the feathers, however, Ture dropped one of them and when Yangayma found this he put it in his hat and singing the spell as above he gave pursuit into the air and deprived Ture of all the stolen feathers so that the culture hero fell to the ground and was killed.⁽¹⁾

In another story Ture was walking with a man called Depago who possessed magic which enabled him to enter into the ground. When it began to rain he took some medicine from his horn in which he kept it and wiped it on an anthill. On the anthill opening they both entered and Ture was amazed to see the fine village and the wealth of Depago under the ground. In order to leave the anthill Depago wiped some more of his magic on to the earth and said "Depago Depago
(name of man)

(1)

See Zande Grammar by Plas & Lagas. 1921.

<u>Depago</u>	<u>nzinginzingi</u>	<u>sende</u>
(name of man)	muddy	earth
Depago	na yera	ngalimo
(name of man)	is cutting	deep
<u>sende</u>	<u>nzinginzingi</u>	<u>sende</u>
earth	muddy	earth

"Depago, Depago, Depago, quagmire, Depago is cutting a big pit, a quagmire."

As Ture was departing he stole some of the magical soot. He went home and persuaded all his wives, with the exception of his first wife Nanzagbe who knew his ways, to burn their huts and come and live with him under the ground. He went with his wives to an anthill and wiped some of the magic on the ground and said "Deture, Deture," Deture a quagmire, Deture is cutting a big pit, a quagmire.^{>>} The anthill opened and they entered only to find grass and they became very hungry. Meanwhile Nanzagbe went and told Depago what had happened and he came and rescued Ture and his wives.⁽¹⁾

This story is in need of native commentary as it is not clear why Ture could not have got out of the anthill. Those natives whom I have questioned on this point have

(1)

See Rev.C.Gore's forthcoming Zande Grammar.

replied that he could not get out because he had not enough magical soot since he had foolishly wiped it all on the outside of the anthill.

In yet another story Ture tries to copy someone whom he has seen putting out a bush fire by placing a magical fat on his head. But in this story we are distinctly told that Ture used a different fat so that his efforts ended in failure.

I can give other instances from the folk-lore of the Azande to illustrate the manner in which the importance of the magical substance itself is stressed more than other aspects of the performance, but these three will suffice. We have seen that in the first story that it was the theft of the feathers which enabled Ture to fly into the air and that it was the loss of these feathers which caused his subsequent fall, just as it was the finding of the one dropped feather which gave Yangayna power to pursue him from the earth. In the second story it was the theft of the magical soot by which Ture entered the anthill and its absence which prevented him from getting out again. In the third story it was the use of a secret fat which gave power over fire and it was Ture's attempt to control fire by a different fat which led to failure. On these occasions Ture copied the spell correctly - I do

not wish to underestimate its importance in the magical performance - but it was the loss of the material of the rite which made the act of magic invalid. This is the whole point of the stories.

Now just as we found that the emphasis placed on different elements of the magic in the Trobriand Islands and in Zandeland has a parallel in different linguistic symbols, ngwa and megwa, we shall find a similar parallel between the significance of the stories given above and the significance of some Trobriand myths.

Once upon a time in these South Seas Islands there lived a man Mokatuboda of the Lukuba clan with his three sisters and his younger brother Toweyre' i. Mokatuboda possessed the magic of the flying canoes and the myth describes his success in a trading expedition and the envy of the other natives whose canoes had to sail on the water whilst his flew through the air. Next year they cultivated their gardens. There was a terrible drought and the rain fell only on the garden of Mokatuboda because he made an evil magic of the rain. Angry and jealous his brothers and maternal nephews killed him, believing that they had been taught the magic (i.e. the spells) and could use it on his decease. But Mokatuboda had not taught them the real spells, neither the magic of the adze nor of the rain nor of the lashing creeper nor of the coconut oil

nor of the staff. His younger brother Toweire'i thought that he had already received all the magic but he had only part and next year when they prepared to make a big trading expedition he discovered that by his fratricide he had deprived mankind of one of its most powerful cultural possessions, the magic of the flying canoe. The whole point of this story is that the magic was invalid because Mokatuboda had not taught all the spells to his brother. (1)

I shall leave the spell, to return to it later, and will draw attention to another profound difference between Trobriand and Zande magic.

8. TRADITION:

In the Trobriand Islands "in the case of any important magic we invariably find the story accounting for its existence." "All important magic has its tradition and is buttressed by its myth." Do we find the same background of belief amongst the Azande?

Since all magic tends to create its own myth it would be indeed surprising if there were no tradition of a simple kind associated with Zande magic. I found that there is always a current tradition, a cycle of everyday myth encircling and generated by the magic. (2)

When I asked a Zande how he knew that his magic was of

(1) Argonauts of the Western Pacific. p. 311. ff.

(2) Vide also Malinowski. Ibid. pp. 76-77.

of any use he told me a story from his own experience or from those of his friends and neighbours. He told me how when gathering termites by night his friend had blown his magic elephant whistle and how soon afterward they heard the tramping and trumpeting of the elephants and next morning saw their deep spoor in the moist earth. Another told me how he had always wished to be a fine singer but had never shewed any ability in the art until a famous song-leader gave him medicine to eat. Another told me how his brother, and a neighbouring chief also, had a swollen penis and had become impotent because of the use of a certain type of 'black' magic. Always there is this halo of rumour and wonder around magic of the Azande.

We know well, for Goldenweiser⁽¹⁾ has shewn us, how in our own society magic is always associated with wonder-working, with strange coincidences too numerous to be accounted for by chance, with the rumour of uncanny personal experience, with the borrowed plumes of eastern mysticism. "There is no faith without miracles."

But this current tradition, this everyday myth is loose and short-lived whether in Melanesia, Africa or Europe, and can be easily distinguished from the set legend and socially inherited myth by its loose form,

(1)

Goldenweiser - Early Civilization. 1921. H. '93. ff.

its restricted range and its absence of longevity.

I did not find, save in rare instances myth of this kind associated with Zande magic. Often magic has been taken over by the Azande from some stranger people and they will tell you how they learnt it by making blood-brotherhood with the foreigner. If you press the native to tell you how man first became acquainted with any magic he will say that Mboli, the Supreme Being gave it to him. Thus though the myth of Mboli forms the final background of belief for all ritual, there is no specific myth for each specific type of magic.

Occasionally however I have found amongst the Azande a specific myth accounting for the origin of a magic, or a legend proving its potency. Thus the clan of the Amazungu have a myth telling how they obtained their magic for healing fractures. Into the clan was born a baby quite round like a pot. The bewildered father was instructed in a dream by Mboli to incinerate the child and to use the cinders to heal broken bones. I will give another example. The corporation of medicine-men possess powerful magic known only to the members of the corporation. That their magic is genuine is proved by legends which show how in the past great medicine-men performed remarkable feats through its medium. In the Golden Age of their magic, the magician Repa, a primitive Moses went with his chief

to wage war beyond the great Uelle river of the Congo. On their return northwards the army found themselves with the enemy in their rear and the wide river to their front. In this crisis Repa threw some of his magic into the water so that the waters parted leaving a dry channel of sand on which they passed over to the other side. When the enemy pursued them into the centre of the river Repa, like his Hebrew prototype, closed the waters upon their fighting men.

Like Moses in the last story, his end was like the end of Elijah. "Repa dances exceedingly the dance of the medicine-men. He rose on high. Then the bells say wia wia wia wia. He rose and rose and rose for ever on high. He went quite out of sight so that the eyes of men did not see him again. He dropped the bells from his hands. The bells kept on falling and falling and falling: they fell here to earth. They plunged and plunged to the earth right into the centre of an anthill so that no one saw them."

Many were the mighty deeds performed by Repa and his son Bokoparanga in virtue of their magic.

The myth of the Amazungu clan and the legends of the medicine-men are however quite exceptional. Generally I have failed to find any story accounting for the existence of magic. Just as it was possible to make an useful distinction between the saying and the formula in the rite of magic,

so it is possible to make a similar analysis of the tradition of magic. The psychological function of magic demands a background of belief in its tradition, but it does not determine the form of these traditions. Whether they exist only as loose current tradition and shortlived every day myths or whether they become set into the mould of a compact myth or legend depends upon the place they occupy in each society and upon their relation to other parts of the culture in which they exist.

I shall shortly return to a consideration of tradition and the place which this conclusion occupies in my argument. Absence of formulae and absence of specific myths are the two main characteristics which in Zandeland present a contrast with the magic of the Trobriand Isles. There are smaller differences which will be noted in the following paragraph.

7. THE RITE. THE CONDITIONS OF THE RITE. THE CONDITIONS OF THE PERFORMER:

Were I to describe fully the ritual of several types of Zande magic, the reader would notice a laxity in the performance which would horrify a Melanesiaⁿ. He would find confusing variations in the sequence and in the procedure of the ritual. The slightest slip in the

ceremonial, a minute omission in the performance of the rite an insignificant change in its sequence does not, as amongst many primitive peoples, the Trobrianders and the Maoris for instance, invalidate the whole act of magic.

Nothing acts more strongly in conserving tradition and compelling conformity in ritual than the publicity of the performance. Amongst the Trobrianders some rites of magic "are ceremonial and have to be attended by the whole community, all are public in that it is known when they are going to happen and anyone can attend them." (h. 31.) Amongst the Azande there is very little ceremonial in magic. There are certainly no big public ceremonies which must or may be attended by others than the family of the man concerned or his friends or by a few old men. Privacy is characteristic of Zande magic.

Lack of conservative discipline in the performance of the rites has its counterpart in the lack of uniformity in the time during which a man must observe the sex and food taboos which accompany all magic. Though agreeing in the main, different practitioners will give one different time estimates and some will observe a wider range of food restrictions than others.

In Zande magic the taboos and the rites are subject to variation, the spell is diffuse and unformulated, the

tradition is not standardized, the performance is not public nor ceremonial; the whole act of magic is less rigidly defined and less amenable to set form than the magic acts of Melanesia.

8. GROUP OWNERSHIP OF MAGIC:

What then are the social causes which determine these differences between the ritual of the Trobriand Islands and the ritual of the Azande of the Nile-Uelle divide ? I think that they are to be found in a comparative study of the ownership of magic in the two areas. In the Trobriands "Magic tends in all its manifestations to become specialised, exclusive and departmental and hereditary within a family or clan." (114) Amongst the Azande magic is seldom specialized within or exclusive to a family or clan but is spread widely amongst the community without reference to kindred ties.

If you ask a Zande from whence he obtained his magic he will tell you that he received it from his father for it is handed over from father to son like any other wealth; or he will tell you that he or his father bought the magic, for magic being the property of an individual can be bought and sold; or he will tell you that one of his friends told him about the magic out of comradeship or that knowledge of that type of magic is possessed by everybody.

Trobriand magic presents a sharp contrast in that it cannot be transferred in any other manner than through the binding custom of kinship which compels a man to hand over his knowledge of spells with his other property to the son of his sister. It is true that some magic can be bought but its transference is always accompanied by and restricted by social qualifications. Very little magic is unowned.

In this difference between Trobriand magic owned by the family or clan, not open to sale and purchase outside these groups and Zande magic owned by the individual and able to be transmitted beyond the restricted domain of genealogical or clan relationship, it is possible to see a solution to the problem of formulae and standardized tradition.

The formula is surety of undisputed ownership of magic and compells filiation of the magic in the family or clan. For the long set formula is a value which can only be handed over laboriously and slowly. But amongst the Azande magic is not generally associated with any social group, being diffused widely without reference to ties of relationship. Consequently there is no need for the formula which tends to restrict the use of the magic to the group already possessing it. Moreover the core of the magic being not the spell but the material element, it is easily transferred from one person to

another. To the Trobriander the spell is the most important part of the magic, in a sense is the magic, because the formula keeps the magic in the group with which it is traditionally associated, whereas the Azande have no magical formulae but only sayings because magic is not generally associated with any social grouping. The formula is correlated to group ownership.

