WILEY

19. Kikuyu Calendar.

Author(s): K. R. Dundas

Source: *Man*, Vol. 9 (1909), pp. 37-38

Published by: Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2840695>

Accessed: 27-06-2016 02:33 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Wiley are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Man*

“ four claws are inserted in the mouth. No. 3 has a very curious carved neck ornament, the like of which I have never seen. Nos. 2 and 3 have each a blind right eye. The carvings are clearly of varying ages, and instinct leads me to place them in order of time as follows, beginning with the oldest :—four, six, two, three, one, five. No. 6 is 18 inches high, and this will give the relative sizes of the others. The larger chests might hold the entire skeleton of an adult, but the smaller ones certainly would not ; and No. 6, the smallest, would not take the bones of an infant, still it had a lid at one time and was for holding something. Captain G. Mair says it was for the placenta. Some of the chests have been painted with red ochre.”

“ It is surprising what a small amount of information can be obtained about these chests, and I can find no myth or legend that would explain the bird-like carvings of the bodies.”

J. EDGE-PARTINGTON.

Africa, East.

Kikuyu Calendar. By Hon. K. R. Dundas.

The Kikuyu divide the year into two seasons as under :—

1. *Kimera kya Mweli* : July to January.
2. *Kimera kya Njahi* : February to June.

Their language does not appear to possess a word answering to our word year (*i.e.*, all twelve months), the word *Mwaka* signifying merely a rainy season.

[37]

Dundas.

19

The circumcision of the boys and girls occurs in the same months ; the season in which it takes place depending on whether they live in Ruguru (the West) or Ithereru (the East), if the former in *Kimera kya Njahi*, if the latter in *Kimera kya Mweli*.

The month commences with the first day of the new moon and lasts thirty days. Each month has a name.

There are no names for the days of the week, but the days of the different markets serve to signify any particular day. Each market is held every fourth day and no two markets in the same neighbourhood are held on the same day. Appended is what may be called a Kikuyu calendar.

The months when the circumcision takes place are carnival months ; dancing, singing, and general rejoicing being the order of the day.

Kathanokomo (June) and *Moga* (January) are called the Semisu months when the harvest is brought in.

FIRST SEASON, JULY TO JANUARY—KIMERA KYA MWELI.

First Month, Moraiinyoni (July).—The grass and thicket is cleared by the men, and the women then burn it ; it is a month of little work. The weather being cool the boys and girls commence boring the lobes of their ears.

Second Month, Moga (August).—The shambas* are dug up, the work being mostly done by the women.

Third Month, Kihu (September).—All the able-bodied population is at work in the shambas preparing for the rains ; the seed is sown.

Fourth Month, Sethanano (October).—Everyone is very busy weeding in the shambas.

Fifth Month, Kanyuahungo or Tumo (November) : Sixth Month, Keha (December).—The men do no work ; the women and children are employed keeping the birds off the crops that are now ripening.

Seventh Month, Moga (January).—Harvest.

SECOND SEASON, FEBRUARY TO JUNE : KIMERA KYA NJAHI.

First Month, Kihu (February).—The whole able-bodied population is hard at work in the shambas preparing for the rains. The seed is sown during this month.

Second Month, Sethanano or Kethathanwa (March).—Everyone is still very busy in the shambas, the work being mostly that of weeding.

Third Month, Mothato (April).—The crops are ripening and the women and children are busy weeding and scaring off the birds. In the Ruguru (West) this is the circumcision month, a time of feasting and dancing.

Fourth Month, Mogilanjara (May).—The crops are nearly ripe and there is no work for anyone.

Fifth Month, Kathanokomo (June).—This is the *Semisu* (Harvest) month, and the work of harvesting is done by the women, the men do no work.†

K. R. DUNDAS.

Technology.

Netting without a Knot. By A. van Gennep.

van Gennep.

Dans le fascicule de mars 1908 de la *Revue des Études Ethnographiques et Sociologiques*, Miss A. Werner publie *Some Notes on the Bushman Race* où elle parle (p. 149) de petits sacs d'une facture spéciale, à laquelle elle semble disposée à donner une signification culturelle et raciale : "I do not know whether to class " among small arts which may have been handed down to these Angoni by their

* Shamba = field or plantation.

† The correct spelling of the names of the months was given me by Mr. MacGregor of the C.M.S.