Notes on Some Animals in Zelandia. By Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard, F.B.A., Institute of Social Anthropology, Oxford

I suppose that there will soon be little wild life to speak of left in Africa outside a few reserves. In some parts the larger fauna have already almost entirely vanished, as in most of Ghana. So much of African thought is based on observation of beasts and the relationship of men to them, as, for example, what is expressed in proverbs, that with their virtual extinction some of what now has meaning may become unintelligible to those without explanatory aids. It is therefore incumbent on those who have had, or have the opportunity of recording native observations on, and classifications of, their animal environment to publish these records. These notes are a small and preliminary contribution to the subject. The texts quoted were taken down by my clerk Reuben Rikita or by myself, from an informant called Kiasanta, except the last, which was dictated by a provincial deputy, Ganga.

Azande broadly classify animal life into anya, animals (mostly mammals), azile, birds, awo, snakes, ato, fish and agbire, insects. Reptiles, except the snakes, tend to be described as awoya, animals, if they are large and as agbire, insects, if they are small. The iguana (karu) was described thus: nyakabata da. kina kura aboro na ri mbata, kporokonyo ny agra n a, ka paranga li ru k ni agra nga wa ya sa ya; ono awere aboro na li kure dunukho na aile de a ono aboro sa na kpi nyemnu ka e ru, u na li aigene, akasa; u na li aie bangili ime; u na li aie nku anduwu na gu panman chromatoc. ‘It is one of the animals with pads. In the past only elderly people ate it. It is a sluggish animal, and it was thought that were a young person to eat it he would not be alert any more. But today everybody eats iguana, including the women. Just a few persons choose to refuse it. It lives on snails and ants; it eats termites in the water; it eats the termites called atumhu, which swarm at dawn.’ On the other hand the tortoise (dagodo) was described thus: ghiro da nis si ru auru, boro ru ki du vuru nis i ru yo, na nru ru biana, na wili ghanja li ru, mene ru wa kina mene kono. Dungo aboro na li ru, ambari na kura goro ru, kina yo na qu u ru, u na li ruwu ru willi agbire. ‘It is a squat little creature (insect) with a shell over it, its body being within its shell, and it has four legs and a longish head. Its bones are like those of a hen. Many people eat it. Members of the Ambili clan change into it [at death] and so they abstain from its flesh. It feeds on mushrooms and insects.’ The toad is also spoken of as a ghiro, ‘insect’: ghiro da nga u ni kpetatara ru, na boro gurubusuyi ru, na s Runbubasawu bangili ru, gbimna ade na li ru gbe, u na ru soye u, u na li akasa da dungo willi kalai agbire. ‘It is a squat little creature (insect) with a spreading head and protruding eyes. Old women eat them much. It lives on the ground. It eats ants and other small bitter insects.’

Azande divide the larger game animals into two colour classes, bi and zambo, words sometimes translated black and red, but here to be more liberally interpreted as dark and light or perhaps dull and bright. This division has some ritual significance in that the light-skinned beasts, or at any rate the more brownish among them, are forbidden flesh to certain people at certain times, more particularly to boys who have recently been circumcised. The interdiction lasts until a rite has been performed by which the animals are darkened (bisi). Some of the chief dark animals—there are others—are buffalo (gbe), waterbuck (mbo), roan antelope (biso), black pig (mlekoor), digdig (gbisso), blue duiker (msuru), elephant (mbara), thioseraco (kanga), reed-rat (rembo), Abyssinian duiker (mbi), wart-hog (zgba), otter (nununangora), porcupine (ntungu). Some of the chief light animals—again there are others—are bushbushk (gbodal), harebeest (ntsungba), oribi (gbangolitsa), red-flanked duiker (kpangbaniba), Uganda cob (gboniko), bongo (mangana), red pig (zetphugun, zukubire), ground squirrel (bakari), hippopotamus (ebpo), thiang (tonga) and ant-bear (harawa). It will be observed that Azande do not always see shades quite as we do. For example, we might, were we to make a similar division, put the roan antelope with its rufus coat and the Abyssinian duiker with its yellowish-grey coat in the light class, and the bush buck, at any rate the male, with its dark chestnut coat, and the red-flanked duiker and the Uganda cob, which are deep chestnut red, in the dark class.