I attribute the emphasis placed upon tradition to the same social cause. The function of the myth is to project the facts of group ownership into the realms of belief, to provide a convincing sanction to the ownership. This is the role which it plays in the Trobriand Islands, but as Zande magic is not associated exclusively with any section of the community there is no need for the myth as it would have no social function to fulfil.

If this explanation is a correct one then in those exceptional cases in which Zande magic is associated with a social grouping it should also be associated with myth. This is what we do find and I have already given examples from the clan of the Amazungu and the corporation of the medicine-men. Inversely the Trobriand magic which is not owned by any segment of society should be found without a background of myth and is so found.

The conclusion drawn is that an utterance is an essential psychological accompaniment of all magical rites and

and that tradition is an essential sanction for their performance, but that these only ~~cr~~ystalize into the set formula and standardized myth when the social mobility of the magic is restricted by its ownership being invested in the family or clan or some departmental grouping. Ownership is always a conservative and standardizing agent in Society.

This thesis can be illustrated more widely than from the two areas from which my data has mainly been drawn..

For example we might draw attention to Muhammedan Arabic-speaking cultures where all important magic is in the hands of the literary classes with their set written formulae supported ^{by} ^o _^ Koranic tradition and the local mythology of the saints.

But I do not wish to make ^a _^ compilation for not only magical but all exceptional privileges invested in one class in society require the halo of myth. Thus amongst the Azande only those clans which are differentiated from the rest of the Zande totemic clans by a special social function have specific clan mythology. In some societies all the clans have differentiated social functions with associated myths, as, for example, the Winnebago Indians.⁽¹⁾

It will be found also that all important magic in

(1) Radin: Winnebago Indians.

any society is restricted in use to a few members of the community whether these few persons derive their credentials from membership from a family, kinship, or departmental grouping or not. By important magic I refer to all magic which has an important social function, magic used in communal undertakings such as agriculture, fishing, hunting, trading expeditions magic practised on behalf of the whole community such as the magic of rain and of the sun, magic to increase the totem animal or plant; magic used to reinforce some essential function of society such as government and leadership in war.

In the Trobriand Islands all really important magic performances are carried out by men who have received their knowledge of the spells from their mother's brother according to the law of this matrilineal society. If a man passes on the spells to his own son he may use them but may not teach them to another. Important magic is consequently restricted to a very few men who practise in virtue of membership of family or clan. To take another example ⁽¹⁾ Amongst the Kiwai Papuans, a society in which group ownership of magic appears to be unknown and where knowledge of the rites and spells is common property, important communal activities such as house-building, agricultural and fishing pursuits and other collective acts of labour have

(1) G. Landtman. Kiwai Papuans. 1927. Passim.

their magic performed by one old man and one old woman who know the secret parts of the rites and whose death is a certain result of the performance.

Amongst the Azande there are only occasional communal activities in contrast to the Trobriand Islanders or the Kiwai Papuans but the stronger and more important medicines are known only to a few men.

9. POSSIBLE RESULTS OF DIFFUSION OF MAGIC:

If all the more important magic is in the hands of a few individuals in society the logical inference to be drawn is that the more diffused is the magic the less important social function it fulfills, the more performance of magic becomes public property the less social utility it possesses. This inference can be checked from observation.

Amongst the Trobrianders spell and ritual which are known to all members of the community have very little social significance. The same is true of the Azande, amongst whom much magic is common property and much can be bought cheaply that it is not even sought after by most men.

In a society such as this where magic is not restricted in use to members of a group but is characterized by its

social mobility it is possible to suggest tentatively that certain features in the domain of magic are due to the absence of exclusive ownership. I think that it is possible that the great extension of the magic of oracles, divination and ordeal amongst the Azande and in many other parts of Africa in contrast to the little importance attached to them throughout Polynesia and Melanesia, may be attributed to the absence of hereditary ownership set formulae and standardized tradition. For it must be remembered that, although the object of oracles is to know about future events and not to produce or influence them, nevertheless it fulfils the same psychological function as other types of magic by giving men confidence in his social and economic undertakings. We have therefore various types of magic fulfilling the same function. However in present state of my researches into Zande customs I do not wish to stress this point too much.

This same phenomena, this reduplication of role in many types of Zande magic is seen in the Special Associations for the practise of magic! (Secret Societies). In so far as I have investigated these Associations I have found that the purpose of their magic is already covered by other types of magic. The spread and popularity of

these societies may, I believe, be accounted for by the need to systematize and stabilize magic by affiliating its use to an Association and by this means enhancing its social utility. In these societies the knowledge of the magic is restricted to the leader of the Society. However the Secret Societies at present found in Zandeland are of recent introduction. Generally they are of easy access, short lived and replaced by other Associations of a like nature.

10. CREATION OF NEW MAGIC:

Not only have all the Secret Societies of the Azande of the Bahr-el-Ghazal entered from across the Congo border but many hunting and other medicines are learnt from the Baka, Mundu, Avokaiya and Moro peoples to the East, the Pambia to the west, the Bongo and Bellanda to the north, the Mangbettu, Amadi, Abarambo to the south. Medicines have also been incorporated into Zande culture from the many peoples who now call themselves Azande but who a generation ago spoke their own language and had their own distinctive customs. The territorial diffusion of magic is quick and far reaching. In at least one instance the Azande have borrowed magic from even the distant and hostile Dinka tribes. The Azande

find in the magic of their neighbours a constant source of new and powerful medicine.

Nor do I think that all Zande magic is of great age. We have already noted that all Zande magic has its current tradition, its halo of rumour, mystery and wonder, the birth place in all societies from which springs transmitted tradition, set legend and standardized myth, stabilized by group ownership and handed over by the customary procedure of kinship, or other social machinery. However in saying that magic creates its own mythology the problem has been simplified. Does not belief create magic ? Often a native will tell you, for example, that a certain man has powerful magic to kill leopards. If you ask your informant what magic is possessed by the hunter, he will often say that he does not know but that he must own some magic or he would not be so successful in killing leopards.

Actual achievement is demanded of the man who wishes to sell his magic. The fate of unsuccessful magicians, especially rain-makers in many parts of the world is evidence of this demand. But the production of rain is a supposed and not an actual achievement. Amongst the Moro of the Yei River in the Southern Sudan it is only when a man becomes renowned as a hunter that he plants medicine roots at the side of his hut and becomes

a practitioner. (i)

It would be a barren discussion whether the myth follows the practise of the magic in all cases or whether sometimes the practise of the magic springs out of current tradition. The rite of magic and the myth always interlace and shape each other. I only wish to suggest that new magic is constantly being created and that it is created by successful men influenced by the rumours of magic which attend their success and that whilst magic gives men confidence in their undertakings, it also represents a record of man's actual achievement. Primitive man is not a romantic but a practical hard-headed being, even in his magic, and there is no magic to attempt the impossible.

11. FUNCTIONAL OCCASIONS OF MAGIC:

How magic is used, its functional occasions bring these paragraphs into the line of the main argument of this Paper. So far I have endeavoured to show by correlations how the morphology of magic amongst the Trobrianders and the Azande is determined by the social structure of the two societies. The same is true of the functional occasions of the magic. This cannot be demonstrated at length as it would then be necessary to describe fully the occasions of use and the specific function of all

(i) From my unpublished notes.

magic in both communities. Moreover the statement is so obvious in simpler instances that it hardly requires demonstration. The Zande has no canoe magic because he has no canoes. The Trobriander has no magic of iron-forging because he lives in a stone age.

The problem becomes more complicated when we consider the sociological aspects of magic. It is clear that the communal garden magic of the Trobrianders is absent from Zande life because the Azande do not cultivate their gardens by joint labour.

It is more difficult to see why the Trobriand chief uses magic as part of his machinery of government whereas the Zande chief does not use this weapon of chastisement, but this difference can readily be understood when the position of the chief is known in both societies. The Trobriand chief was unable to exercise great executive power as may readily be judged from the almost entire absence of corporal punishment, whereas the mutilations and executions inflicted on their subjects by the Zande chiefs are one of the many signs of their real power. The Zande chief therefore had little need of magic to enforce his rule.

On the other hand the Azande move their homesteads freely over the country side and a chief who has angered his people may lose his subjects. Also a young chief

anxious to conquer or acquire new territory by peaceful means has to rely entirely upon his popularity to attract followers. Hence we find a system of magic for attracting dependents.

Magic used in communal undertakings such as we find in the Trobriands, in garden work, in trading expeditions, in building canoes and in other forms of economic enterprise has no counterpart in Zande life. This is because there is a lack of cohesion in Zande social life, solidarity either due to close aggregation of dwellings or good means of communication, being absent. Thus while magic amongst the Kiwai papuans or the Trobrianders is often associated with village activities this cannot be so amongst the Azande because there are no villages.

Also amongst the Azande we do not find the institution of magic associated, save in one instance, with the clan. This is because the clans have little solidarity. Political functions are in the hands of a class and the clans also lack the cohesion which localization would give them. For magic is an important social institution and for it to be orientated after a group, that group must have solidarity without which it cannot exercise important social functions.

12. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I set out at the commencement of this Paper to show

that the social incidence of magic in Melanesia differs from the social incidence of magic in Africa and that this difference affects the structure and functional occasions of the magic I have attempted to do this by a comparison between the data of the Trobriand Islands and the data of the Azande of the Nile-Uelle divide. I explained how the Trobriander and the Zande regarded magic not as a force of nature but as a cultural heritage, not as something discovered but as something co-existent in time with man, not as a vague impersonal power but as a tangible weapon of culture, not activated by the spirits of the dead but deriving its power from the abstinence and knowledge of tradition of living men.

I then analysed the structure of magic in these two societies and showed how the spell amongst the Trobrianders is a standardised formula whilst amongst the Azande it only is a saying adapted to the purpose of the magic and accompanying the rite I concluded that the psychological purpose of magic is not served unless an utterance is made in conjunction with the rite but that the crystallization of the utterance into a standardized formula is determined by the affiliation of the magic with a group through the institution of ownership.

The analysis of magic in the two societies showed also that amongst the Trobrianders myth, like the spell,

is a standardized formula, a set story transmitted intact to the succeeding generation by the social mechanism of kinship, whilst among the Azande magic generates only a loose current myth and everyday tradition, save in exceptional instances in which the magic is owned by a restricted social grouping and a stereotyped and permanent element of culture takes the place of this ephemeral mythology. For here again I concluded that the psychological purpose of magic is not served unless the ritual has a background of belief in mythology, a halo of stories about its wonder-working powers, but that the crystallization of these stories into standardized myth is determined by the affiliation of the magic with a group through the institution of ownership.

I suggested that any section of society enjoying special privileges, whether magical or otherwise produces its own mythology, the function of the myth being to give sanction to the possession of the exclusive privileges.

I suggested that important magic, that is magic which plays its role in large communal undertakings or is practised on behalf of the whole community or reinforces an essential function of society such as war and government is always to be found in the hands of a few men. I gave some examples to support this view. Since all important

magic is in the hands of a few individuals the more it becomes diffused the more it loses its importance and social utility. This gives rise to the creation of new magic, magical redundancy, and an attempt to stabilize the magic through new groups or associations.

I have described how to-day magic is taken over by one people from another.. This is one way in which new magic comes into being but it is also created by individuals and I have discussed the manner of its birth.

I had attempted to shew in the earlier part of my Paper that the form of magic depends upon the structure of society as a whole and at the end of the paper I evenced that the functional occasions of magic are also determined by the Social Structure. Examples were given to show how the occasion on which magic is used and the social activities with which it is correlated and the groups after which it is orientated differ with differences of social structure.

It is one of the aims of social anthropology to interpret all differences in the form of a typical social institution by reference to difference in social structure. In this paper I have attempted to show that differences in the form of ^{the} institution of magic

in particular between two societies, can be explained by showing the variation in social structure between societies.

By the method of Correlation we attempted to show that the formalization of the Components of magic rites depends in the factor of ownership. It may be asked why is magic owned by the kin or clan groups in the Trobriand Isles and not amongst the Azande. The answer is that in the Trobriands these groups have important social and economic functions to carry out which we do not find associated with the same group amongst the Azande. Now since the role of magic is to enable these social and economic processes to be carried out, it is natural that it should be associated with the groups fulfilling these functions. The purpose of our paper was to show how such an association affects the form of the magic.

