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Sigrid Schmidt
(Hildesheim)

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Namibia: Ancient Heaps of Stones at the Roadside**

BAB Working Paper No 3: 2014

ISSN 1422-8769 © The author © Basler Afrika Bibliographien

Presented at the Basler Afrika Bibliographien

08 July 2014

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Tel + 41 61 228 93 33 Fax + 41 61 228 93 30 Email bab@baslerafrika.ch

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Some Notes on the so-called Heitsi-Eibeb Graves in Namibia: Ancient Heaps of Stones at the Roadside¹

Sigrid Schmidt

The Heitsi-eibeb graves in Southern Africa

When the early European settlers and travellers in South Africa looked for traces of the religion of the indigenous peoples they did not find any temples or altars or religious services. They only observed how the Khoekhoen (whom they called Hottentots) and the San (Bushmen) threw stones or branches on certain cairns when they passed by and showed obvious signs of reverence to these places. When the people were asked why they did this they said that this was their custom yet they could not give any further explanation. During the 19th century it became known that such a cairn was the grave of their deity but that, as there were many of such “graves”, he was not actually buried in them. In Namibia the heaps of stones were and still are called “Heitsi-eibeb graves”. They seemed to offer the clue for learning about Heitsi-eibeb and the old Khoe and San (= Khoisan) religion(s). Therefore particular attention has been given to this Southern African special characteristic and the number of references is immense; the following collection of notes is but a random selection made over more than 50 years.

First three basic topics have to be discussed: Heitsi-eibeb, common graves and, in more detail, Heitsi-eibeb graves. Later I shall add my own observations, mainly based on interviews in 1981 at various places in Namibia when I tried to learn somewhat more about Haiseb. I quote Dutch, Afrikaans or German references in my English translation.

Heitsi-eibeb and Haiseb

Heitsi-eibeb was the trickster-deity of the Nama, the Khoekhoe branch in Namibia. The documentation on him is scanty and was compiled in the standard work by Th. Hahn in 1881. Hahn unfortunately pressed his interpretation into the nature mythological theory popular at his time and completely misunderstood the trickster side. He turned the popular trickster story “The Raisin-eater”, in which Heitsi-eibeb tried to trick his family by shamming dead in order to have the raisins all for himself, into “The Death of Heitsi-eibeb” and his resurrection, which he connected with the Heitsi-eibeb graves. Hahn was the last researcher who, in the 1870s, encountered the name Heitsi-eibeb in Namibia. Since then only the form Haiseb (formerly spelled Heiseb) has been known. Haiseb is still remembered by the Damara, at least by the older generation, who share language and many customs with the Nama. Haiseb has two aspects: Haiseb

¹ A German version of this paper was presented at a Lunch Talk at the BAB on 8 July 2014 with the title “Khoisan Erzählungen: alte Geister im Damaraland (Namibia) und ihr Fortwirken bis heute.“

of the folktales is the odd trickster hero who lived in a pre-world, in which animals were still people and strange beings attacked the people of that time. Haiseb of the present world was the deity of some Damara groups. The two aspects can be understood best by considering St. Peter in religion and in the jokes or the Devil in religion contrasted to the many jests about the Devil outtricked. On the one hand the being is addressed in fear and awe, on the other hand people laugh heartily about his follies.

I devoted several studies to the Nama/Damara Haiseb (1986; 2001, 12-41, 205-239; 2009; 2013; 2014, 145), especially Vol. 3 of my series “Afrika erzählt”, *Als die Tiere noch Menschen waren. Urzeit- und Trickstergeschichten der Damara und Nama in Namibia* (1995) in which I documented the tales and information I was able to collect.

Common graves

All Khoisan peoples buried their dead carefully. Schapera compiled the descriptions of burials up to 1930, i.e. showing the traditions before Christian customs supplanted the former usage (Bushman: 1930, pp. 161-166; Khoekhoen: 1930, 358-366). When the grave was closed, stones were put on it. Some sources mention large stones, or large flat stones (Sparman 1977, 201-202).

The reason for this would be to protect the corpse from wild animals. Occasionally there are references which hint at old beliefs: graves were weighed down with stones to prevent the dead from returning to the living (Hahn 1870, 140-141; Lebzelter 1934, 165; Du Pisani 1976, 171; cf. Trenk 1910, 169: the Namib Bushmen placed thickened *dawes* sap in the hands of the corpse at burial so “that his soul ... may not do harm to other people”, quoted in Schapera 1930, 164).

In Namibia up to this day people try to be present at the funeral of relatives and friends. If they could not attend and come to the grave later, may be years later, they put a stone on the grave. They say “I greet you” and “I bury you”, in order to make up for the neglect and to be in harmony with the deceased. This stone has nothing to do with a protection from returning deceased. Rather, it was and is a symbolic gift to the deceased and a friendly greeting. In a way it has the function of the flower thrown into or put onto the grave at Western funerals (cf. the Jewish custom of putting a stone on a grave) (Schultze 1907, 317; Von Zastrow/Vedder 1930, 421; Dornan 1925, 147; Estermann 1976, 10).

Not only in order to make up for a missed funeral, but every time when a person did pass by a grave, a stone was thrown onto it or at least on graves of special persons. In 1913, the missionary Wandres noticed: “The custom is so deeply rooted that even Christians when they visit cemeteries throw a handful of sand on the tombs of their leaders. I saw, too, that they honour the tombs of the deceased missionaries in this way” (1913, 78). During the course of time the dedicated stones might form into impressive heaps (cf. the photos of the graves of Herero, who have the same custom: the tomb of the chief who was shot in 1896 by the Germans, with a psalm on the gravestone and next to it the very big pile of

stones which was accumulated by visitors: Debus 1982, 25; and of the chief Kahimemua in Okahandja (Otto 1983, 78).

