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Summary

The article describes a complex of trackways, mounds and occupation sites in the Chyulu Hills of southern Kenya, dated probably to the fifteenth or sixteenth century A.D. The sites are described and comparisons made with Iron Age material from the surrounding areas and relevant ethnographic and historical accounts. It is tentatively concluded that the remains may be attributed to a population ancestral to the Kamba people who currently occupy the area to the north and north-west.

An Archaeological Reconnaissance in the Horn: The British-Somali Expedition, 1975

by

Neville Chittick

This article describes the chief results of an archaeological reconnaissance undertaken jointly with Somali colleagues at the invitation of the Somali Government from late October to early December 1975.¹

The invitation to carry out this work was particularly welcome, as so little is known about the archaeology of Somalia. Almost all the work hitherto has been concerned with the Stone Age of the region. Outstanding among the works in this field is J. Desmond Clark's *Prehistoric Cultures of the Horn of Africa*. That book includes a lengthy account of work carried out in the field with which it is concerned up to 1954, the date of its publication, together with an admirable bibliography. Clark's book offers a valuable account of the geology of extensive regions of the country and besides dealing with the Stone Age Cultures, an account is given of certain sites with prehistoric art.

The later archaeology is, however, not dealt with in Clark's work, and very little indeed has been published in this field. We may mention first G. Révoil (1882), who seems to be the only person to have examined (though cursorily) the extreme north-eastern region. A. T. Curle (1937) published a brief account of some of the ruined towns in the north-western part of the country, while I. M. Lewis and others have given some account of certain of the cairn graves. The chief Islamic monuments and the inscriptions in Mogadishu and other coastal towns of the south have been described by Cerulli (1957, pp. 1-40) and Garlake (1966). The present writer carried out a brief survey on the coast from Mogadishu to the Kenya border (Chittick, 1969); more recently a joint Soviet-Somali expedition has carried out some survey work of which a brief account has been published (Sa'id *et al.*, 1974).

The object of the present expedition was to visit and summarily survey as many as possible of the reported or likely archaeological sites in the region from Mogadishu northwards. Attention was primarily directed to possible coastal sites, with the particular hope of finding pre-Islamic ports. The present small settlements on the eastern coast are difficult of access by road as long detours to the interior are necessary to drive from one to the other. In view of the pressure of time and the lack of reports of early remains (of which indeed there was little of note at those settlements visited), a number of these

1. The professional personnel, besides myself, consisted of Mr. Sa'id Ahmad Warsame, Director of the National Museum, Mogadishu, Mr. 'Ali 'Abd al-Rahman, and Mr. Fabby Nielson. We travelled in two Landrovers, one provided by the Somali Government, and one by the British Institute.



Topography

The northern coast is backed for the most part by steep mountain ranges which in the west are separated from the sea by a relatively wide, hot coastal plain. Here the main port trading with the Harar highlands to the south-west has been Zayla' (Seila') and Berbera. East of Berbera the mountains mostly extended up to the littoral. South of these ranges is plateau country, sloping to the south and east. Throughout these regions various varieties of myrrh and frankincense trees are found, the latter chiefly in the mountainous regions (Drake-Brockman, 1912).

At some points along this coast the mountains recede from the sea. Our reconnaissance in this region so far as the coast is concerned was confined to the enclave of this type between Las Qoray and Bosaaso (Bandar Kassim) and the region east of Durba to Cape Guardafui.

The northern coast is poor in natural harbours but is protected by the mainland from the south-west monsoon; havens are even fewer in the region of Cape Guardafui and southwards.³ Only the peninsula of Hafun offers reasonably good shelter. From there southwards to El Fosk ('Eel Fosk), lat. 7° 10' N, south of Ras al-Khayl, the coast is mostly exceedingly rocky and inhospitable, with steep cliffs plunging into the sea; these are the 'small and great bluffs of Azania' of the *Periplus* (sec. 15). At El Fosk begins a long stretch of almost straight coast, sandy and for the most part featureless. This is probably the 'small and great beach' of the *Periplus* (sec. 15). This region ends at around Warsheikh, where begins the Banadir, or coast of harbours, which extends to the southernmost region of the Somali coast. Warsheikh is situated on a curious coral peninsula, joined to the mainland by a narrow neck of land, providing shelter for ships on one side or other according to the direction of the monsoon. There are a number of such small harbours on the Banadir coast, which also includes the chief (but still very indifferent) harbours of Mogadishu, Merka, and Barawa.

The Coastal Sites

The sites of greatest interest, in the north-east, will first be described.

Hafun (Xaafiun). Ras Hafun, the easternmost point of Africa, is a striking massif rising out of the sea and about 25 km in maximum dimension. It is connected with the mainland by a remarkable tombolo, or sand-spit, some 20 km long. On the northern side of this sand-spit is a very extensive lagoon formerly partly used for the large-scale extraction of salt, and known as *Khor Hordiyo*, the village of Hordiyo lying on the mainland on its northern side (Pl. Xa). There is an anchorage on the northern side of the Cape Hafun peninsula which can be used in the southern monsoon. **The main anchorage, however, is on the south side of the peninsula** where the ruined installations for the treatment and loading of the salt are situated.

Hafun Main Site (fig. 2). On a low ridge extending to near the shore a few hundred metres south-east of the remains of the salt processing plant there is a plentiful scatter of

3. For a description of these coasts, and accounts of the settlements and inhabitants in the middle of the nineteenth century, see Guillain, 1848, 2^eme partie, vol. 1.

pottery and stone artefacts extending over perhaps two hectares (Pl. Xb). The most notable of the surface finds was a fragment (with handle) of an alabaster vase reminiscent of specimens from Timna' in southern Arabia (Pl. XIa).⁴ There was also a fragment of steatite and blue-glazed pottery which it is thought may be of Parthian origin, as well as wheel-made jar rims and massive rim fragments resembling those of Roman *mortaria*. A small

