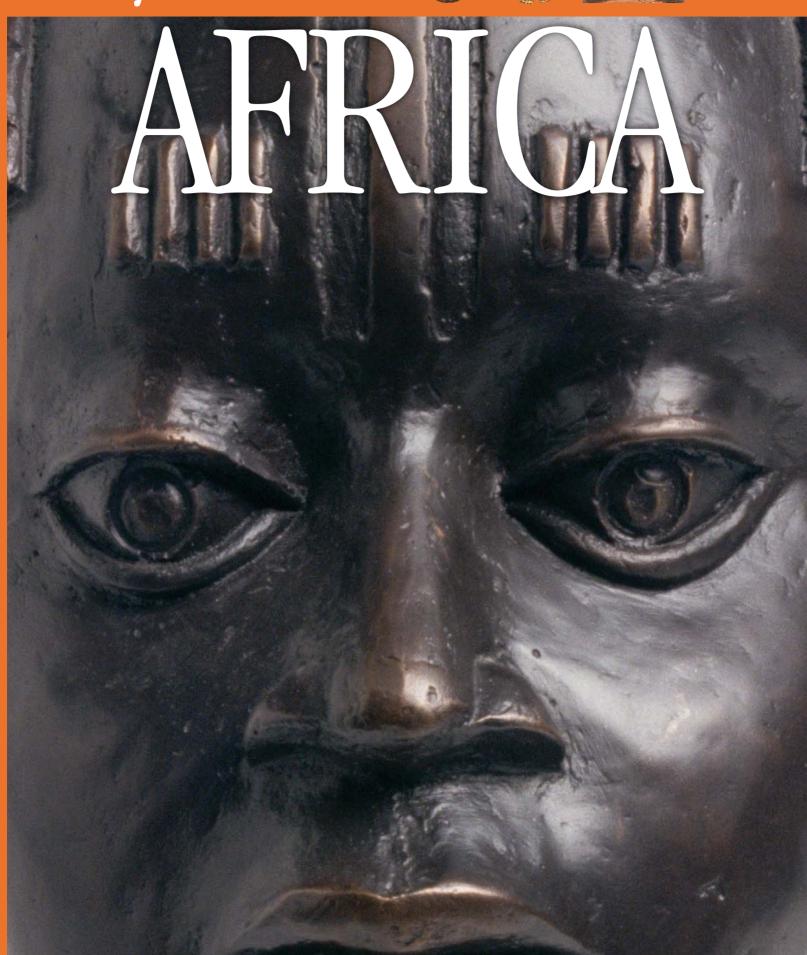


# Expewitness Experiences









# Eyewitness Africa





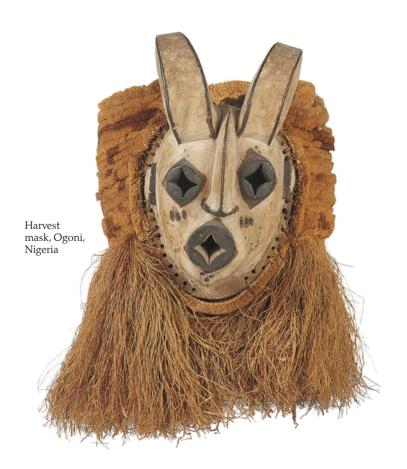
War spear, Lango, Uganda

# Eyewitness Africa



Written by
YVONNE AYO

Photographed by RAY MOLLER & GEOFF DANN



Thrusting spear, Zulu, South Africa

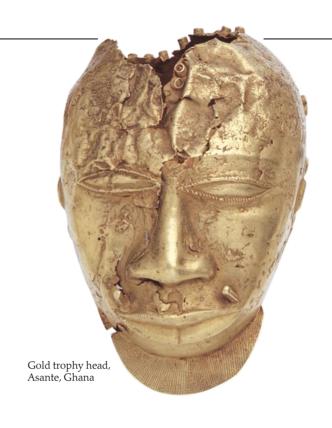






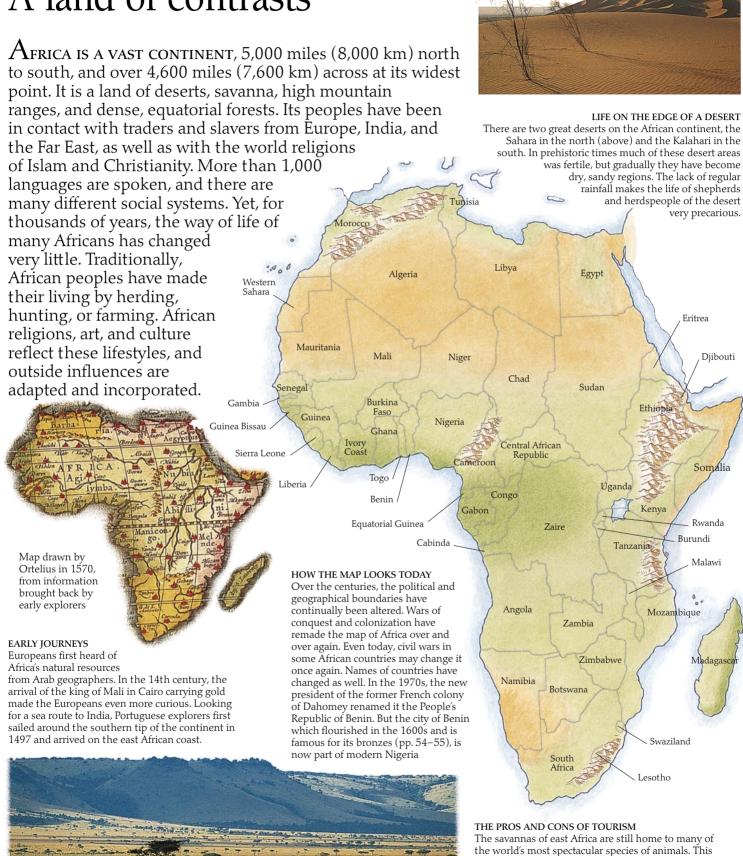
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# A land of contrasts

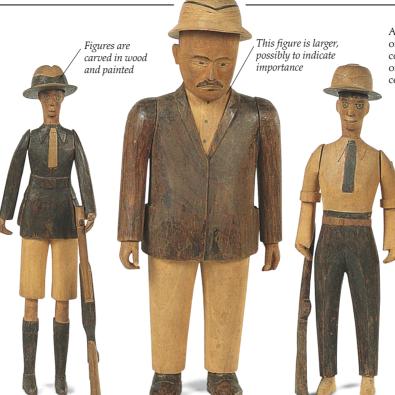


The savannas of east Africa are still home to many of the world's most spectacular species of animals. This is largely due to the development of game parks, established nearly 100 years ago to protect the animals from big game hunting. Unfortunately, the Maasai, whose cattle have wandered across the Maasai Mara plains of Kenya (left) for centuries, can no longer follow this lifestyle or hunt wild game.



# There were once tropical rain forests across much of central Africa. Because of poor farming methods and the cutting down of trees for export, the hot, humid rain forests are pour

humid rain forests are now found only on the west coast and as far inland as eastern Zaire.



African carvings of German colonial officials of the early 20th century, Tanzania

### COLONIZATION

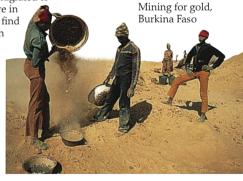
When Europeans first arrived on the west coast of Africa in the late 1500s, they were interested in trading for gold and slaves. By the end of the 1800s, European nations were not only exploiting the peoples of Africa but also competing with each other for gold, diamonds, copper, and land. They drew boundaries on maps with no regard for the local peoples, such as the Tuareg of the Sahara, the San of the Kalahari Desert, and the cattle herders of eastern Africa. The boundaries completely changed the traditional ways of life of these people, who depend on their ability to travel with herds in search of water.



# LIFE IN THE CITIES

As empires grew, so did major cities as centers for trade. In the 1500s, Timbuktu, in the savanna region of northern Africa, was a center of learning, and Gao, capital of the Songhay empire, was home to 75,000 people. Some cities were modernized during colonial rule. For example, Cairo, founded in A.D. 641, expanded rapidly in the 1830s under French rule. As traditional ways of life have changed, many people have migrated to

cities, such as Harare in Zimbabwe (left), to find work, but they often retain strong links with their rural homes."



### MINERAL RESOURCES

Africa is rich in mineral resources. Some of them — for example, the copper belt of Zaire, the diamond mines of Tanzania, and the gold deposits of South Africa — are exploited on a large scale. Most mineral extraction requires a large labor force and sophisticated machinery and technology.

# THE UPLANDS OF AFRICA

Some of the mountains of Africa are so high that the tallest peaks, such as Mount Kilimanjaro on the border of Kenya and Tanzania, are always covered in snow. A layer of cloud causes mists, and water drips onto the dense forests below. Crops are often grown on the fertile high ground—for example, coffee on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro and tea in Uganda, Malawi, and Kenya.



# A place to live

When you travel around Africa, you see an enormous variety of buildings made from a wide range of materials. The type of dwellings depend not only on what is available locally but also on the lifestyle of the occupants. For example, the San of the Kalahari desert live by traveling through their territory, hunting game and collecting fruits. They carry few possessions and are without means of transportation, so they set up temporary shelters of sticks or branches covered with grass or leaves. Most other groups, such as the millet farmers of Chad in West Africa or the Nupe of Nigeria, need to have permanent dwellings close to their fields. They build their houses, often circular in shape, with a framework of wood, mud walls, and a grass thatched roof. These houses are erected near each other in a compound that has a surrounding wall for defense (see pages 16-17).

