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105. The Maori Hei-tiki

Author(s): H. Devenish Skinner

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p. 340); a parallel position to Brynhild with Aslaug, her daughter by Sigurd (*Volsunga Saga*, p. 97). Ishtar loved Gilgames, but he taunts her with the miserable end of all who had loved her in the past, so she demands from her father vengeance on Gilgames (Sayce, p. 434). Ishtar retained her independent personality with as much tenacity as the gods (Sayce, p. 332). Ishtar belonged to the non-Semitic population (Sayce, p. 337). Lastly, Ishtar is, perhaps, best known by the legend of her descent into Hades, and the challenges of the successive gate-keepers.

The position seems to be that a warrior goddess, with lovers but never married, who forced her way into hell, was an idea of a Central Asian people; that this was transformed into Ishtar by the peoples who pressed down in pre-historic days into Babylonia; that it was carried in some form westward by the Huns, and transformed into Brynhild by the Norse ethics and customs; and it was finally treated by the Germans much as Malory treated the Arthurian legends.

Such are a few of the dim links between North and South which may some day serve to join up the two great streams of ancient history.

W. M. FLINDERS PETRIE.

## New Zealand: Ethnography.

Skinner.

**The Maori Hei-tiki.** By H. Devenish Skinner.

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In a paper which appeared in the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XLVI, p. 309, I endeavoured to throw light on the problem of the origin of the Maori pendant called "Hei-tiki." In the course of the paper I made the following statement: "Karl von den Steinen . . . has reached a conclusion arrived at independently by the present writer. This conclusion is that the disproportionate size of the head, the slant at which it is set, and the curved legs depend not on a realistic representation of the human embryo, but on the proportions of the greenstone adze."

Mr. Henry Balfour has written to me that General Pitt Rivers recognised some 50 years ago the influence of the adze on the form of the typical hei-tiki, and has asked me to give Pitt Rivers priority in this regard. This I am only too glad to do. Pitt Rivers' statement has not been published in any of his papers, but occurs on his original printed label attached to a specimen in his collection. It runs as follows: "Tiki, New Zealand. The form of these images, always sharp towards the feet of the image, suggests the idea that, like some Carib axes, they may originally have been derived from celts, ornamented with a human figure." Mr. Balfour adds: "The specimen in greenstone has a well-defined, sharp cutting-edge. When I was arranging the tikis in the museum some 25 years ago, I placed two more alongside of the one referred to, in order to show the eventual loss of the cutting edge, through its interruption by projections concerned with the feet. My idea was that the adze-blade itself was probably symbolic (as in Mangaia, &c.), and that an anthropomorphic design was grafted upon it, possibly to increase the symbolism. The net result being that the adze ceased to be functional and became the vehicle of the anthropomorph. I quite agree with you that . . . there were hei-tiki before celtiform examples. The hei-tiki already existed in other forms, but the idea seems to have been grafted on the adze, whose essential form reacted upon the design and created the distortion of the latter."

Since writing the paper on hei-tiki fresh material and further consideration have somewhat modified the conclusions there stated. Mr. Best states: "The hei-tiki, it is believed, represented the human foetus, and was supposed to possess an inherent fructifying influence when worn by women. This statement has been made by several natives, also by Colonel Gudgeon, Captain G. Mair, and

" Mr. T. E. Green, all good authorities on matters connected with the Maoris."\* Such an array of authority is decisive, and disposes of the doubts on this point expressed in the paper. At the same time it does not invalidate the evidence there adduced as to origin.

Since the publication of the paper I have received from the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum a photograph of a headless anthropomorphic pendant in bone from Chatham Island. This is closely allied to the greenstone forms figured and has a very important bearing on the problem of the age of this type of pendant.

Finally, fresh evidence indicates clearly that the ribs shown on some hei-tiki have no original connection with the forked tongue, but are independent and perhaps relatively more ancient.

H. DEVENISH SKINNER.

## REVIEWS.

### Babylonia and Assyria: Folklore.

Spence.

*Myths and Legends of Babylonia and Assyria.* By Lewis Spence. 8vo., 412 pp., 41 Illustrations. 8s. 6d. Harrup. 1916. **106**

This work is of a type different from any that have yet touched on Babylonia. The author has written works on the mythologies of Mexico, North America, Egypt, the Rhine, and Brittany. It is obvious, therefore, that he writes as a compiler whose wide view gives a value to what must be dependent on the original research of others. As a whole the book is well organised, the authorities quoted are generally trustworthy, and, with a keen sense of what will be of general interest, there is but little playing to the public. An excellent feature is a descriptive index of thirty pages, serving as a general glossary. Such a work will certainly fill a gap in current literature, and introduce many ideas and comparisons where they have not been familiar. There are 26 good illustrations, a few tolerable fancy pictures, and a set of coloured travesties, which should be at once removed from the book to prevent misunderstandings. Without the latter pictures, we hope this will be widely read.

W. M. F. P.

### India: Archæology.

Hunt.

*Hyderabad Cairns.* By E. H. Hunt, M.A.

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We have received Part 2, 1916, of the *Journal of the Hyderabad Archæological Society*. It contains much valuable and well illustrated matter, but that which will most interest anthropologists is an account of cairns which have been explored at Raigir, Dornakal, Balanagar, and Maula Ali. These are but a sample, taken as it were by chance out of groups varying in number from a few to many hundreds, which are, however, only found on "muram" soil, "muram" being the main disintegration product of granite. The sides of the tombs consist of granite slabs, from 6 feet to 10 feet long, and 5 feet to 6 feet high, the end stones fit in between the side stones, and that to the north is the tallest, projecting well above the side stones; the top is covered with slabs to form the roof, and under all is the floor stone. The side stones are not vertical, but incline towards each other, leaning against the wedge-shaped head and foot stones; these also incline slightly toward each other, being kept apart by the roof stones. The greater the outside pressure the greater the stability; the design admits of no improvement. The cists are set in pits in the ground and are covered with a heap of stones and rubble surrounded by a circle of stones, rather of a boulder than a pillar shape; the diameters of the circles hitherto noted vary from 11 feet to 42 feet, the number of stones varies from thirteen to forty, but twenty-four is a common number; in some circles the stones are small, while in others none would weigh less than a ton,

\* *Dominion Museum Bulletin* No. 4, p. 165.