

TO BRAZIL WITH LOVE

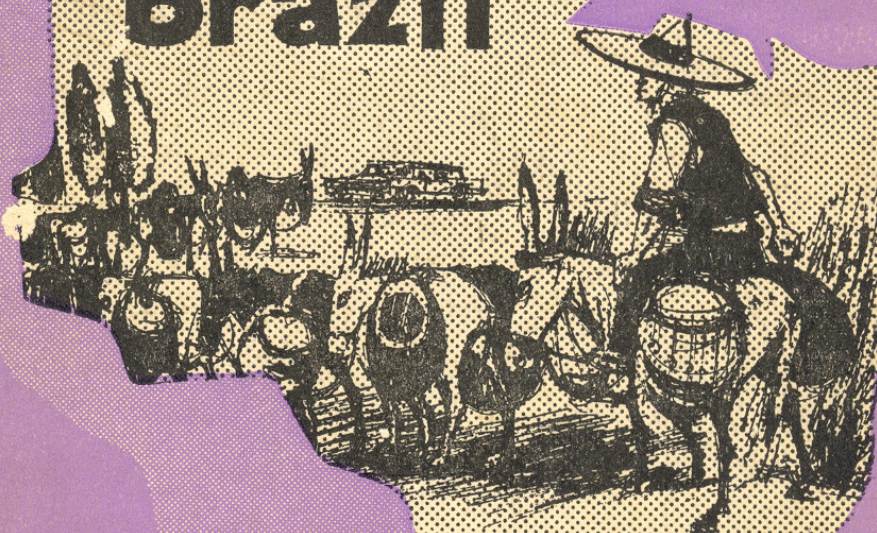
When AKOSUA IN BRAZIL was published, early 1970's, it was the beginning and the euphoria was covering the surface of guilt and shame. Ghana was then only twenty years an Independent nation; Senegal, Nigeria and others, had less than ten years of self government. Angola, Mozambique and Guínea, were a shame for both Brazil and Portugal. Brazil was still flirting with the South African apartheid. Yet, Brazil wanted to get closer to the new African independent states. Pelé was at his climax, as well as the Brazilian football. Even a Brazilian coach was there in Ghana to take care of Ghana's national team the Black Stars. Ghana was, indeed, a show case for the new Africa. The Brazilian diplomacy made her the best to be closer to Ghana. And it seems was successful. This small book is the payback for such a policy: The elementary schools in Ghana started to teach its children how to love their neighbor on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.

Thirty years has passed and much of the effort, for the same old carelessness have made the good start fall down into a gap. Today's visits of the Brazilian Head of State to Africa have changed somehow the old neglect. Maybe now another Akosua will visit us and will tell to her classmates that Brazil has grownup not only materially but spiritually as well. Akosua will see that Brazil is more and more proud of her African descent and acknowledges the historical debt to this Continent.

José Luiz Pereira da Costa

Carnaval de 2008

Akosua in Brazil



Alero Olympio
and
Cecile McHardy

1. We Meet Akosua's Friends

Have you ever had a plane wait for you? This one did not wait patiently. It roared and roared. It seemed excited too, shaking at the loud noise from the engine. It seemed a little anxious for every one to come on board. The line of passengers at Accra Airport did not move at all.

At the head of the queue was Akosua. She was a little African girl of seven, with big laughing brown eyes and tight black plaits. This was her first journey to South America. She held tightly to one briefcase and a brown cardboard box with eight holes. In the briefcase was her special friend. In the brown cardboard box there was nothing at all.

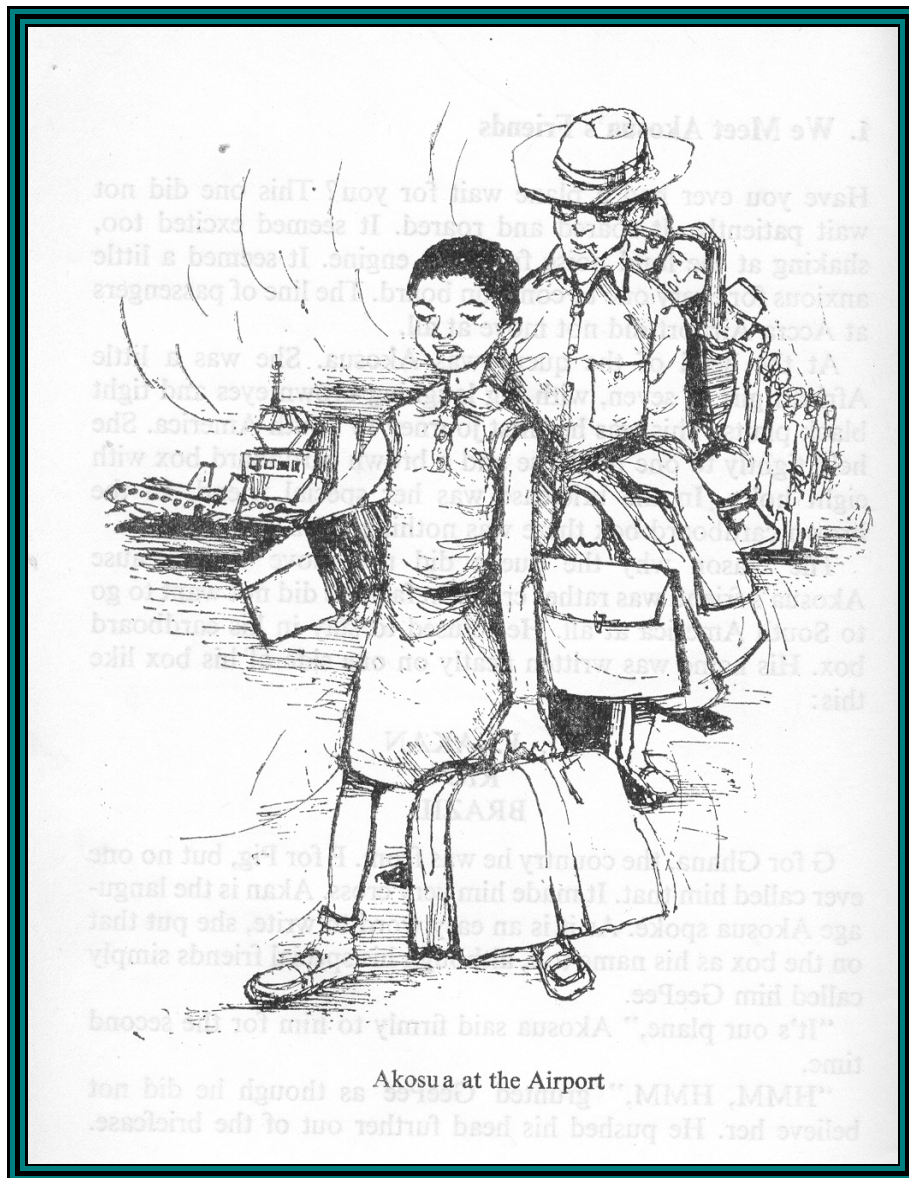
The reason why the queue did not move was because Akosua's friend was rather cross. In fact, he did not want to go to South America at all. He refused to stay in his cardboard box. His name was written neatly on one side of his box like this:

**G. P. AKAN
RIO
BRAZIL**

G for Ghana, the country he was from. P for Pig, but no one ever called him that. It made him very cross. Akan is the language Akosua spoke. As it is an easy word to write, she put that on the box as his name too, although his special friends simply called him GeePee.

"It's our plane," Akosua said firmly to him for the second time.

"HMM, HMM," grunted GeePee as though he did not believe her. He pushed his head further out of the briefcase.



