

Abstracts of Some Recent Papers

ANTHROPOLOGY

M. G. BRAUSCH, 'La société n'kutshu', *Bulletin des Juridictions indigènes et du Droit coutumier congolais*, Élisabethville; 13th year, Nos. 2, 3, March–April, May–June 1945. The Nkutshu (Tetela) are viewed from the angle of the functioning of the four secondary associations which interact within the framework of the community. They are (1) the Leopard brotherhood; (2) the corporation of artisans; (3) the corporation of magicians (*féticheurs*); and (4) the corporation of *sorciers*.¹ Their members form an aristocracy with the title *d'etulu*, 'notables', in contrast to the *olangala*, 'commoners'. The original organization in kinship groups, each under a patriarch, was disturbed by the introduction of the Leopard brotherhood from the north. The conflict between the old and the new resulted in the disappearance of some of the patriarchs; but others of them joined the brotherhood or introduced it into their locality and became its head, thus combining their ancestral functions with those of the new order. The Leopards replaced the traditional councils of family elders. They confine themselves to political and juridical activities and have nothing to do with industry; they form, in fact, a leisured class. The members are grouped in lodges, each one under a descendant of its founder. Candidates pass through an initiation and a series of grades, in some localities as many as 20, in others 8 or 9 grades, and pay fees as they progress. A novice must give proof of courage and skill by killing a leopard or certain other animals. The brotherhood is based on wealth: some products of the chase are exclusively reserved to members, and commoners have to pay tribute in the form of portions of animals they kill: members also take court-fees. All violence is forbidden among members and they are bound to give mutual assistance. They are responsible for maintaining good order; *lolemvu* ('ostracism') is their strong weapon; but they may also put debtors in the stocks (*lumevu*) and order an inveterate criminal to hang himself. The corporation of artisans bears some resemblance to medieval guilds; its function is to promote the economic interests of the members and to maintain the social prestige of the trade by limiting membership. Lodges are composed of master-craftsmen and apprentices. The author describes at length the admission and training of apprentices, the rights and duties of members, and the way in which they dispose of their products. The corporation of magicians (singular, *wetshi*) is also organized in lodges and grades with their own insignia. The quality of a *wetshi* is said to be independent of the person's will; it is shown suddenly by trances that are due to possession by the ghost of a deceased kinsman. Admission into the order is by initiation, the object of which is to inspire the candidate with a great self-confidence and a sense of superiority to common folk. The functions of a magician are prophylactic, diagnostic, and curative. He acts not only by means of magic but empirically. As diviners, members play a great part in the detection and punishment of crime. The existence of these three associations with their wealth, prestige, and political power excites opposition which centres in the corporation of warlocks and witches. A *kanga-doka* is predestined; he must have within his abdomen a material substance named *aloka* [apparently identical with the Azande *mangu*; but note its name contains the widespread Bantu root, *loa*, 'bewitch'], which exists also in goats and sea-cows. Witchcraft is a psychical emanation from this substance. Any person may possess it but becomes a witch only through a desire to use the power with which he is invested by having this substance within his body; and usage

¹ In accordance with present usage the French word *sorcier* should here be rendered 'warlock, witch' rather than 'sorcerer'.

of the power is conferred only by initiation. The corporation is not secret: its members are known publicly. The author describes the rights and duties of the members, and the witch's technique. [Since he appears not to use spells or medicines (apart from poison) what he does is properly witchcraft and not sorcery.] He amuses himself at night by sending out lights like wills-o-the-wisp to frighten people: they are called 'fire of witchcraft-substance'. Mr. Brausch goes on to discuss the attitude to be taken by the Government towards these associations; and to examine the modifications they have undergone through contact with new ideas diffused through European occupation.