# ON THE MOVE

In drier parts of Africa, such as Somalia, where there are no permanent rivers and little rainfall, the only reliable means of staying alive is to keep herds of animals. Because people have to be constantly on the move in search of water and grazing land, they live a nomadic life and need only temporary shelter. Each married woman has her own house, a collapsible structure of mats over a framework of branches, which she takes apart and packs onto a camel when it is time to move on.



# A PLACE OF WORSHIP

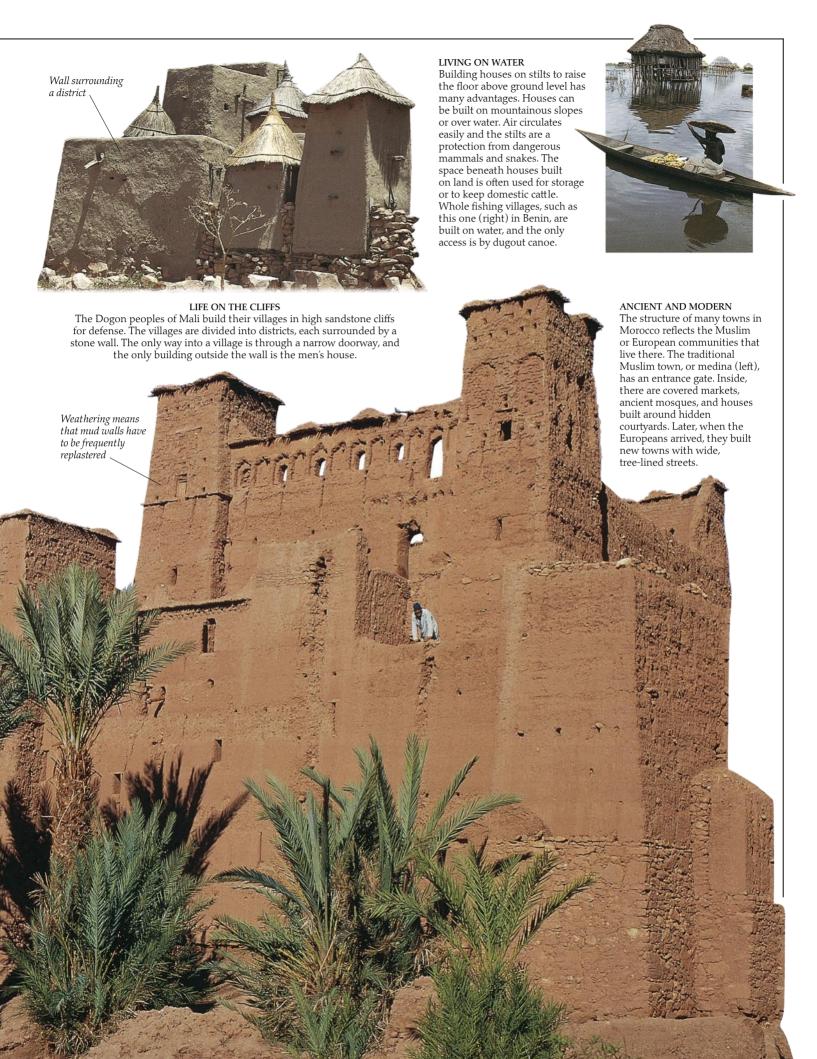
In the savanna regions of Africa, where the Islamic religion holds sway, enormous mosques are built. They are made from mud bricks that have been left in the sun to dry before being built into walls with mud plaster. Mud is an excellent material in hot, dry climates, and can withstand heavy rainfall if dried out by the sun soon afterward.

A Somali nomadic family outside their collapsible house

These pieces of wood help support the structure and serve as scaffolding during repairs

### HOUSE DECORATION

In parts of southern Africa, women decorate the outside walls of their houses with vivid and bold designs. At first sight, the Ndebele paintings appear to be a series of geometric shapes, but they are, in fact, a representation of architecture. The vertical and horizontal lines represent house supports and beams. The women make the designs with their fingers, hands, or brushes and fabric cloths.



# Large wooden seeds, covered in gold, are symbols of fertility or wealth

# Great civilizations

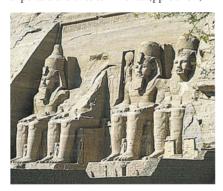
 $\mathbf{F}$ rom the earliest times, the African peoples south of the Sahara Desert lived in scattered family groups and used tools of wood, bone, or stone to fish, hunt wild game, and gather fruit. During the first millenium B.C., there were two great advances in technology that carried these people out of the Stone Age. The first was the organized cultivation of food and the raising of herds, which encouraged people to settle in one place, farm lands, and develop their arts and crafts. The second advance was the production of metal tools and weapons. By A.D. 400, many communities had realized that they had control over metals such as gold and iron ore, and that this gave them power.



STONE AGE ART
Life in Africa depends on an understanding of animals, plants, and the seasons. The earliest peoples recognized their importance and reflected this in superb rock paintings. Not only did they represent themselves but also the animals that they herded or hunted. Most of the early cave paintings show wild animals – elephants, giraffes, rhinoceroses, and ostriches.

# THE ASANTE EMPIRE AND ITS GOLD

The Asante peoples of West Africa became the major Gold Coast power of the 18th century, because of their ability to mine, work, and trade in metals. The realization that they could trade profitably with other nations led them to expand their empire along the west coast of Africa, and they became major exporters of slaves to America (pp. 50–51).



# THE KUSH CIVILIZATION

The Nubian peoples of Kush lived in what is now known as the Sudan. They rose to power in 800 B.C., establishing an independent kingdom that dominated Egypt and controlled the southern trade routes. They were strong in war, and developed one of the world's earliest alphabetical scripts. The rock-cut temples of Rameses II (1304-1237 B.C.) at Abu Simbel (above) are typical of the widespread monument building of his reign. After 1,000 years, the Kushite civilization declined and finally, in about A.D. 550, was conquered by the neighboring kingdom of Aksum, in today's Ethiopia.



# ANCIENT EGYPT

From 3000 B.C., the fertile Nile valley was the home of one of the greatest of all civilizations – Egypt, united under the pharaohs. The land was easily irrigated and the Egyptians were able to produce all the food they needed. The Nile River provided an excellent transportation system and trade route for the export of gold and copper from the eastern desert. And it was from Asia, via the Nile River, that Egypt was exposed to concepts such as brick-making and writing.

Ceremonial sword from treasure of King Kofi-Karikari (1867–75), Asante, Ghana





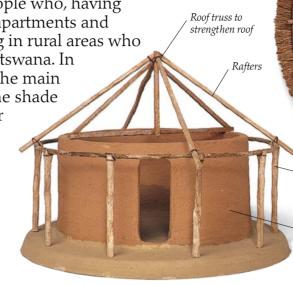
# Building a house

People build houses for protection from cold, wind, rain, or sun, and use a variety of materials, usually from the local environment. In Africa, there are many people who, having migrated to the cities to find work, live in apartments and townhouses. But there are also many living in rural areas who

build traditional houses like this one in Botswana. In that country there are large villages, with the main kgotla, or meetinghouse, in the center in the shade

of a tree. Most villages have a standpipe for water, a post office, and shops. Building a house like this one is usually done by men and women during the winter months, when the plowing and the harvesting are over. Near the house are

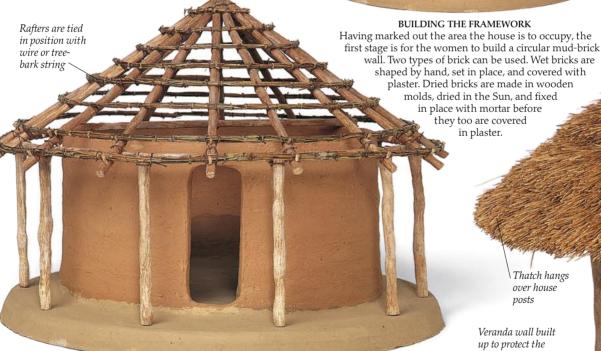
smaller shelters for cooking, for brewing beer, and for keeping domestic animals.



Thatch is trimmed at edges with a sharp knife when roof is complete

Walls are plastered both inside and outside in two or three layers

Posts support roof structure



Thatch hangs over house posts

Veranda wall built up to protect the house from rains

in plaster.