Akosua at the Airport

If only he could jump out and run away. He had tried that once in the taxi which brought them to the airport but he was caught and tied carefully in Akosua's handkerchief before she put him into the briefcase.

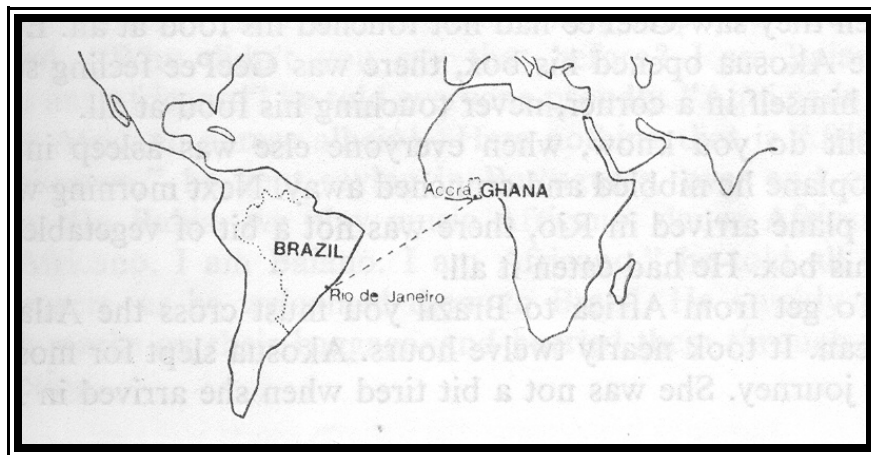
Now, as he did not see any sign saying quite clearly where he was going (such as "From Ghana to South America") like the signs painted on the lorries in Ghana, he dropped his head into the bag again. He did so very quickly for just then a loud voice said, "All passengers for Rio aboard, please."

The aeroplane was quickly filled with people. The stewardess gave Akosua a window seat so that she could wave goodbye to all the friends who

had come to see her off. The stewardess even offered kindly to put the briefcase on the rack over Akosua's head. She did not know that GeePee was inside the bag. Akosua preferred to hold the bag gently on her knees.

It was only then that Akosua guessed what had made GeePee so very cross.

She was looking at a map of the world. It was in a little book the stewardess had given her. She drew a circle on the map to show where she was in Africa. Then she drew a line to Rio, like this.



It is not very difficult to find South America on a map of the world. It **is** shaped exactly like a carrot. That reminded Akosua that she had forgotten to bring GeePee any food for his journey.

The stewardess said at Akosua's elbow:

"Would you like a fruit drink. Orange, tomato, carrot?" "Carrot, please," Akosua answered without thinking.

The word "carrot" startled GeePee and trouble began all over again. GeePee liked eating carrots.

He pushed his head out of the bag and frightened the stewardess who thought he was a mouse. She jumped and spilt the carrot juice.

"Sorry," said Akosua. "I thought you meant carrots!"

"Carrots?" asked the stewardess, not understanding.

"Oh! You mean *carrots* for the Guinea Pig!" she laughed. Everybody else in the aeroplane laughed too. When she had served them all with

salads for dinner, she brought a paper plate full of vegetables for GeePee.

They put GeePee back in his box with his paper plate full of crisp lettuce, cucumbers and carrots.

"He is only a year old and a little excited," Akosua explained when they saw GeePee had not touched his food at all. Every time Akosua opened his box, there was GeePee feeling sorry for himself in a corner, never touching his food at all.

But do you know, when everyone else was asleep in the aeroplane he nibbled and crunched away. Next morning when the plane arrived in Rio, there was not a bit of vegetable left in his box. He had eaten it all.

To get from Africa to Brazil you must cross the Atlantic Ocean. It took nearly twelve hours. Akosua slept for most of the journey. She was not a bit tired when she arrived in Rio.

The same cannot be said for GeePee. He spent all night at work nibbling away at his dinner. He was very tired indeed. He had also grown rather fat.

Ever since Akosua described South America as the carrotshaped country he had begun to feel better about the journey. But he was fast asleep when the plane touched down at Rio Airport. I am sorry to say he was dreaming of still more food.

The man at the Customs looked into GeePee's box. He sounded very excited and spoke quickly in Portuguese. He said something which sounded like "Animales".

Now GeePee disliked being called a Pig, and he hated being called an animal. He woke up and started grunting in a terrifying manner. The noise from inside the box sounded like three Guinea Pigs. The man at the customs sounded very angry. Once more the queue of passengers was delayed.

Akosua could see her friends Jose and Tanya through the big glass window. They had invited her to spend her holidays with them in Brazil. They had come to meet her at the airport.

"Muito, Muito Animales," said the man at the Customs.

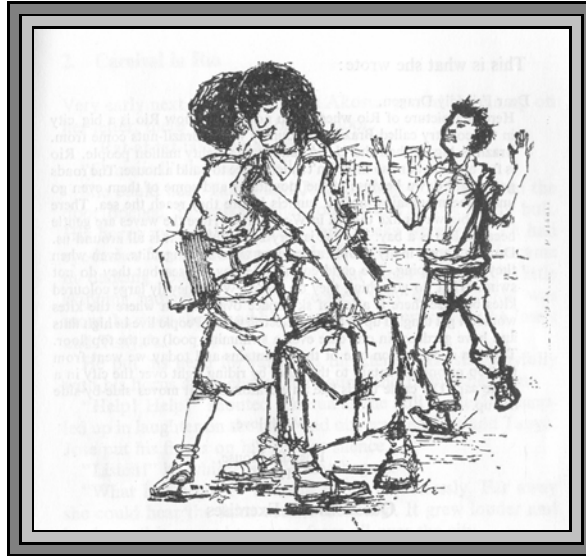
"He's only a small Guinea Pig," explained the stewardess. "He is a Cabin passenger and he comes from Africa."

"Da Africa?" said the Customs man, surprised and delighted. "Why didn't you say that before? I am Baiano ! I too am Africano!" he told everyone proudly. "Aqui nada do Bite e Africano parece alheio !-Here nothing that is African is unknown," he kept saying in Portuguese, over and over again. "In Bahia, we play music Africano, dance Africano, eat Africano. I am Baiano. I am Africano," he told all the passengers, as he welcomed them to Brazil. He quickly put chalk marks on their baggage, and hurried them through the reception.



"Tanya! Jose!" Akosua ran to them and hugged them with delight.

"Welcome ! Welcome!" they shouted; and greetings over, they took her off to show her their city.



It was an exciting day for Akosua and GeePee. Before Akosua went to bed that night she wrote a letter to her Daddy. It was a long letter. She finished it early next morning before posting it by airmail.

This is what she wrote

Dear Friendly Dragon,

Here is a picture of Rio where I am now. You know Rio is a big city in the country called Brazil, the country where Brazil-nuts come from. Brazil is bigger than the U.S.A. and it has eighty million people. Rio is full of mountains so there isn't much space to build a house. The roads go up and down because of the mountains and some of them even go under the mountains in dark tunnels before they reach the sea. There are no big waves like the sea in West Africa. Here the waves are gentle because Rio is a bay. The sea is very beautiful and it is all around us. Do you know, many people around us wear bathing suits, even when they are shopping. The children are often by the sea but they do not swim. What do you think they do there? Well, they fly large coloured kites because there is a lot of sky space over the sea where the kites wouldn't get tangled up in trees or electric wires. People live in high flats and have gardens (in one case even a swimming pool) on the top floor. There is a church on one of the mountains and today we went from the top of one mountain to the other by riding right over the city in a cable car. The cable car is like an elevator, only it moves side-by-side not up.

Much love.