M. DE ROY et M. HENROTEAUX, 'Les Bambudye', *Bulletin des Juridictions indigènes et du Droit coutumier congolais*, 13th year, No. 4, July-August 1945. The writers appear to have unearthed a good deal of information about the secret society named Budyé which prevails among the Luba people of Belgian Congo. The latter describes it briefly as an ancient association of initiated natives who congregate on well-determined occasions with the aim of honouring the deceased members. With the exception of persons who are in European service, any natives, without distinction of age or sex or condition, are eligible for membership. They meet after a burial and live a retired life in an enclosure near the village for one, two, or three days, passing the time, especially at night, in dancing and feasting and in 'sexual communism'. Following the initiatory rite there are three degrees, conferring various privileges. The society has a head and an hierarchy of functionaries. At one time, when the conditions of admittance were more rigorous and the society inspired more dread, it was an important adjunct to the rulers, but now that it embraces the majority of the Luba it has become no more than a dancing and festive association. It is interesting to know that the word *bwanga* is used of the occult force supposed to be inherent in the rites.

M. WILLAERT writes notes on some customs of the Bashi who live on the western banks of Lake Kivu. The first occupants of the country were dwarf Batwa and Bantu belonging to Rega clans from the north-east. Hamites came in with cattle, which to-day are the most treasured possession of the people; they are owned individually, and the notes deal chiefly with the compacts by means of which the beasts are put in circulation.

DR. GEORGES OLIVIER, 'Étude anthropologique comparée des principales tribus de la région de Yaounde', *Bulletin de la Société d'Études Camerounaises*, Douala, No. 10, June 1945. This paper, which was read at the Dakar international conference in January 1945, is a comparative study of four Fang tribes (Ewondo, Eton, Bane, Mvele) numbering about 300,000 in all, which inhabit the region around Yaounde in Cameroun. The Fang are intermediary between the big long-limbed Sudanese and the smaller thickset Bantu (forest negroes). A study of them is of special interest because they are a frontier people living at the north-west limit of the equatorial forest and on the border-line between Bantu and Sudanic languages. They migrated, some say from East Africa, others say from the south. The author gives measurements of fifty persons (male and female) of each of the four tribes; he compares skin colour, and the congenital pigmentary spot in new-born babes; and also the blood-groups among 600 people. He finds very little difference between the four tribes. G. Marchesseau contributes to the same Bulletin ethnographical notes on the Mofu, numbering about 33,000, who inhabit the Durum massif east of the Sanaga river. They are supposed to have migrated south from the Logone valley under pressure from the Fulani.

JEAN ROBIN, 'D'un royaume amphibie et fort disparate', *Sénégal*, Saint-Louis; June-July, 1945. M. Robin writes on the ancient kingdom of Walo in the old delta of the Senegal. The region was occupied by refugees from Ghana (Fulani, Sose, Serer) who refused to be islamized when the Almoravides captured it. A local tradition attributes a

Berber origin to the Fulani: they descend from the Zenaga. Their ancestor was banished for misconduct after a misalliance. The name Fula is said to mean 'cast away'.

COLY DEMBO, 'Autour du mariage en pays Mandingue', *Notes Africaines, Bulletin de l'IFAN*, Dakar; No. 27, July 1945. Advice that a Mandingo diviner would give. The girl who habitually crosses her hands behind her back, as if holding a baby, is good to marry: she will be prolific. If a girl constantly puts her hand on her head, or if her right heel never touches the ground when she walks, she will bring sorrow to her first three husbands: flee from her, young men! The girl who is reputed to have cut her first tooth in the upper jaw is not to be recommended as a wife: her hearth will know the worst misfortunes. Whatever be thy wealth, thou wilt repent marrying the girl who is always scratching her buttocks, for with the rapidity of a flame she will consume thy goods. The girl with a large mouth, or with more than five fingers on each hand, brings good luck; the man who marries her will die rich. Hunger will be unknown in the family that allies itself with the girl who incessantly scratches her stomach. Let your sons avoid girls without abundant hair: it is a sign of many vices. Mothers, prefer for a son-in-law the man who in passing over an obstacle puts his left foot foremost; he will always be of feeble character; you may reckon on complete happiness for your daughter, for she will be able to lead him by the nose.