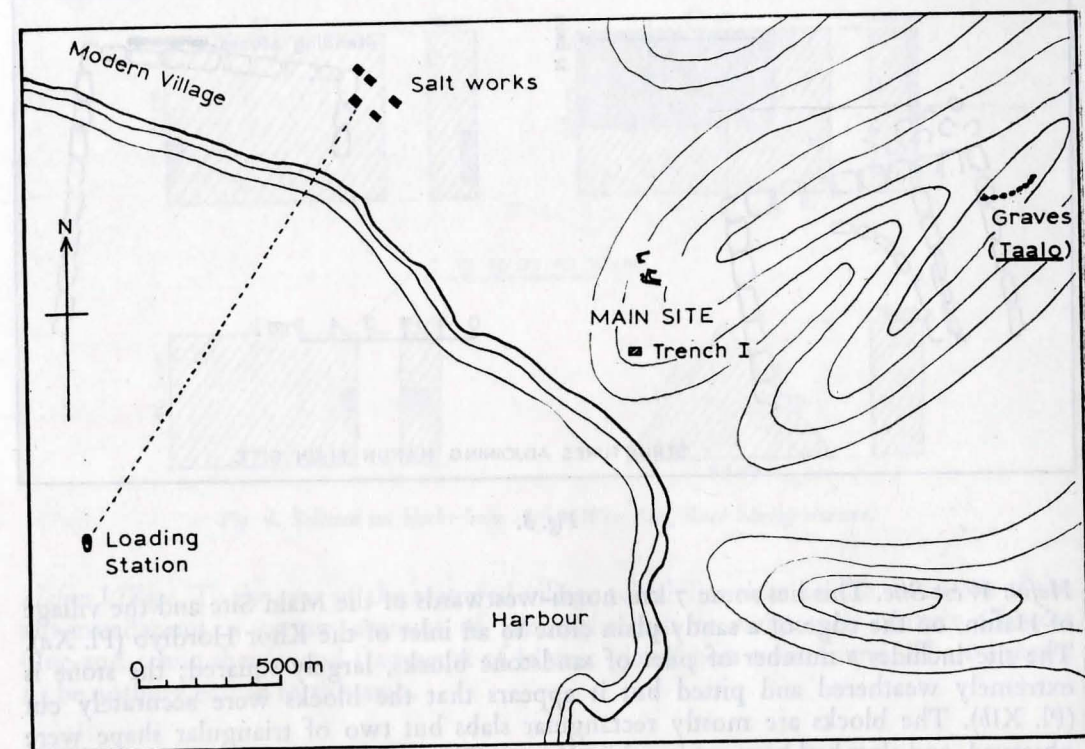


Fig. 2. Hafun harbour, showing position of Hafun Main Site. (Sketch plan based on Admiralty chart.)

test trench 2 × 1 m was dug, chiefly in order to attempt to establish whether the flaked stone artefacts were contemporary with the pottery. No structures were found in the trench but the occupation deposit, which consists of bands of wind-laid sand and charcoal with plentiful sherds of pottery, was found to extend to a depth of at least 1.5 m; the bottom was not reached. No stone artefacts were however, found in the excavation.

About 200 m north of the northern limit of the scatter of pottery were remains of two rectangular stone structures, the surviving tops of the walls being about level with the present land surface (fig. 3). One of these at its northern end and just outside the northern wall has four upright stones set close together. Within the area enclosed by the wall of the other, also at the northern end, an arc of white stones projects.

4. Cf. Cleveland, 1965, Chap. XII; Pl. 89, no. TC 1951, is the most comparable.

About 1 km north-north-east of this site, situated on another ridge, are a number of cairn graves (Som. *taalo*), some of which are surrounded by an 'apron' of white stones laid out as a circular pavement. The only artefact observed here is a base of a 'Sasanian-Islamic' jar (seventh to tenth century?). There are more cairns, without aprons, east of the harbour (that is, south of the above).

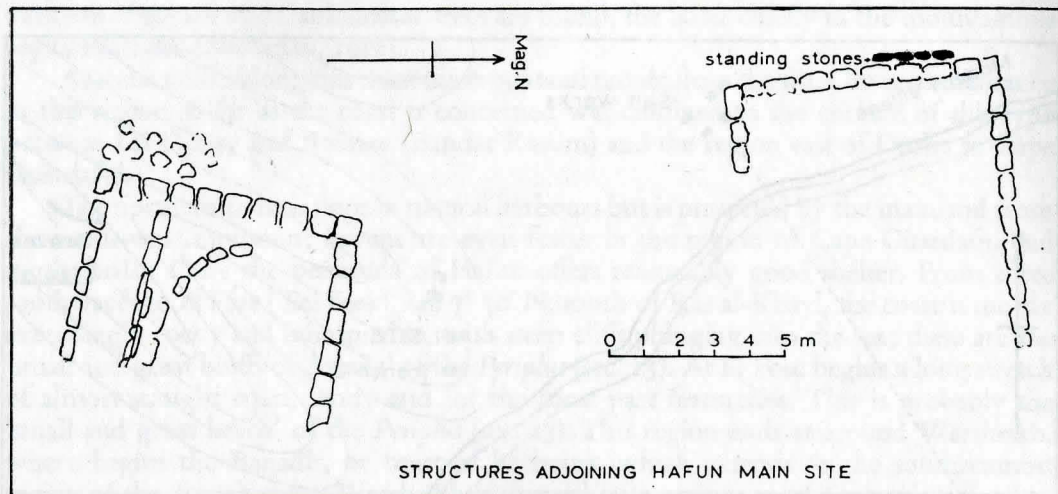


Fig. 3.

Hafun West Site. This lies some 7 km north-westwards of the Main Site and the village of Hafun, on the edge of a sandy plain close to an inlet of the Khor Hordiyo (Pl. Xa). The site includes a number of piles of sandstone blocks, largely squared; the stone is extremely weathered and pitted but it appears that the blocks were accurately cut (Pl. XIb). The blocks are mostly rectangular slabs but two of triangular shape were observed, and slots had been cut in others (fig. 4). These piles of stone can be described as being disposed in groups: a group of five piles at the eastern end of the site, then a group of two, then the remains of an apparently rectangular building with a small square structure adjacent to and associated with it. The whole site has been heavily eroded; the piles of stone are in most cases associated with hillocks of sand between which is exposed an alluvial-like surface. On this surface large numbers of stone artefacts, including finely-made end-scrapers and blades are to be seen; this industry appears to be of 'Hargeisan' aspect. The objects found in the region of the apparent walls were different from any found elsewhere. They included a fragment of quartzite(?) with what appears to be remains of a deep greenish-blue glaze and traces of an incised design under the glaze. The pottery included the base of a vessel of coarse red ware, somewhat similar in character to those of wide cups of ancient Egyptian or Ptolemaic type. (Cf. examples in the Petrie Collection, University of London.) There were no fragments of *mortaria* or of glazed pottery, such as occur at Hafun Main Site. Objects of copper comprise a flat-headed nail or rivet-like piece, and a thick irregular disc, perhaps a weight, of 3.775 gm, and measuring 12 × 10 mm. Close to the latter was found a blue glass bead.



The location of this site close to the lagoon suggests that it was some sort of port establishment; there is no other apparent reason for its situation. Though the adjacent creek is very shallow, one may surmise that the lagoon here may once have been deeper. At the present day fishing vessels sail into the lagoon to the village of Hordiyo on the opposite side of the creek, and the lagoon can be crossed by motor-boat.⁵

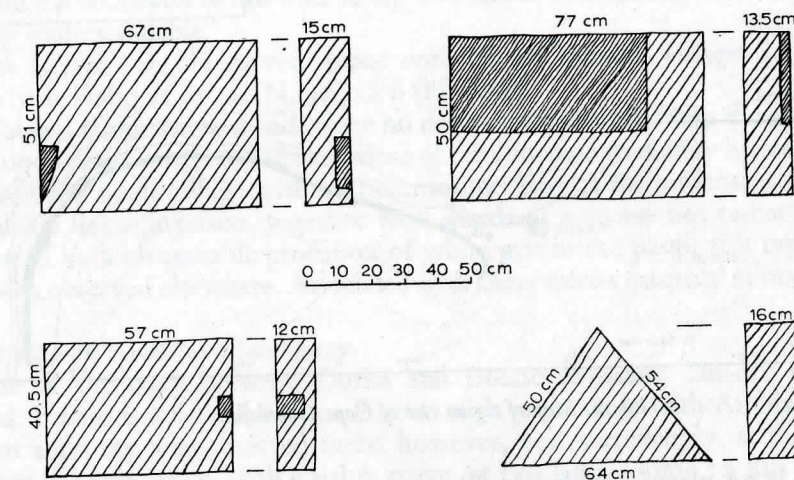


Fig. 4. Selected cut blocks from Hafun West Site, three having recesses.

Hafun Village. To the rear of the scattered village which lies close to the shore east of the salt-installations, a certain amount of late eighteenth to nineteenth century Chinese blue-and-white sherds, and fragments of Islamic glazed pots were found. There appears to be nothing earlier in this area.