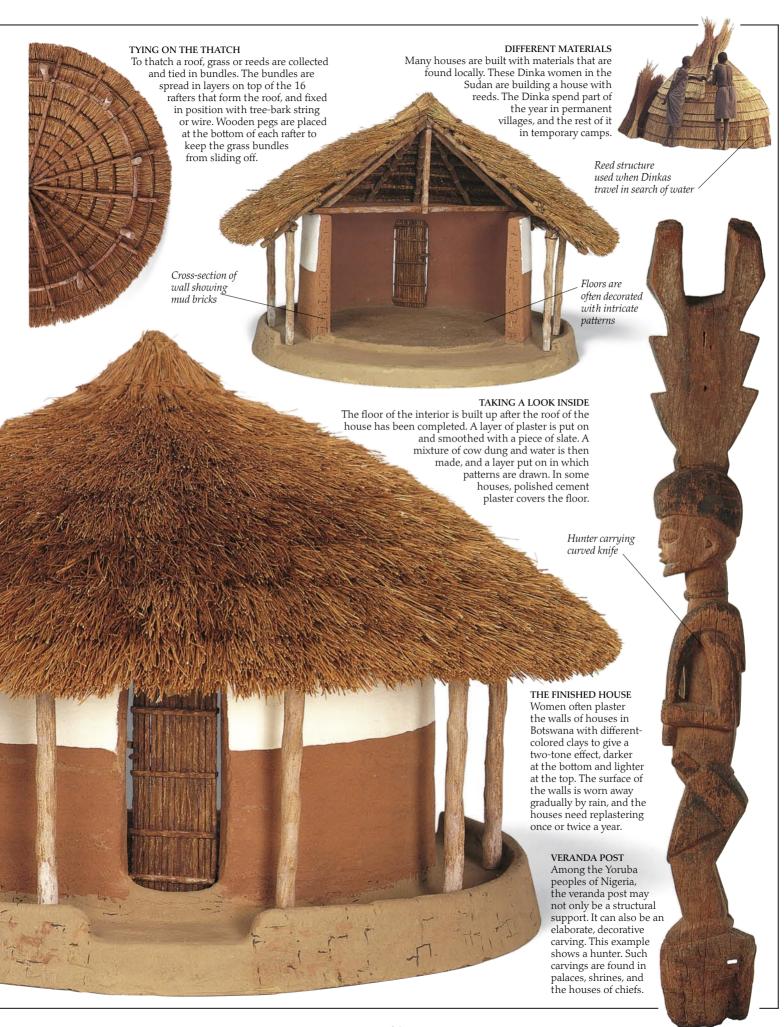
# STRENGTHENING THE ROOF

The task of collecting the timber and building the roof is undertaken by the men of the village. The first rafters are fixed to the supporting posts outside the wall of the house, and fixed to each other at a central point. Thinner poles or beams are now added and lashed to the first rafters. Sometimes extra support is given by a central vertical pole in the middle of the house.

# INTERIOR OF A TUAREG TENT

The lifestyle of the nomadic Tuareg means that they must live in structures that can be taken down and set up easily. The roofs of their tents are made from, on average, 30 or 40 sheep- and goatskins that are tanned and sewn together. The skins are supported on wooden tent poles, and the side walls are made from grass matting.





# Home life

 $\Gamma$ HE PREPARATION and cooking of food, and crafts such as pottery and weaving, are outdoor activities in much of rural Africa. Tents and houses are used for shelter from the rain, to keep warm during cold

weather, and for sleeping. The staple diet consists mainly of grains, usually sorghum (a type of wheat), corn, or cassava, with vegetables, such as

> beans or peas. They are pounded into a soft, sticky pudding to which boiled water or, sometimes, milk is added. A tasty meat or fish stew is cooked separately and eaten with the cooked cereal.



Eating and drinking is a communal activity. Whole families eat together, usually outside. These Tuareg men are heating water to make tea. The Tuareg live in large nomadic groups in the Sahara desert in the south of Algeria. They are

Muslims, and the men cover their faces with a veil. They keep goats and sheep as well as camels, and camel milk is

their main food.



Skin-covered raffia container for carrying coffeepot



Hanging

milk pot,

Somalia

Stopper



Beaded

# TRAVELING COFFEE MACHINE

The Bene-Amer peoples live in Sudan near the border with Eritrea. They are nomadic and travel over a wide area in search of water and pasture for their camels, sheep, and goats. Coffee is an important part of their diet, and they carry coffee-making equipment with them. In other parts of Africa, tea is a favorite beverage, and beer and palm wine are often made by women and sold in markets and beer halls.



Empty ostrich eggshells, if pierced at one end, make excellent milk or water carriers. The San of the Kalahari Desert use these shells exclusively as water containers, which they store within their territory and use during a drought.

# STIRRING IT UP

Wooden food stirrers are often used when cooking grains or stews. These Somali stirrers are typical of the inventive uses to which wood is put. They are rolled between the hands so that the end rotates quickly, much like an electric mixer.

# SERVING FOOD

Wooden vessels are used throughout the African continent. They range from a simple, plain style to highly decorated containers that can be used in a king's palace or for ritual purposes. Bowls like this one from Lesotho are traditionally carved from a single block of wood. Wooden containers and calabashes are important among herding communities, because they believe using anything else will cause their cattle to become ill.





# Life in the compound

In Many Parts of Africa, family groups live in compounds that are often circular in shape. They are made up of several clay houses with thatched roofs, connected by passageways. There is a meeting place in the center of the compound, an enclosure for the householder, and an area for each of his wives. Each enclosure has a sleeping house, containing personal belongings, a kitchen, a granary, and a storage house, which is used for agricultural tools, domestic utensils, dried food, and milk. This homestead of the Kuanyama people in Angola was home to a farming family in the 1930s, and was probably occupied for about ten years. The family would then build a new homestead nearby, reusing materials where possible.

This householder

has two granaries

Guest

house

A WOMAN'S WORK Within a family group, men and women usually have separate tasks. The women look after their children, work in the fields, fish, and prepare food. This woman, in a Habila settlement in the Sudan, is grinding beans before cooking them. Women also fetch and carry water and firewood, as well as looking after their own area of the compound. In many family groups, such as the Kuanyama, the women make pottery for use in the home.

# DAILY LIFE IN THE COMPOUND

compound and herds.

The agricultural life of the Kuanyama is based on the seasons. The compound is built, following a traditional plan, near a permanent waterhole. The grainfields where the Kuanyama grow their staple foods – millet and sorghum – surround the compound, and there are rainy season and dry pens for the cattle. The wealth of a particular householder is measured by the number of wives he has and by the quality of his

Rainy season cattle pens

Fence of hewn stakes

10 ft (3m) high

Enclosure for pounding harvested millet and sorghum

The householder's granaries were always bigger than those of his wives

Sleeping hut

### CATTLE HERDING

In the drier regions of Africa, cattle are kept as the main source of food and the men look after them. The cattle are used for the meat, milk, and clothing – the skins are tanned and made into leather clothes and shoes. Because some communities rely on natural grazing land, they have to move from area to area to exploit seasonal weather changes and to find water. They build temporary camps at each place. These cattle belong to one such community in the Sudan.

Householder's

Cattle moved here because they do not need to be close to waterhole



# MARKET DAYS Most of the food that the farmers grow, as well as many of the animals that are herded, are taken to be sold at a local market. Women are often the traders in markets, such as this colorful one near Nairobi, in Kenya.

# Finding food

 ${
m Most}$  of Africa's rural population farms the land or keeps livestock such as cattle or sheep, despite problems caused by drought or soil erosion. However, there are also small populations who live almost entirely by finding wild foods. Of these, there are three main groups: the San of Namibia and Botswana, the Hadza of Tanzania, and the pygmies of Zaire. These groups are called hunter-gatherers – in other words, they traditionally hunt game animals and birds, and gather insects, roots, fruits, and wild honey. They do not live in permanent villages, but in small nomadic groups that may camp together for part of the year. Hunting is done by the men, and gathering by the women. The Turkana people of Kenya

Surprisingly, their way of life is often easier than that of the farmers.

> Once in the snare, the antelope cannot withdraw its foot



babies on their backs.

FISHING FOR A LIVING

Fishermen use nets, baskets, hooks, lines, traps, and dams in shallow waters to catch fish for a living. They sell the fish to women, who then cure them and, in turn, sell them at the markets. This dugout canoe is particularly narrow because it is used to weave in and out of the roots of mangroves in the coastal waters of West Africa. When not in use, the canoe is turned bottom-up and raised several feet off the ground on a light trestle table. This helps it to dry out and keeps the wood from rotting.

tied around a tree so the animal cannot escape

The hide noose is

FOR THE BIRDS This bird trap was used by a Dinka herdsboy in the Sudan to catch birds. It was hung between the branches of a tree. Birds, unable to see its fine lines - made from giraffe hair and weighted

with clay - would become

ensnared in it.

CATCHING ANTELOPE

antelope. They leave it

lying on the ground

Stone

and simply wait until the animal puts its foot in the hole.

use this wooden trap to catch

SPINNING A TRAP These spindles carry fishing lines of cotton thread that the Bagiun peoples of Ciula Island in Somalia use to catch fish for their daily diet. The baited lines are trailed in the water from fishing boats. Traditionally, Africans catch fish to eat, or to dry and sell. Fishing purely for sport is unknown.

Wooden

svindle

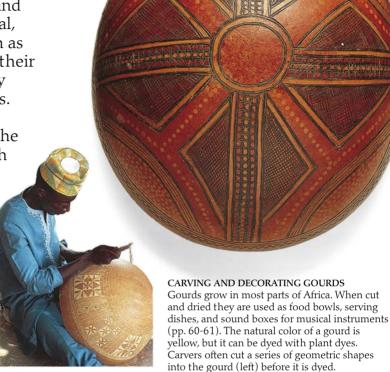
Dugout canoe, West Africa



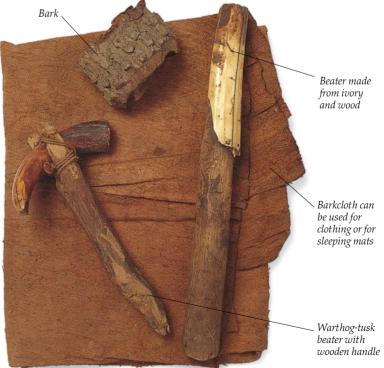
# Pattern and color

 ${f I}$ N AFRICA, pattern and color are important ingredients of everyday life. Materials, pots, and baskets are often covered in geometric, animal, human, or floral shapes. Certain objects, such as pots and calabashes, are made by people for their own use; others, such as textiles, are made by specialists who make a living from their skills. Local resources offer an excellent source of materials from which to make and decorate the objects. The forests provide wood from which stools and figures are carved, and bark that is beaten into a versatile cloth, while seeds and vegetable dyes are used for decoration. Many objects are made for religious purposes or for kings or rulers. These are usually highly decorated.