BOOK II - PART III

THE DANCE (Gbere buda)

T H E D A N C E

1. Introductory note
2. Music
3. Song
4. Muscular movement
5. Pattern of the dance
6. Leadership in the dance
7. Social function of the dance
8. Role of the dance in religious ceremonies

1. INTRODUCTORY NOTE:

In ethnological accounts the dance is usually given a place quite unworthy of its social importance. It is often viewed as an independent activity and is described without reference to its contextual setting in native life. Such treatment leaves out many problems as to the composition and organization of the dance and hides from view its sociological function.

A short analysis of an African dance will show that its structure is quite different from modern European dancing. Also when the dance is only a small one, and much more so when several hundreds of persons are taking part in it, it requires a stereotyped form, and prescribed mode of performance, concerted activities, recognised leadership and elaborate organization and regulations. If these problems are not in the mind of the observer he will give us an interesting description perhaps, but not a detailed account of great value to the theoretical worker.

The dance also has physiological and psychological

functions revealed only by a full and accurate description. Finally the dance is essentially a joint and not an individual activity and we must therefore explain it in terms of social function, that is to say we must determine what is its social value. Here again the untrained observer of a native dance, even if his outlook is not distorted and pejoratif, is so little accustomed to look upon all institutions and customs in the light of their functional value that he often neglects to give the theorist the occasion of dancing which alone can enable him to estimate its significance.

In this paper I shall make a condensed analysis of one dance of the Azande nation along the lines suggested above.

There are a large number of Zande dances. Some of these are regional, others are now no longer performed but are remembered by the older men and can be reconstructed on request. There are dances which accompany the drums, dances which accompany the harp, dances which accompany the xylophone and dances which are unaccompanied by musical instruments. There are some dances special to the

circumcision ceremonies, others special to the various secret societies, others special to the sons of chiefs, others restricted to women, others restricted to funeral ceremonies and others performed only as an accompaniment to economic work.

I have not the space in so short a paper to make a classification of the many different forms of dance found amongst the Azande, and I will therefore restrict myself to an analysis of the main features of one type of dance, which is accompanied by drums and is known as gbere buda (beer dance).

2. MUSIC:

The component elements of the gbere buda are music song and muscular movement. Any of these elements without the others would be inconceivable in this dance but it is difficult to understand the manner in which they are

concerted.

Music is made by large wooden gongs and by leather-topped wooden drums. The large wooded gong has the appearance of a buffalo, with legs, tail, head and horns. When the wind blows into its hollowed body it lowes like a buffalo. These gongs vary considerably in size, some standing four or five feet from the ground. It is cut from a single tree trunk and may take two or three months to complete. Along its back or top is cut a narrow slit and the two sides are hollowed out unequally from this slit. The player sits on the tail end of the gong and beats it with sticks, the ends of which are bound round with strips of leather forming a knob, so as to protect the woodwork. He holds a stick in each hand and strikes the gong with either short or long beats. He may bring both sticks together simultaneously on to the gong or he may use them alternately.

The volume of sound can be regulated (a) by beating on one side rather than upon the other since they are hollowed out to an unequal depth, (b) by the distance from the slit at which the gong is struck, (c) by placing one leg over the slit. This leg can be raised by bending the knee or lowered by straightening the knee, thus opening or closing the aperture to the extent desired, (d) by

the force with which the gong is struck.

The leather-topped drums stand some three or four feet from the ground. A log of wood is hollowed out and the skin of an animal is stretched tightly over each end. The end which is struck is wider than the end which stands upon the ground, the drum tapering slightly from top to base. The drum is often held between the legs slantwise and it is beaten with the flat of the hands in long and short taps. The use of these two musical instruments means at the outset a twofold division of labour in the dance. There must be one man for the gugu (gong) and one man for the gaza (drum with membrane).

3. SONG:

Besides the music of gong and drum there is the music of the human voice. As I was without a phonograph and have little knowledge of music I shall refer to song in a very general way. ⁽¹⁾ For our purposes the song may be divided into two, or more strictly three aspects, the melody or succession of notes in a rhythmic sequence, the meaning or phonetic values in their contextual setting

(1)

For a general account of African Negro music by a specialist see an article on that subject by E.M. Von Hornbostel in Africa, vol.1 No.1. Accurate work on songs can only be done with the phonograph. I tried, on the river steamer on my way home to get two musicians

and the condition of the singer which includes the timbre of the voice and a variety of muscular movements.

For the reason already given I shall not enter far into the question of melody. In any Zande melody the ^{re}~~pry~~ is only a small range of steps. To an untrained ear African melodies seem to have very little variation, which is undoubtedly not the case, and one estimates the difference between melodies by the degree in which they approximate to European tunes. Under these circumstances phonographic records are the only accurate data. Melodies are transitory, few lasting more than a season or two after which they lose their popularity and become totally lost creations. Or it may be that it is only the songs which are transient whereas the melodies always exist in combination with different themes.

All these songs have meaning but the degree of meaning varies. Their meaning is not doubtful in their context in their creator's mind for they refer to persons or events known to him. The meaning conveyed to those who sing and hear them depends upon the degree to which they are acquainted with the persons or happenings referred to. I have not found that there was any difficulty in getting the author to give me a clear commentary

(1)

with the aid of two musical instruments to set down the notation of songs by Azande singers. The attempt was a failure.

but I have often found that other people, though they knew and sang the songs, had only a very vague idea as to their meaning. Meaning in both its qualities of sound and sense undergoes many phonetic and grammatical changes. Generally speaking we can say that it is the melody and not the sense which matters, or as we say in common parlance it is the tune which matters and not the words. (1)

However we must not forget that the song is often a weapon of some power. A clever and popular creator of songs is much respected both for his talent and for his ability to lampoon his enemies. It serves also as an organ of law, in the wide sense of the word as a body of binding sanctions, in that it chastises the man who has offended public opinion, praises those who have distinguished themselves and lauds the chiefs. I shall have to dispense with examples.

We have considered melody and meaning and I will only draw attention to the condition of the performer. The singer produces the melody through his hands as we

(1)

E.M.von Hornbostel has drawn attention to the characteristic obstinacy of missionaries in writing African words to European hymn tunes. The result is invariably a ghastly performance. European music forms like Arabic ~~ones~~ are quite incongruous to an African ear. The natives always sing the hymns out of tune. It is impossible to translate the words of a hymn into an African language without making a stupid parody of their meaning. Finally correlated muscular movements which are an essential accompaniment of all African singing are left out of hymn-singing.

hold them when we wish to call some one at a distance and he accompanies his performance with a variety of muscular movements which are quite different from the stereotyped movements of the dance. Any singing whether in a dance or not is inconceivable without correlated muscular reactions. They are just as much a part of the melody as are the words.

Now these beer-dance songs have a special structure. Like most African songs they are antiphonal, that is to say they are sung by a soloist and a chorus. Actually in the songs of the Zande beer-dance we shall have to distinguish between two choruses but I will explain this later. Every song has an opening verse by the soloist (undu) and a chorus (bangwa). If there are several verses then the soloist begins the next undu while the chorus is still finishing the bangwa.. This overlapping is a common feature of all such songs. I will give one example of a song to show the division into chorus and solo: (1)

<u>undu</u>	<u>wili Bagurunga ke ja mi na di li mi dua kina</u>
(solo)	<u>nderugi li angba ti li ni lengo du a du</u>
	<u>tamanu ka wira kina na Kwamba</u>
<u>Bangwa</u>	<u>nina ooo ooo ako ooo ooo mi bi pai mbataija</u>
(chorus)	<u>gbaria tunotuno gbariai ni gbunga ha</u>

(1) As the melody is not written I have given the words in their phonetic values in everyday speech not as they are sung.

(solo) The son of Bagurunga said I will marry, I will build a grass hut. Indeed I love her, oh very much indeed. She is really very like mother Kwamba.

(chorus) Mother ooo ooo alas ooo ooo I see something ahead the government settlement is far far away the government settlement is so long.

From the solo (undu) and the chorus (banga) the Azande distinguish the sima. At present I am not certain to what part of a song sima generally refers but at least sometimes it refers to the solo repeated as a chorus. Thus in the above song if the soloist sings from wili to Kwamba and the whole is then repeated by the chorus, or he sings the verse in parts each part being repeated by the chorus after him, this part of the song would then be the sima. Some songs are thus divided into three parts, undu, sima, and bangwa.

The song I have given above can also be arranged metrically. If we wrote it so that the end of each line represented a pause in the singing it would read thus -

wili Bagurunga
ke ja mi na di li
mi dua kina nderugi
li angba ti ti ni lengo
du a du tamamu
ka wira kina na Kwamba

The chorus can be written in the same way since pauses occur in the singing so that the syllables are arranged in a regular metric form. At least, this is probably the case with most songs.

4. MUSCULAR MOVEMENT

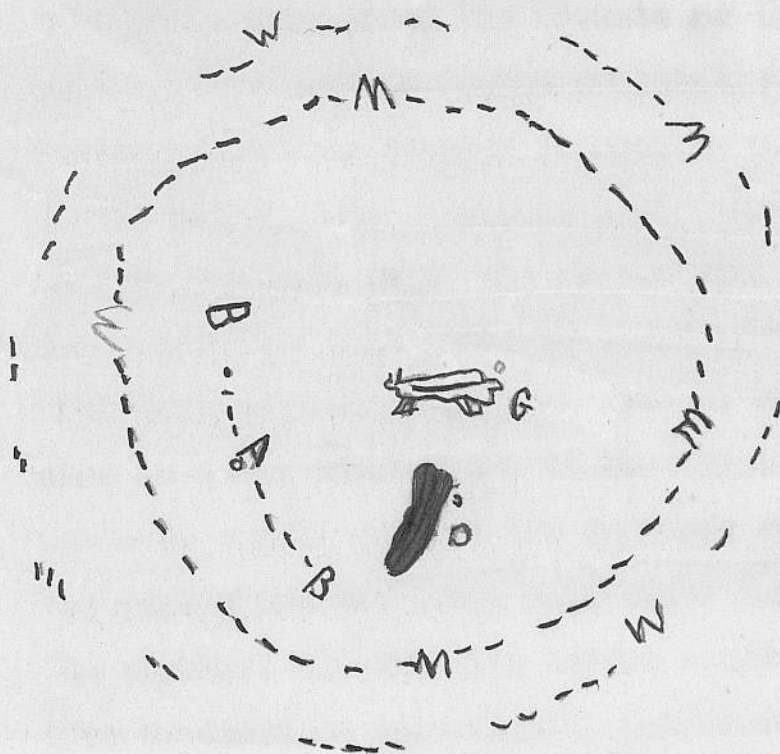
We have tried to formulate some of the problems of music and song and we now come to the third essential component of the dance, muscular movement. The African dances with his whole body. He not only makes move^{ments} with his feet to the music, but holds out his arms bent at the elbow and moves hands and arms up and down, shakes his head backwards and forwards, leans from side to side, lifts and lowers his shoulders, and exercises the abdominal muscles. All the muscles of the body seem to be in action and their skins look as though they accommodated a multitude of snakes.

Considerable latitude is allowed in variation of movement. Not everyone makes the same movements but they are all made to the same rhythm. There are however stereotyped steps with the feet which are made by all the dancers and this conformity is sometimes necessary as will be seen when I describe the action of the dance. These steps appear like the songs to have a vogue and then to be replaced by others. I do not think that

there is any specific correlation between a type of step and a type of melody.

5. PATTERN OF THE DANCE:

It is obvious that unless there is to be complete confusion resulting from the activities of individuals in a dance it must have a set form. The static form of the Zande beer dance can best be shown by means of a diagram.