Hello,

Friendly Mouse, It's Me.

Questions and Exercises

1. Get an atlas and from it copy the map of South America on a piece of paper. Mark the country of BRAZIL in your map. Mark the capital city RIO also. Remember the

full name of the capital is RIO DE JANEIRO. See if you can also find BAHIA and mark it on your map.

2. Ask your teacher to tell you a little about what a guinea pig is and write one or two sentences about it. Also find

the meaning of the statement: "Kofi was used as a guinea pig."

2. *Carnival in Río*

Very early next morning, just as Akosua pasted the stamp on her letter, there was a rap on her door.

Rat-at-tat-tat! Rat at tat tat!

"Come in!" she called gaily.

She could hear Tanya and Jose giggling outside. When the door opened, in walked what looked like a very funny bull. His horns were painted green, his cheeks were pink, he had eye-lashes four inches long and his head was very big. He came in dancing four steps forward, four steps back, with little skipping movements and he seemed very drunk. What was more, he wore shoes and his knees looked very much like Jose's and Tanya's.

He put his head forward and threatened Akosua playfully with his horns as he chased her round and round the room.

"Help! Help!" shouted Akosua as the bull suddenly crumpled up in laughter on the floor and out crawled Jose and Tanya. Jose put his finger on his lips for silence.

"Listen!" he whispered. "It has begun!"

"What has begun?" Akosua asked breathlessly. Far away

she could hear the faint sounds of music. It grew louder and

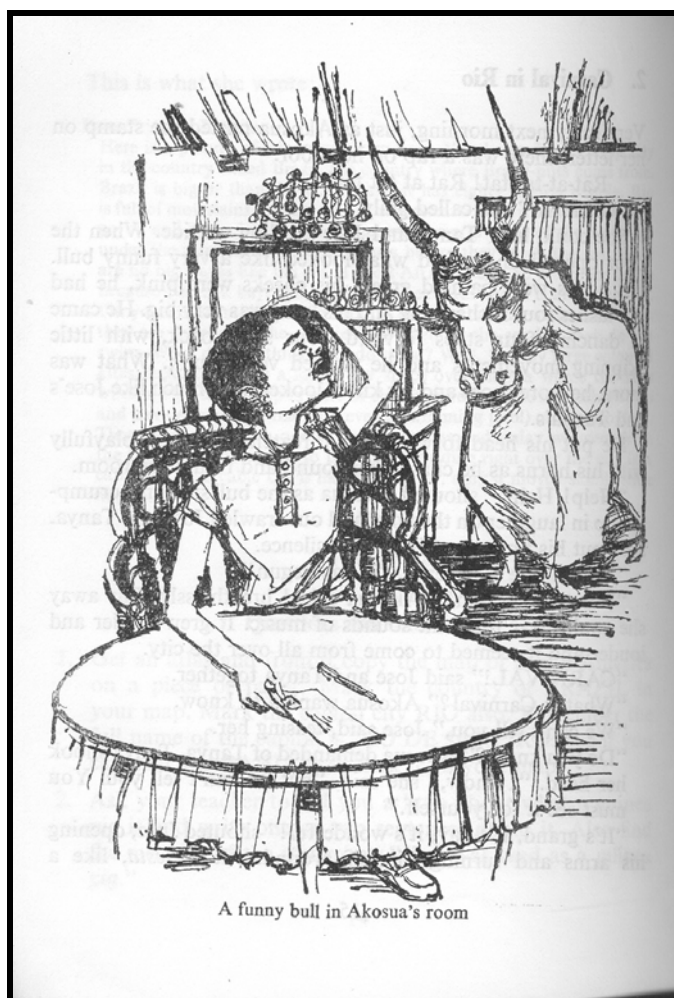
louder and it seemed to come from all over the city. "CARNIVAL!" said Jose and Tanya together. "What is Carnival?" Akosua wanted to know. "We can't tell you," Jose said, teasing her.

"Do you know?" Akosua demanded of Tanya. Tanya shook her head. "I know," she said, "but we can't tell you. You must see it for yourself."

"It's grand, it's gay, it's wonderful!" shouted Jose, opening his arms and turning himself around. "It's *Fiesta*, like a birthday party in the streets, with music and dancing and everybody in disguises!"

"What are disguises?"

"Like this costume of a bull!" Tanya said. "This is what we shall wear."



"All three of us?"

Akosua laughed. "I've never seen a bull with six legs."

"No, No!" Jose said.

"You and Tanya shall be BUMBA MEU BOI. That is what we call this costume. I shall be a ragged cowherd. Come! Help me with my costume."

Jose put on "wrong side pants," his ordinary trousers turned inside out. He wore a brightly coloured shirt. He painted his face with powder and put a pot on his head. On his feet he wore "alpargatas" rope-

soled sandals. Dressed like this, he was ready to guide them through the city and see that the girls did not get lost in the crowds.

By this time the music was getting louder and they went into the

streets to join the Carnival in Rio.

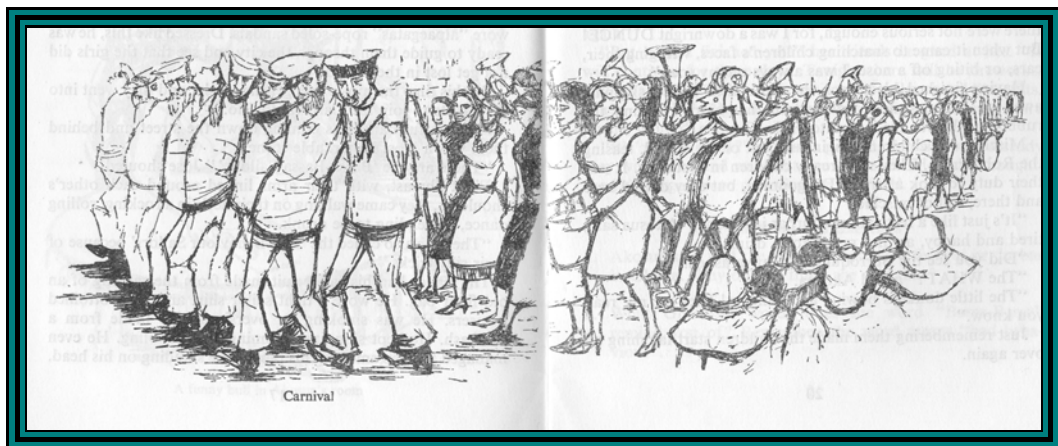
A colourful band was coming down the street and behind them was a most remarkable scene.

"These are the 'Bassa-Bassa Sailors,'" Jose shouted.

Eight abreast, with their arms linked around each other's shoulders, they came walking on their heels in a rocking, rolling dance, pretending to be drunk.

"They are also called the 'Bad-Behaviour Sailors' because of their silly tricks."

The leader had his sailor suit made from the sacking of an old flour bag. He wore a tight sailor shirt and bell-bottomed trousers. He was smoking an oversized pipe made from a calabash. He kept skipping, spinning and tumbling. He even managed to keep smoking his pipe while standing on his head.



It was fun.

Behind the 'Bassa-Bassa Sailors' a lively dance was being performed by a band of men dressed as women. "The Pizanlit !" shouted Jose.

They sang rude songs to each other, walking with tiny steps in high-heeled shoes, waving their gloved hands. Their skirts were very short and the crowds shouted rude words at them like "Wet Bed" and "Stinker". In reply they threw flour and face powder at the bystanders. They ran away at a lively pace, pursued by a large band of Bats.

The Bats wore grand costumes with wired wings. They did not dance but roared down the middle of the street on roller

skates, flapping their wings. There were people everywhere. It was exactly like a party.