Ordinary graves as well as Heitsi-eibeb graves were “greeted” and honoured in the same manner. Therefore the early travellers could not distinguish between the two forms, particularly as up to the 19th century the nature of the Heitsi-eibeb graves was not known. The Europeans observed how the indigenous people put a stone onto the heaps called graves and muttered a few words. We, too, when studying the old sources, are frequently left with the question: did those indigenous people ask the spirit of the deceased for a blessing or did they ask another supernatural being for support? For instance, Wikar noted: “In Great Namaqualand beyond the Bakke River, as they tell me, there are two long rows of graves arranged very regularly in a straight line. They say *Tzoekoab* or God buried people there in olden times and all who pass by must break a twig from a green bush and throw it on the graves.” (Mossop 1935, 95). Andersson mixed the two fields in a similar way: “The Namaquas ... believe in Heitjeebib, or Heitjekobib... But whether Heitjeebib is a deity, a goblin, or merely a deified ancestor, I shall not presume to say. At all events, they affirm he exists in the graves of all deceased people; and whenever a Hottentot passes a burial-place, he invariably throws a stone, a bush, or other token of offering and affection, on the tomb, pronouncing the name of Heitjeebib” (1856, 327). The graves which Sparrman (1975, vol. 1, 283, 1977, vol. 2, 201-203), Thunberg (1986, 97) and Thompson (1968, 13) saw were most likely actual graves. It was not until Alexander (1838), as Flachsberger rightly observed, that actual graves and Heitsi-eibeb graves were distinguished. Later sources state that local people generally know the differences well.

The Heitsi-eibeb graves

Names

According to Vedder (1923 I, 132-135) the Nama name for these heaps of stones is *Heitsi-eibeb*. This name means a place (-*be*, old locative suffix), on (*ei* = on) which *Heiseb* has to be honoured. The particle *tsi* in the word *Heitsi-eibeb* probably is, analogous to some other words, the genitive particle *di* which in former times or some other Nama dialects must have had the form *tsi*. The Damara name is //*kho* //*khowos*. It is an old word which otherwise does not exist in present day usage any more. //*Kho* still is the present-day verb “to bury” but //*khowos* is forgotten. It can, however, easily be explained, for in many disyllabic words the *w*-sound has disappeared and the vowels melted together. //*Khowo* was originally the same as //*kho* = bury. The doubling shows that according to the world view of the Damara something of special importance was buried at the place. The custom of throwing a stone on these graves is called *ao-eis*: *ao* = throw lightly, toss, *ei* = on.

Size

The size of these “graves” was sometimes rather impressive. In 1804 Lichtenstein was shown the grave of an old doctor and wise man who was said to have lived amongst the Khoekhoen long before the Europeans arrived in South Africa. This tomb consisted of a roughly heaped hill of small stones which, however, had a circumference of twenty to thirty paces (Lichtenstein 1967, 349). “This water place was called Kuma Kams, or the water of the beast tribe,” Alexander explained, “and near it was a heap of stones, eight yards long by one and a half high” (1838 II, 226-227). According to Von Zastrow/Vedder the so-called Heiseb graves in Namibia are little hills, 6-7 m long, 1,50 m wide and 0,75 m high; they are similar to long graves and consist of medium-sized stones (1930, 409). Photo: Karow 1909: table 22 preceding p. 161. – Photos of graves of Herero chiefs: Debus 1982, 25; Otto 1983, 53.

Number

Sometimes there are several Heitsi-eibeb graves at one place. “These graves form groups from five to ten or twenty heaps of stones” (Hahn 1867, 275, source of Hahn’s information?). The majority, however, seemed to have been single cairns. Occasionally there were two: Beutler (1752) in Godée-Molsbergen 1922, 289; Viereck 1970, 5-6.²

Sacrifices

The main items thrown onto the Heitsi-eibeb graves were stones and twigs. Stones seemed to have been used more frequently and, of course, did not decompose; they remained as the main indication of the site. The 17th-century sources for the Cape already mention green branches in relation to cult or ritual. In 1655, Corporal Müller saw “a strange proceeding of the Hottentot women on the side of our path, where a great stone lay. Each woman had a green branch in her hand, laid down upon her face on the stone, and spoke words, which we did not understand; on asking what it meant, they said, ‘Hette hie,’ and pointed above, as if they would say, ‘It is an offering to God’” (Hahn 1881, 36).

Graevenbroeck (1695) described the funeral customs. When the people pass by a grave later on they put a twig on it which they had plucked in the neighbourhood or a bunch of grass (Godée-Molsbergen 1932, 288). Wikar (1779) heard of graves? Heitsi-eibeb graves? that all

2 Hahn spent his early youth at Berseba, Namibia, where his father was a missionary. When Hahn was six years old he returned to Germany. All of Hahn’s publications up to the early 1870s are based on the literature of his time (though he did not quote in detail), except some letters from De Vries, former interpreter of Hahn’s father, and missionary Eggert. Therefore these publications have to be treated with a certain reservation. After he had published the bulk of his articles and finished his studies, in the early 1870s, Hahn returned to Namibia, and then as a local trader and fluent in Nama really compiled first-hand knowledge (Schmidt 1982).

who pass by must break a twig from a green bush and throw it on these graves (Mossop 1935, 95). In 1804 Lichtenstein visited “the grave of an old doctor and wise man” and learned that every Khoekhoeb passing by would throw a fresh branch with flowers on it. The custom was still adhered to in his time, for there were several branches which seemed to have been thrown there only a few days ago (1967 I, 349). References, also from Namibia, are frequent: Beutler (1752) in Godée-Molsbergen 1922, 289 (green twig); Campbell 1815 I, 82 (stone or branch); Alexander 1838 I, 166 (stone or branch); Andersson 1856, 327 (bush); Hahn 1878, 261 (fresh leaves and branches); Hahn 1881, 69 (flowers, or twigs of shrubs and branches of trees); Stow 1905, 128 (branches of trees); Crosby 1931, 349 (branches of trees); Estermann 1976, 10 (green branches on grave when departing after funeral). Graevenbroeck was the only one who mentioned grass and Ku’eep the only one who mentioned pieces of wood (1857, 367). There is no explanation by the sacrificing people themselves why only green branches are put on the “graves”, probably, when asked, they would react in the same way as Westerners would if asked why they use flowers and greens for funerals and the decoration of graves.

The references which mention pieces of their clothes or skins (Olpp 1876, 74; Hahn 1878, 257 and 1881, 69; Krönlein 1889, 161; Von Eckenbrecher 1908, 89; Schapera 1930, 384), however, have to be seen in relation to the general African concept of sacrifices in rituals. Clothes in which a little bit of the wearer’s lifeforce (visible in sweat) is absorbed not only symbolize the person but are a little bit of himself. The same holds true for the sacrifice of the broken arrow which Ku’eep mentioned (1857, 367) or “the small parts of their weapons” listed in the *Berichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft* (1850, 263). The meaning of giving a part of oneself becomes even more obvious in the custom of some Bantu peoples who spit on the stones before putting them on the stone heaps which are equal to the Heitsi-eibeb graves (Berglund 1976, 334) and the frequent use of spitting for blessing in general.