G = Gong
D = Drum
A = Soloist

B..B = Inner chorus
M..M..M = Male dancers & chorus
W..W..W. = women dancers

The male dancers form a complete circle, standing close to one another facing the drums. Outside this circle dance the women in twos and threes or sections of more. Normally the men dance in the same spot but every now and again they turn sideways and circle slowly round till each comes to the place from which he started and they then all turn again and face the drums. The women, always on the outside of the men, circle round and round with slow steps, the women of each section with their arms round the breasts of the woman in front. Here again a certain degree of latitude is allowed. Youths anxious to display themselves will leave the circle and execute a 'pas de seul' towards the drums or sometimes a section of the circle will move up to the drums and then back again to their places. Small children jump and run about very much as and where they please. Also in a big dance there is insufficient space for one complete circle so that two or three successive circles are formed and the women will often dance round between the circles. In very big dances another and different type of dance is occasionally performed at the same time as the main beer-dance.

6. LEADERSHIP IN THE DANCE:

In any joint gathering, especially at a dance where the rules of social life are to some extent relaxed and

people enjoy themselves without stint, there is always a danger of disruption and disintegration through egoistical tendencies. Some one may overstep the bounds of sexual freedom, the desire ^{of youths} to display themselves on the drums in the sight of the girls may lead to nasty quarrels. The wish of several persons to act as soloist may lead to confusion and disputes, men heated with beer and the excitement of the dance and armed with weapons may commence fighting and there is the same danger from the victim of a lampoon in the songs.

These dangers are largely overcome by regulations and by the principle of leadership. Firstly we have seen in the diagram above that there is a complete division of the sexes. Men and women never dance together but always with the other members of their sex. This segregation of the sexes is a safeguard and although, as we shall see later, there is a considerable amount of free love at these dances, it is never open or provocative. The Zande beer+dance is a well-disciplined affair. The traveller who enters their country from the Sudan, from the north or east, will always comment on the discipline of the Azande compared with other tribes and one of his evidences for this comparison will be the dance. The dances of the Moro, Mundu, Baka, and Bongo appear to be far more boisterous and high spirited than the Zande dance

and they never maintain the same degree of form and order.

Paramount chiefs consider it as beneath their dignity to take part in a public dance, but there will often be a chief's son present and even when he is no more than a boy his decision in any dispute or quarrel will be final. But leadership of the chiefs is extraneous to the structure of the dance which has its own specific leadership. Song leaders are called baiango. Generally there are not more than two or three of these men with a wide reputation in a Tribe. A man who wishes eventually to become a baiango or song leader will first have to serve an apprenticeship with one of these men to whom he will act as asuali. A song-leader's asuali come to the dances at which he is singing and they stand opposite to him or at his side and back up the choruses. These asuali soon get to know all their leaders' songs and when he is not present they take his place. Precedence is given to the chief asuali of a noted song leader and to-day they are sometimes denoted by arabic terms referring to ranks in the government police, sergeant, corporal and lance-corporal.

A song-leader or one of his chief followers will also have sufficient authority to decide, in case of dispute, who is to beat the gong which is an envied job. There is always rivalry about who shall beat the leather

toped ^hdrum at a dance as the young man who does so knows that the eyes of the girls are upon him. Next to the song-leadership this is the most envied post in the dance, and a short skirmish will often take place when it is unoccupied and there is no one of outstanding qualifications to fill it. However if there is a master drummer (ba ta gaza) present no one will dispute his claims. A follower of a song-leader or of a master drum-beater will make ^{his chiefs} ~~many~~ small presents from time to time.

The dance, like all joint activities, necessarily generates leadership, the function of which is to organise the activity. The problem of the allotment of roles in the dance is solved by the introduction of status. In the event of quarrels it is the song-leader who arbitrates. When food or beer is provided it is given to him for distribution. Whilst it must not be thought that the song-leader is invested with great power or that his rank is highly developed, he has considerable prestige and reputation and a definite social role to perform in this activity.

The leader's prestige is of course conditioned by his ability ⁱⁿ ~~at~~ composing and singing songs, but this ability, in the eyes of the Azande is due to the possession

of the right magic. No man who had not the correct magic could be a good author and singer of songs. In return for small presents, as much as a spear-head, the song-leader will give magic to his followers. The eating of the magic acts in two ways. Firstly it gives a man confidence to enable him to compose and to sing his songs and attract asuali or followers. Secondly it gives him a diploma, a right to take the most prominent place in a dance. One man, in my service, used sometimes to have quarrels when we were travelling in a strange district, since he considered himself a good soloist and tried to monopolise this role. People used to ask him from whom he had got his magic and the fact that he was able to tell them that he had it from a famous song-leader to some extent disarmed criticism.

It is the same with the drums. A youth travelling outside his district will ask permission to beat the leather-topped drum and will explain that he is the pupil of such and such a master drum-beater and has received magic from him.

When the song-leader gives magic to one of his followers he takes the root of a plant and cooks it in oil over a fire. Whilst it is cooking he stirs the ingredients and utters a spell over them. He says :-

"You are medicine of songs. I will cook you. Don't you bring bad luck on me. I have sung very many songs.

Don't let songs go bad with me. We go to sing songs with song-leaders. They sing the chorus of my songs well. I will go to sing my songs. The older men all get ready to go to the dance. Don't let me get bad in singing. Indeed I will continue singing for a long time. I will grow very old and sing songs always. All my followers, men follow me very much in singing. All my followers come with presents for me. You are song medicine, if you are proper song medicine you boil well like water, because you are Andegi's medicine (a noted song leader). I did not steal you. I stayed with him very much (with Andegi) for many years. Andegi saw that I was well with him! He went to show the place of all my medicine to me and my song magic all over the country. Don't let song-leaders be angry with me about songs."

This is a very free translation of the spell uttered. Sometimes also a man will have a magic whistle, partly hollowed out at one end. He addresses the whistle and then blows it before going to sing his songs at a dance. When addressing the whistle he says:-

"You are whistle of song. I am going to sing my songs. Men back up my songs very much. Don't let people remain silent during my songs. May my songs not fall flat. I will sing my songs to people, women and old women, and old men and all men. Don't let them stay at home. They go to sing all my songs. Don't let song-leader

spoil my songs. It is thus, I will blow my whistle of songs which is you. Because I did not just take you but I bought you. Thus I will blow my whistle. I blow it 'fia'."

I have given these two spells as examples of the type of magical rites and spells which are used in reference to songs. There are other types of magic used to give success in song singing and there are probably as many medicines used to give success in beating the leather-topped drums. I will not give any spells to illustrate this last type of magic. They are similar in form to the spells given above though their sense is different, being adapted to the different purpose of the magic.

7. SOCIAL FUNCTION OF THE DANCE:

We have examined the component elements of the Zande dance, music, song and muscular movement. We have described the pattern of the dance and have shown its need of organization and leadership and how this need is satisfied. Throughout our discussion we have posed concrete questions to which we have often an inadequate answer. The formulation of these questions will enable us to return to the facts with a better chance of obtaining definite answers.

We shall now pass on to the question which must always be uppermost in the mind of the Ethnologist, what is the value of the dance in primitive society, what needs does it satisfy, what ^o r^lle does it play in native life ? The usual account of dancing amongst primitive peoples gives us so little information about the sociology of the dance that we are unable to answer these queries.

We shall restrict ourselves here to showing along what lines these problems must receive attention from the observer, by describing the Zande beer dance from several aspects. The gbere buda is a local activity. Only those who live within a few hours' walk of the homestead in which the dance is being held will attend it. These people are all known to one another, they have grown up together as children, have played, worked and fought side by side. Many will be bound to each other by ties of blood-relationship or by other social ties such as those created by marriage, blood-brotherhood, circumcision, magic associations, and so on. All are members of the same political group of the tribe and owe allegiance to the same chief. It is of some importance to bear in mind that the dance is a social activity carried on by persons amongst whom there is a bond of common association and experience based upon propinquity of residence, and that this bond

is reinforced by feelings of kinship and other socializing forces.

People come to the dance in small parties and friends and relatives will dance together in the same section of the ring of dancers. People come from all directions to meet their friends, lovers, relatives, to dance, gossip and banter. Mothers bring their babies and the dance is the earliest occasion on which the individual is introduced into a far wider society than the small family group. When infants are able to walk they run and jump about outside the dance or near the drums in the centre, completely carried away by the rhythm. The dance plays a great part in the broadening of the outlook of childhood and in modifying the exclusive sentiments towards the parents built up in the family in babyhood and infancy.

When children grow up into boys and girls they will never miss a dance. To both sexes it is a means of display which becomes intensified in the development of puberty. The dance is one of those cultural milieux in which sexual display takes place and selection is encouraged. The sexual situations of the dance are not very obvious to the observer. Boys and girls come to the dance to flirt and flirtation often leads to sexual connection, but society insists that neither the one nor the

other shall be indulged in blatantly. At the same time society permits these sexual incidents so long as they occur with discretion and moderate concealment. A boy who openly approached a girl would be reprimanded and abused but if he catches her attention whilst she is dancing round with her friends, gives her a little nudge perhaps, and when he sees that his advances are reciprocated says mu je gude (come on kid!) no one will interfere. They go quietly into the bush or into a neighbouring hut and have intercourse. It is a different matter with married women. Their husbands are always jealous of them going to dances and generally accompany them. Men are also frightened to flirt with married women since they will have to pay heavy compensation to the husbands and in the past risked the severe punishment of mutilation.

The dance therefore also belongs to that group of social institutions which allow sexual play to a moderate and discreet extent the functions of which are to canalize the forces of sex into socially harmless channels and by doing so to assist the processes of selection and to protect the institutions of marriage and the family.

To grown-up men and women the dance does not offer the same attraction as a means of flirtation as it does to younger people. To them, as indeed to everyone who goes to a dance, it is the dancing which is the chief

attraction. But the grown-ups shew less inclination to be drawn into distractions and they give their whole attention to the rhythm of the dance. Old persons of both sexes do not normally take part in dancing.

We have mentioned a few important aspects of the ghere buda but we cannot here enter into the many other interesting problems which arise from observation of dancing. To do this we should have to give a complete and detailed description of every side of the whole activity.

WE wish however to ask the general question, what is the social function of dancing? Such a question will give us a general statement which covers all dancing in all communities as distinct from the different specific functions of dances in different communities and on different occasions.

We cannot do better than to summarize the excellent treatment of the problem by Radcliffe Brown. We cannot give Professor Brown's opinions in full but anyone may read them in chapter V of his Andaman Islanders.⁽¹⁾

(1) The dance is a community activity in which the whole individual personality of the dancer is involved by the innervation of all the muscles of the body, by the concentration of attention required and by the action of the personal sentiments.

(2) In the dance this whole personality of the

(1) A. R. Brown: The Andaman Islanders. 1922.

individual submits to the action upon him by the community. He is constrained by the effect of the rhythm as well as by custom to take part in the collective activity and he is required to conform his actions to its needs.

(3) The elation, energy, and self-esteem of the individual dancer are in harmony with the feelings of his fellow-dancers and this harmonious concert of individual feelings and actions produces a maximum unity and concord of the community which is intently felt by every member.

In the main our observations on the Zande Beer Dance are in agreement with Brown's analysis of dancing amongst the Andaman Islanders. The dance brings into play the whole muscular system of the dancer, it requires the activities of sight and hearing and it produces a feeling of vanity in the performer. All these experiences are heightened by their being expressed collectively. Certainly rhythm and custom influence the individual towards taking part in the dance. To some degree the dancer is compelled to co-ordinate his actions with the actions of the other dancers and this constrained co-ordination is pleasurable. There is also a tendency for the dance to increase good-will and to produce a feeling of concord.

Professor Radcliffe Brown's analysis provides a

basis and stimulus for investigation and we would like to make further observations before committing ourselves to complete agreement. On the observations which we have already made on the Zande Beer Dance we ^{wish} ~~should like~~ to make some suggestions which would modify or refine these views.