Sites near Cape Guardafui

Damo (Daamo) is a village of huts built of matting, but with a stone mosque, 5 km west of Cape Guardafui which affords considerable protection to the beach adjacent to the village. It is situated at the eastern end of a bay, at the further end of which lies Olog (fig. 5).

About 1 km east of the village there are remarkable remains on the rocky fore-slope above the sea, behind which lies the 'Asir massif, the top of which forms the cape. The remains consist chiefly of wall-like features cut out of the rock, variously about 10 cm and 50 cm wide. The tops of sections of the 'walls' are recessed as if to provide seating for blocks: and the walls include returns, also cut in the rock (Pl. XIIa). Insufficient remains of these walls exist to make a meaningful plan, but excavation of the sand is likely to reveal more.

5. The possible early date of this site would accord well with the relationship between the name Opono (Hafun) and the name Punt (pronounced Pwene?) suggested by Lewicki (1969, p. 38) citing F. Storbeck.

A couple of hundred metres away is an old quarry, and a dump of material including cut stone blocks and some pottery. The latter included one base poorly glazed in grey-green; the rest is unglazed, and includes fragments of handles probably from amphorae.

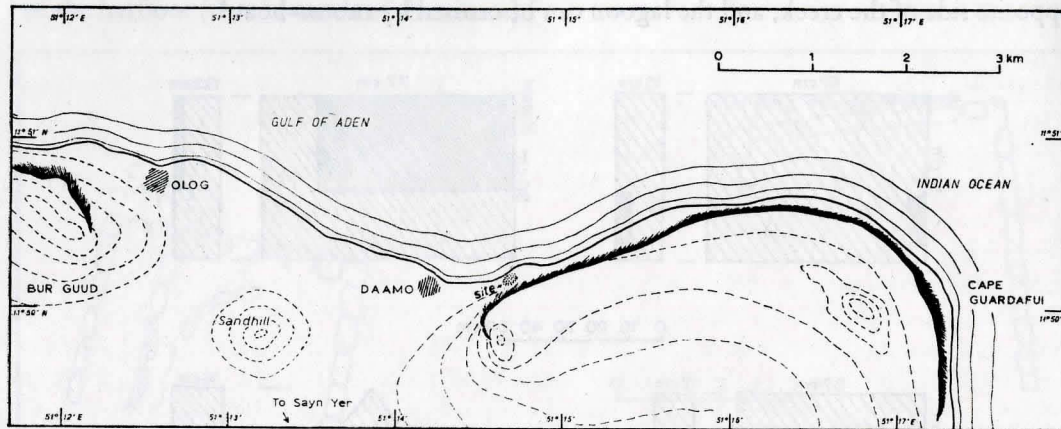


Fig. 5. Map of region east of Cape Guardafui.

Though there is no piece immediately diagnostic as to date (and no fragments of heavy bowls as found at Hafun Main Site were seen), the unglazed pottery seems most likely to be of Roman origin.⁶

In the *Periplus* (sec. 12) we read of the Market and Cape of Spices; the latter is undoubtedly Cape Guardafui (Schoff, p. 85), and it seems most likely that the Damo site is to be identified with the Market of Spices.

Olog, 3 km to the west, is a rather larger village than Damo. It consists of perhaps 100 huts of matting, in the course of being engulfed by the sand. There is a scatter of sherds of eighteenth and nineteenth century date behind the village, but nothing earlier was found despite an extensive search. The identification of Olog with the Market of Spices (Schoff, p. 86, quoting Glaser) is to be rejected in favour of Damo.

The region from Bereda to Durba

The stretch of coast from Olog to Bereda (Bereeda, 51° 3'E) is wholly inaccessible, but all the villages from Bereda to Durba (50° 20'E) were visited, and enquiries and summary searches for antiquities were made. Nothing however of particular interest came to light, save at Durba, and in areas outside the villages, where there were cairns and, in particular, 'platform monuments', as described below (p. 131).

Alula ('Aluula), however, deserves some mention. This is the district headquarters of the area, from which a small amount of coast-wide trade is carried out. Some 15 km to the

6. Révoil (1882, pp. 40-41) describes relics very close to 'Olog' which are probably the same as those referred to above; it seems that he has muddled Damo (which he refers to elsewhere) with Olog. He found a fragment of a millstone 'de caractere romain'; in another place (p. 302) he refers to the pottery he collected there as being adjudged Roman.

east lies the inselberg-like Ras Filuk (or Ras al-Fil) which, from its remarkable resemblance in silhouette to an elephant, is certainly to be identified with the Cape Elephant (*Elephas*) of the *Periplus* and Strabo. Alula is adjacent to a shallow lagoon fringed with mangrove bushes. This would seem to relate to the 'large laurel-grove called Acannae' of the *Periplus* (sec. 11), trees other than date-palms being almost non-existent elsewhere in this region, and the confusion of the wide mangrove-leaves with laurel, which is not indigenous, being understandable.⁷

There is pleasing old carved woodwork to be seen in villages in the region, particularly at Habo at 11° 40'N, 50° 32'E (Pl. XIIIb).

Durba lies at the seaward end of the no doubt ancient track from the south over the Dabaga mountains, in which fine specimens of frankincense trees may be seen (Pl. XIIIa). Durba itself is a small village with a stone mosque. East of the settlement is a scatter of indeterminate flaked artefacts, together with sherds of a coarse but rather thin pottery distinguished by a remarkable profusion of white grit in the paste; this type of pottery has not been observed elsewhere. Associated with these were a quantity of marine shells.

The coast between Bosaso and Las Qoray

None of the coast between Durba and Bosaso (Bosaaso, Bender Cassim) was examined. Bosaso is a flourishing small port, with some trade with Arabia. Nothing of significant antiquity was observed there, however, nor, surprisingly, at the remarkable hot springs of fresh water, with a palm grove, at Bio Kulel, some 12 km south-east of the town.

Bender Ziyada, 21 km west of Bosaso, is now in ruins, and El Ayo ('Eel Ayo) partly so, largely, it was reported, due to the hurricanes with torrential rain which struck these regions in 1971 and again in 1972. Las Qoray, where the road turns inland, is however, flourishing. On the plain between the coast near El Ayo and a ridge c. 2 km inland, vast numbers of small to medium-sized cairns were observed. No other early remains were seen anywhere along this stretch, save some pottery at El Ayo including a sherd of Islamic sgraffiato. Noteworthy, however, in this area are the raised beaches, very prominent in places, at about 5 m and 13-15 m respectively above high water mark.

On the coast west of Las Qoray, only Zayla ('Seila') was visited. This town must surely have been the site of, or near, Avalites of the *Periplus* (Schoff, p. 73), but neither we nor earlier visitors have found any material remains of such an early period.⁸

The East Coast

Between Hafun, described above, and Mereg, only Bender Beyla was examined. This is a small port with a plentiful spring of fresh water on its northern side, close to the shore. It is situated on a long slightly indented bay where there is a sandy shore in stark contrast to the precipitous cliffs north and south. The bay is bounded at the south end by Ras Mabber.

7. This agrees with Schoff's identification (p. 85). The place is said in the *Periplus* to be the source of the best grade of frankincense. At the present day however there is extensive cultivation of date-palms along this coast; such are not found on the Indian Ocean littoral.

