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SOME POINTS OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE FOLK-LORE OF CENTRAL AFRICA AND THAT OF THE KAFIRS, AND CHALDEA. (Friends) in the Caps Munchely Magazine

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Mr. Stanley in the marrative of his travels, "Through the Dark Continent," gives us "The Legend of the Blameless Priest." It is highly creditable to the great traveller that during the unsettled life of his journeyings, he should have succeeded in obtaining such a legend in such exact details. It is another evidence that there is hidden away in the Folk-lore of the people of Africa, very much that is intensely and universally interesting, wanting only earnest and competent men to collect it; I say wanting, not waiting, for it is now fast passing away from the memory of the masses of the people, and becoming changed by intercourse with foreigners.

This legend, committed to writing at Uganda, on Lake Victoria Nyanza, has many curious points of resemblance with the Creationmyths of Zululand and other parts of Southern Africa, which it will be worth while to consider; and, further, it appears to me clearly to be a variation of a legend found in the just recovered Chaldean ancient lore. Yet Mr. Stanley is probably unacquainted with these particulars and has thus unconsciously added an important item to our knowledge, and afforded important material for the Comparative Mythologist, and indicated new lines for the collector of Folk-lore.

I will first give an abridgement, as brief as is compatible with clearness, of the Ugandalegend, and point out the several curious similarities it has to our local legends; then show its probable origin in some common source with the Chaldean account; and lastly point out that the languages spoken in the Central parts of Africa are dialects of the same language as the Kasosa, Zulu, Suto, &c., spoken in the South Eastern Countries.

THE LEGENID OF THE BLAMELESS PRIEST.

Kintu was Priest, Patriarch, and first King of Uganda." He came from the North, and "brought with him one wife, one cow, one goat, one sheep, one barnana-root and a sweet potato." He settled on the western bank of the Mwerango river at Magonga, near the present frontier of Unyoro. There were no human beings there to dispute with him the right to settle. Kintu was alone in his kingdom; on him devolved the peopling of the country. But it was "not destined to remain desolate long, for his wife was remarkably prolific. She brought for th four children at a birth each year; and each male issued into the world with an incipient beard and the powers of lusty prime youth; and the female children at two years of age bore children, who at an equally early age conceived and bore



sons and daughters, until the land began to be fully peopled." The cow, the goat, the sheep, the chicken, the banana, the potato, all increased at the same rate, until the valleys of Unyoro abounded with numerous families all rich in all the necessaries of life.

When the land could no longer bear the vast population, Kintu gave portions of the original banana to some of his offspring, and portions of the original potato-plant to others, and sent them forth to seek new homes, and to establish new nations.* Those who received the banana cutting went to the south of Magonga, and those who received the potato went to the north and dwelt in the valleys of Unyoro. So to this day the Waganga and all living about Magonga prefer bananas for food, and the Wanyoro prefer the potato.

Kintu, the Priest, had an especial aversion to bloodshedding, whether blood of man or animal. But he did not instruct his children not to use animal food; but nothing must be killed in his presence, but at a distance from his house and neighbourhood. If the murderer was subject to the law of having his blood shed by man for the blood of man he had shed, he must not be slain in the presence of Kintu. If the culprit could succeed in reaching Kintu, and touch his feet or garments, or were the patriarch only to cast his eyes on him, he was safe. So great a right of sanctuary surrounded this primitive Priest.

But as man increased so too did evil. And at length the children of the gentle, blameless Kintu not only gave themselves up to all excess of evil living, but rose against their venerable head, and threatened to depose and kill him. At length, wearied by their growing impiety, he determined to leave them, and, calling his wife, said, "See, my sons whom I have brought into this world have become wicked and hard of heart, and threaten to drive their father away or kill him, for they say I am become old and useless. I am like a hateful stranger amongst my own children. They shed the blood of their brothers daily, and there is nothing but killing and bloodshed now, until I am sick of blood.† It is time for us to get away and depart elsewhere. Come, let us go." And in the night Kintu and his wife departed, taking with them their original cow, goat, sheep, chicken, a banana-root and a sweet potato.

From that time for many generations successive chiefs spent much time in searching for Kintu; but each died without any tidings of the lost one, whom all believed to be still alive, and that he would again appear amongst his children.