The constraint exercised by rhythm and custom is not so much emphasized amongst the Azande. One frequently sees able-bodied Azande who take no part in the dancing. They are not compelled by custom to take any part in the activity nor do they show any pain at not responding to the rhythm of drums and melody. Some people do not like dancing and prefer to remain at home when a dance is in progress. It is true that these are persons who have passed the period of youth and probably there is a considerable difference in the influence of rhythm upon persons of different ages, its effect being more compulsive in the case of children than in the case of adults. Also conformity to the actions of other dancers allows considerable latitude to the individual. Individuals often wander about on their own. Here again there is a correlation with age, adults keeping strictly to their place in the order of the dance while the actions of small children are often quite outside the organisation of the main activity.

We must also remark that whilst the general feeling of the dance is one of good-fellowship, nevertheless such gatherings create dangers disruptive to the unity and concord of the ceremony. Some of these dangers we have already mentioned, slanderous songs, sexual indiscretions, drunkenness, competition (for self-display is essentially aggressive when thwarted), and so on, and we have tried to show that there is social machinery to prevent these disorders. Men also like to air their grievances at such a public gathering. Anyone who watched severed beer dances ^{would} see quarrels and could not ascribe to the statement that the dance was always an activity of perfect concord in which individual vanity and passions were completely socialized by the constraining forces of the community.

We have mentioned a few of the points on which more observation is to be desired. All these details are important. We want cinematographic descriptions of dances in their full social setting.

8. ROLE OF THE DANCE IN RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES.

Above all it is necessary to know on what occasions dances are held and, if they form part of some ceremonial complex, what role, if any, do the dancers take in the performance of the rites. It is quite possible that

Zande Beer Dances are held on a variety of occasions, but amongst the Azande of the bush I have only come across their performance in connection with the cycle of mourning and mortuary feasts. (1)

The Zande Beer Dance takes place at the feasts in honour of the spirits of the dead. It is a sacred obligation on the part of the relatives of a dead person to erect a monument of a heap of stones over his or her grave. This may take place from a year to five years after burial.

About a year before the ^{mortuary} feast there is an economic and religious ceremony at which a number of women thresh the millet which is needed to make beer for the occasion of the feast. From this time what we may call the feast cycle begins and continues till the concluding ceremonies about a year hence. During this cycle from time to time dances are held, the object of which appear to be to mark the time till the ^{mortuary} feast, to remind the locality that preparations for the oncoming festivity are in progress. You are sitting round the fire in the evening when you hear the distant beating of drums and you ask the natives what

(1)

The only exception to this statement is that the dance is held on visits by European officials. Amongst the Azande who have been concentrated by the Government into settlements there is, I believe, a growing tendency for the dance to be held as a play activity without any ritual associations.

this signifies. They tell you that it is a pumbwe (feast). You walk in the cool of the night through the tall wet grasses to attend the ceremony and you are dissappointed to find that it is only a small affair, with some forty to fifty persons dancing and that there is no beer provided by the master of the homestead. It is customary to give such dances now and again between the threshing of the millet and the main ceremony in honour of the dead.

On this last occasion the dance is a very big affair and may be attended by some hundreds of persons. I have seen quite five or six hundred persons attending one of these dances and was told by the natives that often there were many more. This feast dance closes the cycle and there are no more dances in the homestead.

We must therefore not think of the dance simply as a play activity but as forming part of an important social undertaking associated with religious ceremonial.

This does not mean that the dancers take any part in the ceremonial relating to the spirits of the dead. These intimate functions are carried out by the kindred of the dead and by other persons bound to them by close socialties. The relatives do not take part in the festivities. Their activities are quite distinct from those of the friends and neighbours who have come to dance. These latter have come to enjoy themselves. The dance is an important

local affair to them and no young person of either sex would care to miss it. They come in holiday mood.

But the activities which form part of the intimate ritual of the spirits and the ceremonial exchange between relatives-in-law not unrelated to the more boisterous and profane activities of the dance. Even if the emotions of the dead man's relatives and the emotions of the dancers are different, nevertheless the dance must be regarded as part of the whole ceremonial complex.

The beating of the drums attracts large numbers of neighbours to the homestead of the man who has made himself responsible for the carrying out of ritual duties to the dead. This crowd gives a background against which the rites are performed. Not only does it flatter the giver of the feast that a large number of persons should attend it but their presence gives support to the more serious events of the occasion. The crowd gives social recognition to the carrying out of a sacred duty towards the dead and to the obligations of ceremonial exchange between the master of the feast and his relatives-in-law. A crowd makes the banal and unpleasant labour of carrying stones to the grave, the indecent wrangling over the number of spears and amount of beer which are exchanged, an impressive and memorable

occasion. It raises the unwelcome labour in preparing for the feast and the irksome obligations of relatives into a dignified ceremony in honour of the spirits of the dead. Such I think is the function of the dance as part of the complex of religious ceremonial.

Book

PART II - PART IV

THE

SOCIAL FUNCTION

OF

OBSCENITY

in

Relation to Certain Customs
of the

A Z A N D E

THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF OBSCENITY.

- I. Introductory Note.
 - II. Obscenity amongst the Ba-Ila.
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 - V. Obscenity amongst the A-Zande.
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 Ingassana.
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 - VIII. Social function of prescribed and collective obscenity.
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I. INTRODUCTORY NOTE :

It is not uncommon for those who live amongst primitive peoples to come across "obscenity" in speech and action. This "obscenity" is often not an expression by an individual uttered under great stress and condemned as bad taste but is an expression by a group of persons and is permitted and prescribed by society. Some Europeans apologise to us for introducing us to such indecency but at the same time give us a full and unbiassed account. Also they may even, like Junod & Smith & Dale attempt to explain these "indecencies".

Most Europeans, however, though unable to see the "obscenities" in their own society, perceive "obscenities" amongst the natives because they are strange to them, and they forthwith condemn them. The grounds of condemnation appear to be that such "obscenities" offend the moral sense of white men. Amongst such critics, needless to say, there is no attempt at explanation.

In consequence these "obscenities" are stigmatized as being anti-social and are commonly legislated against. They are said to be "Ultra-bestial", or "Too infamous to bear repetition."

It is my object in this paper to bring together some of the better documented accounts of these "obscenities"

which occur in Africa, so that we can study our Zande data not as isolated instances but in comparison with a whole range of similar social facts.

II. OBSCENITY AMONGST THE BA-ILA:

Amongst the Ba-Ila of Northern Rhodesia⁽¹⁾ "The occasions when lewd songs are not only permitted but are regarded as essential to the ritual, are at sowing time; at the Lwando fishing; when a new canoe is taken to the river to be launched; when smelting iron; at initiation; and at funerals and the Makubi. They are also employed in the Kashimbo dance." (ii.191)

In sowing, smelting, fishing, launching canoes, erotic songs are associated with a joint economic activity. On the other occasions mentioned they are associated with religious ceremonial.

But though Smith and Dale give us the economic occasions of these erotic songs their accounts often lack descriptive detail. With regard to sowing we are told that the wife "assisted by the members of her household (she)

(1) All references about the Ba-Ila are from "The Ila speaking peoples of Northern Rhodesia" by the Rev. Edwin W. Smith and Capt. A. M. Dale, 1920.

starts to hoe the ground, stacking the grass and rubbish in large heaps until dry enough to burn, her husband meanwhile hoeing his own little patch. As soon as the ground is hoed it is sown." (i.137). Sowing therefore seems to be a joint labour of the household and the lewd songs are presumably sung by the women during the hoeing of the ground and the placing of the seed into the earth.

In the Iwando fishing men leave the villages and encamp on the river-bank. A large open wove reed mat is used as a scoop, the men wading along in the river pushing this mat in front of them and enclosing the fish which are then scooped out. Here again we have a joint activity apparently on a large scale, but we are not told the manner in which the songs form part of the undertaking. (i.161-2 - 166-9).

From the description of the making of canoes and from a photograph of a finished specimen it is obvious that to carry it to the river to be launched is a heavy task and can only be carried out by a number of men working in co-operation. Here again we should like more detail as to how exactly the songs accompany the activity. (i.200-2).

Smelting amongst the Ba-Ila is a long and important labour carried out under strict taboos. Trees have to be cut down and charcoal made from them, ironstone has to be

dug up, water has to be drawn and clay gathered and the kilns erected. The operations appear to be carried out by all the men in the villages living away from home in specially erected shelters. With regard to the erotic songs we are unfortunately given no more information than that they accompany these operations.

"When our informant says that bad language is not prohibited, he is thinking specially of the songs that are sung during the operations, they are mostly of a lewd nature." (1.208). The authors give several examples of these songs, e.g.

shampala yamwandauka

"The man with the bare glans, it's all split, it has become of the spring, it makes him defaecate." (1.207-8).

The occasions of religious ceremonial on which licence is allowed are at initiation ceremonies, at funerals and at the feasts in honour of the "divinities."

"On the occasions, especially in the Mwandu and Chisungu connected with the initiation of the girls, both dances and songs are grossly obscene. There may be some hidden significance in them - that there is such attached to the songs we have already seen - but the apparent motive is to excite the passions to the highest pitch". In connection with the initiation of girls we are also told "The Chisungu (dance) is kept up for 2 or 3 nights and days, and is the

and is the occasion for much unbridled licence". (ii.18-26)
 Here also takes place the Kashimb^o dance.

During the feasts of mourning erotic songs are sung by the female mourners. Smith & Dale give several of these, e.g.

ma! ma! ma! diakomena itoni diakwe !
ndia mulolobozho
kudikwete kudilolobola

"Dear! dear! dear! His great penis is a size ! It is a thing without an end. It must have had a long unwinding.

These authors go on to say "When we have expressed our astonishment at women singing such songs - for it is the women that sing them - the elders have quoted a proverb 'ushildilwe taitwa ku bushu' (A mourner is not to be passed before the face'), i.e. he or she has licence to do whatever he or she pleases. Under ordinary circumstances it would be reckoned taboo for women to utter such things in the presence of men; but at funerals all restraints are removed. People do as they like. Grass may be plucked out of the thatched roofs; the fields may be robbed of the growing corn; all passions are let loose; and no complaint for damage, theft, or adultery can be made."
 (ii.113)

Amongst the Ba-Ila every "demigod", or important

ancestral spirit has at least one annual feast in his honour. This is called ikubi (pl. makubi). What takes place at these festivals has been summed up by the authors "There is a monotonous sameness about all the makubi. There is always plenty of beer; much dancing and singing; charging up and down by men with their spears; lewd songs and a general licence. In many points the annual feast is comparable with the saturnalia." (ii.191).

Before I give the data bearing on our problem from the Thonga Nation, I will make a condensed analysis of the Ba-Ila material.

- (1) Licentious songs are normally not permitted by society.
- (2) When they are allowed it is at an important religious ceremony, or
- (3) in connection with specially arduous or lengthy joint economic undertakings.

III. OBSCENITY AMONGST THE BA-THONGA:

We shall find that erotic songs and behaviour are allowed amongst the Ba-Thonga of the Transvaal⁽¹⁾ on much the same occasions as amongst the Ba-Ila but it is often

(1) All references to the Ba-Thonga are from "The Life of a South African Tribe" by Henri A. Junod, 1927, 2nd.ed.

less easy to label the occasion as economic or ritual as they are sometimes associated with labour carried out in connection with a ceremony.

In reference to the sungi or circumcision lodge we are told that the most rigid sex taboos must be observed by all the inmates and that the people in the villages must make no noise and must have no quarrels. "Strange to say, in the meantime obscene language is permitted and even recommended - a contrast which we shall often meet with during the marginal periods. Some of the formulae contain expressions which are taboo at other times; when the women bring the food to the sungi, the shepherds who receive it from their hands are allowed to address them with as many unchaste words as they like. The mothers themselves have the right of singing obscene songs when they pound the mealies for the sungi." (1980)

"The law is that women, the mothers of the circumcised, must bring plenty of porridge twice as much as is required for the boys. Should one of them fail to do this she will be punished at a given time. They deposit their pots at some distance, so that they cannot catch any glimpse of the ngoma, and shout "Ha tsoo ! We are burning." This means 'Our heads are sore from having carried our pots such a long way.' Shepherds run to meet them and answer

with a great many jokes in rather dubious taste: "We know what is burning with you etc." Is this not the rule of the ngoma ?" (1.84)

The secret formulae of the initiates are often very obscene. If one wishes to know whether a boy has been circumcised one says to him "The beast which has been opened from behind" and if he has been initiated he will answer "The crocodile", and will add "the knife which circumcises". He replies thus in reference to long secret formulae which allude to the manner in which crocodiles copulate and to how boys pierce a virgin's vagina to make a way for the older men who will follow them. The author considers many of these formulae ugly enough to require translation into latin.