8. Curle (p. 316) records finding pieces of celadon ware east of the town; the blue-and-white porcelain illustrated by Sa'id *et al.* (1974, p. 328), looks to be of nineteenth century date.

North of the village, between a large cave and the shore, is the debris of what seems a settlement or camp-site of 'strandlooping' people. There is a large quantity of shells lying around, notably oyster, with chert artefacts including scrapers, one of these being a fine example of 'thumbnail' type; others are larger.

Three hours spent exploring the shore south of the village to the region of Ras Mabber yielded nothing. A little pottery not of modern type, with stone flakes, was found just inland from the spring north of the village.

Bender Beyla is notable for the presence of boats of sewn construction (*beden*), described below.

Mereg is an abandoned district headquarters, set back about a mile from the open sea on an apparent raised beach. There is a well nearby, and two others between the ruined buildings and the beach. A search of the area brought to light no sherds earlier than the late nineteenth century. The vague reference to early coins from *Mereg* in the *catalogo* of the Museo della Garesa (p. 168) seems to need substantiation. Nothing of interest was found at 'Adaale (formerly Itala).

Warsheikh. This is the northernmost of the Banadir towns. The partly ruined settlement on the headland seems to be of relatively recent date. There is a good exposure of deposits on the south side of the headland but none of the datable pottery collected was earlier than the nineteenth century. The mosque near the tip of the cape has an inscription recording its construction by Sheikh Abu Bakr b. Mihzar b. Ahmad al-Kasadi in 1278H (A.D. 1861-2); the grave of the Sheikh is in an adjacent room. The mosque has a foliate mihrab and three rows of transverse (east-west) piers. It is similar in character to many of the period on the Kenyan and Tanzanian coasts, save that attached tomb-chambers are never found in that region.

Cerulli (1957, p. 123) records the finding of coins (evidently of the 'mediaeval' sultans of Mogadishu) in the dunes round about Warsheikh; he informs me in a letter that they derive from three sondages dug in 1920-21; they were deposited in the Scuola Orientale of the University of Rome, but were lost in the war. Another find of coins here is recorded by Freeman-Grenville (1963, p. 180). No remains of any settlement or indeed significant artefacts were found by us in these dunes. Cerulli (*ibid.*) records similar coins in the ruins of a village named Mos (Moos), 14 km north-west of Warsheikh.

Nimmo, just south of Mogadishu, has a ruined mosque and other buildings (see Chittick, 1969, p. 5); these were confirmed to be of nineteenth century date, and are stated to have been built by a Sheikh Awais who had a madrassa there.

Abai Dakhan. This is a very small village between Jesira and Nimmo. There is a great deal of pottery on the surface, round about the prominent little mosque (which does not seem to be of any great age). This includes a sherd of celadon (? fourteenth century) and Islamic monochrome, the latter both of the usual fifteenth century type and the poorer ware thought to be characteristic of the sixteenth century. A coin was also found: this has not yet been cleaned but appears to be of one of the sultans of Mogadishu, probably about the fifteenth century.⁹ There do not appear to be any structures here, though the remains of a wall visible in the ground close to the mosque may be of 'mediaeval' period.

9. Coins have been reported as having been acquired at Jesira but we were told in answer to enquiries at that village that none had been found there. It seems possible that the coins reported to have been from Jesira in fact came from Abai Dakhan, taking into account the fact that no pottery dating from between the tenth and eleventh centuries and the nineteenth century has been found at Jesira.

An account of sites visited southward of here to near the Kenya border has already been published (Chittick, 1969).

Sewn Boats

Boats of the type termed *beden*, constructed without nails, were observed at Hordiyo, Hafun, and, notably, at Bender Beyla. At the last place twenty-five were counted, as opposed to two, of *mashua* type, with iron fastenings, and a few dug-out canoes (*huri*). The *bedens* are used chiefly for fishing (Pls. Xa, XIIIb, XIV).

This most interesting survival of an ancient mode of boat-building in this region does not seem previously to have been noted.¹⁰ A representative *beden* measured 10 m overall, with a beam of 1.82 m; the stem is heavily raked, and the stern only slightly less so. The planking is only some 2 cm thick; the timber (mango?) was stated to be brought mainly from Mombasa and Tanga. The ribs are of local wood, alternately naturally grown crooks and half-crooks. The planks are attached to each other by trenails, or wooden pegs, and by thin cord threaded through holes made with a bow-drill. On the inner side the stitching passes over a packing of fibre, overlying a tar-like substance laid over the joint. The stitching at the stem, stern, and at the joint with the keel is packed with similar material on the outside (Pl. XIVb). The cord used at the present day is of imported fishing-line, but older vessels, in a state of decay, were seen to be stitched with coir cord. The rudder is attached to the stern-post by cords, and operated by ropes either side leading to its trailing edge. No metal fastenings whatever are used in the construction of these vessels.

The vessels are strengthened by a substantial gunwale, attached by trenails, and by a thwart through which passes the mast. Nevertheless, by simply pulling on the hull from side to side they can be demonstrated to be very flexible, which no doubt is of assistance in landing on the sandy beach in the surf, which must usually be very heavy.

The vessels use anchors mostly of stone presumably when fishing, for at the village they are drawn up on the shore.

Sites in the Interior

Town-sites in the north-west

The ruins of Islamic towns in the north-west have long been known. A good brief overall description of them has been given by Curle (1937) but no detailed account of the various sites has been published.

Only one town site of this group was visited by the expedition, namely Abasa; but another, Maduna, of different character, and lying far to the east, was examined.

10. Boats of sewn construction are mentioned in the *Periplus* (sec. 16) in the region of Rhapta. Hourani (1963, pp. 89 ff.) gives an account of the mode of construction of vessels of this type which he states survives in remote parts of South and East Arabia, south India and adjacent isles. The sewn *mtepe* and *dau la mtepe* of the Swahili coast have been extinct for some forty years; they differed from the *beden*. The mode of construction described by Hourani differs significantly from that of the *bedens* here briefly described, of which it is hoped to give a fuller account elsewhere.

Abasa lies some 44 km north of Borama on the Zaila' road, close to the village of Bon in a region where some cultivation is possible. It is a relatively extensive town site; the large number of buildings are scattered over a wide area and separated by large open spaces. The buildings are rectangular and are moderately well built of fairly regular but

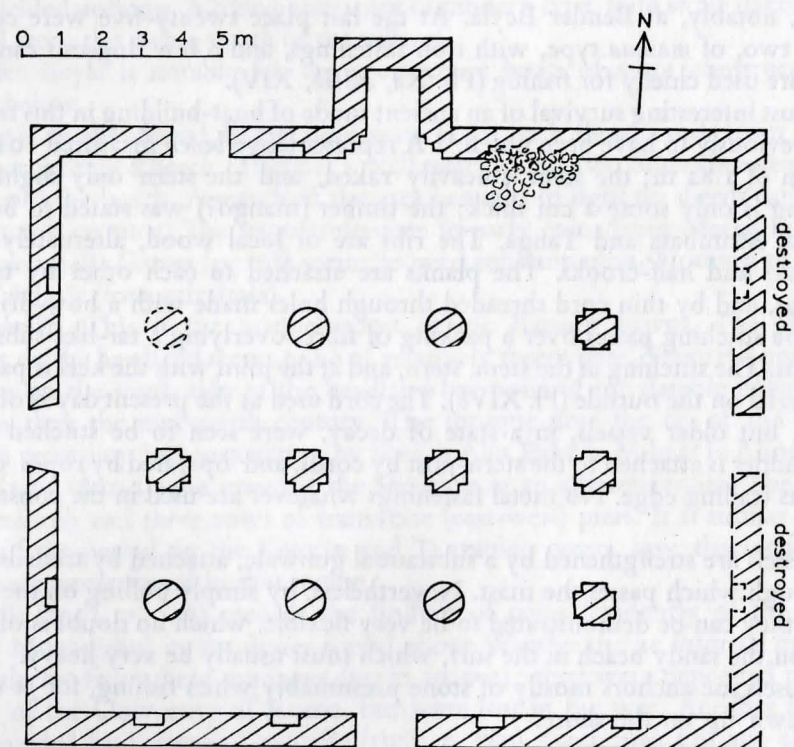


Fig. 6. Plan of mosque at Abasa.