There are examples of actual sacrifices at the Heitsi-eibeb graves. Hahn described that “the most costly present which lovers could lavish on each other”, buchu, the fragrant herb powder, was sprinkled on these cairns (1881, 23). Schultze noted this custom in relation to actual graves (1907, 317). Vedder reports the sacrifice of tobacco (1912, 412; Von Zastrow/Vedder 1930, 409). Tobacco was often used in Nama/Damara sacrifices (cf. Schmidt 2014, 143 ff.; it was, as Vedder pointed out, the only item of luxury in the very olden days and has kept its importance in rituals.) Instead of tobacco bits of food might be offered, at the Heitsi-eibeb graves as well as at other places. According to Lebzelter the Damara formerly left some pieces of the food when they returned from hunting or gathering veldfood. They deposited the first fruit sacrifices at these graves and specially went to them before going out on a journey (1934, 165). The missionary Eggert wrote to Hahn that they even offered honey-water (1869, 68).

Unique and difficult to interpret is the use of zebra dung which Hahn mentioned (1881, 69). He himself pondered about this strange information (1905, 120). Wandres, and one of my

informants as well, described that sand was thrown on graves and Heitsi-eibeb graves (1913, 78). As this is not mentioned in earlier sources it should be asked whether the use of sand in place of the customary stones was only a substitution in stoneless areas or had been influenced by Christian funeral customs.

Supernatural beings connected with the cairn

Various older sources connect the sacrifices at these cairns explicitly with Heitsi-eibeb or Haiseb. If the Nama were asked what these cairns were, Alexander experienced, they said that Heijé Eibib, their great Father was below the heap (1838 I, 166). Whenever a Hottentot passes a burial-place, Andersson observed, he invariably throws a stone, a bush, or other token of offering and affection, on the tomb, pronouncing the name of Heitjeebib, and invoking his blessing and protection in his undertakings (1856, 327). Eggert stated that “the offerings are done to honour him. He should be happy when he returns from the veld where he had dug for onions and recognizes that people did not forget him. If one gives only a little honey-water he will become angry and says: ‘You are no good people, I want to have bulging cheeks.’ If he gets plenty then he is happy and says: ‘You are good people!’” (Hahn 1869, 68) Lebzelter’s Damara informants stated that the first fruit sacrifices were dedicated to Haiseb at these cairns “because it is his right” (1934, 165), and according to Thomas’ narrator the Hai//om placed a stone or twig on these mounds “for remembrance, for Heiseb was our God” (1950, 3-4).

Other Khoisan peoples of earlier generations connected the heaps of stones with their local deity. Wikar (1779) who was told about two long rows of graves in Great Namaqualand attributed them to *Tzoekoab* or God; at least people told him that *Tzoekoab* or God buried people there (Mossop 1935, 95). And when in our oldest reference to this special question, Beutler’s expedition into Kafferland in 1752, the Khoe captain Claas explained that “the devil had made the cairns and that they threw the twigs to pray to him and asked him to love them” (Godée-Molsbergen 1922, 289) we easily recognize the local deity, perhaps the trickster-deity, behind the “devil”, for up to the 19th century Europeans gave the local deity this designation. In the Cape Province, in the neighbourhood of the former mission station Blyde-Uitzigt, there was another “grave” of the “devil”; the name of this place was “Teufelsnacken” (devil’s neck). The “grave” was surrounded by a number of heaps of stones. The people went to it to ask the spirit of the place for help (Hahn 1870, 140-141, quoting Tindall). The !Kû believed that their trickster-deity Huee was buried under the stones (Vedder 1937, 424).

It is notable that though the name “Heitsi-eibeb graves” remained generally known, references to Heitsi-eibeb or Haiseb himself in connection with the “graves” became rare in later documents, probably due to the spread of Christianity. When people deposited a stone they muttered: “Give me ...” but did not say the name of the being they addressed.

Prayer

If we look into what the people asked for at these cairns, we learn that they asked first and foremost for good luck, luck for the undertaking they had set out (Andersson 1856, 327; Hahn 1869, 67-68; Knudsen in Hahn 1881, 56), i.e. for the journey (Tindall 1959, 63) or for the hunt (Tindall 1959, 63; Chapman 1868, 394-395), for success in hunting or whatever their wish may be for the time being (Ku'eep 1857, 367); for good luck and long life (Beutler in Godée-Molsbergen 1922, 289), for good luck and rain etc. (Hahn 1878, 261) or that Heitsi-eibeb might protect them from evil (Krönlein 1889, 161), that the good god might protect him from illness and bad luck and give all that was wished for (Karow 1909, 71). They went there when ill and asked for health (Tindall quoted in Hahn 1870 140-141), went and asked “the old one” for many children and cattle (at grave? at Heitsi-eibeb grave?) (Olpp 1876, 74), for preservation from death and an abundance of cattle, sheep and goats (Schmelen 1815 in Schmelen/Schmidt 1979, 58), for plenty of cattle (Alexander 1838 I, 166). Well-known is Hahn’s prayer which “[t]hey generally, if hunting, mutter”:

Oh, Heitsi-eibib,
Thou, our Grandfather,
Let me be lucky,
Give me game,
Let me find honey and roots,
That I may bless thee again,
Art thou not our Great-grandfather?
Thou Heitsi-eibib! (1881, 69)

But I doubt that the prayer had so fixed a form, and in such a form which is pleasing to the European ear. As far as I could observe prayers were generally improvised on the spur of the moment according to traditional patterns. On Vedder’s time the prayer was mainly a greeting (Vedder 1923 I, 132).

The connection of former religions with such “graves” is shown best by the action of a newly converted Christian who had been raised in the older belief system. “Cupido, our Hottentot driver, having surmounted this superstition [of throwing a stone or a branch on the cairns], when passing any of these graves, used quietly to get from the waggon, and scatter the branches and stones which happened to be on them and resumed his seat without a word” (Campbell 1815, 82). Though the missionary takes the stone heaps for graves of “great Hottentot captains”, the Khoeb destroys them as symbols of the old religion. If they had been actual graves he certainly would not have acted in this manner.

Even after the religious significance of the cairns had been lost and the custom of throwing stones on them had been given up, the places remained eerie. “Children occasionally are afraid of them, for if a place is haunted then it often is in the neighbourhood of a Haitsi-//khob. Superstitious Whites also fear to meet ghosts there” (Albat ca. 1965, 4).