Some of the people wore costumes of grandly coloured silks and satins like the Kings and Queens of Carnival, while others wore pyjamas or shorts. Some wore funny Carnival hats which were so large that they rested on people's shoulders, completely covering their heads. Holes were cut in the crowns of these hats so that they could see through them. There were many many costumes, Hunters and Robbers and trained Bears and Dragonmen. The bands passed quickly, dancing, each with their own orchestra.

The Robber bands came in twos and threes in costumes made of hemp sacking. They wore large, painted, funny masks. The Robber bands liked playfully to frighten people and if you paid them money, they would perform a dance for you. Suddenly, one Robber stood before Jose and made a funny speech as is their custom.

"When I cry," he sobbed and rubbed his eyes like a child, "men, women, whales, children, bears and other pests tremble in themselves, for they know my final decision, to bring them to endless destruction."

Jose wasn't frightened but the girls were. Just as Jose was about to give him a cruzeiro, which is the name of a Brazilian coin, another Robber shouted, "STOP! At the age of five, I this dreaded Monarch, was sent to school. But the lessons there were not serious enough, for I was a downright DUNCE ! But when it came to snatching children's faces, wringing their, ears, or biting off a nose, I was always on my toes."

Having finished his speech, he did a little dance, skipping away on his toes. Jose was certain that hidden behind the rubber mask, was his favourite uncle, Gaucho.

Mischievous children ran in and out of the crowd, teasing the Robbermen. They were really children in costumes. It was their duty to look after the Dragonmen, but they darted here and there, full of mischief.

"It's just like a festival or a durbar in Ghana," Akosua said, tired and happy, as they rested for a drink.

"Did you see the Burroquites?" Tanya asked. "The WHAT?" asked Akosua.

"The little donkeys bowing and dancing! They are not real, you know."

Just remembering them made the children start laughing all over again.

"And the Clowns," said Jose. "They looked so jolly with such large shoes on. They couldn't dance at all. Did you see the Clown in the rubber mask pulling funny faces while he danced on his hands? Do you remember when we met another cow band? The naughty children teased the bulls with red flags and we ran into the crowd with our horns!"

"Imagine," Tanya said, "when we were lost, they paid us money to see Akosua dance!"

Further conversation was impossible. A band of acrobats passed by them quickly. They wore costumes of dry plantain leaves and all you could see was their feet. Tall, tall men they seemed, because they wore stilts. They were called Koi-Koi. That evening Akosua asked, "When shall we have Carnival again?"

"But it isn't finished yet!" her friends laughed at her. "It will continue for three days. Tonight there will be fireworks, and a parade of floats, lorries and tractors decorated like stilts. There will be alligator hunters, the Baiano dancers, more music, more dancing...."

"It's not finished?" Akosua gasped, for she was already very, very tired and wanted to go home. Besides, she thought, she had forgotten to give GeePee any food.

Questions and Exercises

1. Akosua said that the carnival was like a festival or durbar in Ghana. Why do you think she said that?

2. What Ghanaian words does the word "Bassa-Bassa" remind you of? Remember the word means "bad behaviour".

3. Journey to Bahía

Jose promised to feed GeePee because Akosua was so tired after the Carnival. When he opened GeePee's box, he had a great surprise. Inside the box were three guinea pigs. **He** ran to Akosua.

"He's a she ! GeePee's a she!" he cried. And he was right. Inside the box were two baby guinea pigs.

Very surprised, Akosua said, "Now you and Tanya can each have a guinea pig." That was the real reason why GeePee did not go on the journey to Bahia.

Gaucha was waiting with his car outside. Gaucha means 'cowboy'. Everything a real Brazilian Gaucha wears is of leather -jacket, trousers, leggings and a hat -to protect him when he rides through the thorny bushes, rounding up the cattle in the great plains.

Gaucha was Jose's uncle. He was not dressed at all like a cowboy. The children called him Gaucha, fondly, because Jose said he drove his car like a horse.

Gaucha had travelled all over Brazil and he knew many stories about that part of the country Akosua would not see on her journey to Bahia.

"Hello, little traveller," he said, when he met Akosua, and ran his fingers through her hair.

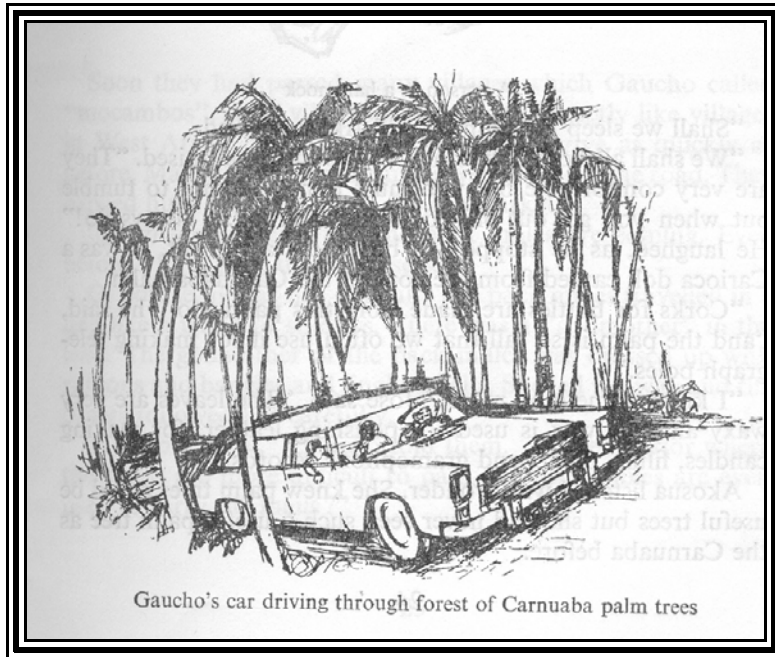
Akosua liked him at once. Even without his carnival mask he was jolly. He had laughing eyes and a drooping moustache which moved up and down as he talked.

"All set for a long journey?" he asked, as he bundled the child into the car.

Soon they had left the city of Rio. The car bumped along the dusty roads into the countryside. The land was dry and it was covered for miles with palm trees Akosua had never seen before.

"What are these trees ?" she asked. They stood 50 to 60 feet high.

"Palm trees," said Jose.

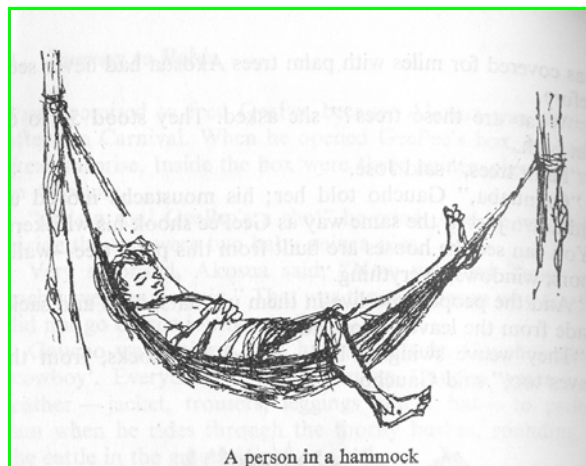


"Carnauba," Gaicho told her; his moustache moved up and down just in the same way as GeePee shook his whiskers! "You can see the houses are built from this palm tree-walls, doors, windows, everything."

"And the people who live in them use hats, bags and sacks made from the leaves," Jose added.

"They weave swinging beds, called hammocks, from the leaves too," said Gaicho.

"Shall we sleep in hammocks?" Akosua asked.