We see that obscene songs and expressions are here associated with the important rites of circumcision and that they also accompany the unusually great labour of pounding the large supply of mealies needed for the lodge.

Amongst the northern clans girls when they reach the age of nubility go through a period of seclusion. "Then will begin a seclusion period of one month. Three or four girls receive the initiation together..... Every morning they are led to the pool, and their whole body is immersed in water as far as the neck. Other

initiated girls or women accompany them singing obscene songs, and drive away with sticks any man who happens to be on the road, as no man is allowed to see a girl during this period. If a man happens to come near the group, the women ask him the secret formulae of the circumcision school, not the long ones but the short ones, probably those which contain licentious words.....When the cortege of women accompany^{ing} the initiated has returned home, the nubile girls are imprisoned in the hut. They are teased, pinched, scratched by the adoptive mothers or by other women; they must also listen to the licentious songs which are sung to them" (1.177.).

Two or three months after someone has died the Ba-Ronga hold a ceremony at which the whole of the family of the deceased is present and in which the mortuary hut is broken down. Part of the ritual consists in the killing of a goat and some hens. "Then, while the batukulu and the old men were busy with the victims, cutting them up and squeezing the psany (half digested grass) out of the bowels, the other mourners began to sing and to dance. First an elderly woman, of a very clear complexion and a mephistophelean face, very tall, with a curiously licentious smile, came into the middle of the place, opened her arms wide and suma, began to sing. Together with her song she

performed a strange mimicry with her thighs. This mimicry took on a more and more lascivious character; it became a regular womb dance, so immoral that the men dropped their eyes as if they feared that she would take off all her clothing..... The words of her song were also of a very questionable character. She described an adulterous woman going during the night from one hut to another, seeking for lovers, knocking on the walls..... This seems very immoral indeed. Let us remember, however, that in the opinion of the Thongas, these songs, which are taboo in ordinary life, are specially appropriate to the mourning period. 'These women have been uncovered by the death of their husband,' Said Mboza.' There is no longer any restraint on them. They are full of bitterness when they perform these lascivious dances. 'The reason is perhaps deeper, as it is not only the widows who sing these words; we are still in a marginal period, the period of mourning, and these phases of life are marked for the Bantus by this strange contrast; prohibition of sexual intercourse and a shameless outpouring of impure words and gesticulations."

Amongst all African peoples the building of a new home is perhaps their greatest economic task. Also it is often accompanied by religious ceremony. Amongst the northern clans of the Thonga nation there is a special period of moving from one village to another, of about

a month in duration, during which the most irksome taboos have to be observed. "When all the walls are ready, the roofs are carried from the old village to the new by all the men together. They lift each roof on to their shoulders, after having removed the old grass, and go out of the village, not by the main entrance but by one of the back gates which has been widened for the purpose. A broad road has been prepared through the bush. They follow it, marching as fast as they can, and singing the obscene songs which are reserved for special occasions.

In these they insult the women who accompany them, carrying the baskets, the mortars, the pestles. 'The village is broken in pieces so are the ordinary laws. The insults which are taboo are now allowed' (Mboza). This suspension of morality in speech is only allowed on the day when roofs are carried to the new village. Some days later, again, the women will take their revenge when they smear the floor of the huts; then they too will sing their songs, insulting the men. But all this is done in fun. It is a great day of rejoicing for the 'tinamu', who tease each other as much as they like. A man may be wanting in respect even to his great mukonwana on these days !" (1.321). Amongst the Ba-Ronga these songs are not allowed when only one hut is being transported (1.324)

Though ceremonial acts begin and conclude the building of a new village, the activity is an economic rather than a ceremonial one. On the two occasions on which the obscene songs are sung it is in carrying out the tiring and unpleasant labour of transporting the heavy roofs of the huts or in smearing the floors, both acts of joint labour.

In a period of prolonged drought amongst the Ba-Thonga a sacrifice is first made to the spirits. "Then the women assemble. They must remove all their clothing, only putting some grass round their loins and, with a peculiar skipping step, singing a special song; 'Mpfula nana', 'Rain fall', they go to all the spots where children prematurely born have been buried in dry ground, on the hills, take away what they find in the broken pots and collect all that impure matter in a secret place, so that children may see nothing of what they are doing. Water is poured on these graves in order to 'quench them (timula)'. On the evening of the same day they go and bury these impurities; this is done in the mud near the river. No man must approach during this operation; the women would have the right to strike the imprudent one and ask him questions on the obscene formulae of circumcision; the man would answer in the most impure words he could find, as all

language taboos are suspended on that day; nakedness even is no longer taboo; because says Viguet, 'It is the law of the country!' Every one consents to the suspension of the ordinary laws!" (ii. 318.)

Thus we see that the ceremony to make rain fall is characterized by obscenity in speech and nakedness which is strictly forbidden in everyday life.

The last Thonga ceremony to be described is that of the nunu. The nunu is an insect pest which causes great havoc to the beans and maize. The chief men of the country send the women to pick the insect off the bean stalks and a girl, who is one of twins, goes to throw them into the neighbouring lake. "Behind her marches the whole crowd of women, arms, waists and heads covered with grass, carrying branches of the big leaved manioc which they wave from side to side, and singing....."

When the twin has thrown the insects into the water, "Then the savage yells are raised louder than ever, and the women sing their impure songs (ta ku ruketela), which they would never dare to utter on ordinary occasions, and which are reserved for these ceremonies, rain seeking and nunu hunting." (ii. 440.)

If we analyse these descriptions of licentious behaviour we shall find :

(1) As amongst the Ba-Ila these specific forms of obscenity

in song, speech and action are not ordinarily permitted by society.

(2) When they are allowed it is at an important ceremony, in connection with the rites of circumcision of boys and the initiation of girls, at the funeral feasts and at the rain and nunu ceremonies, or

(3) In connection with some arduous or lengthy economic undertaking, in the joint labour of carrying the roofs or smearing the floors in the building of a new village, and in the one woman (possibly joint) labour of pounding the mealies for the circumcision lodge.

IV. OBSCENITY AMONGST THE AKAMBA:

I do not wish to overload this paper with quotations, but we must note the data bearing on the subject of obscenity in Lindblom's excellent treatise on the Akamba of Kenya, East Africa. ⁽¹⁾

Amongst the Akamba the boys and girls go into the initiation camp together. There they sing songs in connection with the rites of circumcision. "Some songs are sung alternately by boys and girls and they are extremely obscene. One of them runs as follows.

The boys

hae, hae, listen

The kino (female pudenda) is a fool,

She dwells in the clothes

Hae hae

The girls answer

You say, eeh, listen

The kea (male pudenda) is a fool

It dwells among the testes,

And is a fool

to allow the kino to drink fat.

The meaning is that, by much sexual intercourse, the man grows lean, while the woman thrives on it. Like the songs, the conversation also is of a very dubious nature, and according to my informant is directly intended to show that no feelings of shame exist under these circumstances, though in daily life considerable modesty is shown in connection with such matters." (Page 50)

In behaviour as well as in song is obscenity prescribed. Each of the initiates in the second circumcision ceremonies must hold up his penis until erection ensues. A lump of wood is then bound to the member and in this condition he marches round amid roars of laughter. In the same ceremonies a small hole is scooped out in the ground and each of the initiates in turn has to ejaculate into the hole which represents the vagina. Also each of the initiates has to copulate with another to show how he performs the sex act with a woman. "The songs are of an indescribable lewd content". There is a

general licence and the initiates, armed with sticks, make a terror of themselves in the whole countryside. (Page 65).

In times of drought the Akamba women perform a ceremony like that described by Junod for the Ba-Thonga. They beat their drums and march from village to village and then in a combined force proceed to the medicine man. Lindblom met the women on the march in 1911 and took down some of the songs which they were singing, such as

" Ea, eeh!

We come from afar

To find salt for the kino (female pudenda)
penis eregitur

uh, uh! "

He translates this song freely as "We come to get rain, so that we can get food for our husbands who cannot accomplish their sexual duties if they are weak from hunger."

Lindblom says that the circumcision songs are stereotyped all over Ukamba and are of considerable age whereas the ordinary song is localized and short-lived. He does not say whether the rain ceremony songs are handed down from generation to generation or not. (Page 276)

Amongst the A-Kamba we find also -

- (1) That certain collective expressions of obscenity of a type usually prohibited by society are
- (2) permitted on the Ceremonial occasions of Circumcision and rain-making.

V OBSCENITY AMONGST THE A-ZANDE

I became interested in this problem of prescribed obscenity when I found myself amongst the Azande of the Bahr-el-Ghazal Province of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

The Azande have some very obscene songs which they regard as highly improper and offensive except when they are sung in their socially determined context. Some years after the death of a man or woman the relatives of the dead give a feast so that a heap of stones may be placed over his or her grave. Extensive preparations have to be made for this feast. In these preparations there are no greater labours than the women's work of beating a large quantity of millet and later grinding it in a malted form. The millet is needed to make many pots of beer, some of which is to be drunk at the feast, but most of which will be given away in a system of exchange between the master of the feast and his relatives in-law. (1114)

After a religious ceremony in honour of the spirits of the dead the millet is piled up in the centre of the household court and the women, relatives and neighbours of the master of the feast, begin to thresh it with long sticks. In doing this piece of labour they all march round and round the telebun singing obscene songs. These songs are the only songs which have been handed over from generation to generation

the Azande have a number of songs which are sung at the feast.

and which are known throughout the length and breadth of the country, all others being localized and living only a few seasons. They are sung with a fast rhythm to the beats of which the women workers thrash the telebun. In consequence their sticks all belabour the grain at the same time and at the same intervals. Generally there will be one or two women who act as leaders. These stand in the middle of the telebun, lead the songs and make obscene bodily movements.

I will ^{give} ~~show~~ ^{some} the reader of these songs - here is one of them:-

na ta pumbe wili mbia nenge ro yo

Mother of the feast little stone is in your vulva

ba semba li pumbe wili mbia nengere ro yo

Master of the ceremonies little stone is in your vulva

agume pumbe wili mbia nenge ro yo

relatives of the feast little stone is in your vulva

wili kawili pumbe wili mbia nenge ro yo

son of my brother of the feast little stone is in your vulva

a ta pumbe wili mbia nenge ro yo

All the people of the feast little stone is in your vulva.

During the singing of such songs the men keep away from the work as they fear to be insulted.

About a year after the telebun has been threshed the feast is held. A few days before the feast the women grind

the malted grain to make the beer. Six to ten or even more grinding stones are arranged in a circle under the shelter of a granary.

First old men perform a mixed religious ceremony in honour of the spirits of the dead and magical ceremony against witchcraft and to influence the ritual exchange of goods in the feast. When this is finished they begin to sing the best known of these songs which can be sung at either grinding or threshing. After a few lines they leave the stones and the women come and take their place and commence the grinding. The flour falls from the stones and forms a large heap in the centre.

There are always one or two women who lead the singing. The work never stops as those women who are singing will take the place of those who are tired at the grinding. Here again the work is done to the rhythm of the songs, the women all moving their stones together to the rhythm in unison.

The song with which they begin the grinding goes thus:-
oo oo ngongo li ngoto nenge oo ee ee
 "oo oo the vertical column of the clitoris vulva oo ee ee".
 This line forms a main chorus throughout the song which is composed of such lines as these:

kira o kira o nenge na yamba ru o
 "penis o penis o vagina is calling you"
 or, agbio o agbio agbio ba kira yo zegio
 "relatives-in-law o relatives-in-law o

inadequate to give a full account of the ceremonial of these associations since, for obvious reasons, I did not wish to show too great an inquisitiveness on my first visit into associations made illegal by the white man. Indecency amongst secret societies seems to be common enough and to be similar to that met with in the ceremonial of initiation, e.g. amongst the Wapare of East Africa described in the *Jahrbuch des Städtischen Museums für Volkerkunde zu Leipzig*, 1913.