uncut stone set in mud mortar. The houses are mostly small, consisting of one or two rooms; it is thought the maximum is three. The mosque is the most interesting building (plan, fig. 6). It has columns of two different designs, cylindrical and cruciform, curiously disposed: they are poorly built (Pl. XVa). One of the cruciform ones is considerably thicker on the top than at the bottom; this does not seem to have been an intended feature. About a third of the way up the columns are reinforced by timbers, and again at the base of a sort of square capital. Most of the timbers are intact, uneaten by ants, though sometimes only a slot remains where the timber was. The mihrab is of exceptional width; the jambs of the arch are ornamented with recessed rebates of uncut but selected stone. The mihrab arch has collapsed since 1934 (see Curle, Pl. III), and unless some conservation work is undertaken quite soon, more of the building will fall.

A considerable amount of pottery was picked up, almost entirely on the surface of what were evidently rubbish dumps. The datable, imported pottery was Islamic and

Chinese and looks fifteenth-sixteenth century, though a fragment of ribbed celadon may be of the fourteenth century. Everything seen accords with the view that this, and presumably other similar sites, were towns of the Muslim emirate of Adal, part of the state of Ifat.

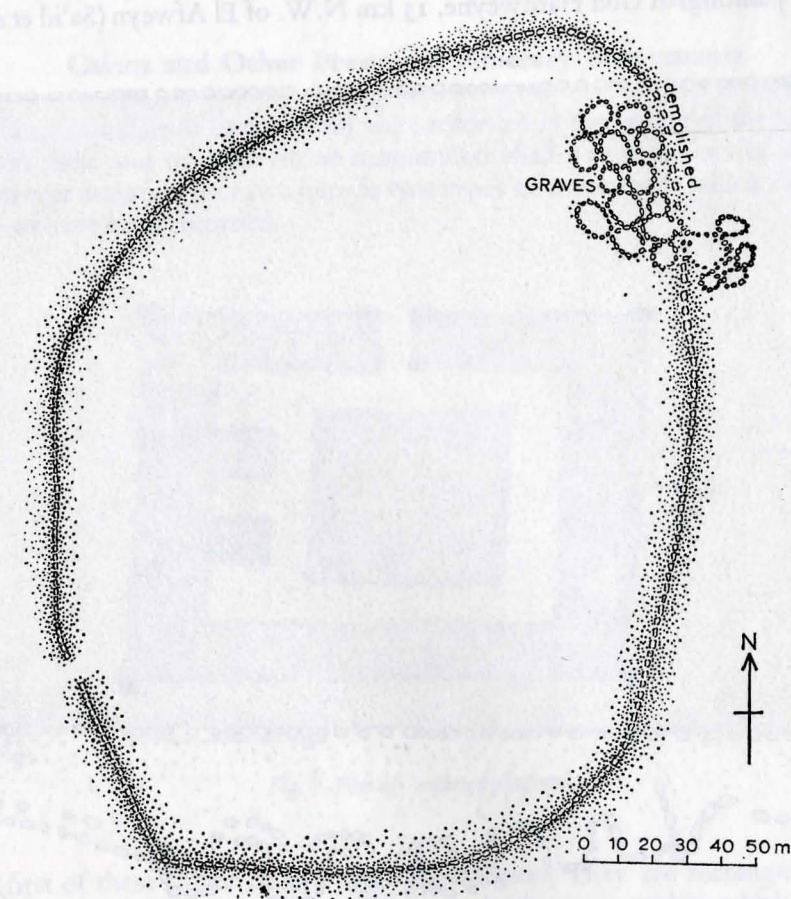


Fig. 7. Plan of enclosure at Waargade.

Other town-sites and isolated ruins

Maduna (Maduuna). This town site lies next to a *chor* of the same name about 5 km from El ('Eel) Afweyn and about 90 km by road southward of Erigavo ('Erigaabo). It is different in character from the town sites in the north-west, the buildings being of drystone, all with curved walls (Pl. XVb). The sole exception is a rectangular mosque. The walls of this were originally rendered with lime plaster, of which tenuous remains survive on the interior. There are no signs of columns (Pl. XVc).

There was very little pottery on the surface of the site; the one possibly datable piece is a greenish glazed fragment, possibly Adeni of around the seventeenth century. There were many stone artefacts, almost all the tools observed being exceptionally thin scrapers of a type not seen before, and presumably manufactured for a special purpose.

It may be noted here that the Soviet-Somali expedition found an interesting rock-shelter with paintings at God Hardweyne, 13 km N.W. of El Afweyn (Sa'id *et al.*, p. 317).

