

## THE TURKANA OF KOLOSIA DISTRICT.

[WITH PLATES III AND IV AND A MAP.]

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## FOREWORD.

IN submitting these notes, I feel that a few words regarding the comparatively recent history of the district will not be misplaced.

The Kolosia Turkana first came into contact with the Kenya Administration in 1906, when a deputation, under Headman Ajuga, reported to the District Commissioner, Baringo, and asked for protection from the Abyssinians. On receiving

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The name "Athapanitha" is merely the plural form of *Athapanu* (decoration).

I append a list of the main ornaments and song subjects which are peculiar to each Athapanu.

*Ornaments and Decorations.*

<i>Imuru.</i>	<i>Iriha.</i>
Baboon skins.	Leopard skins.
Black ostrich feathers.	Light ostrich feathers.
Dark metal ornaments.	Brass and copper ornaments.
Dark coloured beads.	Light coloured beads.
Giraffe's tail.	

White ostrich feathers may be worn by either class. Recently, feathers stained with red ink have become very fashionable, and either section may wear these. The same applies to feathers stained with red earth.

*Subjects of Songs.*

<i>Imuru.</i>	<i>Iriha.</i>
Black ostrich .. <i>Akeleth.</i>	Light ostrich .. <i>Akeleth.</i>
Giraffe .. .. <i>Eokuri.</i>	Leopard .. .. <i>Erith.</i>
Stone .. .. <i>Amuru.</i>	Elephant .. .. <i>Etom.</i>
Ostrich eggs .. <i>Abeiye.</i>	Rhino .. .. <i>Amruthing.</i>
Lion .. .. <i>Ang'atun.</i>	Guinea-fowl .. <i>Atapin.</i>
Eland .. .. <i>Ewapet.</i>	Partridge .. .. <i>Etokora.</i>
Buffalo .. .. <i>Akothurwan.</i>	Wart-hog .. .. <i>Eputir.</i>
Honey .. .. <i>Aou.</i>	Porcupine .. .. <i>Abubu.</i>
Deika .. .. <i>Ithiru.</i>	Serval cat .. .. <i>Echwet.</i>
Kerio river .. <i>Ang'olol Kerio.</i>	Snake .. .. <i>Imun.</i>
Acacia .. .. <i>Eowei.</i>	Turkwell river <i>Ang'olol Tirkwel.</i>

v.—*Social Divisions amongst Women.*

The women are divided into four main social classes, but the passing from one to the other is automatic and no ceremony attaches to any of the stages:—

<i>Akadwaranan</i> ..	This class may be said to consist of all unmarried girls.
<i>Ataran</i> .. ..	All women who are married, but have not yet given birth, are included in this class.
<i>Abero</i> .. ..	This class consists of all married women who have given birth.
<i>Akimat</i> .. ..	In this class we have the really old women, <i>i.e.</i> all past the climacteric.

The blood is caught in a small wooden bowl and then transferred to a larger one, which is placed in a handy position. Blood is consumed either in its raw state or mixed with milk, but it is never cooked.

The time taken for a beast to recover its strength is roughly two to three months, according to the state of the grazing. This bleeding of an animal is called "*kidarak*."

In addition to meat, blood, and milk, the Turkana know of many kinds of wild berries and roots which are very nourishing—in fact, many are considered to be luxuries, and the women will go off for several days and live on nothing but wild berries, seeds, and roots. Actually, one may say that, with the exception of a few poisonous bushes, every tree is food to the Turkana.

Should a person be suddenly seized with hunger in the village, he will consume some ghee.

As might be expected, there are certain rules regarding the division of meat. The head and neck (*akhou*) and stomach (*aboin*) are handed over to the women, who cook the head and neck with the skin on, and later consume the whole, skin and all. The head of the village is given the upper portion of the left hind-leg (*akhalogeding*) and the breast (*atarup*), while the senior member of the other portion of the village is given the lower part of the right fore-leg (*ikipithit*). When these choice parts have been handed over, the rest of the meat is divided up amongst the common herd.