ECONOMICS

J. H. MACKAY, 'On the role of regional planning in administration and land planning', *Farm and Forest*, Ibadan, Nigeria; vol. v, No. 4, December 1944. Mr. Mackay starts from the assumption that any balanced scheme for the development of a region must be based upon the potentialities of the land, and to understand these, a detailed study not only of the topography, soils, natural resources, and human settlement is required, but also of the various forms of land use and indeed every aspect of existing native economies; for one cannot successfully introduce new forms of rural economy if these clash seriously with the old; they must be a development out of the old, or be superimposed without violating the existing basic farming economy and deep-rooted social practice, although these may have to undergo gradual change. In every direction there is urgent need for improvement; all lines of development are closely inter-connected. They must therefore be considered together, and to plan balanced, practicable progress one must have at the outset a clear picture of every aspect of the region and its people. This is the information that a regional survey should provide. Mr. Mackay gives an outline, briefly indicating the subjects and details that appear to him most required.

K. R. S. MORRIS describes a large-scale experiment to rid a thousand square miles of territory in the north-west corner of the northern territories of the Gold Coast from *Glossina palpalis* and *Glossina tachinoides*. After four years of work it has been so far successful that trypanosomiasis admissions at the district hospital have fallen by 90 per cent. since control measures started; 160 square miles of land, depopulated by the disease during the past thirty years, are restored to grazing and farming. Cattle are now grazed in places where their owners never dared to take them before.

NOEL HALL, 'Development work in West Africa', *United Empire*, London; vol. xxxvi, No. 5, September–October 1945. While describing development work generally in West Africa, Mr. Hall deals particularly with the Anchau scheme in Northern Nigeria which has beneficially affected the life of some 300,000 people. Ten years ago a group of young doctors tackled this sleeping-sickness area; they cleared it of tsetse; resettled the people in new or reconstructed villages; brought in field workers, mainly practical farmers; prepared vegetation maps; trained people in animal husbandry; sent out teams of propagan-

dists into the surrounding villages. To-day in the villages there are groups responsible for maintaining the new standards, and schools for children and adults. The whole scheme was based upon a thoroughly sound and scientific diagnosis. The team worked as a unit in making a simultaneous attack upon all the problems. Nearly all the work was done by the local people themselves. Habits and customs had to be disturbed, but with the support of the Emir of Zaria, who himself helped to explain the reasons for changes to the leaders, there was virtually no opposition.

HYGIENE

DR. G. MACDONALD, 'Malaria control for African rural areas', *The Crown Colonist*, London; October 1945. Dr. G. Macdonald, Director of the Ross Institute of Tropical Hygiene, says that it has been shown that under Indian rural conditions malaria can be practically eliminated in a couple of years at a cost of 3½*d.* per head per annum (work was carried out for 22 weeks yearly) and of this sum almost 3*d.* was spent on local labour or local produce—pyrethrum flowers. This method is applicable to African conditions. In any scheme of widespread hygienic improvement its effect must be considered on racial increase and the risk not overlooked of replacing disease by famine consequent on overcrowding. Any improvement must have as a corollary research and work on trypanosomiasis control, on soil losses, on agricultural methods, and other factors which limit the capacity of the land to support its inhabitants. There is no reason why, if this work also is carried out, the peoples of tropical Africa should not treble or quadruple themselves, and while this is happening the educational standard must be raised sufficiently to make the limitation of populations by factors other than universal disease a possibility.

The concluding part of Dr. Macdonald's lecture is printed in *African Affairs*, October, 1945.