Within the classes of beasts—animals, birds, etc.—different ‘species’ are designated by reference to some prominent feature, though in some cases an animal may come under more than one designation. The anyalinde, the animals with teeth, the beasts of prey, include such beasts as the lion (bahu), the leopard (mama, moma), a cat (paka) and the genet (mbili). Here is a description of the lion: u nga bire nga lindu ni mbuga ru na bakere li ru, tu ru ni dide u, na rukata bangilu ru, u ni kiki ru na ali ku u na benga sa ru, kikinda linu ru, u na zia anya dunukho, kina mbara ku gari ru, mbiko kia ru, kina abakindo na kura rogo ru, u na li kina pasio dede, na pasio aboro a. ‘It is a powerful animal of tooth, tawny in colour and with a large head. Its ears are small and it has very small eyes. It is broad in front and tapers to the tail, which is a long one, and it has large teeth. It preys on all beasts and only the elephant can surpass it, because of its size. It is kings who change into them [at death]. It lives entirely on flesh, including the flesh of man.’ Of the leopard it was said: u nga nya lindu we kina bahan, u ki da ni mbaka mbaka kopo ru, na kiki li ru, na didi ru tu, rukata bangili ru, u na gisuru ndu ru, na gaang sa ru, u na zia anya dunukho, kina gbe na mbara na gasa ru, mbiko kiindu amu, u na li kina pasio dede, na pasio bora a. ‘It is a beast of tooth like the lion. It has a spotted coat and a large head, short ears and small eyes. It has short legs and a long tail. It preys on all animals, only the buffalo and the elephant surpassing it on account of their size. It lives on flesh, including that of man.’ On the other hand, while the leopard is usually described as a beast of tooth, though it is also one with pads, the hyena is generally described, like the already mentioned iguana, as one of the beasts with pads: u nga nyakabata wa kina kina, ono u
This is a complex and dense passage of text. It seems to be discussing various aspects of wildlife and their characteristics, possibly in a linguistic or cultural context. The text includes references to different species, their behaviors, and their physical traits. It also makes mention of various mythical or symbolic representations of these creatures. Without additional context, it's challenging to disentangle the exact details and meanings intended by the author. The passage appears to be rich in cultural or linguistic significance, possibly drawing from a specific regional or historical perspective.
Another category is that called *anyakoroko*, animals eaten only by very poor people or, according to the Ambomu or true Azande, by some of the Auro, peoples of foreign stock. Canon and Mrs. E. C. Gore (*Zande and English Dictionary*, 1952, p. 110) translate the word by "taboo, unclean beast" but I think that these are not correct terms, for the animals are not taboo, neither are they unclean if this word is used in the biblical sense. Mgr. Lagae speaks, I think also not with entire accuracy, of "interdictions générales qui lient tous les Azande, aussi longtemps que ceux-ci n’ont pas atteint un âge avancé. Il leur est défendu de manger du léopard (manu), ou du n’okwango, du chameleon (magnifique), des animaux et les animaux de surnaturellement nommés pour l’animal et chimpanzé, de hyène (zege), du génou, de l’antilope (mangana). Quiconque en mange, risque de ne jamais devenir fort et robuste. Seuls les vieux peuvent en manger impunément. On appelle donc ces aliments yakokopu, c’est-à-dire, objets des vieux* (*Les Azande*, 1926, p. 38). My own impression was that the words "taboo," "unclean" and "interdiction" go beyond what Azande feel about the matter. It is rather to them that people who are not old, and therefore cannot be excused, are dirty eaters if they eat the sort of animals that Mgr. Lagae has instanced, carnivora and others (I am doubtful about that rare animal the mangana or bongo). This category includes many other creatures than those that Mgr. Lagae has mentioned, which no well-brought-up and self-respecting person will ever dare to eat for it to be known that he ate them: most snakes, most birds, most monkeys (except perhaps in the tropical rain forest), the iguana, the rat ndari, lizards, toads, crocodiles, the jackal and most insects. I doubt not, however, to care to dispute that in the case of some of these creatures there may be also present the idea that for a young person to eat them might cause loss of vitality.