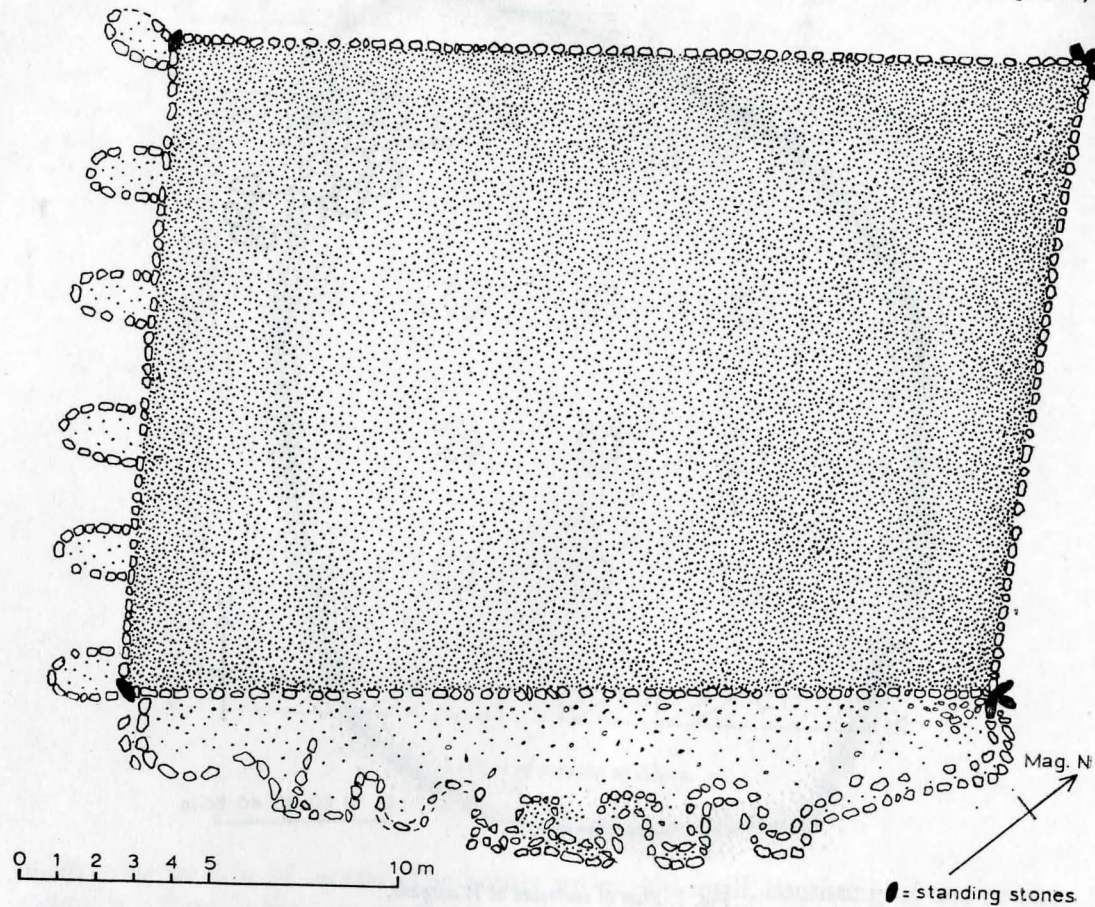


Fig. 8. Plan of 'platform monument' 20 km east of Alula.

Wargaade. This is a small village about 70 km north-north-east of 'Adaale, and 20 km from the Indian Ocean coast. Adjacent to the village is a large irregular enclosure bounded by a much eroded but still fairly high wall of rubble set in mud mortar. The enclosure is more or less ovoid in shape, measuring 230 m \times 210 m (fig. 7). No structures other than graves (mentioned below) were observed within the circuit, nor any pottery, though the wall must surely have enclosed a settlement. A short distance east of the enclosure however, in an area where the local people dig for iron nodules or slag to make medicine, unglazed sherds were picked up on the surface; this pottery is quite different from modern material.

In the north-east segment of the enclosure are a number of interlocking grave 'circles', almost certainly of Islamic Somali type. They certainly however date from the abandonment of the enclosure since they are built with stones taken from the wall.

No other enclosures of this nature were observed on the journey, nor to my knowledge have been reported. The remains are locally ascribed to the Galla.¹¹

Cairns and Other Presumed Funerary Monuments

Very large numbers of cairns (*taalo*) were recorded in the course of the journey. It is planned that these and other drystone monuments shall be the subject of a subsequent paper. However attention is drawn here to two types of monument which do not appear previously to have been recorded.

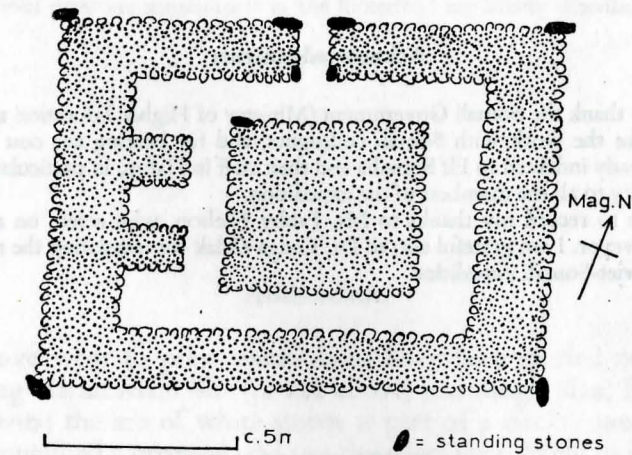


Fig. 9. Plan of 'enclosed platform'.

The first of these I refer to as a *platform monument*. They are rectangular structures low in height, formed by a drystone wall, or kerb, the space within which is filled with rubble, and covered with selected small stones. There are usually relatively large stones set upright at the corners. There may also be normally subsidiary features, assumed to be graves, outlined in stones adjacent to the platform. The platforms are usually of considerable dimensions; the largest observed, measuring 24 m by 17 m (fig. 8) is situated on the coastal plain 20 km east of Alula.

The second type I refer to as an *enclosed platform*. This consists of a relatively small rectangular platform similar to that described above, surrounded by an enclosure wall.

11. Note, however, the possibility of confusion between *Gaalla*, the Galla peoples, and *gaalo*, pagans, commented on by Lewis (1961, p. 103).

There is an entrance-way through the enclosure wall on the north-western side. Between the enclosure wall and the platform is a space which is usually greater on the south-western side than on the others. In this larger space are grave-like features, built of rubble in similar fashion to the platform (fig. 9). Two or more such monuments may be adjacent to each other, apparently added to the original; in one case five were observed in line.

These monuments are mostly very ruined. They were observed only in the extreme north-east, the most southerly seen being 18 km south of 'Unun. In this region there are also many cairns. All such monuments seem popularly to be ascribed to the Galla (on which see note 11 above). The extreme north-east however appears to be a very unlikely region for the Galla to have inhabited in considerable numbers or even penetrated. The date and attribution of these monuments remains to be resolved.

Acknowledgements

I wish heartily to thank the Somali Government (Ministry of Higher Education and Culture) for their invitation to undertake the work with Somali colleagues, and for bearing the cost of the expedition in Somalia. I am also greatly indebted to Elf Somalia and their staff in Hafun, in particular M. Duran, for their open-handed hospitality to all the members of the expedition.

I should also like to record my thanks to Mr. Fabby Nielson, who acted, on a 'volunteer' basis, as photographer and surveyor. I am grateful also to Dr. Osaga Odak for translating the relevant chapter from the Report of the Soviet-Somali expedition.

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Summary

The article sets out the chief results of the reconnaissance, notably the discovery of three early coastal sites in north-eastern Somalia. Two of these are on the Hafun peninsula, of which one appears to be of Graeco-Roman date and one may possibly be earlier; the third is on the northern coast just west of Cape Guardafui. Some curious drystone monuments in the hinterland are briefly described.

Addendum

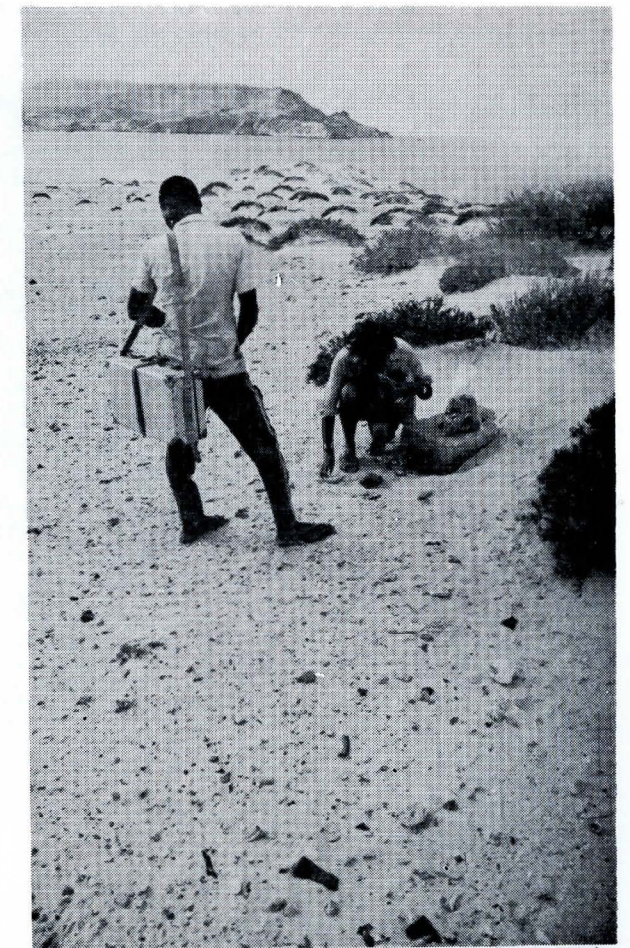
Since the above went to press, excavations have been carried out at Hafun. The structures adjoining Hafun Main Site (p. 121 above, and rough plan, fig. 3) prove to be funerary monuments; the arc of white stones is part of a circle round the burial area. The graves each contained a green-glazed jar; these jars seem likely to be of late Parthian origin. Fragments of similar jars were found in excavations in the part of the site with occupation debris.