Gourd is burnished with a hot knife \_



# CLOTH MADE FROM TREES

Trees are a ready source of materials, for both objects and dyes. In Uganda, a special fabric is produced from them. The bark is stripped off the trees, which are then covered with banana leaves for protection. The bark is softened by soaking in water, or by steaming in a bundle over a fire. It is then placed on a wooden log, a piece at a time, and beaten with a heavy mallet. The frequent beating of the bark causes its fibers to knit together to become cloth.



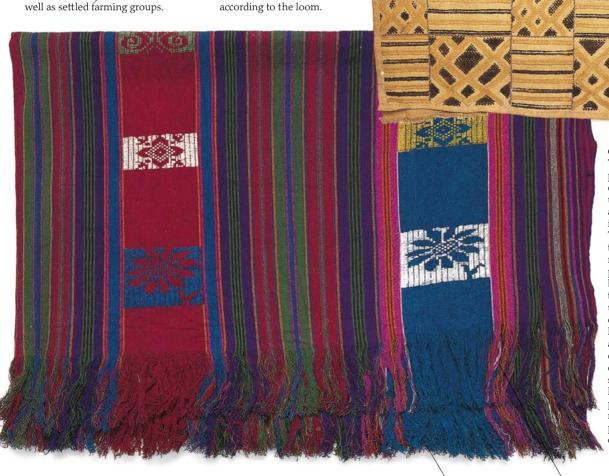
MAKING A MAT, SOMALIA
Many mats and baskets are woven
from vegetable fibers, usually by
women in the home. Little
equipment is needed – just a knife to
split the strands of fiber. It is an
activity that is popular with many
cattle herders and hunter-gatherers
who are constantly on the move, as
well as settled farming groups.



WEAVING ON A LOOM
Both men and women weave
cloth on looms. Two sets of
fibers or threads are used to
make the cloth: the first set,
warp threads, are arranged
horizontally or vertically. Above,
the warp threads are wound
around the poles in the ground.
The second set, weft threads, are
passed in and out between the
warp threads to form the fabric.
The cloth varies in width
according to the loom



# RAFFIA CLOTHS In many parts of Africa, raffia, the grasslike fiber of the raffia palm, is used to make a wide variety of everyday things such as ropes, fishing tackle, and snares for catching wild animals. Young leaves are stripped and peeled, carefully dried in the sun, and mounted on a loom to be woven into cloth. Usually a loom is kept inside a weaver's house, but some are outside in the village, under a shelter for shade in the hot sun.



CUT-PILE CLOTHS, ZAIRE The Kuba peoples of Zaire produce a highly distinctive embroidered cloth (above) using a technique known as "cut-pile." The base cloth is a piece of woven raffia. The raffia embroidery thread is threaded on a needle, which is used to pick up a few threads of the base cloth, before pulling the embroidery thread underneath. The embroidery thread is cut, leaving its two ends visible as a pattern on the surface of the base cloth. Pieces of embroidered cloth are sewn together to form one large piece of fabric. The pattern is created from memory, and the same patterns are found on carved objects and houses.

MULTI-COLORED CLOTHS, MADAGASCAR

In 19th-century Madagascar, cotton, silk, and raffia were woven into colorful shawls that were worn by both men and women over European clothing. Local vegetable dyes were traditionally used to produce the colors of the textiles, but the introduction of manufactured dyes increased the range still further. The designs are so complicated that the weaver often uses bits of numbered paper to figure out at which point the pattern is to be formed.

The edge is typically frayed to form a fringe

The colors and patterns in cloths from Madagascar combine vividly

# Sports and entertainment

When the daily work is over, African peoples relax in various ways. Storytelling is a favorite occupation, and lives of important ancestors are often reenacted around the communal fire in the compound. Music can be performed either by an individual playing a lute or harp or by a group. Music is also played as part of village competitions, which include other activities, such as wrestling, racing, and dance. Among the Mursi peoples of Ethiopia, fierce dueling contests with long poles are organized by young unmarried men. The Acholi of Uganda play a game called undile that is similar to hockey. The board game, mancala, has often been called the national game of Africa, and is played everywhere.



# FULANI DANCE TROUPE The Fulani of West Africa have a strong tradition of singing, storytelling, and dancing. These talents are highly regarded. Groups of "street" musicians called griots perform in the open air.



In some societies, where strength and skill in fighting is important, young boys are encouraged to play games to prepare for their later lives as warriors. Zulu boys, for example, use fighting sticks in a game similar to fencing, becoming expert at striking and avoiding blows.

Painted pebbles used as playing pieces

Players lift the pebbles and redistribute them counterclockwise

Toy gun copied from a European firearm, Azande, Sudan



### HOMEMADE TOYS

African children are ingenious at making their own toys from scrap materials. Toys made from wire - cars, helicopters, and trucks – are quite common. This boy has made a car from heavy wire, using shoe-polish cans for the wheels.





Doll in bed, part of a complete doll's house,



DOLLS WITH A PURPOSE

Although many dolls are made simply for the amusement of children, some play a crucial role in the life of young girls. The akua'ba dolls of the Asante, for example, are made because it is believed they guarantee the owner will have children in the future. Some dolls are made for ceremonies, such as the initiation of young girls into womanhood. A variety of different materials, such as wood, beads, wax, and nails, are used to emphasize different features of some of these dolls.



Camel, horse, and ostrich racing are popular spectator sports in parts of Africa. Berber horsemen ride to display their skills on special occasions, and the Tuareg peoples of the Sahara often race camels.



Leather pouch to hold mancala pieces

# PLAYING THE GAME

Mancala is found everywhere, and, as well as being played on carved boards, is often simply scratched on rock or in the sand.



Wooden

mancala board,

Maasai, Kenya

courts to sing praises in

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS

Mancala is a board game for two or more players that is played all over Africa. The wooden mancala board consists of two rows of holes, and the playing pieces are usually pebbles, although seeds, beans, cowrie shells, peas, and even buttons can be used. The object is to win all your opponent's playing pieces, but the rules of the game and

# THE GAME OF MANCALA

their honor.

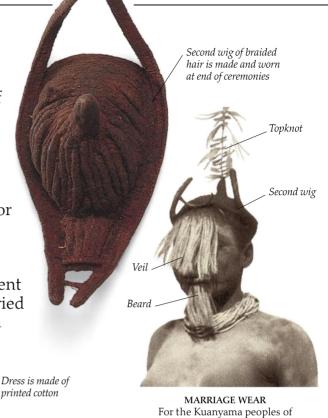


WEARING A BABY
African mothers often
carry their babies on
their backs, tied on with a
shawl or a piece of fabric.
This method of carrying
babies has influenced the
design of baby slings used
by European and American
women, as it is an efficient
way of caring for a child
while doing other tasks.

Dresses are made with a patchwork of colors

Female dress

People wear clothes for a variety of reasons other than to keep warm, or as a protection from the sun or rain. Clothes are worn for modesty, or to advertise age, position in society, wealth, or occupation. Often, people have different or more showy clothes for important ceremonies or rituals ceremonies. Among the Maasai, the women wear skirts of animal hide and numerous beaded ornaments for different occasions. However, only the married women wear brass earrings, which indicates their status in society.



Wide-elbowed

MARRIAGE WEAR
For the Kuanyama peoples of
Angola, the initiation and
engagement ceremonies for young
girls were combined into one event
lasting several days. Each girl was
given a special wig with shell
decorations, and wore a hide skirt,
apron, and beads. During the event,
this first wig was ceremoniously
burned, and a second wig, topknot,
and beard were given to her. The
girls wore the beards in imitation of
men. They were then ready for the
transition into womanhood.

THE CHANGING FACE OF FASHION
The traditional dress of the women of the Herero

cattle herders of Namibia was leather aprons, headdress, and elaborate beaded ornamentation. This was abandoned during the 19th century when those Herero who became Christian adopted the dress of the German missionaries. The distinctive, colorful Victorian costume (left) consists of a long dress with a wide stiff skirt, a fitted bodice worn with a shawl, and a "duk" – a cloth wrapped around the head (above).

Victorian-style Herero dress, Namibia



# Male attire

Different clothes can indicate the many cultural groups to which people belong. They can also give clues about the kind of work a person does, or his or her position in society. In Africa what people wear can show if they live in a desert or forest region, if they are farmers or kings, if it is a hot or cold time of year. Today, many Africans wear western dress, but some types of traditional clothing are making a comeback. Asante kente cloth, which was formerly worn exclusively by royalty and chiefs, is now worn by others. People even wear a combination of western and traditional dress.

> Ostrich feathers stuck into headress on special occasions

Number of feathers increase with seniority of wearer

# CEREMONIAL HEADDRESS

The men of the Karamojong of Uganda wear distinctive and elaborate headdresses of human hair. This headdress was made with hair that had been cut off. Nowadays, a hairdresser gathers the hair on a person's head into a tight bun. It is then covered in clay and painted it with pigments. The whole process can take three days.