I conclude these few notes on animals of Zandeland with a text, which I think is of interest, on multiple births and care of the young: were, gu nga wanga ug, u nga badari na gu nga mama, na ba. Agara na batika ni ba biata, ani nga aremio, na kurii; ni gu rage aviri kuri bii. Agara na vonga ni ba sa, ami nga ambaga na angbho na ngbgha na ngbgha na mburu, na bia, lempanghango na ngbgharia na gbe. Agara nga anya nga na batika ni ba sa sa nga wunu na ngarangara na rinma, mbiro, ndakpa, na waku, na bagiyan, na bawamu, ga waku pai nga u na vunga, ka a e nga wiru ka meru ya, ki u di kendi di ami ni ta ni kana ru; na gu nga rinma, u na vunga ki di wina kindi ami ni la; na mnogo na vunga ki di wini kindi fuo ru; na mbiro na vunga, ka a nga wunu yu. Now, those animals which bear in twos are ground squirrel and leopard and lion. Those which bear young in threes are reeds-rats and other rats, and sometimes rabbits as many as five. Those which bear only one at a time are water-buck, Uganda cob, digdig, reedback, Jackson’s hartebeest, grey duiker, roan antelope, red duiker, gazelle and buffalo. Those animals which give birth to one at a time are colobus monkey, the monkey-ngurunga, the white-faced, white-nosed monkey, the monkey ndakpa, baboon, a red monkey and chimpanzee. With regard to the baboon, when it gives birth it will not leave its young and go off by itself. It always takes its young with it and they go about together. Likewise the white-faced monkey, when it bears young it always takes its young with it and they go about together. Also the colobus monkey, when it bears young also takes its young behind it; and the small grey monkey, when it bears young it will not put its young down. were, mbaga ni vunga ki e wina kina ba ru, a u ka o biata u ki ni di ru ka mongara ru, ami ki ni li, wini a li e ru u; ki ni ta u na o dudu ni nyaki ni ru, u ki ni nhu na u, ko ni ru ti mwo no mi nga ru, nyem yu ni ta u ki ni nhu yu wu adu yu u, a u ni nga ni di ki ni gi sa ru, were, gu gbe pae nga u na vunga e wina bi ru, u ka biata, ki ni di wina ka asada ta u, u ni li mwo, a u ni nga ni ki no pui ru e ru vu yu jogu fago ru a ru, a o u ni di ki ni kia kedge ni ana ka ta ni ru, u ka kada, ki ni xi ti ru ni kra gbe. Were, gu nga gbhena, u na vunga ki ra biata ki la tumba wina a u na kina ru, a o di wina nga ni ri nga ru nduru na nga. Were, agura anya nga suhuta, u e wina ru, ami ni xata sima. Were, ka a nga wina kina, baba, a red monkey and chimpanzee. With regard to the baboon, when it gives birth it will not leave its young and go off by itself. It always takes its young with it and they go about together. Likewise the white-faced monkey, when it bears young it always takes its young with it and they go about together. Also the colobus monkey, when it bears young also takes its young behind it; and the small grey monkey, when it bears young it will not put its young down. were, mbaga ni vunga ki e wina kina ba ru, a u ka o biata u ki ni di ru ka mongara ru, ami ki ni li, wini a li e ru u; ki ni ta u na o dudu ni nyaki ni ru, u ki ni nhu na u, ko ni ru ti mwo no mi nga ru, nyem yu ni ta u ki ni nhu yu wu adu yu u, a u ni nga ni di ki ni gi sa ru, were, gu gbe pae nga u na vunga e wina bi ru, u ka biata, ki ni di wina ka asada ta u, u ni li mwo, a u ni nga ni ki no pui ru e ru vu yu jogu fago ru a ru, a o u ni di ki ni kia kedge ni ana ka ta ni ru, u ka kada, ki ni xi ti ru ni kra gbe. Were, gu nga gbhena, u na vunga ki ra biata ki la tumba wina a u na kina ru, a o di wina nga ni ri nga ru nduru na nga. Were, agura anya nga suhuta, u e wina ru, ami ni xata sima. Were, ka a nga wina kina, baba, a red monkey and chimpanzee. With regard to the baboon, when it gives birth it will not leave its young and go off by itself. It always takes its young with it and they go about together. Likewise the white-faced monkey, when it bears young it always takes its young with it and they go about together. Also the colobus monkey, when it bears young also takes its young behind it; and the small grey monkey, when it bears young it will not put its young down.'
such time as its legs are firm. The mother puts it in high grass to hide it, and then when evening comes the mother goes and gets her young to walk around in the evening or at night, until the young is grown strong and goes around by itself. Now, it is the habit of the buffalo when it has borne young to leave its calf in the place of its birth, as the water-buck does, for three days, and then to take it out to try its walking. The mother grazes and as she goes along she calls to her calf ‘yu,’ teaching it their speech, till such time as it is big and separates from its mother to go about by itself as a fully developed animal, and then it changes into an old buffalo. Now, when the Uganda cob bears its young it waits three days and then lifts up its young and they walk off together also, until such time as the young grows up and is strong of leg. Now, all those beasts which have hooves wait for three days and then begin to walk with their young.