The most notable finds in excavations at the West Site, in what is referred to above (p. 122) as an apparently rectangular building, were sherds of what appears to be Mycenaean pottery, found in the lowest deposit. The piles of (largely) cut stones evidently derive from this structure, and have been re-used to construct cairns over burials.

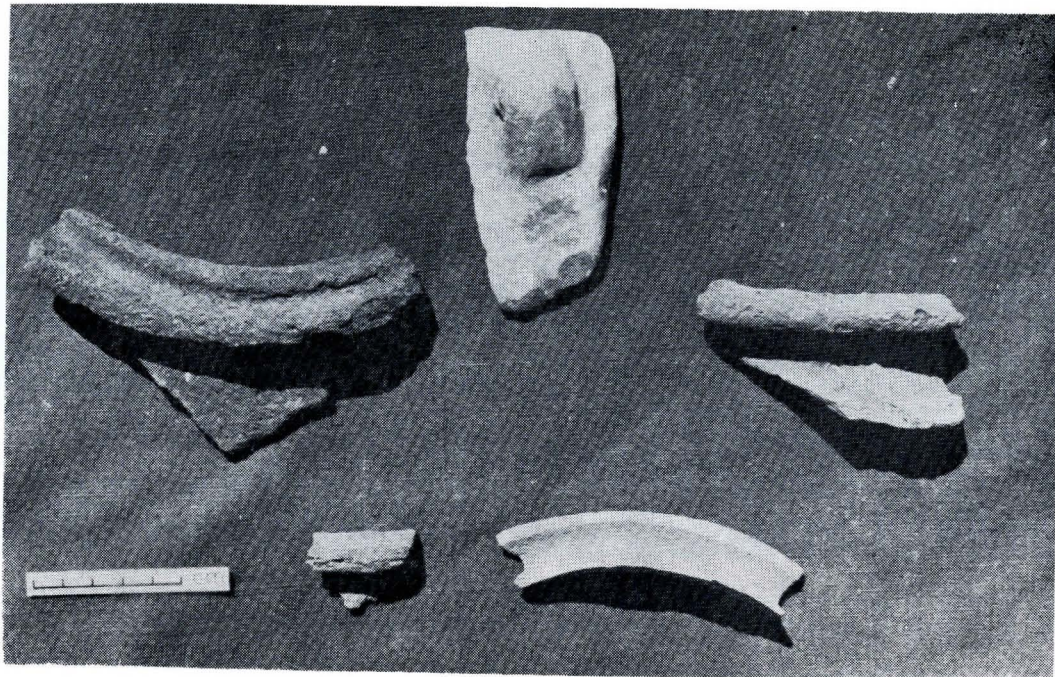
The excavations have just been completed at the time of writing, and the attributions of the pottery proposed above require confirmation.



a. View across the Khor Hordiyo to the Hafun peninsula. The arrow indicates the approximate position of Hafun West Site. In the foreground a huri, with stone anchor; a beden is afloat behind.



b. Part of Hafun Main Site: view towards harbour.



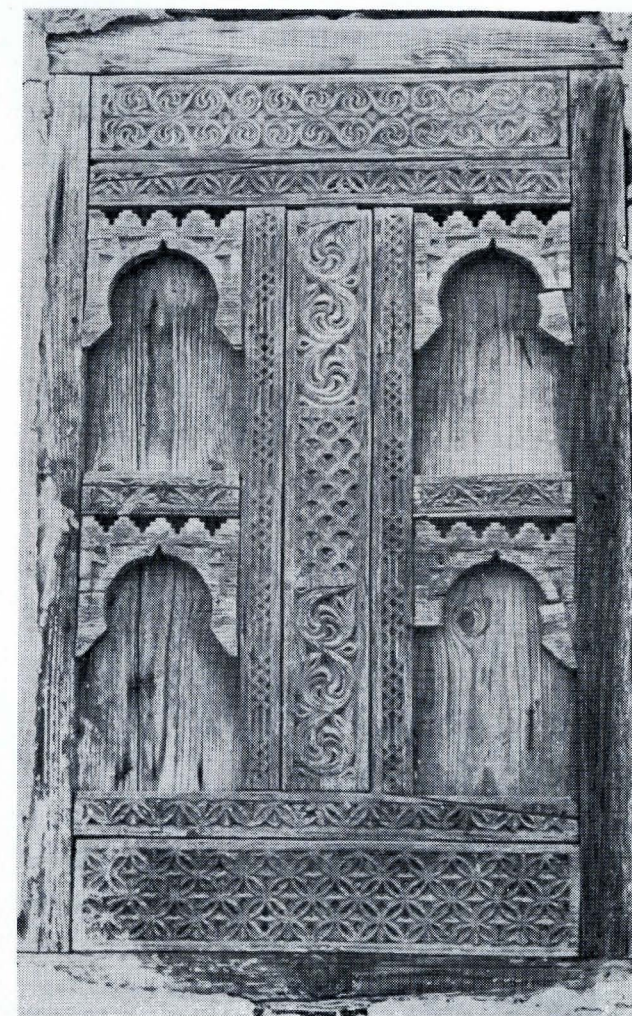
a. Fragment of alabaster vase (top) and sherds from Hafun Main Site.



b. Hafun West Site with one of the piles of cut stones.



a. Damo; 'walls' cut in the rock.



b. Carved window at Habo.

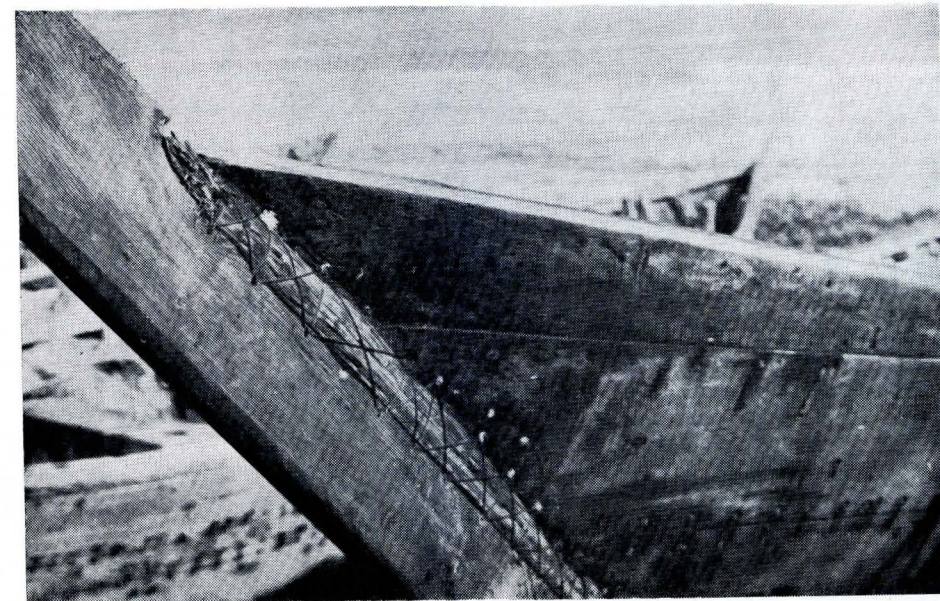


a. Frankincense tree, probably Boswellia carteri, in mountains above Durba.