Hats are worn by many people in Africa, and the style varies considerably. Sometimes, to protect themselves against the elements, men wear veils - pieces of cloth that can be wrapped around the head and over the face. In western Africa, many men have short hair and frequently wear small

caps to match their clothes.

Desert veil,

Sudan

Man wearing beaded hat, Nigeria

The style and color of the beadwork often indicates from what region the man comes

an important Karamojong symbol

The headdress is in the shape of a cow,





# INFLUENCES FROM THE EAST

During the 19th century, cloth that imitated Javanese dyed material was printed in Amsterdam, in the Netherlands, and in Manchester, England, using a technique in which designs were put on the cloth in stages. The cloth was exported in large quantities to West Africa. This trade still continues, though factories in several West African countries, including Ghana (above), produce the cloth.



# CHANGING CLOTHES AND CUSTOMS

This is a traditional Zulu goatskin front apron that is tied with a beaded belt. The back piece was usually made from oxhide. The aprons form part of the costume that is worn at ceremonies and on special occasions. Traditionally, the Zulu peoples of southern Africa are cattle herders who have retained many of their traditional customs in spite of upheavals caused by western culture. A young man courting a girl will wear western clothes bought in the city as well as the traditional red-and-white courting cloth.



Wooden sandals, Somalia



FEET AND FOOTWEAR

A variety of materials are used to make sandals and shoes. Wood sandals and clogs protect feet from hot sand and spiky plants, while leather shoes provide protection from all weather. Berber women in Morocco weave not only clothing, carpets, and tent hangings but also boots that are worn by both men and women. The sole is leather, but the calf-length upper boot is woven in thick, colorful wool.



knot, an Islamic motif found in many parts of West Africa

Cross decoration is the dagi

This beaded crown

portrays a royal ancestor



# EXCLUSIVE WEAR

Only kings are allowed to wear beaded crowns in Yoruba society in Nigeria. This is because they are believed to be descendants of Odudua, the mythical founder and first king of the Yoruba peoples. The king wears the crown that is appropriate to a particular ceremony.



and the other a shorter, knee-length top (right). Both are worn over trousers. The outfits are

has a long, loose gown,

trousers. The outfits are usually made of local cloth that has been woven in narrow strips, which are then sewn together. The neck, the front of the top, and the bottom edge of the trousers are usually embroidered.

A cap of the same fabric is often worn as well.

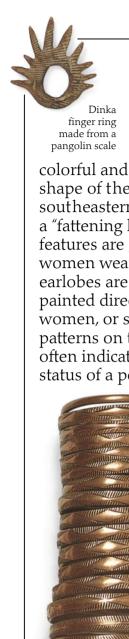
Embroidered boots, Morocco

# DRESSED FOR THE DESERT

Embroidery is

done by men

People who live in the desert regions of Africa, such as this man from Algeria, wear loose clothes to keep cool. The men wear baggy trousers and long cotton tops. A piece of cloth, or veil, wrapped around the head, with a narrow gap for the eyes, is an effective protection against the sun, heat, and windblown sand of the desert.



White beads

indicate love

# Self-adornment

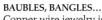
The ways that African men and women make themselves attractive is

colorful and varied. In some cultures, the size and shape of the body is emphasized – young girls in southeastern Nigeria spend part of their initiation in a "fattening house." In other cultures, particular features are given attention – in Kenya, Kikuyu women wear earlobe plugs because distended earlobes are admired by their men. Colorful dyes are painted directly onto the body of both men and

women, or small cuts are made with a knife to form patterns on the skin. These designs

often indicate the identity, wealth, and

status of a person.



Copper wire jewelry is found in many parts of eastern and southern Africa. The items vary from lightweight coiled bangles to heavy copper armlets that can weigh up to 30 lbs (13.5 kg). Copper bracelets, armlets, and anklets are usually worn by women. They often indicate wealth.

Carved

hairpins



Today, South African women wear ornate beaded necklaces, cloaks, and headgear and produce beaded items to sell to tourists. The traditional thread used for stringing beads imported from Europe was a fine gut that was strong and durable. By twisting this between the fingers, a point was made to put through the beads. Nowadays, a needle and thread are used.

> Pink usually indicates "bride price", givin by the groom to the bride's family



stiffening braided hair

> Both men and women spend a lot of time decorating their hair, sometimes into elaborate styles. Hairpins are often used, both for practical reasons and, in the case of the carved pins, as decoration. Oil is often used on the hair, since its shine indicates health.



# HENNA HANDS

Wooden hairpins

Ropes of beads

are worn as

girdles

and belts

In many parts of northern and western Africa, henna dye is used to paint intricate patterns on the hands, feet, and face. Although it is used by men and children, it is more commonly applied by women, not only to make themselves beautiful but also to protect them against evil.









Religion and beliefs

The most widespread systems of belief in Africa are the world religions of Christianity and Islam. However, there are many different traditional religions as well, including the belief in many gods and the worship of ancestors. Ancestors are the providers of rules of conduct for a community. If angered, their spirits can inflict harm and must be appeased with offerings. The belief that kings are gods is another important part of traditional religion. The kings of Benin and Ghana,

for example, are too holy to speak directly to their subjects and must use a spokesman.

# A LIFETIME OF TRAINING

Sometimes children are identified as future priests and undergo a long training with established masters who teach a wide range of knowledge in great secrecy. The priest is the only person in the community to perform rituals, and he wears a distinctive costume. Each priest owns his mask, which both hides and reveals violent and benevolent powers.

MASKS AND ANCESTORS
Families honor ancestors during
annual festivals, and through
song, dance, and music, tell of
the family's history. A number of
masks, such as this Fna mask

the family's history. A number of masks, such as this Epa mask (right), are paraded in sequence as the story is dramatized.



The priest is a religious specialist whose job is to maintain, celebrate, and, if necessary, restore the right relationship between the community and the gods. He is an important person, and is concerned with both the physical and the spiritual well-being of his community. People often seek his medical advice, as well as consulting him about social and moral problems.





Islam is a religion that has only one god, Allah, and it is based on the teaching of the Prophet Mohammed, who was born 1,400 years ago in Arabia. Islam is widespread in many parts of Africa, and has affected some traditional religions. This Asante gown (above) is covered in leather pouches that contain sayings from the Islamic holy book, the Koran. These Koranic scripts were believed by the Asante to protect senior warriors during battles.



A BLACK CHRIST
Where people were converted to Christianity, European crucifixes and carvings were copied and gradually took on an African appearance. Figures of St. Anthony, the patron saint of Portugal, were made in large numbers, and often used as healing charms. More recently, some wall paintings, like this one in Mozambique, depict a black Christ.

# CHRISTIAN COUNTRIES

Christianity has become the major religion in some African countries. Ethiopia has been Christian since the 4th century A.D., and the priest is highly regarded there. Only the emperor holds a higher position in society, because he is closer to God. Every church in Ethiopia has a completely enclosed inner room, which is entered only by the priest. People gather to worship patron saints and take mass in church on religious and national holidays.



# A MISSIONARY ZEAL

Europeans began to establish Christian missions in West Africa from the early 19th century. African traditional values such as the belief in many gods and ancestor figures, were greatly affected. The European missionaries, traders, and officials were frequently represented by African carvers, usually on horseback or wearing a hat to distinguish them from Africans. This one was carved by a Yoruba craftsman in Nigeria.

# Rites and rituals

To preserve good health and prosperity, many Africans perform rituals, including ancestor worship. Ancestors are called upon to solve problems, combat evil spirits, cure sickness, and help people through important events in their lives. The priest, who is also the community's healer, contacts the ancestors in various ways. He may go into a trance or use magical objects such as oracle boards or carved figures. The Yoruba of Nigeria and the Dogon of Mali, for example, use an oracle bowl and board. In this way, the priest "divines," or finds out, what the individual consulting him must do.



bowls are often élaborately carved.

Divination vessel. Cameroon

# DOGON DIVINATION

The Dogon priest, like the Yoruba priest, uses 16 kola nuts and a tray. He makes a pattern of marks in the dust on the tray to record the number of nuts left behind after he has passed them quickly from one hand to the other several times. The final pattern is the key to a sacred poem recited to the client, who then interprets it for his own purposes.

# DIVINING STAFFS AND THEIR USE

Power

figure, Zaire

Magical

container

at centre

of figure

In Africa, there is a belief in the close link between events and the behavior of individuals. Sometimes, the priest uses a divination staff to seek out harmful people. The entire community gathers together as the priest moves the staff around until it points at the person believed to be responsible for the evil.

### POWER FIGURES

The belief that invisible forces can be destructive is widespread in Africa. Carved human or animal figures are sometimes made that contain "healing" and "protective" substances, which are placed inside the sculpture or rubbed into it. They are often placed in a container that is at the center of the figure. This process is accompanied by chanting and prayers. These figures can be owned by an entire community or by an individual.