S. L. KARK and H. LE RICHE, 'The Nutrition and health of South African school children', *Manpower*, Pretoria; vol. iii, No. 1, September 1944. A report on the research conducted by an anthropologist and a medical officer. About 800 children of various ages were measured and examined in each of three urban and six rural areas in the four provinces of the Union. The results are set out in an elaborate series of tables and graphs. The measurements are compared with those of white children, the same technique being used by Mr. le Riche as in the Pretoria survey of white children in 1940. The figures show clearly that white children are considerably superior to the Bantu in height, weight, &c.; and Mr. le Riche is of opinion that this is due, not to racial differences but to superior environment and to good feeding in particular. Alternatively he says: 'it is concluded that environmental factors, such as nutrition and preventable disease, are at least as important as hereditary factors in deciding the size of children.' Bantu girls came out of the test better on the whole than boys. Comparison of Bantu children taken some from 'good' and some from 'bad' areas led to the conclusion: 'An adverse environment appears to affect girls in both weight and height, while in the case of boys its effect appears to be more marked in regard to weight.' Dr. Kark's thorough clinical examination revealed a high degree of malnutrition: many children were on the borders of starvation. He concludes his report with these words: 'Diet-deficiency diseases, syphilis, malaria, bilharzia, tuberculosis, scabies and impetigo, roundworm and tapeworm infestation, trachoma, preventable crippling, and many other less severe or less common diseases, form no small array of factors which are contrary to the maintenance of good health and nutrition. No amount of juggling can succeed in separating the influence of one as opposed to the others where they so commonly occur together. The outstanding fact is that they are all preventable.'

ROGER HOWMAN, 'The Emotional Side of African Education', *Nada: the Southern Rhodesia Native Affairs Department Annual*, Salisbury; No. 22, 1945. Old African society had its patterns of behaviour, its moral sentiments, its courtesies and responsibilities, its outspoken public opinion voicing its sense of 'the right things to love and to hate'; and so its members were educated men. Formal scholastic education, failing to reach deep levels, has a very limited influence. Clash of culture has produced a peculiar type of personality, the cultural hybrid; he is inevitable but transitional. He belongs to a period of rapid change and instability. We must seek out every influence that will tend to build up a new culture by fusing the old with the new and then we may expect character to emerge in the individual. We need a conception of African education that leaves the classroom and takes in all those natural processes of education whose moulding influences never cease from birth to death; if we would but recognize and use them, they would be of incalculable power. It is almost a social law that to change an individual we must change his group. Only superficial change on the outskirts of a culture is brought about if the individual is removed and treated as an individual (as formal education does) and then released to go back to his group. The position is worsened when group life crumbles to pieces. If we would work in with the natural processes of education, the influences exerted by the groups with which we surround the individual, then, inevitably, slowly, the thoughts of one generation would become the feelings of the next and educated Africans of emotional stability and moral standards would emerge.

C. R. HOPGOOD, 'The Future of Bantu Languages in Northern Rhodesia', *The Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*, Livingstone; No. 2, 1944. Northern Rhodesia, with its 32 languages and dialects, offers, like other African territories, many problems to those who hold that the vernacular should have its place in education and be a medium of literature. Mr. Hopgood contends against the view that Bantu vernaculars are not worth preserving and that the only reasonable policy is to establish English as a *lingua franca* throughout the country; and he stresses the importance of encouraging both linguistic research and all attempts to build up a vernacular literature. He recognizes that there must be some sort of policy limiting the number of literary languages. In Northern Rhodesia five are officially recognized, and these should be sufficient for ordinary purposes; but Mr. Hopgood pleads for some occasional modification of this policy to meet special needs. The languages set for our Institute's competition in 1937 included the Ila-Tonga-Lenje cluster and a prize was awarded for an Ila manuscript of very marked literary merit. But when the question of its publication arose, only with considerable difficulty was the Literature Committee persuaded to make a grant for the purpose. The only objection to a subsidy was that Ila is not an 'official' language, Tonga being the only member of the cluster thus recognized. Mr. Hopgood urges that any outstanding book should be considered for publication whether or not it is in an official dialect. He is of the opinion that the literary standards and 'literary-mindedness' of the Ila-speaking peoples are on the whole definitely higher than those of the Tonga. For ordinary purposes Tonga may be accepted as the literary language; but if an African produces a composition of real literary merit in Ila or Lenje, then Ila or Lenje should in this case be regarded as Tonga. In other words, the whole cluster should be officially recognized and not one member of it. The argument is that it is unfair to Africans with definite literary gifts to insist on all publications being in one specific dialect which is not theirs. The suggestion now made would not hinder but would rather promote the desirable unification of dialects.