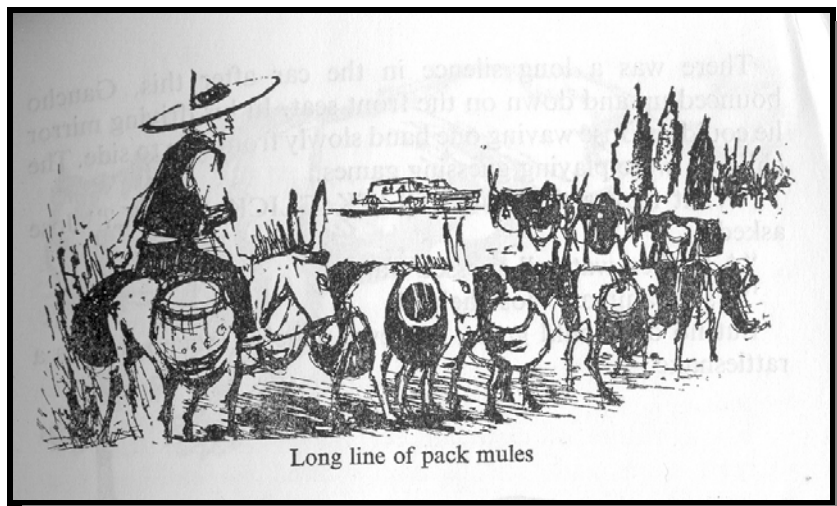
"We shall all sleep in hammocks," Gaicho promised. "They are very comfortable but you must remember not to tumble out when you get out of bed in the morning. I always do!" He laughed, as he stopped to buy them

a present. It was a Carioca doll carved from the cork of the Carnauba palm.

"Corks for bottles are made from this palm too," he said, "and the palm is so tall that we often use it for making telegraph poles."

"I know something more," Jose said. "The leaves are very waxy and the wax is used for polishing leather, for making candles, films, paints and gramophone records."

Akosua listened with wonder. She knew palm trees could be useful trees but she had never seen such a useful palm tree as the Carnauba before.



Soon they had passed many villages which Gaucho called "mocambos", small villages which seemed exactly like villages in West Africa. Now Gaucho could not drive as quickly as before. Many trains of pack mules were now on the road. They carried huge loads of goods for the markets.

"I can always tell when the pack mules are coming. Even before I have seen them," Jose said.

Of course, it was not difficult. The pack mules travelled in a line like a troop of soldiers. There was a "godmother" in the lead. The godmother of the pack mules was dressed up with ribbons and bangles and jingling bells. She led the way and the others followed her carefully.

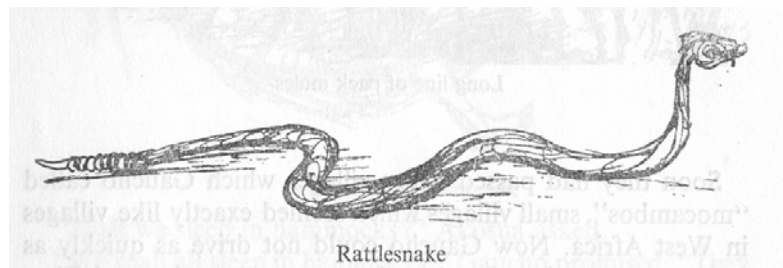
"Do you know," Gaucho told them, "in the interior where the roads are more difficult to pass, the pack mules are even used to carry the mails?"

There was a long silence in the car after this. Gaucho bounced up and down on the front seat. In his driving mirror he could see Jose waving one hand slowly from side to side. The children were playing guessing games.

"What makes this sound CLICK-CLICK-CLICK?" Jose asked.

"A broken watch," guessed Tanya.

"It's an animal," Jose helped.



But no one could guess, not even Uncle Gaucho. It was a rattlesnake.

"And what makes this sound, **GRRRR GRRRRR?**" asked Gaucho.

"A dog?"

"No."

"Is **GRRR GRRRR** like a loud purr?" Tanya asked. "Hmm!" murmured Uncle Gaucho.

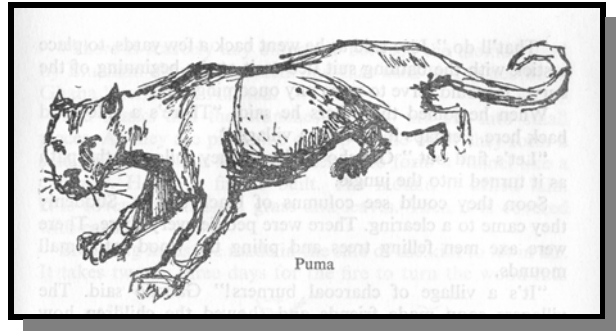
"An angry cat!" suggested Jose.

"Well, it is a kind of cat, only it's much bigger," said Gaucho. "I know. A lion!" Akosua said.

"A Puma!" shouted Jose and Tanya together.

"I suppose you are all correct," laughed Uncle Gaucho.

"The puma is like the African lion. It is the same colour too. Its real home is in South America. The puma is smaller than the African lion. It can do some things the lion does not like to do, like



swimming! And it can do another thing the lion cannot do, like climbing trees. If we are lucky, we might see one on this journey. After this talk the children searched the jungle with wide eyes, hoping to spy a puma in the trees.

Suddenly there was a loud GRRR GRRR then PSHSHSH! The car wobbled from one side of the road to another.

"A flat tyre!" grumbled Gaucho in the nicest way. He brought the car to a stand-still. "We are in a dangerous corner too. Who's got something red we can use as a flag?"

Tanya looked into her bag and all she could find was her red bathing suit.

"That's too small," Gaucho said. "Use mine."

It amused the children to see Gaucho's bathing suit. It was an old-fashioned bathing suit. The wind filled it like a large red balloon.

"That'll do," Jose said as he went back a few yards, to place a stick with the bathing suit tied to it at the beginning of the curve. It would serve to warn any oncoming traffic.

When he joined the others he said, "There's a side road back here. Perhaps it leads to a village."

"Let's find out," Gaucho said and they followed the path as it turned into the jungle.

Soon they could see columns of black smoke. Suddenly they came to a clearing. There were people everywhere. There were axe men felling trees and piling the wood into small mounds.

"It's a village of charcoal burners!" Gaucho said. The villagers soon made friends and showed the children how charcoal is made.



"There is scarcely any difference between the method used by Brazilian charcoal burners and that used by my people in Ghana," remarked Akosua.

The trunks and the branches of trees are cut into small pieces. As they are piled one on top of the other they form a small hill. A hole is left in the centre to form a funnel like a chimney. Here the fire is built. The mound is called kiln. It is covered with dried grass and leaves. Then it is covered with earth.



Breathing holes are made in the side of the kiln to let in air. It takes two or three days for the fire to turn the wood into charcoal. When the black smoke from the kiln turns to blue smoke, the fire is put out. The charcoal is ready and the workers separate it from the earth and put it into sacks for sale in the markets.

While some of the villagers helped Gaucho to repair his car, the children helped to put the charcoal into bags. Jose noticed that some of the sacks had no charcoal but what looked like white sand.

"Do you make charcoal into sand too?" he asked. "Taste it," Jose's new friends suggested.

"Why, it's salt," Jose said, surprised. It was very coarse salt.

"The salt flats are over there," the villagers told them. "Can you see the windmills? Come, we will show you."

The children followed their friends. They showed them how the windmill turned and pumped salt water from the sea into drainage tanks. These salt flats were arranged in steps.

When the sun dried up all the water, the salt was left in dry flakes. This was carefully raked and sifted and put into bags.

"Why, it's easy," thought Jose, "to make salt from the sea." He promised himself he would make his own experiment.