People drive in nails and then pull them out again to release the spirit's power

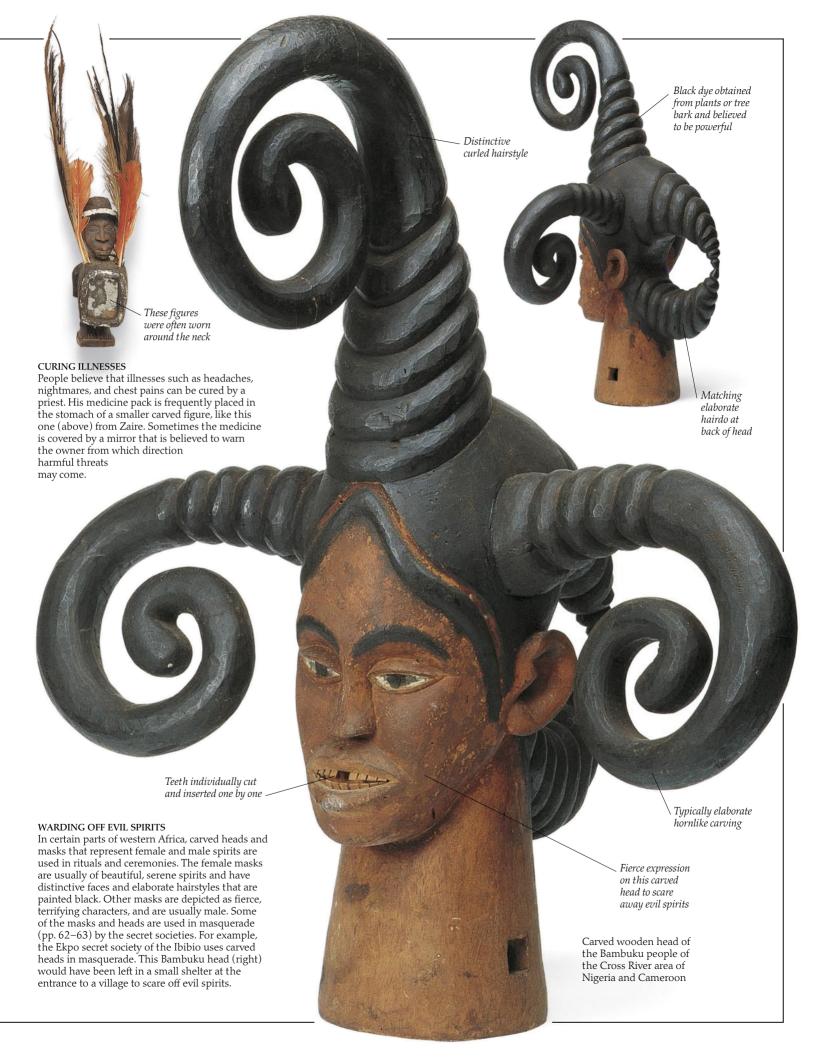


Divination staff, Mozambique

problems and to establish dates for festivals to honor ancestors and gods. As well as the vessel, he uses a tray which he dusts with flour or powdered wood and on which he marks a pattern. Finally, he has a small tapper, with which he calls upon the god of moral order, Orunmila.

**DIVINING CEREMONIES** Divination is carried out in many African countries, and one of the most important pieces of equipment is the divination vessel, in which kola nuts are stored. For the Yoruba, the priest

performs the rite to solve







# Medicine and healing

When seeking a cure for sickness, many Africans consult Western-style doctors and take advantage of modern technological treatments. However, the same people will also seek the advice of a traditional healer, a doctor of traditional medicine who is also a religious specialist. To identify the source of the illness, the healer often contacts good and evil spirits by going into a trance. Treatment may include an animal sacrifice, or, if another human being is considered responsible, the use of herbs or magical substances to combat the enemy spirit. The healer may also involve other people. Among the Ndembu of Zambia, friends of the patient are called together so that the healer can find out



SURGICAL TOOLS FROM SOMALIA
These instruments reflect the curious mixture of outside influences
(in this case, the Middle East) and traditional beliefs that occurs in
African societies. As well as surgical tools to remove tonsils,
spatulas, and a splint, there is also a counter-irritant that relies on
the patient yelling when the heated nail is applied to the wound,
letting the pain "escape by the mouth."



#### IRON STAFFS

In Yoruba society, medicine men belong to the cult of Osanyin, the god of herbal medicines. Osanyin's powers are secret, but are often represented by bird-headed staffs. The staffs are symbols of healing and herbalism. The central bird represents the power of the elders, who, after death, were believed to take the form of birds.

Birds symbolize

the power of

MAGICAL POWERS This traditional healer in northern Cameroon is performing a healing ceremony. He involves the other villagers in making music by rhythmically passing a charm over the sick person. Healers often chant, sing, and dance in order to attract the goodwill of the spirits. They believe that this makes the medicines more effective, and encourages the patient to recover quickly.





# A way of death

When a person dies in Africa, the family sometimes performs a number of rituals to ensure that the spirit of the dead person moves easily into the world of his or her ancestors. Carvings of the ancestors, which are kept in shrines, help to retain the link between this world and the next, so the family does not lose contact. A period of mourning forges links between the living and the dead, and sometimes sets the family apart from the rest of society for a short time. In Madagascar, for example, women in mourning stop combing their hair and wear white.

man and wear winte.

#### ROYAL BURIAL

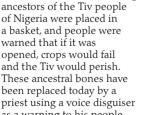
Kings and chiefs are considered sacred and have elaborate funerals. Traditionally, they are buried with their servants, who will help them in the afterlife. It was important that the kings were impressive in death, so they were often buried in full regalia. This man (left) was buried in a chamber in the ground, fully dressed and seated upright on a stool. He wore a copper crown and beaded armlets, and there were elephant tusks at his feet. His tomb was in the village of Igbo-Ukwu in Nigeria, and he was probably a ruler of the Ibo peoples.

#### FUNERARY FIGURES

Figure is made of wood covered

Some funerary figures were carved to represent ancestors, whose remains were kept in containers in a special hut under the care of one of the male elders of the village. The carved figure was placed on top of the container. This Kota funerary figure from Gabon (above) would have been placed in a dark corner of the hut. The metal acts like a mirror and is believed to reflect back any evil that threatens.

Graveposts are topped with carvings of animals, human figures, and nowadays even bicycles and airplanes



VOICE DISGUISER

According to a legend, bones of one of the founding

priest using a voice disguise as a warning to his people. Voice disguisers are used by many groups in Nigeria. They distort the priest's voice, making it boom.

> Colored seeds decorate base

Abinsi voice disguiser, Nigeria

## MEMORIALS IN MADAGASCAR

In Madagascar, dead people are placed in family tombs. Because many of the families are scattered, members often die far away from their family tombs. In such cases, the dead are temporarily buried somewhere else until there is enough money gathered for the ritual and all the relatives have been assembled. The body is then dug up, wrapped in a burial cloth, and reburied in the ancestral tomb. Tombs vary from region to region, and this circle of graveposts marks the tomb of someone of noble descent.



#### LUCKY FOR SOME

Some west African peoples regard the birth of twins as unfortunate, but the Yoruba of Nigeria welcome them and even consider them lucky after certain ritual duties have been completed. If one or both of the twins dies, a carving of them is made to ward off harmful spirits.

This coffin was

probably made for a fisherman

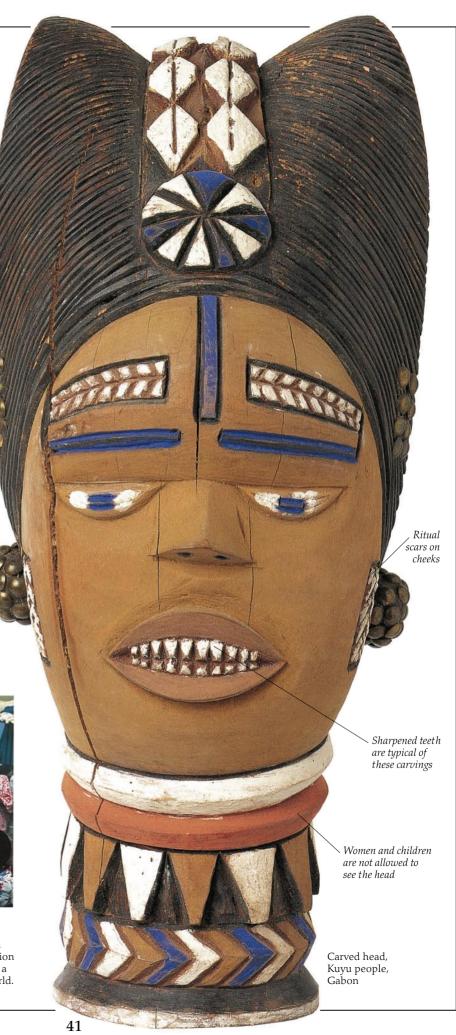
# FINDING THE GUILTY CULPRIT The Kuyu people of Gabon believe

that the death of an individual is the result of an evil spell. The priest is called upon to detect the real cause of death by magical means. Wearing a long robe and a carved head (right), the priest dances among the male villagers. He stops dancing in front of the person believed responsible. That person simply accepts this and pays an appropriate fine.



#### FANTASY COFFINS

Highly individual coffins are built on request in Ghana. A coffin with a large cocoa pod can be made for a cocoa farmer who wishes to take his wealth with him. The tradition began when a fisherman asked his nephew to make him a special coffin, as he hoped to go on fishing in the next world.



# Nations at war

There were three different types of traditional warfare in Africa - state wars, raids by one group on another, and the jihads, or holy wars. The state wars were led by kings or emperors who were able to call their troops into battle on short notice. The king of Benin could raise 20,000 warriors in one day, and Ethiopian armies could number as many as 200,000. The raids were carried out by neighboring groups with different interests. The cattle-herding Maasai of Kenya, for example, were frequently at war with the farming Kikuyu in order to gain access to watering holes and land rights.