Punishment for ignoring the custom

In the olden days, if a person passed by a Heitsi-eibeb grave and did not “greet” it he would be punished. Haiseb would play a prank on him (Lebzelter 1934, 165). Most sources report on more severe consequences. The person would head for disaster (Vedder 1912, 412), would get sore feet, lose his way or meet with other kinds of disaster (Vedder 1923 I, 132); he would be drowned in the first river he attempted to cross (Campbell 1815, 82); his neck would be turned round so that he always had to look backwards (Hahn 1870, 140-141); he would lose the protection of the deity, evil spirits and illness would take power over him and his amulets would not protect him any more (Von Eckenbrecher 1908, 89); a serious disease would break out in the country, i.e. not only the individual but his whole community would have to suffer (Wikar in Mossop 1935, 95).

Places of cairns

Many reports about sites are rather general:

- All over the country you may find large heaps of stones (Ku’eep 1857, 367; Von Eckenbrecher 1908, 89).
- They are found throughout the country [Namaland] (I have observed them even in Damara-land), and frequently in situations perfectly ‘stoneless’, from which it may be inferred that the natives carry the materials a long distance (Andersson 1856, 327).
- These Heitsi-eibega (plur. masc. obj.) I have found all over Great Namaqualand and Damara-land; and I hear from traders that they are met with even at the Okavango River and in the Lake N’Gami territory. All along the Western Kalihari I found them even at spots where no stones are to be found near at hand (Hahn 1878, 261).
- They are wide-spread in the Cape Colony up to the Kiskamma as well as in all of Great Namaland and even in the north-east as far as to the Matabele (Hahn 1867, 275).
- In 1804, Lichtenstein found them in the country of the !Gonaquas (Hahn 1878, 261).
- Later [after visiting “the grave of an old doctor and wise man” in the country of the !Gonaqua] we often found them up to the borders of Kafferland but never met with them in the other regions of southern Africa (Lichtenstein 1967 I, 349).
- They are to be found in Namaland as well as in Hereroland, even far into the northern Ka-okofeld (Vedder 1923 I, 132).
- There are about 50 of such Heitsi-//khogu (sing. Heitsi-//khob) to be found in the area of the parish of Bethanien (Albat ca. 1965, 4).
- Hahn, in 1869, was convinced that only Khoekhoen kept up Heitsi-eibeb graves and that therefore the graves in the areas south of the Kunene and Zambesi rivers proved that these areas once must have been Khoekhoe areas (Hahn 1869, 8 and 65).

Many people observed that Heitsi-eibeb graves were at special places:

- The piles are built at every crossing of a road they come to when they go out hunting (Chapman 1868, 394); by the wayside, leading to the hunting-field (Tindall 1959, 63);
- in narrow passes, between two mountains, on both sides of the road (Hahn 1869, 67, quoting de Vries; 1881, 69);
- so-called Heitsi-eibeb graves are frequently at the entrance into deep and narrow mountain gorges at the right and the left (Krönlein 1889, 161);
- usually in mountain saddles (Von Zastrow/Vedder 1930, 409);
- at frequently used paths and on mountain saddles (Vedder 1923 I, 132);
- the heap of stones was in a cleft between two eminences (Alexander 1838 II, 226-227);
- they are, according to Thompson and Alexander, mainly in gorges (Flachsberger 1971, 126).
- Heisé are nearly always to be found at paths that had been used since time immemorial, though forgotten today, at mountain paths and passes. In all of the Kaokoveld area known to me there are hardly any passes or gorges without Heisé monuments (Krenz 1970, 2).

The locality of a number of Heitsi-eibeb graves was indicated

a) Heitsi-eibeb graves in Namibia:

- At the road to their farm [near Okombahe] there was a larger one; there are many more all over the country (Karow 1909, 71).
- There is a mound at Kauas, and one on the road to the hills; and there are others in the land (Thomas 1950, 3-4).
- *Haitse aibeb* mounds have been found at the entrances of many of the ravines that drain from the Brandberg massif ... One of the largest of such cairns is at the foot of the Hungorob ravine on the south-western side of the mountain (Kinahan 1984, 1).
- [Frequently *Heitse Eibebs* are near water]. Particularly typical examples are the gorges of the Brandberg which carry or formerly carried water. Very conspicuous is the cairn on a rock with interesting paintings about 200 m before the Numas water-hole at the entrance of the Numas gorge. In the Kaoko-Veld I found *Heitse Eibebs* nearly at all water-holes (Viereck 1970, 5).
- An old pass way to Franzfontein is crowned by a striking “Spitzkuppe” [“pointed hilltop”, Heitsi-eibeb cairn?] which is known among the Nama and Dama who live there permanently as “#Go-dana Heisé”, that’s to say “pointed-headed Heisé” (Krenz 1970, 2).
- We found such heaps of stones on the farms Nudaus No. 17, Lichtenberg No. 121, Sesriem No. 137, Wolwedans No. 114, all in the Maltahöhe district (Gaerdes 1969, 5).
- Vedder derived the place name Kokobos in southern Namibia from //kho//khobos = place of burial-grave = Heitsi-eibeb grave (1938, 9).

b) Heitsi-eibeb graves in South Africa.

- They are now still to be seen at Van der Merwe's farm Hexriver, close to Botha's place in the Goudini, and in the neighbourhood of the Tradouw Pass (Hahn 1878, 261).
- Two of them are to be found in the vicinity of the missionary institution of Hankey, on the Gamtoos river. One of these ancient heaps stands a little above the junction of the Zuurbron and Vley Plaats road, in the Zaat Kloof, on the line of road from Hankey to the Zuurveld, via Zuurbron ... The other is to be found in the neighbourhood of Hankey, in a narrow gorge of the Klein or Palmiet river (Stow 1905, 127 note 1).
- Borchers found near the drift which he crossed in the upper portion of the 'Gariëp, on the right bank, a grave of a Bushman captain or chief, which consisted of a large cairn of stones and branches of trees (Stow 1905, 128).
- There are *Heitsi Eibibs* on a mountain or in areas which in the Bushmanland of today still bear the names of old kapteins or chiefs, places like Naib-Kabib and so on (Kling 1932, 11).
- A visit was accordingly paid to the farm Hartebeestfontein 473 (formerly 119), and Mr. Kloppers guided us up the southern slopes of the Magaliesberg to the nek, where the heap of stones was found (Van Warmelo 1965, 281).