"We need a lot of salt for curing meat and for use in the meat-canning factories in Bahia," they told the children.

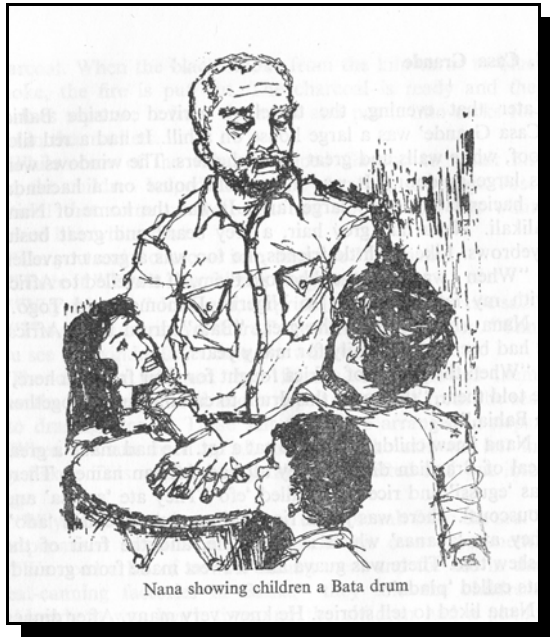
Already it was lunch time and the children had a picnic lunch with the charcoal burners at their camp site. Then they set off once more to travel and find out about Brazil.

Questions and Exercises

1. Describe in your own words how coal is made.
2. If you were Jose how would you carry out an experiment to make salt yourself?

4. *Casa Grande*

Later that evening, the travellers arrived outside Bahia. 'Casa Grande' was a large house on a hill. It had a red tiled roof, white walls and great green shutters. The windows were as large as doors. It was a very old house on a hacienda. A hacienda is a very large farm. It was the home of Nana Alikali. Nana had grey hair, a grey beard and great bushy eyebrows. Like his little friends, he too was a great traveller.



Nana showing children a Bata drum

"When I was your age," he told them, "I travelled to Africa with my father. I went to Nigeria, Dahomey and Togo."

Nana showed them the great "Bata" drum from Africa. It had been in his family for many years.

"When the people of Africa fought for their freedom here," he told them, "they used this drum to call the people together, in Bahia."

Nana knew children liked to eat a lot. He had made a great meal of Brazilian dishes. They all had African names. There was 'egussi' and rice balls called 'efo'. They ate 'acassa' and 'couscous'. There was jollof rice and corn meal, called 'ado'. They ate 'ananas' which is pineapple, and the fruit of the cashew tree. There was guava and a sweet made from groundnuts called 'pinda'.

Nana liked to tell stories. He knew very many. After dinner he called for oil lamps to be lit. It had grown very dark. He told them stories of the Tortoise called 'Sapo', of 'Caipora', the great giant of the woods, and of mischievous little bush people, the 'Bodoque'. They were all stories from Africa.

Jose wanted to know what Nana grew on his farm.

"Many things," said Nana. "First, a lot of cocoa. South America is the real home of the cocoa plant. When the Europeans came to America, the first Americans offered them a drink called 'chocolate'. Then it was made of cocoa mixed with water, corn, and pepper. At that time, people also ate pure cocoa mixed with honey, cinnamon and vanilla. That was long ago. Now cocoa grows in many other parts of the world.

There is a lot of cocoa in West Africa. It had to be planted there. Here it grows wild even when we do not plant it. Long ago, people even used cocoa beans as money."

"Why did they mix the cocoa with honey?" Akosua asked. "Chocolate is sweet already!"

"No. We have to mix cocoa powder with milk and sugar to make chocolate," Nana told her. "We also get cocoa butter from the cocoa bean. We use cocoa butter in making soaps and things like that. Here in Bahia we also make a wine from cocoa," Nana added.

"Now off to bed with you, little ones," he said.

As Gaucho promised, hammocks were tied between posts on the verandah. There was one for each of the children. It was very comfortable to sleep in.

Early next morning, Jose forgot he was sleeping in a hammock. He fell out with a bump.

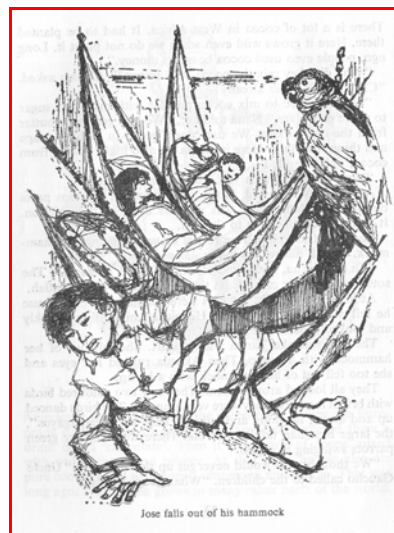
"Eh ha, eh, ha, ha! Good morning! Good morning!" The sound of laughter came from the other end of the verandah.

At first Jose thought the girls were laughing at him because he fell out of the hammock. He picked himself up quickly and looked around him.

The noise awoke Tanya with a start. She fell out of her hammock with a bump. Then Akosua rubbed her eyes and she too fell out of her hammock with a bump.

They all looked around them. They saw two coloured birds with bright feathers. They were very amusing. The birds danced up and down, laughing and talking. They were "papagayos", the large Brazilian talking parrots. There were smaller green parrots swinging in cages.

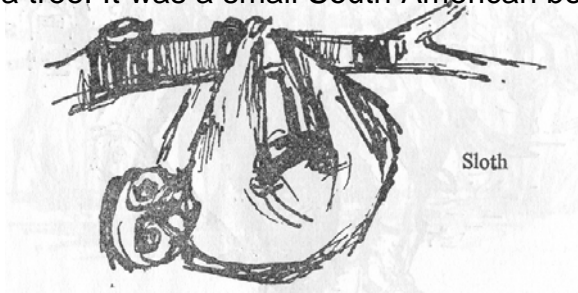
"We thought you would never get up this morning!" Uncle Gaucho called to the children. "What sleepy heads!"



"As bad as a sloth," said Nana, joining them.

"What's a sloth," the children wanted to know.

Nana showed them a small brown animal hanging on the branch off a tree. It was a small South American bear.



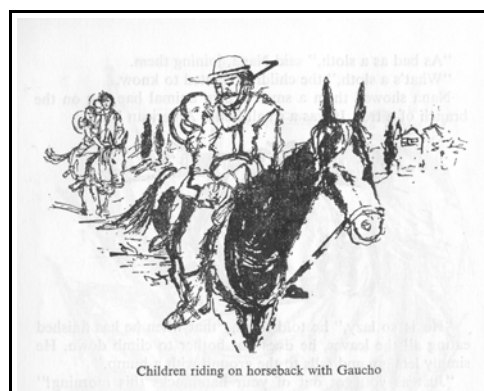
"He is so lazy," he told them, "that when he has finished eating all the leaves, he does not bother to climb down. He simply lets go, and falls to the ground with a bump."

"Just as you got out of your hammocks this morning!" laughed Uncle Gaucho.

"The sloth is even more greedy than GeePee," he said.. "He makes a very good pet for children. He is very clean, and he does not cause harm."

The children dressed quickly and had breakfast. After breakfast Nana had a great surprise for them. They were to ride round the hacienda on horses. This time Gaucho looked like a cowboy. He looked very smart as he jumped into the saddle. He gave the children red handkerchiefs to tie round their necks. Everyone wore straw hats to keep off the sun.

They were off at a slow trot. They passed first through the mangrove swamps. Mangroves are trees which like to grow in water. Their roots harbour all kinds of crabs and shrimps.