Armies also went to war for religious purposes. The spread of Islam in the region south of the Sahara occurred partly because of trade but

also as a result of the holy wars. A victorious member of the ahosi carries the head of Painted design and shave of shield tells an enemy us about the warrio

> WOMEN AT WAR Although women sometimes accompanied their husbands to war, the king of Dahomey was exceptional in having an all-female guard. Called ahosi, they were greatly respected for their skill and bravery. They were not allowed to form any personal relationships, as they had to remain loyal to their king.

FABRIC WAR TALES Many stories of military campaigns were handed down through the generations. Dahomean chiefs or nobles would often commission clothmakers to make banners showing their

successful battles.



The Muslim leader Muhammed Ahmed was known as the Mahdi, or "the rightly guided one." He united many Sudanese peoples in a religious crusade in the second half of the 19th century.

> Sudanese shield

PREPARING FOR WAR Getting ready to go to war not only included planning strategies and tactics but also ritual preparations to strengthen the warrior and all his weapons. Many men, such as the Zulu soldiers, chewed magical substances and spat them in the direction of the enemy before attacking. Protective charms were also worn by either soldiers or their horses.

beginning the main combat.

Maasai

MAASAI RAIDS

The Maasai of Kenya and their neighbors, the

Kikuyu made frequent raids on

each another. They planned their attacks carefully

cattle or other property belonging to the enemy. If two groups confronted one another, they often held

and used scouts to find out the whereabouts of

a duel between their two best warriors before

shield





# Single-headed lance

#### THE QUILTED HORSEMAN

This is a lancer in the heavy cavalry of the Sultan of Bagirmi, drawn from life by an English major in the 1820s. Both rider and horse wore cloth as quilted armor to protect them from flying arrows. A double-headed lance was sometimes used in close combat with the enemy because it was capable of piercing metal armor.

# Into battle

The horsemen of Sudanic Africa – the savanna region south of the Sahara Desert – played a vital role in the rise to power of many West African empires from the 9th century onwards. They controlled the trans-Saharan trade routes, and in this way acquired large North African horses to replace the smaller native breeds. The cavalry were divided into light and heavy squadrons. The light

divided into light and heavy squadrons. The light cavalry were usually mounted on small horses, armed with light javelins and one large spear, and rode bareback. In warfare, their speed and ability to maneuver meant that they could be used for surprise attacks on the enemy. A heavy cavalryman, whose uniform is shown on these pages, was

usually mounted on a large horse, and armed with a sword, a heavy lance, a large shield, spears, and

more protective armor. He formed part of the ruler's bodyguard.



HEAVY PROTECTION

A cuirass, or body armor, was worn by the Fulani heavy cavalryman as an alternative to chain mail. It was certainly better protection against arrows and spears than other methods of protection, such as the cloth that the Mossi cavalrymen of Burkina Faso wrapped around themselves. The Fulani horseman, weighted down by all this heavy armor, needed assistance to get onto his horse. If he fell off during a battle, he could not remount.



carried in its scabbard across his back was

an essential weapon. However, his main

weapons were his spears, because they were strong enough to pierce the chain mail of the enemy. Sometimes he carried an

ax as well, which would have been hung from the saddle.





Over thousands of years, a huge variety of fighting implements has gradually evolved in Africa. Many of these weapons were used not only in battles and wars – different kinds of swords, spears, throwing knives, shields, and body armor were designed for display and ceremonial uses. For example, the *afena*, or state sword, is symbolic of the authority of the king of the Asante peoples of Ghana; the royal sword and

lance are carried by the king of the Kuba people of Zaire on state occasions. Protection was provided not only by weapons and shields – Fulani and other Muslim warriors often wore sayings from the Koran, the holy book of Islam, for luck, encased in leather pouches hanging from the neck or sewn into clothes.

#### ALL SORTS OF SPEARS

Spears were frequently employed in both battle and hunting. The larger spear (left) was used by the Lango of Uganda, who frequently raided their neighbors to capture cattle. The smaller spear (far left) is a Zulu iklwa or thrusting spear, often used in close combat.

Hide is covered with velvet

and silverwork

Botswana

CLOSE COMBAT

Some of the deadliest and most effective weapons used during close combat were battle-axes. This ax from

Botswana is decorated with

incisions on the blade. Both

were used as symbols

of power.

the ax and the Sudanese knife

Iron knife, Mangbetu,

Sudan

Knobkerrie is also used as a swagger stick or snuff container

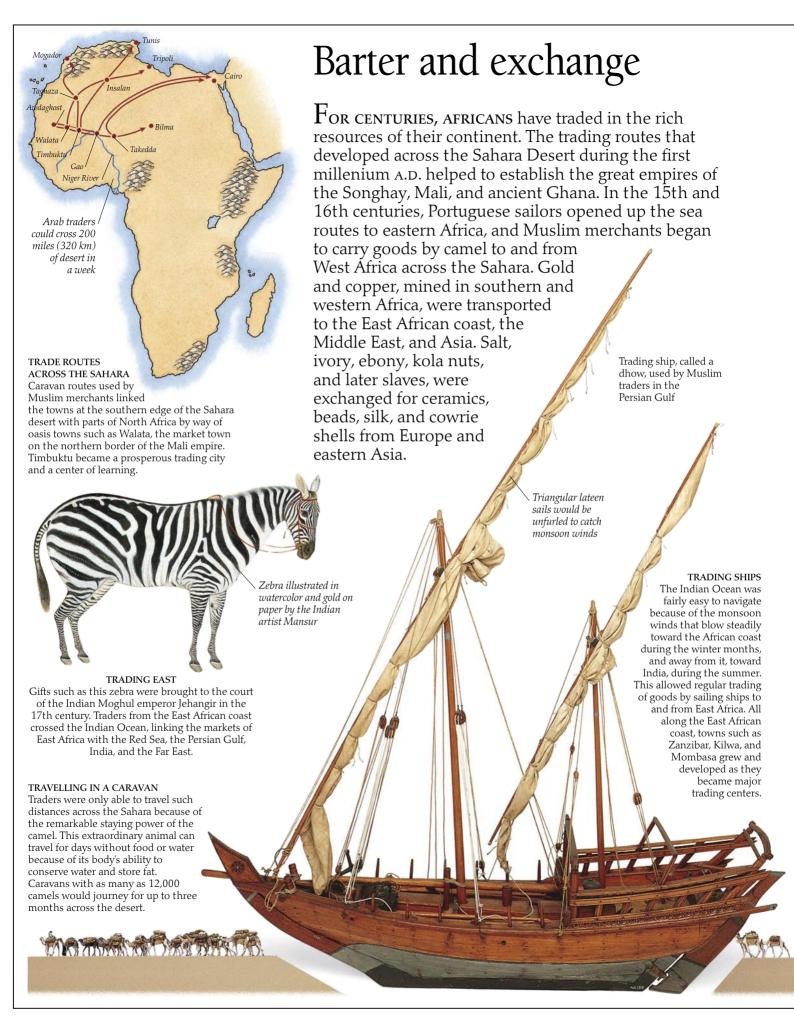
#### STATUS SYMBOL

An Ethiopian warrior had every reason to be proud of his shield, as it announced his status as well as his military skills. Wrapped in a red cotton cloth, the shield, along with the varrior's other arms, was carried on his mule. A servant boy stood behind his master during discussions and held the shield. Shields were often decorated with a lion's mane, tail, or paw, mounted in clasps of decorative silverwork.

#### ESSENTIAL ACCESSORY

The fighting stick was used by many peoples, including the Dinka of Sudan, as a throwing weapon, a fashionable accessory, a symbol of office, or simply as a tool for everyday tasks. Some sticks were spiked with metal studs and nails. Others had a socketed iron spike fixed to the end of the shaft. This spike was useful not only as an additional weapon in battle, but it could also be pushed into the ground to turn the stick into a stool.









#### DETERENTS TO SLAVERY

These lip disks (for both top and bottom lips) were worn by the Sara women of central Africa. Although considered attractive by the Sara peoples, the lip disks were not considered an asset by the Europeans. This made it less likely that the women would be captured and marched across Africa to be transported and sold.

Lack of space meant that slaves

could not lie down

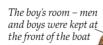
A slave's journey

As the tobacco, sugar, and cotton plantations became established in the Caribbean and the Americas, the plantation owners needed more workers. European traders were interested in capturing or buying slaves from Africa, and African rulers were willing to sell the slaves they had captured in wars. Men, women, and children were forcibly taken, tied, or shackled together, and marched to the coast to await a ship. Those who survived the long journey were sold to plantation owners.

ECONOMIC DISASTER
From 1500 to 1850, about
25 million people either died during wars fought
between African rulers or were captured and sold
into slavery, like this netted man awaiting
transport. This had a disastrous effect on
traditional ways of life, and deprived the
continent of a vital part of the population.

#### TRAVELING ON A SLAVESHIP

Slaveships were usually overloaded, with as many as 600 slaves crammed into a space built for 400. Many slaves died on the way, and some committed suicide by refusing food or throwing themselves overboard to drown.