What are Heitsi-eibeb graves? Theories

Andersson pondered: "The Hottentots have an indistinct notion that they came from an easterly direction, and it is possible that the stone tumuli found by the traveller may have something to do with this tradition" (1856, 327). This idea has not been confirmed by anybody else.

The indigenous people called the heaps of stones the graves of Heitsi-eibeb or of Haiseb but, at the same time, were sure that he was not buried in them. Excavations confirmed the information: no bones were found. But the people treated these graves similar to actual graves. Therefore, early observers presumed that there were connections to ancestor cults. "Little can be said about a religion of the Namaqua," wrote missionary Vollmer. "There are some dark reminiscences of worship of the dead and particularly of a certain Heitse eibeb whose grave, or rather graves, in former times were honoured by sacrifices of wood and stones" (1866, 278). Burkhardt in his survey on the missionary work in South Africa probably based his treatise on Vollmer's and other missionary reports. "What is known about the religion of the Khoekhoen most likely could be classified as ancestor cults. Heitsi Eibeb is invoked and his blessings are asked. This is done particularly at the grave stone-heaps which can be found wherever Khoekhoen lived" (1877, 138). Flachsberger, who studied the sources for the period 1777-1837, could, however, not discover any indications for ancestor cult (1971, 128). Chapman suggested: "As nobody lies buried there, they are very probably intended to propitiate the powers that are supposed to aid the hunter" (1856, 395).

Vedder was told in the Kaokoveld by an Ovatjimba chief that such cairns were erected to demarcate the boundary of clan areas, and he regarded this statement as a possible explanation for the Heitsi-eibeb graves in the Khoisan areas, too. Flachsberger, however, did not find any references for this theory in the old documents (1971, 126). Kling, most likely following Vedder, stated: “The Heitsi Eibibs are just boundary markers” and maintained that they were erected by various Bushman chiefs, and the little sacrifices of twigs were deposited to honour the chiefs (Kling 1932, 11).

Viereck, who knew the country very well, believed that originally these cairns were supposed to show the direction to a waterhole, for he recognized that all over the country most of them were not far from waterholes or fountains, which, however, today often had no water any more. Heitsi-eibebs at narrow passes and entrances to gorges, therefore, were favoured places to show the direction. But, Viereck concluded, “I do not want to maintain that the Heitse Eibebs only showed the direction to water. They probably also had another meaning, about which we don’t know anything” (1970, 5). Kinahan also interpreted the Heitsi-eibeb mounds as route markers. They “have been found at the entrances of many of the ravines that drain from the Brandberg massif in Western Damaraland. It is commonly believed that these cairns mark the routes of frequent travel by indigenous people in both prehistoric and modern times. This explanation seems quite reasonable, for the Brandberg ravines provide the easiest access routes to the waterholes at the top of the mountain” (1984, 1).

My own observations in 1981

My own investigation confirmed the published sources to a certain degree but brought forth further details, documenting the state of affairs in 1981. Excerpts from my notes are added as an appendix to the published sources. In order to facilitate the access to these excerpts I quote the numbers of the statements of the individual informants.

When I asked about Haiseb, the Damara people mentioned first of all the *Haise //kho //khowos*, the Haiseb grave, it was the first thing that they associated with the name of Haiseb. These heaps of stones are at roads and paths (5, 8, 11). We did not build them, Haiseb did (5). You cannot build new ones (5). Nobody is buried in them (3). Each passer-by had to throw a stone or a twig on it (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 14, 15). It was stressed that each person of the group had to throw a stone. “If they were ten people or however many, each of them must stop and throw stones” (11, 14). The mother of Jacobus Byl had obeyed the custom, the boy not. Therefore they had a mishap (12). Sometimes the informants mentioned that the passer-by had to take “another stone” and throw it on the heap, that’s to say he must not take a stone from the heap and return it but look for a new one (6, 15).

People prayed at these cairns (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8). They prayed to Haiseb (3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11); first they threw a stone, then they prayed (11). On the other hand there are statements that they

did not pray. “We just throw the stones, we do not speak ... they take two white stones and without saying a word throw them on the tomb and go on” (3). “We did not pray. We just put down the stone, this was our prayer” (5). At first sight this seems to be contradictory. Jacobus Byl’s description gives the explanation: “People did not pray there. But it was the habit to be quiet for a little while and look at the place”. They did not say prayers aloud as the informants are used to in the Christian churches nowadays but had them in mind and regarded the little act as a ceremony, it “is an adoration or honouring what they did” (12). The finding of meat is explained: “For they had asked for it with the stone” (“want hulle het nou klaar gevra met die klip”), though, as Ouma Johanna had described some sentences before: “We did not pray. We only put down the stone” (5).

They asked for a good journey, that the person should not meet with any mishap on the way (4, 7) or for luck in hunting (14). They prayed: “Lord, our god Haiseb, help us, we are hungry, let us get meat!” (7) Luck for the journey or for hunting were the main requests which had already been mentioned most frequently in the old reports, for they were the main things which people had in mind when they were walking along a road or path and passed by such a cairn. When, however, a person was looking for stray donkeys or cattle in the veld he would ask to find the animals (6). Most informants confirmed that people only prayed at the cairns when they happened to pass them but did not seek them out if they needed supernatural help in illness or other distress (5, 6, 7). But Aaron Tsameb who gave this information on one day, on the following day said that they did, and he described how the wives of hunters went to the cairn to ask for luck for their husbands who had gone out to hunt. On the first day he probably described the general situation, on the second a custom of his home area in the east of the country which had come to his mind (7). Today it cannot be reconstructed to which extent such special prayers and offerings at the cairns like this ceremony of the hunters’ wives were more frequent in earlier days, whether in general or only locally.

The items which were thrown on the cairns were, like in the olden days, preferably stones and twigs. Jacobus Byl from the Keetmanshoop area named sand (12). Later he added: “Some women also cut off a little bit of their dresses and gave it there.” Parts of the person’s clothing were the well-known ancient African offerings (Olpp 1876, 74; Hahn 1878, 257 and 1881, 69; Krönlein 1889, 161; Von Eckenbrecher 1908, 89; Schapera 1930, 384). Byl continued: “It was a sacrifice which was given.” When I asked: “Did they regard this as a sacrifice?” he pondered: “I think so today. I don’t know what they have thought at that time ... Yes. Sometimes, even when there was only a little bit of water and the sun burnt so hot and we children were so thirsty as it was in the time of the wild raisins, nevertheless they sprinkled some of the water on the stones” (12).