The only animals whose meat the Turkana do not eat are the Hyena (*Ebu*), the jackal (*kwee*), and dogs (wild or otherwise) (*Ing'ok*). Their favourite meat is that of the elephant (*etom*), the hippo (*epir*), the rhino (*amuthing*), the giraffe (*eokuri*), the lion (*ang'atun*) and the camel (*ekal*). Crocodiles (*akinyang*) appear to be eaten only by the Lake Rudolf people, while all Turkana deny eating snakes.

Every part of an animal is eaten, except the horns and teeth, and it is no uncommon sight to see a man making a meal off an animal's hoof.

#### iv.—*Tobacco.*

Anyone who has lived among the Turkana must feel a strong inclination to think of tobacco as food, for a Turkana of the southern half of the district literally "lives" with a ball of tobacco in his mouth, and will accept a gift of a mouthful of tobacco in preference to a good square meal. The Turkana neither chews nor smokes his tobacco but, having mixed it with a little salt (*emakati*) and wood-ash (*ekurun*), will roll it into a ball and place it between the lower lip and the teeth, where it remains for hours on end. When available, the tobacco will be wrapped in the silky covering of the *evu* seed. One will often see a man extract his ball of tobacco from his mouth and give it to a friend, who will put it into his mouth without any hesitation.

If a man runs short of tobacco, he will cut up his tobacco pouch, and, rolling the pieces into balls, will place one at a time in his mouth until he is able to obtain a fresh supply of the real thing. This commodity is obtained from the Marakwet, but, in

## 19.—TURKANA PLACE-NAMES AND THEIR MEANINGS.

Loitruk	..	..	..	From <i>aruk</i> , a hump. So called on account of the summit rock representing the hump of a bullock.
Kailongol	..	..	..	From <i>ailong</i> , a benefactor. There is always grazing to be had here.
Lotong'ot	..	..	..	From <i>etoko</i> , a head-string. A colossal bullock was sung about and killed here. It had huge horns and many head-strings.
Nadume	..	..	..	From <i>adume</i> , acacia
Koumukun	..	..	..	From <i>koumukun</i> , an insect.
Lukwamothing	..	..	..	From <i>ekwang</i> , white; and <i>amothing</i> , rhino. A white rhino is said to have died here.
Karuthugwil	..	..	..	From <i>ihugwil</i> , bent horns. Site of a big meat feast.
Long'ethia	..	..	..	From <i>egiete</i> , to fight. Site of a riot.
Kang'etet	..	..	..	From <i>ng'etet</i> , acacia seeds.
Karunkyukuri	..	..	..	From <i>aroniki</i> , miscarriage; and <i>eokuri</i> , giraffe. Giraffe said to have died here, as a result of miscarriage.
Kobanyet	..	..	..	From <i>ebanyet</i> , shaving. Turkana elder was killed here by elephant and many people shaved.
Kula	..	..	..	From <i>kula</i> , beating. Site where <i>eadung</i> seeds were beaten out.
Kolong	..	..	..	From <i>akolong</i> , dry. Devoid of grazing.
Nakwakal	..	..	..	From <i>ekwang</i> , white; and <i>ekal</i> , camel. White camel was killed here.
Kerio	..	..	..	From <i>etiyeri</i> , a cure.
Kochodin	..	..	..	From <i>ichidiyu</i> , to scoop up water from a hole.
Changei	..	..	..	From <i>echangei</i> , long.
Bwilbwil	..	..	..	From <i>abwilbwil</i> , neck fat.
Ayangyang	..	..	..	From <i>yangyang</i> , still waters, swamp.
Lokwiyam	..	..	..	From <i>ekwiyam</i> , ringing stones.
Namuru	..	..	..	From <i>amuru</i> , a rock.
Kakorotom	..	..	..	From <i>akuru</i> , to dig for water.
Nabeiye	..	..	..	From <i>abeiye</i> , ostrich egg.
Logetiwei	..	..	..	From <i>edoket</i> , a slope; and <i>eowei</i> , acacia.
Kang'akupur	..	..	..	From <i>kaiपुरa</i> , to swear.
Kalokwanyang	..	..	..	From <i>otinyang</i> , a yellow bullock.
Laplap	..	..	..	From <i>laplap</i> , lapping of water.
Lokotur	..	..	..	From <i>katur</i> , an insect.
Athugwiliatom	..	..	..	From <i>athugwil</i> , large tusks; and <i>etom</i> , elephant.