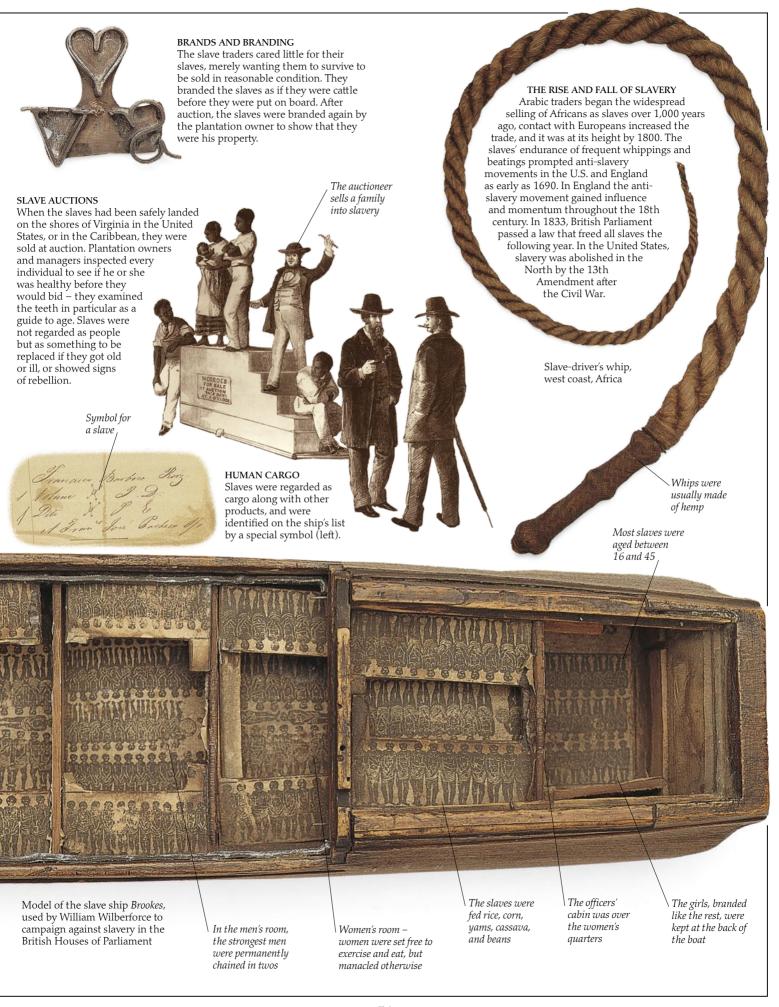


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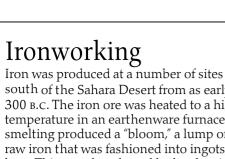
Gangs of armed raiders
traveled into the forests of
western Africa to capture as
many men, women, and children as
possible. The villagers were shackled
together and marched to the coast. During
the journey they were treated with great
brutality, and at the coast the hardship
continued. Although children were often
captured with their parents, the traders
were not concerned if families or
villagers were kept together. They
separated the slaves according to age,
size, sex, and physical fitness.

#### NO WAY OUT

On a slaveship, limited space and the poor ventilation and sanitation led to many deaths, both from sickness and suicide. Sometimes the slaves mutinied, but this usually led to the ringleaders being killed, or the slaves wandering the ocean, unable to steer the captured ship.







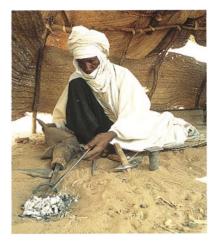
Wooden stick worked by apprentice's

south of the Sahara Desert from as early as 300 B.C. The iron ore was heated to a high temperature in an earthenware furnace. The smelting produced a "bloom," a lump of raw iron that was fashioned into ingots, or bars. This was then forged by local smiths, or traded to other smiths in distant communities. Smelting iron was a difficult process. Often before it began, there was a ritual ceremony followed by music and dancing to ensure its success.





to long pole for use in the fields



FORGING IRON Smiths are considered mysterious and powerful figures, set apart from the rest of the community. To maintain secrecy, Tuareg smiths even speak a different language, Tenet, to fellow smiths.



left hand -TOOLS OF THE TRADE The smith's equipment consists of hammers, chisels, an anvil, and bellows. Air is pumped through the bellows by the smith's apprentice or a young male member of the family. This air controls the fire, and therefore the temperature at which the metal is heated. The hot metal is beaten into shape on the anvil with a hammer. The smith frequently returns the metal to the fire until the task is completed. Although the tools used are

> particularly weaponry such as the extraordinary bird-headed throwing knives of Gabon (pp.46-47).

simple, some metal objects produced are very sophisticated,

pouch that

fills with air





# Gold of the Asante



Asante gold weight

The scales

were handheld

ALTHOUGH THE ORIGINS of gold-working in Africa are uncertain, western Africa supplied Europe with large quantities of gold before the discovery of the Americas. European nations gained so much wealth from trade with that region, then called Guinea, that the gold coins the British minted were named guineas. Gold was obtained by

washing soil on riverbeds and banks, or by digging it from pits. The gold ranged in size from fine, granular gold dust to sizeable pieces, or nuggets. In Asante, Ghana, larger gold nuggets were given to the king, the Asantehene. The goldsmiths were a privileged class in Asante society, and used the lost-wax

process (pp. 54–55) to produce delicately designed gold and brass pieces.

GOLD DUST
Gold dust was, until the 20th century, the main form of currency among the Asante. Weights made of brass, but often called gold weights and cast in many different shapes, were made to measure out units of gold dust. The dust was weighed in a set of scales, using a spoon. Weights were also used as jewelry and as charms by storytellers.

Gold weights

Set of

scales

#### CEREMONIAL GOLD

The ceremonial daggers, trophy head, finger rings, and bird ornament (right) are part of the treasure of King Kofi-Karikari, who was Asantehene from 1867 to 1875. They are decorated with, or cast in, virgin gold gold in its natural state. They were never intended for use in war, but would have been carried when the king appeared in public on ceremonial occasions.

Spoon to measure gold dust

Gold dust box



#### WEIGHING OUT THE GOLD

To carry out a transaction, the gold weight of a buyer had to be weighed against that of a seller. If both weights were equal, the buyer measured out the agreed amount of gold dust onto his scales, and this was then transferred to the seller's scales for confirmation. If both agreed on the weighing, the seller took the gold dust and the buyer the goods.









#### EARLY AMPLIFIERS

Hanging under the keys of this xylophone are gourds - the dried, hollow shells of fruit from the gourd or squash plant. These amplify the sound of the player hitting the keys, producing a rich, resonant tone. Xylophones are played with other instruments on their own - and in northwest Ghana, for example, for making special announcements to the village.



#### **DOUBLE BELLS**

Musicians play these double bells by holding them up and striking the two metal cones with sticks, rods, or horns. Bells such as these are used mainly as percussion instruments at festivals and masquerades. This bell set comes from Cameroon in West Africa.

# Musical instruments

 ${
m M}$ usic is everywhere in Africa. Musical instruments and song are a basic part of the African way of life, from a mother singing a lullaby to her newborn baby to elaborate village festivals full of color and costumes. People may use music to break up the monotony of the working day. A farmer, for example, might sing a song to encourage his crops during hoeing and sowing. In rural areas, herders and hunters scattered over vast distances signal each other by blowing coded musical messages into a flute. Some music, such as that of warrior groups, or beer-drinking and hunting songs, can be performed only by men. Other music is sacred to women only, and might be played during rites of passage into adulthood, or during childbirth. The enormous variety of musical instruments across Africa ranges from elaborately carved ceremonial drums to the most basic of rattles, made only from pieces of scrap metal or bits of bark.



A sansa is an instrument that works like a tiny handheld piano. Narrow metal or wooden strips are arranged over a sounding board and attached to a resonator gourd. The musician plucks the metal strips, each of which corresponds to a note, with his thumbs. These thumb-pianos are often called the "traveler's friend," because people can play them while wandering from place to place. This one is used by the Umbundu peoples of Angola.



#### STRING ALONG

This musical bow from Cameroon is simply a wooden stick across which strings have been tightly stretched. The strings are bowed, plucked, struck, or hit with a bow, which is usually a flexible piece of wood with a string attached at both ends. Gourds, made from hollowedout, dried squashes amplify the very soft sounds made by the strings. A musician can coax a whole range of sounds from the bow by holding it at different angles to his body - for example, against his chest.



Dried, hollowed-out gourds act as resonators



# Masquerade performed

Masked dance, or masquerade, is performed in many communities in western and central Africa, and plays an important part in rituals and social events. Once inside the costume, the identity of the masquerader is hidden from other people, and he

or she takes on the character represented by the mask. Often parts of the body are exaggerated with padding or pieces of wood. Combined with dance steps, gestures, songs, and sounds, the complete costume becomes a powerful and energetic force that represents the spirit world as well as the world of humans. Masquerade is mainly performed by men who are

members of secret societies.



This iron staff (left) is used by the Yoruba people in a masquerade to celebrate Ogun, god of iron and blacksmiths, carvers, and all those who use metal instruments.



#### **BODY DECORATION**

Young girls of the Mbuti people of Zaire are painted with white as part of a ceremony to announce their status as young women. Colored paints are often put on the body, usually of a young person, in many different ceremonies. Paints, like the costumes, disguise the wearer and add to the power and mystery of the ceremony.

#### DANCE SHIELD, KENYA

In the ceremonial performances of the Kikuyu people, dance shields, called *ndome*, are worn on the upper left arm by young men. The serrated design on the inside of the shield is always the same. The outer design varies according to the age of the men and the region in which they live.



#### AN ANNUAL EVENT

The masquerade happens at specific times and to celebrate certain events, such as harvest, or the initiation of children to adulthood. The costume may only be used for a short time — maybe only a week or a month. Afterward it is stored away until it is needed the following year. This masquerade costume is worn by Ibo men, who imitate young girls as part of the annual harvest celebration.





Ibo masquerade costume, Nigeria

Headdress of carved and painted wood

Colorful, handembroidered cloth is a feature of this costume





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