According to Aaron Tsameb (7) the wives of hunters deposited tobacco. Tobacco is well-known from Vedder’s reports as one of the main objects used for sacrifices (Vedder 1912,

412; Von Zastrow/Vedder 1930, 409). When a young woman of the audience questioned Mr. Tsameb's statement because there had not been any tobacco in the olden days, he explained that it was growing wild. Probably he was thinking of dagga (*leonitis*), which people not only smoked but also used for sacrifices (Vedder 1923, 138.). The young lady believed that tobacco had been introduced into the country only in more recent times. It had, however, been well known in the 19th century, and the Damara were the great tobacco raisers who traded their tobacco far and wide. Petrina #Neis remembered, too, that her mother put down at the Haiseb graves "a little bit of tobacco and a little bit of food" (8). Note that tobacco and food were not "thrown" on the heaps but "put down".

The informants interpreted the depositing of things at the cairns from their present-day point of view. The stone was a contribution like the collection today in church (5). It was a present to the god (11). Some spirit had to be honoured (12). It was a sacrifice (11). Jacobus Byl called it a sacrifice, too, and substantiated this by the report of their sprinkling of water on the heap of stones though the people were suffering from thirst (12).

The throwing of stones and other prescribed items on the cairns, therefore, was by no means an empty, superficial habit. The people were convinced or at least hoped that their wishes would come true. "... and it will come true!" (4) They hoped that they would have luck on the way (4, 7) and luck in hunting (7, 14). "The stone which is thrown there, this stone means that the person who had put it down, be it a child or an adult or an old man, may get something in return, whatever it may be, that he must get it" (5). "Then they saw perhaps: there ahead lies a zebra or perhaps a gemsbok or there lies a koedoe, and then they butchered it and ate. For they had asked for it with the stone" (5).

But if they did not obey the custom and did not throw a stone (connected with prayers or honouring the spirit of the place) they would be punished, like disobedient people described in the old sources. "Then you'll take the wrong path and lose your way and will die" (7). You may meet with unexpected kinds of dangers and threats like the venomous snake recognized at the last moment on the water-bag (12).

The Heitsi-eibeb grave or *Haise //kho //khowos* was a special place with a special atmosphere, a place of special spirituality. "Perhaps it was a holy site" (2). Children were afraid of playing there, adults punished if they did (2). "It is as if they [passers-by] get into a conflict (verwarring) with the spirit or what this may be, perhaps somebody who is dead here and has to be honoured", Jacobus Byl attempted to define the atmosphere (12).

Ouma Johanna mentioned that when, after the little ceremony, you were leaving the cairn you must not look back (5). This is the very ancient tabu known world-wide when people were leaving a place of supernatural potency or the otherworld. The most famous example is in Greek mythology: Orpheus journeyed to the land of the dead to fetch back his wife Eurydice; but disobeying an order, he looked back and therefore failed (St. Thompson: Mot. C331. Tabu: looking back).

The custom of throwing stones on the Haiseb graves must have faded away in the first half of the 20th century. Older informants had accompanied their mothers in the veld, had observed them and were taught to throw a stone on the heap. But they themselves had not done so since they had grown up and did not remember the details well. Therefore, informants were likely to reconstruct components. So Petrina #Neis said that her mother prayed to the Lord, “our father”, and then admitted “I only know Our Father”. But this detail reveals to us that she considered the old prayers as something similar to the present Our Father. The mother of Evangelist Byl shows best the intermediate stage of the transition time: at home she was a good Christian but in the veld she believed in the old lore: the venomous snake at their water-bag must have been the punishment for the boy’s disobedience of not throwing a stone. He had brought both of them danger to their life.

It is notable that Evangelist Byl gave one of the most detailed accounts, for especially in southern Namibia the Nama people could tell very little about the Heitsi-eibeb graves. Pastor Pieters knew the name *Haise //khob* and that there are such heaps but he attributed them to a time before the middle of the 19th century, to the old Nama and their beliefs, to whom he as a Witbooi, the later and Christian immigrants from the south, did not belong. Other people who told me much about old customs could not say anything about the cairns. Probably the influence of the missionaries had lasted longer in southern Namibia than in Damara areas of the north and had suppressed the custom earlier. In addition, in southern Namibia the old deity to whom people prayed in pre-Christian days was Tsûi-//goab and not Haiseb, who rather was the deity of certain Damara areas. Thus it is of particular interest that the intelligent Jacobus Byl called the old “graves” *Ho tsi //kho* and not *Haitsi //kho*. He did not derive the name from *Heitsi* but - though he admitted another pitch - from *Ho tsi*. “This means: where I find you I bury you. *Ho* means ‘find, get’” [and *tsi* = you, *//kho* = bury] (12).

Old and new sources stress that the cairns were at old paths or passes. Therefore a few words have to be devoted to the spirits of the road which up to today are well known. I discussed them in detail in my essay: “Spirits – Some thoughts on ancient Damara folk belief” (2014, especially pp. 143-145). There are certain places on roads, also public roads, which are the domain of spirits. My informant illustrated this with her own experience. We came in a car from Tsumeb. After a short stop the lights of the car would not work. All attempts to get them to work again failed. We sat in the dark. People said: “You have to sprinkle tobacco!” We crumbled a cigarette. A woman who spoke Nama went in front of the car, sprinkled the tobacco and said: “Let us go! We come from a party meeting and we have to go home. Open the road for us!” After fifteen minutes a car came, they fixed our lights in a moment. If she had not sprinkled the tobacco they would not have come (recorded 1991, Usakos).

If you enter this area you have “to speak”, you have to introduce yourself and speak about the purpose of your travel, give a little gift (which again is mainly tobacco or a little bit of food)

and ask for permission to pass. Then you will have “luck”, otherwise you might get into difficulties and have “bad luck”. The Khoekhoegowab language has a special verb for this action: you have to *tsekhom*. Krönlein’s Nama dictionary illustrates the deeper meaning well: “*tse*: ausscheiden, absondern (zu besonderen Zwecken), heiligen” (1889, 325); “absondern” = to separate, “heiligen” = to keep holy. You have to honour the place or the spirit(s) who reign(s) there. Similar belief is related to spirits of the water, the ground and the family fire. Nobody, however, could give any further information on these invisible forces, and nobody ever mentioned any relationship to the Heitsi-eibeb graves.