To summarize the Zande data:

- (1) Obscenity normally forbidden by society is sanctioned at certain times
- (2) as when millet is being beaten or ground by joint labour in preparation for the feasts of the dead,
- (3) and in connection with the customs surrounding the mother's brother relationship, and in the ceremonial of secret societies.

There are possibly many other examples of obscenity amongst African societies, but extreme care has to be exercised in using material of this nature as the account is often merely an opinion or impression of an untrained and prejudiced observer.

VI. OBSCENITY AMONGST THE LANGO, DODINGA, LUGBURNE AND INGASSANA

I am very grateful to be able to supplement the data of this essay from the observations of such an unbiassed observer as Mr. Driberg. In his book on the Lango of Uganda Driberg has

described the obscenity which takes place at the ceremonies of twins and he says (in an oral communication) that such songs are handed down from generation to generation in contrast to other songs which have only a seasonal existence. He suggests that they are probably taught at the female initiation schools. In both the male and the female initiation ceremonies of this tribe there are grossly obscene songs and he found the same to be true of the rain ceremonies. In this last instance the songs are, as is so often the case, obscured by sexual symbolism, e.g.

"kwaich obolo te oduru"

"The leopard lashes its tail under the fig-tree"

(The penis lashes about under the female pudenda)

Mr. Driberg also informs me that amongst the Didinga of the A-E Sudan there is general obscenity in action and songs at the initiation ceremonies of both men and women. Amongst the same people the women sing erotic songs when building cairns near the cultivations upon which they swear not to use the crops for their individual uses but to keep them for the use of the clan. In building operations also girls sing licentious songs out of the hearing of men when engaged in cutting and carrying grass. (oral communication). Amongst the Lugware of Uganda at the planting season the men dance a special dance in which the accompanying songs are erotic. At this dance the men reach a state of semi-erection of the

penis. When a man is in this condition he makes a short run from the dance and comes back in a state of detumescence and repeats the performance. (Driberg, oral communication).

I will add a note from my material, as yet unpublished, collected amongst the Ingassana people of the Fung Province of the A-E Sudan. This people have a special corporation of players who dance and sing at ceremonies of marriage, ^{birth of} twins and when children are suffering from some illness. Their performance is accompanied by much lewd side play with wooden phalli. The songs also are probably obscene in keeping with the general sexual associations of the ceremonial occasions.

VII SUMMARY OF DATA AND FORMULATION OF PROBLEM.

Our analysis of the occasions of prescribed obscenity amongst the Ba-Ila, Ba-Thonga, A-Kamba and A-Zande may now be supplemented from the notes of Driberg and myself collected in Uganda and the A-E Sudan.

Firstly we must emphasize the fact that these types of obscenity are normally prohibited. They are considered by the people themselves as very improper and at any other occasion than the few permitted ones an effective ban is placed on their manifestation. They belong to that part of mental life which society stigmatizes as coarse and vulgar and which must be repressed by the individual. On rare occasions, however, such exhibitions are not only permitted but even prescribed by society. In an analysis of these occasions

lies the road to an explanation of the function of the types of erotic behaviour described in this paper.

We found that at certain ceremonies, which we may describe as religious ceremonies, obscenity is permitted:- Initiation ceremonies (Ba-Ila, Ba-Thonga, A-Kamba, Lango, Didinga): Funeral ceremonies (Ba-Ila, Ba-Thonga, Lotuko): Feasts in honour of the spirits (Ba-Ila): Rain ceremonies (Ba-Thonga, A-Kamba, Lango): Ceremony for the protection of the crops from pests (Ba-Thonga): Ceremonial theft from the mother's brother (Azande): Secret Societies (Azande, Wapare, etc): Ceremonies of twins (Lango, Ingassana): Marriage and illness of children (Ingassana): Ceremony to protect the crops (Didinga): Sowing dance (Lugbware).

The second group of occasions on which we found obscenity permitted had its characteristic of arduous, lengthy and joint labour. It is impossible to make clear cut distinctions between these two groups for many occasions which we have considered as ceremonial have economic associations, e.g., the rain ceremonies. Also many of the acts of labour take place in a ceremonial cycle, e.g. the beating and grinding of the millet amongst the A-Bande. If we use the term ceremonial in its widest sense then all the occasions of obscenity given in this paper may be called ceremonial occasions. But it will be found convenient to make a sub-group comprising those obscenities which actually accompany acts of labour.

Such obscenities are found accompanying sowing, smelting, fishing, launching canoes (Ba-Ila) : pounding mealies, carrying roofs of huts, smearing floors of huts (Ba-Thonga) ; threshing, grinding, carrying stones in government labour (A-Zande) : building cairns (Didinga) ; cutting and carrying grass (Didinga).

In attempting to explain these obscenities I shall first attempt to show why the prohibitions of society are relaxed on any of the above-mentioned occasions. I shall then show what purpose their relaxation serves on ceremonial occasions and lastly what is its economic role in labour. I shall thus follow in explanation the analysis which has been made from the data brought together. For I believe that the correct method in interpreting any element of culture is by describing it in terms of a sociological law or generalisation by reference to which any specific occurrence of the element in the life of the society is explained. At the same time the element of culture in question will be found in many different contexts and associated with many other different elements of culture and the significance of its association will be understood only by an analysis of each specific context. Consequently an element such as the one which we are examining in this paper may have an indefinite number of

social functions but there is one common functional characteristic of them all.

Before we give our own explanation we shall, however, give consideration to the explanations put forward by two of the authors from whose works we have borrowed most of our material for this essay.

We want to explain how certain actions normally taboo are on occasions prescribed modes of collective expression.

VIII. SOCIAL FUNCTION OF PRESCRIBED AND COLLECTIVE OBSCENITY.

How are we to explain this prescribed obscenity? Smith & Dale give an explanation which arises from a somewhat mystical account of the so-called dynamism of the Ba-Ila, by which they mean all the magical and religious ideas which are found amongst that people. They tell us that the songs are used, must be used, when the dynamic forces are intimately in evidence and they conclude "In normal times the abnormal is taboo, but in abnormal times the abnormal things are done to restore the normal condition of affairs." (ii.84)

This explanation, like the conception of dynamism, appears to be a little mystical and I certainly cannot understand the conclusion. In any case I do not think that launching a canoe, sowing, and fishing, though

seasonal events, should be thought of as abnormal.

The theory held by Junod and also apparently by Lindblom is derived from the work of Van Gennep which is embodied in his "Les Rites de Passage". According to this theory these obscene songs may be attributed to the fact that they occur in "marginal" periods which occur between rites of "segregation" and rites of "aggregation". Thus, for example in the building of a new village there is amongst the Ba-Thonga a "marginal period" of one month or more during which the ordinary laws are suspended and many special taboos are enforced. These prescribed acts and songs of obscenity are made to emphasize the suspension of the ordinary laws in the "marginal periods" in passage rites. Hence also we find similar obscenity at similar occasions as in the "Rites de Passage" of initiation and funerals.

The objections to this explanation as a generalization are obvious. It covers only a few of the facts which I have brought together in this paper. The rain and nunu ceremonies described by Junod himself are not passage rites or at least not in the accepted sense of the phrase. Certainly the beating of the telebun and the grinding of the malted grain amongst the Azande, the sowing and fishing undertakings or the makubi ceremonies amongst the Ba-Ila are not passage rites.

So we cannot accept the theory that these obscenities have the function of creating a normal condition of affairs in an abnormal situation (Smith & Dale), nor that they have a directly opposite function of creating an abnormal period between ritual acts of "segregation" and "aggregation" (Junod).

However we shall bear in mind the just observations of both these authors, ^{that} ~~that~~ the obscenity takes place ^{often} ~~always~~ in abnormal times, e.g. drought, and often during passage periods, e.g. initiation, but we will attempt a more comprehensive explanation than they have done.

The explanation which I wish to put forward to account for these specific acts of obscenity is a very simple one. To my mind there is, in one respect, an identity of social function between the taboo, or special prohibition, and these acts of special licence.

What is a taboo? In the terminology of Religion given in "Notes and Queries on Anthropology" we are told that "Taboo should be limited to describe a prohibition resting on a magico-religious sanction." And again we are told that "Various other prohibitions are observed in uncivilized society; e.g. Legal Prohibitions, put forth by authority; and Customary Prohibitions which appear to rest simply on social disapproval; but the term tabu

should be restricted as above." (Page 262-4th Ed.)

There are several reasons why this mode of definition is an unsatisfactory one. To give only one of these reasons, essentially similar prohibitions in different societies would be classed into different categories according to the different political developement of each society. It is always difficult to tell where the sanction of a prohibition lies and the same prohibition may have its sanction in social disapproval and in political authority as well as in magico-religious forces. How for instance is one to class the prohibition of incest, has it a magico-religious sanction, or is it put forth by authority, or does it rest simply on social disapproval? Surely this depends on the specific development of each society.

I do not think that a taboo should be treated in this way as a separate entity identified by its sanction, but should always be regarded as a prohibition which forms part of some social activity. Its sanction will generally be found to rest in the social activity itself, e.g. If a food taboo or a sex taboo is broken before fishing expedition no fish will be caught; if a taboo is broken before a magical performance the magic will not attain the end towards which it is directed.

Now it is commonly overlooked that the taboo looms large to the native & derives its social importance not because something or other is prohibited, but because that something or other is part of his daily life, a routine activity or a habit, e.g. the taboos on sexual intercourse and on certain foods or drinks. It is for the reason that the native is prohibited from doing what he habitually does as a matter of course, that his attention is focussed on the activity with which the prohibition is associated. In this manner the importance of activities of social value is impressed upon the mind of the individual. This I regard as the main function of the taboo.

We may look at these prohibitions which concern persons from the same point of view. The relationship of a man to his sister is emphasized not so much by the fact that he may not have sexual intercourse with her, as that she alone of all women is withheld from him. In the same way the relationship of a man to his mother-in-law is emphasized by the fact that he may meet and speak to all women save her alone. The facts of leadership are often impressed upon Commoners in the same way, e.g. in New Zealand or Samoa. However I wish in this paper to discuss not so much the taboo as the special act of

licence. Just as the taboo is enforced by tradition to be observed in relation to some specific activity so the occasion of obscene behaviour is socially controlled and regulated by tradition. Just as the main characteristic of the taboo is that a man may not do what he is habitually accustomed to do, so the main characteristic of the obscenity is that a man may do what he is normally prohibited from doing. The function of both the taboo and of the special acts of obscenity is to make a break in the ordinary routine of an individual's life and so give emphasis to the social value ⁽¹⁾ of the activity with which the taboo and the obscenity are associated.

The similar function of the taboo, and of the special acts of obscenity are well illustrated in an instance given by Smith & Dale amongst the Ba-Ila. Nothing could be more disgusting to an Ila than intercourse between a man and his sister or daughter, yet we are told "If a man wants very special luck, he not only gets the charm, but under the doctor's instructions he commits incest with his sister or daughter before starting on his undertaking." (i.261) We find this act of terrible obscenity performed just where we would normally expect to find sex and food taboos coupled with the magic. Amongst the Ba-thoⁿga also we find that on the death of a man his widows ritually

(1) For concept of "social value" see A.R. Brown's Andaman Islanders' passion.

prostitute themselves. We would expect on such occasion rigid taboos on all sexual intercourse.

I think that the explanation given here will help us to understand many acts of prescribed and stereotyped obscenity. It does not explain all types of obscenity nor does it attempt to explain the psychology of obscenity. It attempts to explain why socially controlled and stereotyped obscenity is associated with certain social activities.