In process of time Ma'anda succeeded to the chieftainship. He was possessed with a strong faith in the continued existence and reappearance of Kintu, and spurred on by the hope of being success-

ful where all others had failed, he devoted himself to the chase, "penetrating great forests, and traversing extensive plains and valleys ostensibly to hunt game," but really in the hopes of perchance lighting on some hidden recess where Kintu was concealing himself.

During Ma'anda's hunting excursions, a peasant one day, fatigued by his labour, sleeps in the tropical forest, and there dreams. Three times he dreams the same dream. He hears a voice telling him to go to a certain place in the forest beside a stream, where "he shall see something which shall give him great wealth and make him a great chief." He obeys, and his heart fills with awe as he approaches the deep solitude, and sees, "Ranged in two rows, on either side of a venerable man, who reclimed on a kind of throne, many warriors seated on mats. They held spears and shields in their hands, and the complexion of these mean was so light as to resemble that of white men. The central figure on the throne was that of an old man, whose long beard was white with age, and his complexion was similar to the warriors seated on the mats. All were clothed in spotless white robes."

He is told that Kintu, the first King of Uganda, sits before him, and is sent with a message to Ma'anda, "for Ma'anda has long searched for Kintu, and Kintu has something to tell Ma'anda." "But," said the Amcient Man, "bid him come hither, accompanied only by his mother and thy self and, mark me, not even his dog must follow him."

Ma'anda, prepared by a dream, receives the message sent to him by Kintu, and at once sets out secretly, accompanied by his mother and the peasant. But the Katekiro, or Prime Minister, seeing his Master go forth alone, unaccompanied by his guards, and fearing treachery, follows, unperceived by Ma'anda. But Kintu points him out to the chief; and he, enraged because the word of Kintu had thus been unheeded, launched his spear at his faithful servant and pierces him to the heart. And turning to the place, lately occupied by Kintu and his followers, all have vanished. Kintu had fled from the shedding of blood; and no revelation was made to Ma'anda; and the peasant lost his reward.

Ma'anda fell on the ground, lamenting and calling on Kintu.

But no answer came but that given by the echoing words, "Kintu,
Kintu-u, Kintu-u-u," as if im mockery of his sorrow.

All night they kept watch, breaking out now and then into moaning and wailings for the last loss of the great father of Uganda. But Kintu never more appeared in Uganda, and to this day has not been seem or heard of by any man."

Such is the Ugandla-legend of the Blameless Priest.

Thirty-five names of his reputed successors are still retained in the memory of the people. Mr. Stanley fixes the thirteenth or the fourteenth century as the time of the arrival of Kintu at Magonga. But, it is clear, that Kintu is a purely mythological personage; and if there ever existed a Historical person called Kintu, which is not

^{*} This would be called by the Zulu,—ubudabuka kwezizwe, the breaking off of the nations.

[†] Comp. Gen. vi. II-I3.

impossible, the earliest human traditions have been woven into myths around him, and he has become invested with almost divine attributes. He is to be regarded as one of those Great Ancestors, or Onkulunkulu, Great—great Fathers, whose names have been handed down amongst different tribes, as the Ohlanga,—Primal Life-stems,—from whom they have severally sprung. It is very common for natives to confound the special Unkulunkulu, or Great Father of their tribe, with the First Unkulunkulu, to whom they refer Creation, and of whom they speak as the First Man. But this confusion may be due more to a misunderstanding of words than any inconsist-

ency in the ideas of the natives themselves.

But whether we are to regard Kintu as representing, in the native mind, the first man, or only as "the Great Father of the Uganda," -whether Adam, or Noah, or Ham, -there is sufficient similarity in the account given of him and of the First Unkulunkulu in the Creation-Myths found am ongst the Zulus and other Kafir tribes, to lead us to refer them to a common origin. In these latter, Unkulunkulu is represented as first coming out of a bed of reeds, - out of a reed, from a hole,—or from the earth; and the locality of his outcome is by various tribes referred to various places,—as the sea shore,—a river,—the mountains,—the North,—or the South,—according to the direction from which tradition says the tribe came. But from whatever source he comes, he appears with a wife,—the Great Mother, or she splits off from him, and with cattle, sheep, &c. Or a tradition of the Ark sending forth its living freight after the deluge may be preserved in those Fabulous Monsters which first swallow, and then are forced to disgorge all living things. The legend of Kintu may be referred to either class of myth.