Analogous customs at heaps of stones among other peoples

The survey of the Khoisan customs connected with the cairns showed that formerly the cairns were places of spiritual potency. People prayed there, prayed to their deity. Early Western observers thought that this reverence at the cairns was special to the Khoisan peoples. When, however, already in the 19th century such customs at cairns were also found among neighbouring peoples, Westerners considered the cairns to be remnants of a former Khoisan settlement area (Hahn 1869, 8) or a copy of old Khoisan customs (Hahn 1878, 257; Büttner 1879, 291). The more examples were discovered, the more it became obvious that the custom was far-spread in Africa and even beyond. In other countries there were not only heaps of stones at the roadsides but also the obligation that each passer-by had to add a stone.

My cursory collection of notes may add a number of further examples. In Namibia, Herero and Wambo peoples knew such heaps of stones and called them *ombindi*. Van Niekerk’s account of the Himba usage in the Kaokoveld is nearly congruent to Nama/Damara descriptions: the *ombindi* and the immediate surroundings are regarded as the living area of some spirits. At each *ombindi* the Himba carries out a ritual act and speaks with these spirits. Each Himba traveller takes a stone or a twig with leaves and places it on the *ombindi*. While doing so he addresses the spirits with the words: “Give me luck that I may travel happily!” (1981, 40) They had, however, also stone heaps as demarcations of their clan territories (Vedder 1923, Henrichsen 2011).

Since the scanty 19th-century references to such cairns in Zimbabwe (Andersson 1856) and in the Xhosa area (Cape Monthly Magazine article March 1878 quoted in Hahn 1878) the amount of documentations in southern Africa has become impressive. The state of collection and information up to 1965 is described by Van Warmelo in *A Tale of a Heap of Stones* (1965). Xhosa and Zulu call these heaps *isiVivane*. Van Warmelo: the Kropf-Godfrey Dictionary gives the meaning of *isiVivane* in Xhosa thus: “a heap of stones thrown together by travellers at certain steep and dangerous passes on a difficult, tiring journey, a small stone being added by every passer by, who says, *Thixo ndincede*, God help me; or *siphe amandla*, give us strength, whereby the traveller asks for help to accomplish his enterprise or errand. Whether his object is good or evil, whether he is going to steal his neighbour’s cattle, or to pay a visit to his friends, or to pay

his addresses to a young woman, he will use the same form.” The Zulu Dictionary says: “cairn, accumulated heap of stones, memorial collection of stones, ‘rocky heap’ (on which Natives throw stones as they pass at crossroads or some outstanding place, the action being believed to bring good luck).”

The Venda call them *tshiwelo* “place of rest”, the Tswana *sefiko-ntle* “something of stone, in the veld”. Van Warmelo described the difficulties which they experienced when trying to find actual cairns to take photos. “We searched around without success, but finally discovered some local people who said they knew this particular *isiVivane*. However, only a few months earlier the Roads Department had scooped the whole heap up and carted it away for gravelling a road somewhere else. One more relic of ancient times destroyed!” (1965, 279)

A.-J. Berglund, who lived among Zulu, had a special explanation for the cairns. “I suggest that spitting on a stone and throwing it on *isivivane* (cairns) is a symbol of innocence, the heaps themselves probably being traditional roadsigns as they are found alongside frequented paths and located so that they can be recognised.” He gained this insight from his own experience while he accompanied a group of men to settle a dispute with a local farmer. Each of the men, except he whose cattle had been confiscated by the farmer, picked up a stone, spat on it and threw it on the heap. Everybody readily accepted that the owner of the cattle did not throw a stone on the heap, although Berglund, on the other hand, was instructed to do so. Passing the cairn on their way home all, again, threw a stone, the owner of the cattle did also. The man described his behavior thus: on the way to the farmer anger was burning inside him. After the successful negotiations his anger was “cooled”. “So I was nice when we returned. Then I could throw a stone” (1976, 334ff.).

Th. Hahn was the first person who, as early as 1878, dedicated an article to *The Graves of Heitsieibib*. He was the stern defender of the idea that Heitsieibib graves were the sole heritage of the Khoekhoen. A closer reading of his article shows how he solved the problem of bringing his conviction in line with the fact that such cairns are probably distributed world-wide. He mentioned examples from the Xhosa (p. 257), from Tanganyika, China and West Asia, Spain and Germany. While he regarded the Xhosa practice as a copy of the Khoisan custom he subsumed the other examples under the world-wide “custom of erecting stone-heaps in honour of deities, or in memory of the deceased, especially of eminent men” (p. 264). Nevertheless, he gave the following quintessential quotations in italics:

On the road from this city to Mishapoor is a large stone-heap, on which the inhabitants of that country in passing by, “*will throw a stone in honour of the spirit of the place.*” (Le Tour du Monde) Wilhelm von Humboldt, in his essay “Researches into the early history of the Aborigines of Spain,” says, p. 176, “*that he found large artificial stone-heaps in the province of Galicia, on which every one who passes by has to throw a stone as a kind of pious sacrifice*” (p. 264.) In connection with our survey the traditions of ancient Greece are of particular interest. In

Greece the heaps of stones were dedicated to Hermes. His name was derived from Greek *hermax* and *hermaion* = heap of stone. The heaps of stones seemed to have been very popular, they served as points of orientation and enlarged because each passing traveller added a new stone. Hermes, inter alia, was the protector of travellers, the god of shepherds whose herds he increased, a masterthief, and his main trait was cleverness (Hunger 1981, 176).

We possess a very extensive collection of examples from German-speaking areas in the *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* by Olbrich, Vol. 8 (1937), 406-413. The article discusses heaps of stones, the sacrifice of stones, and stone-throwing. Particularly in eastern parts of Germany there are (were) heaps of stones to which each passer-by added a stone especially at places where somebody was murdered or killed in an accident. In Roman Catholic western and southern Germany these heathen customs were substituted by “Marterln” (wayside shrines with a crucifix) [where people do not deposit stones but which they decorate with flowers and where they pray]. Stones were also thrown as a sacrifice to supernatural beings. An example may be: on the path up to the Zerzeralp (Vintschgau) there is a place called “To the wild ladies” (‘Zu den wilden Fräulein’). There is a heap of stones. Children who go up to the alp for the first time have to pick up a stone, spit on it and, while saying: “I sacrifice, sacrifice to the wild ladies”, throw it on the heap. Anyone neglecting to do so is apt to get into great danger (p. 410). Here are the same elements which we know from the African ritual: heaps of stones at the roadside, particularly people who pass for the first time have to offer, spittle on stone as part of the person, short prayer, threat of misfortune if not carried out.