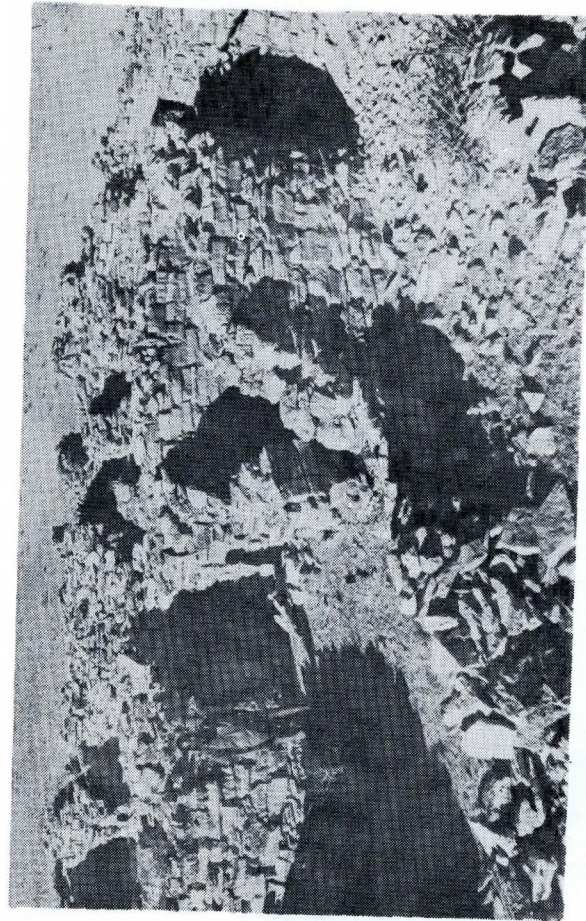
b. Bedens at Bender Beyla.



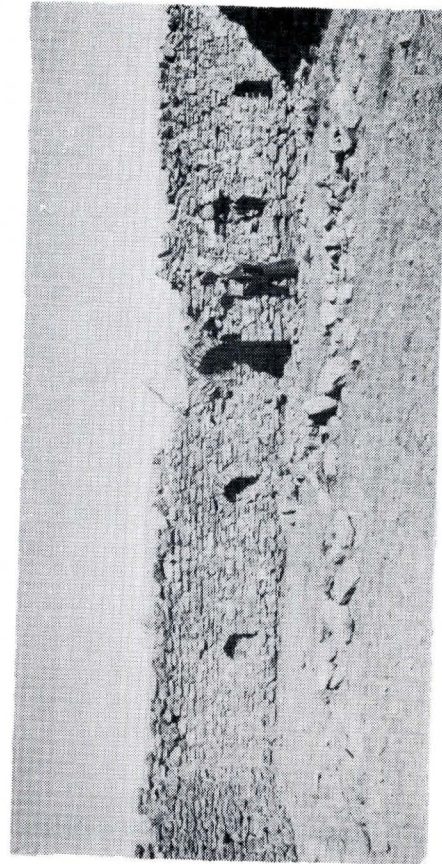
a. Beden in course of construction at Hafun.



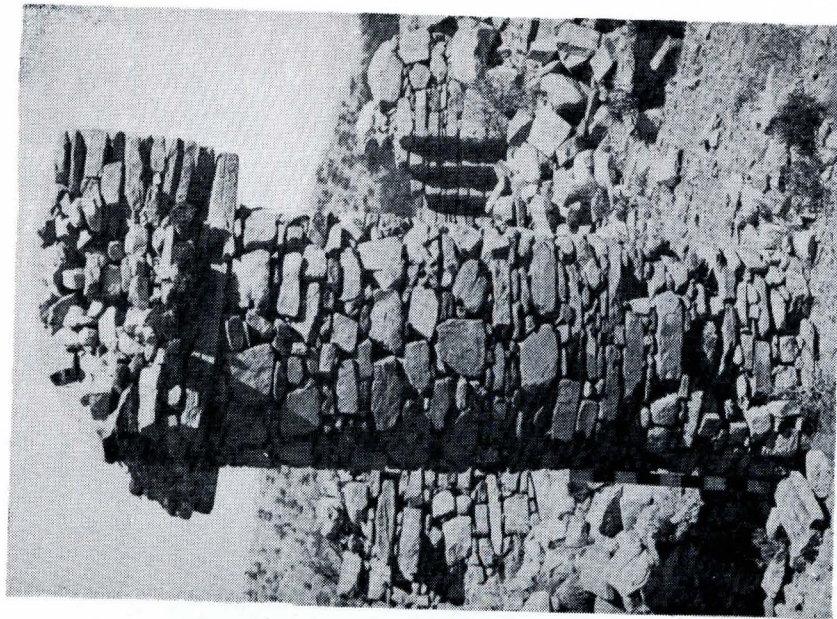
b. Beden, detail of stem.



b. Maduna: part of the buildings, showing curved walls.



c. Maduna: interior of mosque.



a. Abasa: column in the mosque. Note timber below the capital.

The African Element in Madagascar

by
Pierre Verin

Dr. Verin carried out archaeological research in Madagascar for many years. The present article is a revised version of a paper presented at the seminar organized by U.N.E.S.C.O. in Mauritius in 1974. It can be considered as complementary to his chapter in East Africa and the Orient (ed. H. N. Chittick and R. I. Rotberg) which was concerned with the Indonesian (Austronesian) elements in the culture of Madagascar.

We can say definitely that the Malagasy are of mixed Indonesian and African ancestry. The fact that the language of Madagascar is predominantly Indonesian in nature in no way entitles us to deny that Africa played a part in settling the island. The vast neighbouring continent makes its presence felt in the form of the biological elements, major linguistic borrowings and numerous features in the cultures and in the traditional social and political systems.¹

Without wishing to present an exhaustive review of our predecessors' speculations, we need to recall briefly the theories bearing on the African contribution to the peopling of Madagascar, before going on to an objective assessment of the sources, and examining research prospects.

Review of the Principal Theories

Scholars have hesitated between two extremes, either to accord excessive importance to the South East Asian contribution (neglecting Africa) or the reverse, with, it is true, a few aberrant views, like those of Briant when arguing for an important Hebraic element in the origins of the race, or Razafintsalama who believed, on the basis of several thousands of doubtful etymologies, that the 'Great Isle' had been colonized by Buddhist monks (Briant, 1945; Razafintsalama, 1939).

Alfred Grandidier (1908) had assigned a prominent role to Asia, holding that all the ancestors of the Malagasy—apart from recent Makoa² arrivals—came from South East Asia, including the blacks termed, for the purpose of his argument, Melanesians. Gabriel Ferrand (1908) took up this challenge to geography, and to a certain extent to common

1. We should note that this hybrid situation does not occur in the Comoro Islands nor on the East African coast where Indonesian penetration has also been suspected.
2. Makoa in Malagasy includes not only the Makua proper of north-western Mozambique, but also people of African origin brought as slaves in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.