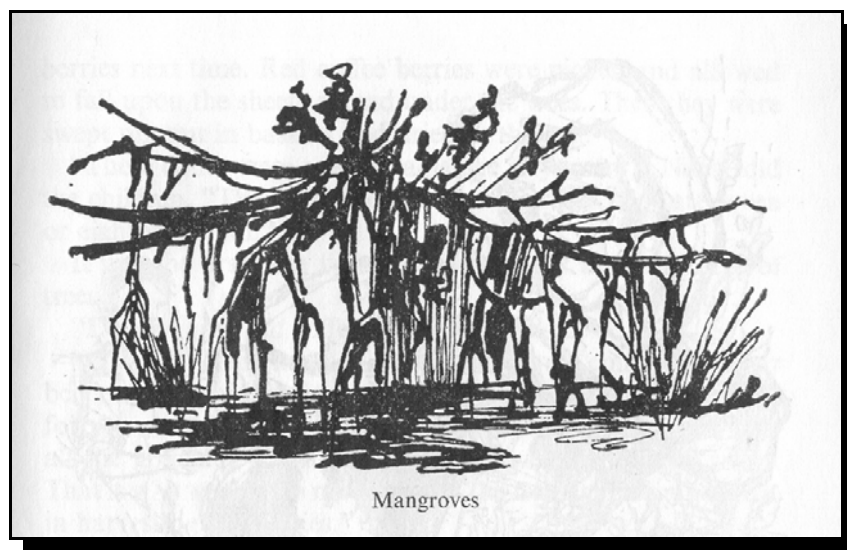


"These mangrove trees are the Red Manque," Nana told them. They seemed like great spiders standing out above the water with their roots exposed.

"The bark of the mangrove is rich in tannin!"

Of course the children did not know what tannin was. As they rode along, Nana explained that tannin was a substance used for curing leather. In the great cattle markets of Bahia, cows are killed and the meat is cured and canned. The hide, or skin, of the animals is made into leather. Tannin helps to preserve the leather.

There was white clay in the swamps. Women and children



were collecting it in baskets. They worked the clay by foot then rolled it into cylinders. From this clay they build many beautiful small clay figures which are painted and sold in the markets of Bahia. This clay is also used in potteries for making ovens, bricks and tiles.

It was a long hot ride through fields of corn and cocoyam planted in rows. There were cassava and ginger and pumpkin running to vine.

Everyone was grateful for the shade of the coffee groves. Even more welcome were the juicy oranges whose trees sheltered the coffee plants.



It was harvest time for coffee and wide sheets were spread under the trees. As the coffee berry grows very near the branches, workers carefully pick the berry from the stem. If not, the branches will be injured and the trees will bear fewer berries next time. Red coffee berries were picked and allowed to fall upon the sheets spread under the trees. Then they were swept up, put in baskets and dried in the sun.

"These coffee trees are the same age as you are," Nana told the children. "They begin to bear berries when they are seven or eight years old."

It was the first time that Akosua thought about the age of trees.

"Do you have *old* coffee trees?" she asked.

"Oh yes!" Nana laughed. "The coffee trees continue to bear berries until they are twenty, sometimes even until they are forty years old. Coffee has brought more wealth to Brazil than all the gold dug from her mines or washed from her rivers. That is why we take so much care of the trees, and so much care in harvesting the berries."

Casa Grande welcomed home three tired little people that evening. Akosua climbed the stairs in a very strange way. She walked with her

hands on her hips. Her knees, she noticed, were slightly bent. She knew she would not be able to sit down for dinner.

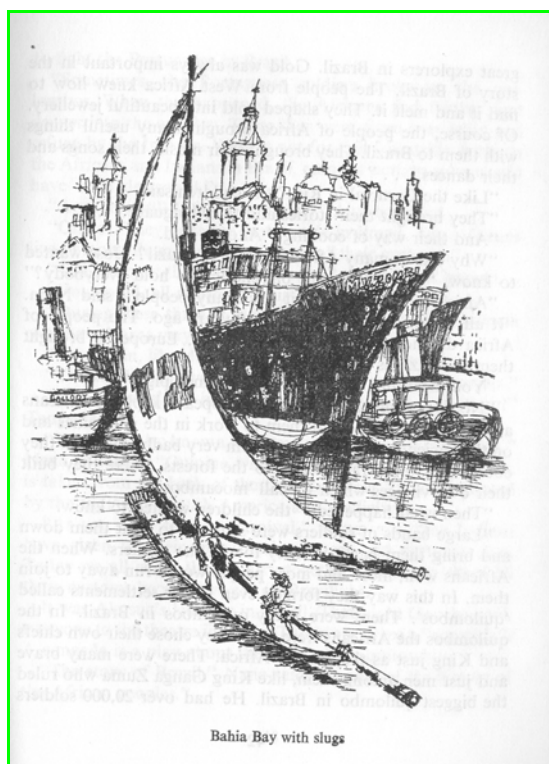
"Now you know why I am called Gaucho !" their uncle laughed. It was true. The long day's riding on a horse made them very sore. They all moved with the slow awkward walk of a cowboy ... exactly like uncle Gaucho.

Questions and Exercises

1. Write four or five sentences about the sloth. Is it good to, copy him? Why?

2. What do you know about cocoa in Ghana? Have you learnt anything new about cocoa?

5. *Brazil and Africa*



Bahia means 'bay', a safe harbour. The bay of Bahia was spotted with islands and crowded with ships. There was a great traffic of all manner of craft on the water. There were the short, heavy river peddlers, there were slow paddle steamers which bring down the produce from the forest where there are no roads. There were the giant ocean liners which cross from one continent to the other. There were tramp steamers, barges, frail canoes of fishermen and rafts.

"Over there," Nana said, pointing toward the sun, "is Africa." "You mean if we sailed in a straight line from here, we would reach Africa?" Jose asked.

"Yes, we would get to Angola and the Congo. Long ago, Bahia was the first port of call for hundreds of ships crossing the ocean from Africa," Nana said. "Running through the middle of Brazil is a great river.... "

"The AMAZON River," said Jose and Tanya.

"Just as there is a great river running through the middle of Africa-the CONGO River," continued Nana. "The climate of Brazil and that of Africa are very similar. We have the same plants, the same animals.... "

"Like cocoa!"

"And parrots!"

"And lions!"

"Are the people the same?" Jose asked.

"Yes, many people from the Congo and Angola came to Brazil," Nana told them.

"Were there people from my country too?" asked Akosua.

"From your country, too, and from Nigeria, Dahomey, Guinea, Senegal," Nana said. "The people of West Africa were great explorers in Brazil. Gold was always important in the story of Brazil. The people from West Africa knew how to find it and melt it. They shaped gold into beautiful jewellery. Of course, the people of Africa brought many useful things with them to Brazil. They brought their music, their songs and their dances.... "

"Like the Carnival in Rio," the children said.

"They brought their stories and their language.... " "And their way of cooking," Akosua said.

"Why did so many Africans come to Brazil?" Jose wanted to know. "Was Africa not big enough to hold everybody?" "Africa is very big and it has many people," said Nana.

"It all began about four hundred years ago. The people of Africa did not want to come to Brazil. Europeans brought them to Brazil as slaves."

"You mean just as I brought the guinea pig?"

"No, it was much worse. The Europeans kept the Africans as prisoners. They forced them to work in the goldmines and on the haciendas.

They treated them very badly. So when they could, they often ran away into the forests. There they built their own villages which we call 'mocambos'."

"Then what happened?" the children wanted to know.

