



## 163. The Stone Cairns of Northern Kenya

John Parkinson

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- D. initial hostility and subsequent reconciliation of individuals to the new culture as a factor in integrating new culture-traits, and caused by
1. intensity of contact;
  2. duration of contact and resulting habituation to new cultural elements;
  3. social, economic or political advantages resultant upon acceptance;
- E. psychic conflict resulting from attempts to reconcile differing traditions of social behaviour and different sets of social sanctions.

#### V. THE RESULTS OF ACCULTURATION.

- A. *acceptance* : where the process of acculturation eventuates in the taking over of the greater portion of another culture, and the loss of most of the older cultural heritage; with acquiescence on the part of the members of the accepting group, and, as a result, assimilation by them not only to the behaviour patterns but to the inner values of the culture with which they have come into contact.
- B. *adaptation* : where both original and foreign traits are combined so as to produce a smoothly functioning cultural whole which is actually an historic mosaic; with either a reworking of the patterns of the two cultures into a harmonious meaningful whole to the individuals concerned, or the retention of a series of more or less conflicting attitudes and points of view which are reconciled in everyday life as specific occasions arise.
- C. *reaction* : where because of oppression, or because of the unforeseen results of the acceptance of foreign traits, contra-acculturative movements arise; these maintaining their psychological force (a) as compensations for an imposed or assumed inferiority, or (b) through the prestige which a return to older pre-acculturative conditions may bring to those participating in such a movement.

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#### The Stone Cairns of Northern Kenya. *By John Parkinson.*

**163** In *Antiquity* for June, 1933, and MAN, 1933, 102, mention is made of the stone cairns characteristic of certain parts of the Northern Frontier Province of Kenya as far as the Abyssinian boundary. They are to be seen typically at the administrative centre of Wajhir. Mr. Huntingford, the author of the first paper, considers them as being undoubtedly graves, in which conclusion Mr. Curle, who writes in MAN, agrees, although he admits that in one he demolished at Wajhir he found fragments of pottery but no bones. Mr. Watson (MAN, 1927, 30) states that he "broke up" many at Wajhir and discovered nothing.

Some years ago, when travelling through the Province, I also took the opportunity of investigating one of those conspicuous mounds of loose stones near the wells of Wajhir. Broken bones came to light, two fragments of pottery, and a roll of sheet copper about 2 inches long.

Another such roll had been found some years previously by a political officer during the demolition of a cairn in the same district. The pottery was formed of terra-cotta coloured clay, about .4 inch thick, and had formed part of a bowl about 7½ inches in diameter. The edge was incised with transverse grooves. Two fragments, each about the size of a large pea, of a dull green earthy substance, probably containing copper, were picked up. Some of the bones had obviously been buried, for they were brown and discoloured by soil; they were the skull, lower jaw and femur of a hare and the skull of a mongoose. There were also a few bones of birds, not identified. For these determinations I am indebted to Mr. A. T. Hopwood, of the British Museum of Natural History. Although the country is somewhat dry at the present day for hares, the presence of such a species indicates no great change of climate, but the mongoose is not of the semi-desert type one would expect.

The other fragments of bones show no indication of having been buried; they are white, fragile, and human. They consist of the heads of two femora, two astragali, a piece of a fibula and some

vertebræ. All the stones composing the cairn being removed, a flat surface of limestone without a sign of a grave was laid bare.

It is difficult to account for the human bones not having been buried, except on the hypothesis that, like the Kikuyu, the former inhabitants of Wajhir threw their dead into the bush to be eaten by hyænas. Some of the cairns are no doubt graves, possibly of chiefs; some would seem to be certainly not, and I would suggest that they are surface stones piled up to clear the ground for agricultural purposes. If so, soil including the burrows of rodents, into one of which a mongoose had crept and died, might well be thrown upon the pile, together with any human bones chance put in the way. The wells of Wajhir were dug on the margin of a lake, and into a considerable thickness of freshwater limestone, proving a long-continued wet period. That they were dug is due, doubtless, to the failure of the rains and the continuance and increasing severity of the drought, which seems the final cause for the emigration of these people. Remnants of earthworks, resembling dams, were noted to the west of Eil Wak, on the border of Italian Somaliland.

Turning to British Somaliland, the stone walls of dwellings and other buildings forming a line of villages are well known in the west, along the Abyssinian frontier. They are mentioned by Burton (*First Footsteps in East Africa*). To-day no even tolerable water-supply exists in the immediate vicinity of any of the towns. It is to be presumed that they were abandoned for the same reason as that just given, namely, the increasing drought, which implies a rough contemporaneity of habitation, *i.e.*, the conclusion of the last wet period and the commencement of the present time of diminished rainfall, but a close correlation cannot be insisted on.

It is noteworthy that the graves of the people of the stone-walled villages are on the Somali pattern made to-day, while in the centre and east of the Protectorate cairns are very conspicuous and are always believed by the natives to be graves.

In examining the Somaliland ruins, I found a number of grinding stones, having a provenance other than that of the district in which they were discovered. Therein lay a clue to the route taken by their former owners.

JOHN PARKINSON.

**Covenants.** *By A. M. Hocart.*

In a paper on Blood-Brotherhood (MAN, 1935, 127) were discussed two forms of covenant, one used by the Azande, the other by the Pawnees, and called by Miss A. Fletcher, "the Hako."

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The Hako is very valuable for theoretic purposes since it represents a stage of development from the creation ritual to the covenant pure and simple. It has not ceased to be a creation ritual, but on the other hand it is commonly resorted to in order to bind two tribes together. The blood covenant of the Azande, on the other hand, has become specialized as a means of binding; it has dropped all other purposes. As a consequence, its technique has been pared down to fit its specialized purpose, whereas the Hako preserves the full pattern, because it remains generalized.

There is another striking difference between them. The Azande rite causes the two parties to behave as we find cross-cousins behave wherever there are cross-cousins. The Hako, on the other hand, relates the two parties in the peace-making as Father and Son; those who take the initiative are visitors, and appoint one of their number as Father; the hosts select from their midst one who is the Son.

At first this difference seems to forbid that we should connect the two rituals as derivatives of a common original; but a closer analysis of the ritual pattern leaves a common origin as the hypothesis that best fits the facts.

A full-blown ritual requires two parties, male and female. These need not be man and woman, for the two parties come together as god and goddess, and the god and the goddess may be represented otherwise than by a man and a woman. In modern India a male and a female idol may be bedded together, in Vedic India a dead stallion and the queen. There is a Vedic rite of mating the king with the earth symbolically. The Pawnees use two feathered pipes to represent the male and the female in this same Hako; but the sacred marriage which gives birth to the Son takes place between the party of the Father and a corn-cob, which is called Mother Corn. Mother Corn is Mother Earth (Miss