were, agura nga anya linde, u na vanga, aviu ki ra ka sima yo. biata a ta da ti ba ma u ni kiri ra ka mangusara ra, u a ni ndu ki zr
kuri ki ni ye na u fu ra ami li ru, u ki ni ndu ki zr renwo ki ni ye na u fu ra ami li ru ka sana, ami ki ni ta na u da kina o ami ni kepaya ni ni kuru amana, guru ki ni mere ki ta a da kina o u ni ye ni bereke ki ki aasi, da a o u ni kparo ki ti aisi kind. ‘Now, these beasts which are beasts of prey, when one of them bears young the cubs stay in its lair for three or four days, and then it brings them out to get them to walk around. It goes and catches rats and brings them to its cubs to eat, and it kills reed-rats and brings them to its cubs to eat so that they may grow; and then they hunt with their mother until such time as they develop into full-grown leopards. Then they wander off and roam on their own though they come from time to time to see their mother; and then there comes a day when the cubs separate from their mother for ever.’ were, gu nga bas, u na vanga, ka boro mbela nga ku rogo gu rago u ni vanga ni ya. ka ni mbeldi ko yo u ki zi ni fi kina aviu ami li ni, da kina o u ni rogo aviu
ni rogo gu rago re, ani ni anga, ki ni kparo ni ba ba uk ze ko am aya wa ami a kpi nyen u e. ‘Now, with regard to lions, when one of them gives birth no man would ever dream of going near its lair, and if he were to do so she would seize him for her cubs to eat. When she removes her cubs from their den they are already strong and they go off in pairs to hunt animals as they please.’ were, mbara na vanga wiru ki e e fu kina bara u ni tiindi ru, nara ki ni ndu ni kina kuberu mbiko bara du na linde ni wagi ru ngboso linde ru ka ndu na u, u ta nga ra u ki ni ndu ni kina ndu ru, u ki ni zura kina ngbao angua fui ru ni ni li e, u ni kuru sa gu a goroba ngbaya wataku ga ni boko u ki ta kata ru ni li gi wiru na ni, da o wiru ni ngara ni du ami ki du. ka ndu u kina kuru anya sa, ka guru a bandu nga guru bereve za mbiko u ngara. ami a ni ndu wiru tu li kina ga u lu, nara ni li kina ga u; ka bara a tiinda nga ru bereve ya, u ni ti ni kina ndu ru ka ti ba mbara.”

‘Now, when the elephant gives birth she leaves her young to the father, for him to carry. The mother just goes by his side, because the male has tusks which cross at their junction to carry it. When the young gets stronger it goes on its own feet. The parents strip off the tips of branches for it to eat. When they get among a man’s maize or his pumpkins they break them off to feed their baby with them. When the young grows up its parents are just older beasts with it, they no longer guard their young, for it is grown up. When they go together the young eats its own food and his mother hers; and the father no more carries him; he walks on his own feet from now till he becomes a big elephant.’