"Large bands of soldiers were sent out to hunt them down and bring them back. So they fought the soldiers. When the Africans won, more and more people would run away to join them. In this way they formed even bigger settlements called 'quilombos'. There were many quilombos in Brazil. In the quilombos the Africans were free. They chose their own chiefs and King just as they did in Africa. There were many brave and just men among them, like King Ganga Zuma who ruled the biggest quilombo in Brazil. He had over 20,000 soldiers to fight the Portuguese in Brazil.

"Sometimes, the Portuguese soldiers broke up the quilombos. When this happened, the Africans fled further and deeper into the country. There they were given friendship and refuge by the Indians. Were it not for this friendship between the Africans and Indians in Brazil, many of both peoples would have been destroyed."

"Are there still Indians in Brazil?" Akosua asked.

"Oh yes. They were the first people in Brazil. The Africans lived among them and learnt many of their customs."

"Tell us about the Indian customs!" the children begged. "You could tell me some yourself," Nana laughed. "During these three weeks you have been on the hacienda

you have learnt very many."

"You mean, like sleeping in hammocks?" Jose asked. "Yes, the Indians were the first people to make hammocks." "And to use plants in making colours to paint on pottery!"

Tanya said.

"Yes! They also know a lot about using plants as medicines," Nana told them. "Quinine, which we use today to cure malaria, is taken from the bark of the Cinchona tree. It was first used by the Indians of South America as a medicine."

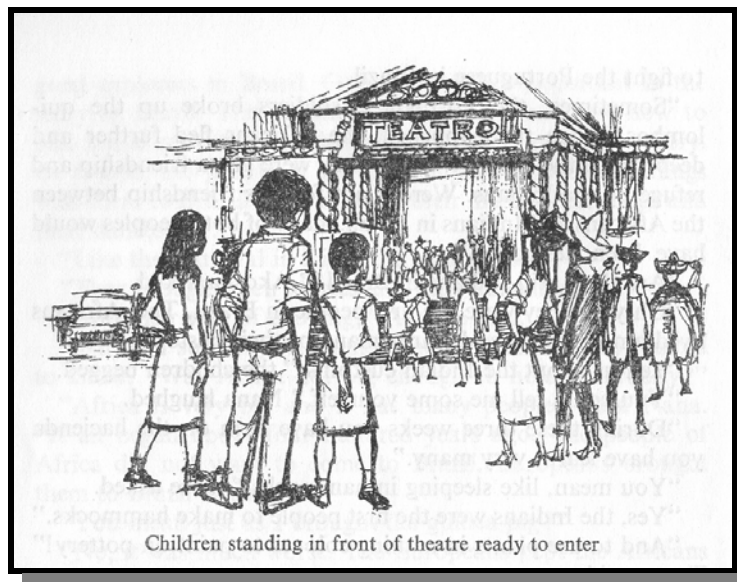
"As you have seen in Carnival," Nana said, "the Indians have given us their own music, dances and costumes too. Today we all share

the country together just as we share all these customs because we are all Brazilians."

It was Akosua's last day in Brazil. That night Gaucho took everyone to the theatre in Bahia. They were to see a "congada". A congada is a play about the story of the quilombos.

"The story of Brazil," Nana said, "is part of the history of the African peoples."

Home Again



Too soon it was time to say goodbye to Bahia. Again Akosua stood at the head of the line of passengers. In one hand was her briefcase and in the other was a brown cardboard box with eight holes. Inside the cardboard box were Pedro and Petra. Inside the briefcase, there was nothing at all.

Where was GeePee?

She had decided to stay in the carrot-shaped country with Nana Alikali.

So Nana gave Akosua two baby South American bears to take back to Africa.

"Write soon!" Akosua's friends sang, as her aeroplane sped into the blue sky towards home again.

Questions and Exercises

1. How many things can you find in the chapter which are common to both Ghana and Brazil?

2. What do you find about Brazil which you can't find about Ghana?

Difficult Words and their Meanings 1

accustomed: used to a thing.

baggage: belongings with which one travels. **bay:** an inland bend of the shore.

briefcase: bag for keeping papers.

carrot: a plant with an orange-coloured, eatable root. **crisp:** hard but easily broken.

crunch: to chew anything hard, and so make a noise. **cucumber:** a long green fruit used in salads.

customs: the place where taxes on goods from other countries are collected.

delighted: highly pleased.

dunce: a person slow at learning.

elevator: a lift in a high building for taking people or goods up and down.

exciting: rousing feelings; moving to action. **grunt:** to make a sound like that of a pig.

hug: to hold lightly with the arms.

lettuce: a plant whose leaves are eaten raw and usually in a salad.

nibble: to bite off little pieces at a time.

queue: line of persons waiting.

stewardess: a woman who attends passengers on board a ship or aeroplane.

tangled: mixed together in confusing way.

terrifying: frightening.

tunnel: an underground passage cut through a hill or under a river.

2

acrobat: one who does body-twisting and balancing tricks.

alligator: a kind of crocodile.

breathless: out of breath.

clown: a person who acts or talks like a fool to cause laughter.

costume: fashion of dress; dress for disguise.

cowherd: one who looks after cows. **custom:** what one is in the habit of doing. **demand:** to call sharply for; to ask a question **destruction** : damage.

disguise: a dress which makes the wearer seem other than what he is.

dreaded: terrible.

giggle: to laugh in a silly manner. **insulting** : rude.

interior: the inside of anything.

mask: a cover for the face, for a disguise. **monarch:** king; ruler.
orchestra: a band of musicians.

perform : to do or act as on the stage ; to play music. **pursue:** to follow; to chase.

sacking: cloth for making sacks.

spin : to turn round quickly.

stilts: long poles with foot-rests on which a person may walk clear of the ground.

tease: to make fun of a person and annoy him.

threaten: to promise to hurt a person if he does not do as one wants.

tumble : to fall.

3

can: to put (food) into a closed tin to keep it from going bad. **chimney:** an opening or hole for the escape of smoke or heated air from a fire.

column: a pillar.

drainage: the drawing-off of waste water by pipes, gutters, etc.

drooping : bent and hanging as in a tired state.

experiment: a trial or test carried out to find out something. **factory:** a large workshop where goods are made in large quantities.

flake: a thin layer or slice of anything.

funnel : a tube or passage for the escape of smoke, air, etc. ; a wide-mouth filler by which liquids are poured into bottles. **jungle:** forest; thick-growing trees.

kiln: a large oven for baking bricks or pottery. **legging:** an outer covering for the legs.

mound: a heap of earth or stones.

moustache: the hair upon the upper lip of men.

mule: an animal whose parents are a horse and an ass. **pack mule:** a mule used in carrying goods.

separate: to set apart; to divide anything into parts. **suggest:** 'to bring forward an idea.

traffic: the motor-cars, buses, cycles, etc. which use a public road.

wax: a sticky substance used for candles and other purposes. **windmill:** a mill driven by sails which are made to move by the force of the wind.

wobble: to move unsteadily from side to side.

4

awkward: clumsy.

cinnamon: a spice got from the bark of a Ceylonese tree. **cylinder:** a roller-shaped object.

injure: to harm; to damage.

mangrove: a tree which grows on muddy shores and river banks in hot countries.

mischievous: wicked; fond of playing tricks.

shelter: to give protection to; thing that gives protection from attack, heat, rain or wind.

swamp: low ground made wet and soppy with water. **tannin:** a substance got from the bark of certain trees and used in preparing leather.

vanilla: a sweet-scented flavouring used in ices, puddings, etc. **barge:** a flat-bottomed boat for carrying goods, used on rivers and canals.

frail: weak.

raft: a number of logs, planks, etc. fastened together and used as a boat.

tramp steamer: a small cargo-boat going from port to port.