The latter portion of the legend,—the departure of Kintu, and the constant search made for him by his successors,—appears in the

Zulu tales, in two particulars,

First, The uncertainty with which the natives speak of the First Unkulunkulu. They do not know what became of him, whether he died or not, nor where he is. He has no name. He is like one gone out into the wilderness, whose footsteps you follow

for a space, and then lose, and never find them again.

Second, Ma'anda's crying for Kintu. There is a curious and up to the present time, inexplicable custom amongst the Zulus, that of crying for Unkulunkulu. The children are told to go and cry for Unkulunkulu on the mountains, when their parents want to get rid of them; and to tell one to cry after Unkulunkulu, that is for him to return, is equivalent to telling him to do a thing from which there is expected to be no result. This appears to be now explained, they are shouting for "the Great Father," as Ma'anda

shouted for the lost Kintu, but are, like him, destined to be ever disappointed.

The account of the disappearance of Kintu, and Ma'anda's search for him, has seweral points of similarity in the Chaldean Legends of

the deluge.*

It may be as well to remark that the knowledge of these legends has come down to us, not only in the recently discovered "Cuneiform Inscriptions," but also in fragments of the writing of Berosus, which have been preserved to us in the books of various authors. Berosus was a Babylonian Priest, about three or four centuries before the Christian Era, and had ample means of knowing the Babylonian traditions. According to Alexander Polyhistor he gives an account of the deluge in which the builder of the ark is called Xisuthus. It is said that on "quitting the ark with his wife and daughter and the pilot, he paid his adoration to the earth; and, having constructed an altar, offered sacrifices to the Gods, and then, with those who came out of the vessel with him, disappeared.

"Those who remained within, finding that their companions did not return, quitted the vessel with many lamentations, and called continually on the name of Xisuthus. Him they saw no more; but they could distinguish his voice in the air, and could hear him admonish them to pay due regard to religion; and likewise informed them that it was on account of his piety that he was translated to live with the Gods, and that his wife and daughter and the pilot

had obtained the same honour."

In the Cureiform Inscriptions the account is somewhat different.

We find amongst them a marrative of the illness and wanderings of Iz-dubar. Iz-dubar is supposed to be Nimrod. He, like Ma'anda, was a Hunter. The legend says that in the latter part of his life, suffering from some bodily affliction which is regarded as resulting from the curse of the Gods,—to be "the brand of the Gods upon him,"—he determines, "having had a dream," to go in search of Hasiadra, which is the Chaldean name for Noah. He calls him, "Hasiadra, my father, who is established in the assembly of the Gods, death and life are known to him."

From this it is evident that there existed a legend that, like Kintu, Hasiadra had departed, man knew not where, but that he had not departed from the world, but might be found by diligent search.

During his wanderings he has to pass through many trials, and to overcome many difficulties. At length he meets with a "boatman, named Urhamsi, who takes him in his boat to the presence of Hasiadra. Hasiadra gives him an account of the building of the ark, at Surippak, the ark—city, from which Hasiadra is called the Surippakite, son of Ubarratutu, and the particulars of the deluge. He tells him that when he had quitted the ark, he sacrificed to the Gods; that Ela, "the prince of the Godswarriors," who had inconsiderately.

^{*} Mr Stanley in using these words did not know how full of interest they would be in reference to the mythology of the native races. It would be very desirable to know if the Waganda have a word corresponding to Unkulunkulu.

^{*} See " Tibe Challeleann Accommt of Genesis," &c. By George Smith.

made the deluge to punish man's sin, pleaded against the preservation of any; and endeavoured to stir up the anger of the Gods, exclaiming, "Let not any one come out alive, let not a man be saved from the deep." But he is overruled by the other Gods, and Hasiadra goes on to say, "Bel went up to the midst of the ship. He took my hand and raised me up; he caused to raise, and bring my wife to my side; he made a bond, he established a covenant, and gave this blessing, in the presence of Hasiadra and his people, thus: When Hasiadra, and his wife, and the people, to be like the gods are carried away, then shall dwell Hasiadra in a remote place at the mouth of the rivers.' They took me, and in a remote place at the mouth of the rivers they set me."