IX. ASSOCIATION OF OBSCENITY WITH CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES.

I have said earlier in this paper that the taboo, and the same applies to stereotyped obscenity, must not be treated as a distinct entity defined by its sanction but must be considered in relation to the activity in which it plays its role. Thus whilst a generalization has been made which will explain the association of stereotyped obscenity in general with activities of social value we still have to show its specific function within specific activities.

Thus we have noted that obscenities occur as part of larger ceremonial undertakings, such as those associated with death, the birth of twins, drought and initiation into manhood. Now these are all occasions of emotional stress fraught with grave danger both to the individual who

experiences them and to the society. The pent-up emotion of anger, fear, sorrow, grief reaches a point where some activity is essential. Yet unless this activity is guided into harmless channels it may prove to be fatal to the individual and disruptive to society. On such occasions society condones or even prescribes actions which it ordinarily prohibits and penalises.

It is well-known that those primary tendencies, such as sex, which are essential to the preservation of society as much as to the preservation of individual life are nevertheless in their unregulated expression incompatible with even the most primitive form of culture known to us. To preserve and transmit culture individual gratification has to be subordinated to social ends and this brings to the individual many painful experiences, labour, obedience to authority, limitation of appetite to social convention and respect for the manifold restrictions and regulations which mould and transform the common tendencies of his species (instincts). It seems indeed ^{that} all the manifold and complex systems of societies as developed as our own, such lofty systems which we have built, science, art, religion, all trace their energy to these primary tendencies, especially that of sex. By a process, to which the name of sublimation is given by one school of writers, those tendencies most

inimical to culture are the very forces which have sustained and developed it.

Such a process however may defeat its own ends. By over-repressing primary tendencies, instead of the individual's energies being devoted to cultural ends they are deflected to obsessions, delusions and sometimes suicide, so that he is of no value to society at all. This view of culture has been brilliantly stated by ~~Freud~~ ^{Freud} and his school, and both they and others have pointed out how societies do, and how our own society should give free play within bounds to the exercise of these primary tendencies since such a course is far less dangerous to society than over-repression.

It has been deemed wise to give a broad and comprehensive theory of culture in order that our explanation of obscenity on ceremonial occasions should not stand alone but may be shown as just one of a large number of social customs with the same social function, viz. of providing a channel of activity for the harmless expenditure of emotional tension highly dangerous for the individual and disruptive to society.

It will be better to give illustrations of this function. Obscenities occur amongst many tribes at ceremonies of initiation into manhood and womanhood of

boys and girls. The commonest feature of such initiations (and also in secret societies) are the rigours to which the initiates have to submit. Severe floggings, teasing and tormenting, hunger, thirst, exacting labour, exhausting dances, bitter humiliation, rape, sodomy, these and many other trying experiences are imposed upon them. Not only does the manner of their life lead to emotional tension but its severity, its pain and its fatigue tend to make the person experiencing them seek an outlet in immediate, and probably sexual, gratification. (1)

The severity of initiation ceremonies is an essential part of their educational purpose but this purpose would not be served were the severity to lead to sudden and disruptive passions. The creation of an alternative and permissible channel of activity compensates the initiate for his painful and fatiguing experiences whilst at the same time maintaining the purpose of the discipline inflicted.

We could now take each typical occasion upon which there is a collective expression of obscenity, death birth of twins, drought and so on, and we could show in each instance, as in initiation, how the occasion is

(1) "When, for instance, the demands of reality are severe, when life is hard to bear, there is a tendency for the person's mental activities to revert to the primary types with all the serious consequences of this." Jones. p.5. Papers on Psycho-analysis."

one of great emotional stress to the individual and how the expression of his emotional responses is not left to chance but is socially determined and guided into traditional channels.

We do not, however, propose to consider each of these occasions separately as the general deductive statements given above, will, we think, provide a working psychological explanation for them all. Therefore to the broad generalization we first put forward we shall add an appendix (a):-

- (1) The general function of collective and prescribed obscenity is to give emphasis to the social value of the activity with which it is associated.
- (a) Many of the occasions of this type of obscenity are the great crises of human life fraught with emotion of peril to the individual and to society. The further function of obscenity therefore is to provide a socially regulated means of expressing this emotion.

X. ECONOMIC FUNCTION OF OBSCENITY

We have seen that obscenity, in particular obscene songs, is often correlated with a definite act of joint labour. Before trying to explain this special correlation I will draw attention to another specific correlation, that

between the taboo and economic undertakings.

All labour is unpleasant and requires some drive behind it. (1) Such drives are found in incentive, in concomitant stimuli, in human company, and in other ways with which economists have made us familiar. Such drives are especially necessary in joint labour which is arduous or requires organization over a long period. The special function of the taboo in its association with economic undertakings is to act as a drive behind the labour. I have not given the taboos associated with the undertakings described in the first part of this essay, but I will give two instances now.

When the Ba-Thonga wish to construct a new village, a task already referred to in this paper, the members of the village first collect all the building material. Before commencing the construction of the huts the headman of the village leaves the old village into which he may never again enter. He takes his chief wife with him and in the evening they have sexual intercourse on the spot chosen for the new village. Next day the rest of the villagers come and there begins a period, of about one

(1) The unpleasantness of labour and the need to overcome the reluctance with which it is taken up is too obvious and well-known to require elaboration. It is interesting, however, to note the etymology of "work" word symbols. The French travail is related to the Italian word travaglio which means suffering; the word painful was used in the middle ages in the sense of industrious; the Italian word for work, lavoro, comes from the Latin labor, pain; the Greek word means both to work and to suffer, as does the Hebrew assab. (From *Tours. Ibid*)

month, called buhlappa, time of moving. During this month the workers have to observe taboos. Sexual relations are absolutely prohibited and no one may wash his body during the whole buhlappa. The reason given for the first taboo is that sexual intercourse would injure the headman of the village, and for the second that washing would cause rain to fall. Amongst the Ba-Ronga clans there are other buhlappa taboos. No one is allowed to light a fire in the new village until it is completely built, all cooking being done outside the fence. Crushing mealies in the mortars is also prohibited; so also is dancing; so also is whistling since it might attract wizards. (i. 320. ff.)

This example shows us clearly how the taboo acts as a drive behind the labour. The pleasures of sexual intercourse and washing and dancing and the comfort of cooking within the village are prohibited and the normal routine of family life is curtailed until the labour is accomplished.

I will give one more example. I have already mentioned the smelting operations amongst the Ba-Ila. When carrying out the long and difficult smelting operations the workers live away from their village homes. Whilst residing in their temporary shelters "If anyone wishes to visit the village, he must on no account have connection with his wife. He may not enter his house - in particular

he may not sit on his bed - but squats down at the door, where, if his wife cooks him food, he must eat it. And the women staying in the village may not wash, nor anoint themselves, nor put on any ornaments that might attract the notice of men. They are, as we were told, in the same state as recently bereaved widows." Also while the men are moulding the kilns they may not drink any water, but only namenge. (i.207.)

Here again we see how the comforts and pleasures of home life are denied to the workers until the labour is completed, and at the same time all aids to sexual attraction which might let loose the socially disruptive forces of sex, are forbidden to the women.

The method I have applied in the examination of the taboo, namely to study its function in relation to the activity with which it is associated, I will now apply to the obscenity already described.

We found that stereotyped obscenity, especially obscene songs, were correlated to specific acts of labour. Unfortunately we do not know with sufficient exactitude how close the correlation is in most of the Ba-Ila, Ba-Thonga and other data, to solve our problems with certainty. The obscene songs have (a) rhythm and (b) erotic meaning. I will discuss rhythm first.

I showed from my Zande material how the rhythm of

these songs marks the time for the labour. In beating the millet and in grinding the malted grain the women workers all made the same movements to a fast rhythm. Presumably the Ba-Ila must have carried out their sowing, fishing, smelting and canoe-launching operations to the rhythm of the erotic songs since they sang them during the work, but we are not told so explicitly. In the same absence of statement it is necessary to infer that the Ba-Thonga could not very well have carried the roofs of their huts nor pounded their mealies whilst singing songs, unless their movements were, to some extent at any rate, correlated to the rhythm of the songs.

The correlation of labour to rhythm is a matter of some importance to theoretical workers. It is well known that those who work to rhythm suffer far less exhaustion than those who do not work to rhythm.⁽¹⁾ The functional value in rhythm is greatly increased when it accompanies joint labour as it organizes the movements of each worker so that they take place in harmony with the whole scheme of the undertaking.

I shall not labour this point any more here since it has constantly been worked out by other writers and because I hope later to deal in full with the relation of rhythm to labour amongst the Azande.

(1) Arbeit und Rhythmus see also B Molinowski Primitive Labour Nature "Aug. 15. 1925."

The songs described in the early part of this paper have not only rhythm but are all characterized by their erotic meaning. The special privilege allowed to the workers in singing vulgar songs, considered as shocking and indecent at other times, must be regarded as one of the concomitant palliatives of labour which assist the workers to combat weariness and monotony. Those who have seen natives beating millet grinding malted grain for hours together know how exhausting a labour it is. Those who have seen native men carrying the roof of a hut for any distance, who have seen a woman or girl pounding grain, know how arduous the one, how monotonous the other. Carrying canoes, sowing, fishing, smelting, can all be tiring occupations and are carried out efficiently largely owing to the palliatives allowed to the workers. (1)

(1) Professor Seligman has kindly drawn attention to the importance of the "dramatization" which we observe in these social expressions of obscenity. He has also drawn my notice to the probable psycho-analytical explanation of the data given in this paper.

The explanation which I have given here to account for the association of obscenity with acts of labour is largely in accord with the psycho-analytical writers, in that both explanations consider that the function of such obscenity is to act as a drive and palliative of labour. Both regard the obscenities a result of the clash between necessary labour (reality-principle) and the desire to avoid exertion (pain-pleasure principle).

The psycho-analytical writers go on however to develop this thesis by saying that acts of labour and of copulation are referred to by the same word symbol not only because certain attributes of each are similar so that the two distinct activities become associated in the mind, but

XI CONCLUSION.

We may now summarize our conclusions :-

- (1) There are certain types of obscene behaviour the expression of which is always collective. These are usually taboo but are permitted or prescribed on certain occasions.
- (2) These occasions are all of social importance and fall roughly under two headings, Religious Ceremonies and Joint Economic Undertakings.

We explain the obscenity in the following manner:-

- (1) The withdrawal by society of its normal prohibitions gives special emphasis to the social value of the activity.

because also there is a motive, a specific function in this extension of the word-symbol from its primary referent (the idea of copulation) to its symbolic equivalent (an act of labour).

Primitive man, according to these writers, (see Jones Papers in Psycho-analysis pp. and also ~~unknown~~ ^{Shenker's} article in Imago 1912. "über den Einfluss sexueller Momente auf Entstehung und Entwicklung der Sprache") gets over his inertia and repugnance for labour by sexualising his tasks. He treats them as "an equivalent of, and substitute for, sexual functioning." These tasks were at first "identified with sexual acts." (Jones pp.)

I must confess to doubt as to the precise meaning attached by writers of this school to much of their terminology. What do they mean when they say that tasks are an "equivalent of" or a "substitute for" or are "identified with" sexual acts?

It may be quite true that amongst primitive peoples much energy is devoted to labour which would otherwise

- (2) It also canalizes human emotion into prescribed channels of expression at periods of human crisis.
- (3) It gives both stimulus and reward to the workers during periods of joint and difficult labour and through the special form of its expression, i.e. melody, it organizes the undertaking.

be devoted to sexual gratification. It is also doubtless that sexual interest is a stimulus to labour. If this is so then the fatigue of hard and exhausting labour would tend to lead to an attempt to obtain relief through sexual gratification. But since this is impossible, because sexual desire is rigidly repressed to allow necessary labour, then an alternative mode of relief is offered by erotic symbolism and songs.

This may be true but as I do not understand the processes by which work is sexualized in the manner referred to or precisely what is meant by such a statement I prefer to simply give the theory. Certainly I do not think that there is any strong sexual interest consciously attached to the obscenity and I believe that its importance lies not so much in that it is sexual but in that it is normally prohibited by society and that the removal of this prohibition gives a palliative of privilege to the workers.