A Bronze Snake Head and Other Recent Finds in the Old Palace at Benin. * By the late Professor A. J. H. Goodwin, M.A., F.R.S.S.A.F., University of Cape Town. With four text figures

Excavations were undertaken by me during two seasons (17 December, 1954—23 February, 1955, and 11 December, 1956—16 February, 1957) in the area of the old palace of the Oba of Benin, immediately east of the present palace. This older area covers...

* The paper has been prepared for press, with some additional material, by Mr. William Fagg, Deputy Keeper of Ethnography, British Museum, with whom Professor Goodwin was in correspondence on the subject at the time of his death.

had been abandoned in March, 1897, after a disastrous fire which occurred while the British punitive expedition was in the town, when the Oba Ovonramwen was deported and confined in Calabar. This gives a final date for all material retrieved there.

Excavation in 1954 started directly opposite the European Cemetery. Finds consisted almost entirely of crushed pots, with sufficient numbers of fragments of rolled trade brass, cut tacks and staples to indicate that we were in a domestic part of the palace. It was eventually possible to discern four consecutive red-clay floors, each representing a building destroyed by a fire, leaving fragments of finely divided carbon from thatch. Following the first and the third fires the site had been roughly levelled and cleared before rebuilding the palace in hard tropical ferruginous earth. After the second and the fourth (1897) fires the walls had been allowed to collapse in the rains, and formed an earthen layer 14 inches thick, consisting of wall earth incorporating fragments of eroded pottery of early date. The break between the second and third palaces indicates either a period of civic turmoil (as in 1897) or that this wing was not needed at the time of rebuilding. It is not possible from the evidence to date the earlier three floors, or to dig deeper owing to a prodigal use of the town water supply which has yielded a ‘hanging water table’ in this area. The carbon may represent general or isolated fires. The only large fragments of carbon recovered (completely charred half-coconuts) all belong to the known date of 1897.

During my second season work started about 100 yards west of the earlier dig. Three preliminary pits showed no sign of floors, apart from a very recent superficial floor belonging to a corrugated iron structure. It became clear that we were excavating an open courtyard over which adjacent wall material had fallen to a depth of 12 to 15 inches and that we were within the pattern of the palace. The third pit indicated the position of the water mains laid in 1912. An area was uncovered adjacent to the disturbed earth of this pipeline. All the potsherds recovered were fragmentary and eroded, sherd's caught up in the wall earth from superficial borrow pits. They may therefore belong to any period prior to the erection of this part of the palace. No complete pots, either broken or whole, were found, no charred foodstuffs occurred, and we were clearly in a non-domestic area. Charcoal from thatch indicated the use, the fragments of rolled brass strip, cut tacks and square-sectioned copper staples showed that the woodwork had been plated with strips of beaten brass strip, as is still customary. Immermorable nets of termites clearly indicated the fate of timbers or floors.

At a depth of some 18 inches from surface a widespread living floor was indicated by a white powder. This consists of scattered fragments and crushed lumps of impure kaolin, still used domestically in potmaking and still stored in large lumps a foot or so in diameter on verandahs. The falling walls had crushed and scattered the kaolin, clearly defining the surface of a courtyard within or adjacent to the palace.

On this surface, lying face upwards, two important finds were made. The first is a large bronze casting of a snake’s head (figs. 1 and 2), 164 inches long by 13 inches at maximum width; it had been broken and crushed, but was still about 3 inches deep. The bronze, where touched at one point by a digging tool, is brassy in colour, patinated to a dark green. The second is part of a rectangular plaque (fig. 3), 125 inches wide and 15 inches in length. The plaque is broad, measures 61 inches wide by 7 inches long, and is part of a catfish plaque, originally some 16 inches in length.

The snake’s head. This is distinctly spoon-shaped in its obverse aspect (fig. 1), which hardly shows the fractures and crushing visible on the reverse (fig. 2). It ends in a cast selvedge at the neck. The design is almost symmetrical and is decorated by plaques or medallions which were applied in relief in wax, during its manu-

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