Izdubar obtained of Hasiadra the object of his journey, and

returned to reign at Erech.

It remains to make a few remarks on the language.

The language shows the principle of initial inflection, which is apparent in the Kafir languages, as well as the similarity of many words, thus:—

Mntu, a human being, Wantu, plu.

Mtuma, a slave, Watuma.

Mngwana, a freedman, Wangwana.

Msheni, a pagan, Washeni. Uganda, the name of a district.

Waganda, a man of Uganda, Waganda.

Em-bomma, evidently a locative case,—at Boma. The English pronounce it Boma. It should probably be written Emboma.

Umriro, fire, for Umlilo, the r being used for l, as in so many Suto

words.

Nyama, meat, Inyama.

Mutti, sticks; from the root ti we have Umuti, uluti.
Mku, a species of fig. U-mku-iwane is a fig tree in Kafir.

The plural of personal nouns is sometimes ba, as Mtwa a dwarf found in many places = Batwa or Watwa. The Zulus use Umutwa, Abatwa, for the Bushman.

Bakutzi or Wakuti, evidently two different dialects, meeting

Ba-ama, Bakumu.

Mambu kwa Mungu. This Mr. Stanley translates, My fate is in the hands of God. Kwa is at once recognised. Mungu for God has its representatives in other dialects. Joano Dos Santos, a Portuguese Dominican who laboured in the country of Sofala, gives Molungu as the native name for God. A lad from the Shire gave Umlungu. Umlungu is the name given to the white man by the Kafirs of these parts. The name given to the white man in central Africa is Msungu. These words are probably all related.

But perhaps the most interesting word is that of Muzimu. It will be known by some that those labouring amongst the Zulus met with the word Ezozimu, that is, the cattle of Uzimu, applied to a certain sacrifice, apparently regarded as of great importance. But the Zulus

could not give us any information respecting this Uzimu, except that they had an indefinite notion that in some way it meant the Ancestral Spirits, to whom, in common with other South African tribes, the Zulus sacrifice. The first distinct explanation of it was found in one of Captain Burton's books, that on Dahomey, where the word Uzimu, pl. Bozimu, is said to mean Ancestral Spirit. In this work of Mr. Stanley we have the word constantly occurring. Thus we have Muzimu-Island, or as Livingstone wrote, Mozimu that is, Spirit Island.

The Priests or Priestesses of Muzimu, or witchcraft.

The propitiation of the dreadful Muzimu or evil spirits with charms and medicines by the Chief Priest.

Homage and dures paid to the Muzimu or Spirits by Suna before

levying an army.

A small square hut, rearred to the genius of the family,—the household Muzimu. Or many Huts made for the accommodation of the

Muzimus or Spirits.

The Gambaragara are a nearly white people,—an aristocratic caste living in the midst of the Wasongora, who are a coloured people. They are entrusted with the keeping of the charms of Kabba Rega, and endowed by hereditary right with the privilege of the Priests of the Muzimu of Unyoro.

The elders of Kungwé retain the traditions of the race whence they sprang; and in their charge are the Lares and Penates,—the

Muzimu.

The inhabitants of Katawi pray to their Muzimu to raise storms to destroy voyagers on the Tanganika, that they may be wrecked and driven ashore. He is regarded as one of the most powerful spirits along the shore of the lake.

We also read of the "Muzimu of the Well," in a fairy tale, which

sounds very much like one of the Arabian Nights' Stories.

Thus we have no longer any difficulty in comprehending the Zulu word; and conclude that the retention of such a sacrifice with the name Ezozimu is a proof that the Zulus, in days of long ago, were connected with the central tribes.

It is also probable that this word Muzimu is identical with the Molimo, Balimo of the Sutos, and Morimo, Barimo of the

Bechuana and other tribes.

If every traveller would contribute as much as Mr. Stanley has done to Comparative Mythology and Comparative Philology, of the countries they visit, how much added interest would be taken in their books. But if Stanley could do what he did, how much may not intelligent missionaries resident for years amongst the people do, if they would direct their attention thoroughly and systematically to such enquiries.