Conclusion

Let us return to the Heitsi-eibeb graves in Namibia. Our review of the sources confirmed the general statements that they can be found at former roads or paths. Whether African or ancient Greek traditions are discussed, “[i]t is commonly believed that these cairns mark the routes of frequent travel by indigenous people in both prehistoric and modern times” (Kinahan 1984, 1; cf. Hunger 1981, 176). But the cairns are (or were) much more than mere points of orientation, for each stone of the often impressive heaps is connected with a prayer or at least a wish. In addition, there are the many sacrifices which now cannot be seen any more, the food, the tobacco, the drops of water offered by thirsting people. “Perhaps it was a holy site” – it was a holy site! For us, therefore, remains the question: did those people who founded the stone heap erect it as a road sign, or did they found it at the road to ask there for a blessing for the undertaking they had set out for? As according to tradition Haiseb had built the heaps and nowadays no additional ones can be erected, the question never can be answered.

The comparison of dates revealed that not only Khoisan peoples obeyed the custom but many other peoples as well. These peoples had their own traditional religions, the Bantu mainly ancestor cults. They, thus, had the custom of revering the stone heaps (or the spirits connected

with them) side by side with their main religion. In ancient Greece there were notable religious services at temples and altars for various gods; Hermes, honoured at the roadside, was but one of the Greek deities. This leads to the question: did the old Khoisan peoples also have further cults over and above the ritual at the cairns, and in which relation did these cults to the Heitsi-eibeb grave cult stand?

As mentioned above, already in 1965, Van Warmelo lamented the complete lack of appreciation for the cairns in South Africa. “We searched around without success ... Only a few months earlier the Roads Department had scooped the whole heap up and carted it away for gravelling a road somewhere else. One more relic of ancient times destroyed!”

Also Gaerdes in Namibia required as early as 1969: “There would be some tasks for our experts in the south of the country, tasks which become more and more urgent; first of all a documentation of the Heitsi-eibeb and then to have them classified as historical monuments – these as well as the graves of former Herero ovahona.” Gaerdes’ request should be extended. Not only should the Heitsi-eibeb graves all over the country be protected by law, but the general public also has to be taught to value the cairns as relics of ancient times and as a common heritage.

Survey of the Sources

KH = Khoisan references		Non-Khoisan references
Albat (1965)	KH	
Alexander 1837		Bantu
Alexander 1838	KH	
Baumann, H. 1936	KH	further African countries
Baumann, O. 1894		East Africa
Berglund 1976		Zulu + literature
BRM 1849	KH	
BRM 1850	KH	
Beutler 1752	KH	
Boerger		Asia
Brownlee 1955		Xhosa
Budack 1965		Herero
Burkhardt 1877	KH	
Büttner 1879	KH	
Campbell 1815	KH	
Campbell 1822		Tswana
Chapman 1868	KH	Tswana
Crosby 1931	KH	
Debus 1982		Herero
Dornan 1925	KH	Tswana
Dundas 1913		East Africa
Du Pisani 1976	KH	
Du Toit 1959	KH ?	
Estermann 1976	KH	

Flachsberger 1971	KH	
Gaerdes 1969	KH	
Graevenbroeck (1695)	KH	
Hahn, H. (1857)		Herero, Wambo
Hahn, Th. 1867	KH	
Hahn, Th. 1869	KH	
Hahn, Th. 1870	KH	
Hahn, Th. 1878	KH	Bantu, East Africa, Asia, Spain, Germany
Hahn, Th. 1881	KH	Xhosa? Theal
Hahn, Th. (1905)		Bantu (Mashona)
HdA 1937		German
Henrichsen 2011		Herero
Herrmann 1961		North Africa
Hoernlé (1912-1922)	KH	
Hunger 1981		Ancient Greece
Hunter 1961		Pondo South Africa
Huntingford 1953		East Africa
Jeffreys 1968	KH	Arabia
Jenness 1955		Canada
Karow 1909	KH	
Kinahan 1984	KH	
Kling 1932	KH	
Krenz 1970	KH	Arabia
Krönlein 1889	KH	
Ku'eep 1857	KH	
Küppers 1976		Sweden

Kuhlmann 1930		Herero
Lebzelter 1934	KH	
Lichtenstein (1803-1806)	KH	
Olpp 1876	KH	
Otto 1983		Herero
Pechuël-Loesche 1907		Angola
Ray 1933		America
Rust 1928	KH	
Schapera 1930	KH	
Schmelen (1815)	KH	
Schmidt 1970		Germany
Schultze 1907	KH	
Smith (1834-36) ed. Kirby		Bantu
Smith (1834-36) ed. Lye		Bantu
Sparrman	KH	
Stow 1905	KH	
Tenbrock		Korea
Theal 1910		Xhosa
Thomas 1950	KH	
Turner 1983	KH	
Van Niekerk 1981		Herero
Van Warmelo 1965		Xhosa, Zulu
Vedder 1923	KH	
Vedder 1928	KH	
Vedder 1931		Herero, Ovambo
Vedder 1938	KH	

Viereck 1970	KH	
Vinnicombe 1976	KH	
Vollmer 1866	KH	
Von Eckenbrecher	KH	
Von Zastrow/Vedder	KH	
Wandres 1913	KH	
Wikar (1779)	KH	
Willoughby 1928		Bantu
Zuure 1929		Bantu

Non-Khoisan References in the Sources:

<i>Herero</i>	Budack 1965; Hahn, H. (1857); Henrichsen 2011; Kuhlmann 1930; Van Niekerk 1981; Vedder 1931; actual graves: Debus 1982; Otto 1983.
<i>Wambo</i>	Hahn, H. 1857; Vedder 1931.
<i>Bantu Angola</i>	Pechuël-Loesche 1907.
<i>Tswana</i>	Campbell 1822; Chapman 1868; Dornan 1925.
<i>Matabele in Zimbabwe</i>	Andersson 1856.
<i>Xhosa</i>	Brownlee 1955; Theal quoted in Hahn 1881?; Theal 1910.
<i>Zulu</i>	Berglund 1976 and literature quoted.
<i>Pondo</i>	Hunter 1961.
<i>Bantu</i>	Alexander 1837; Smith ed. Kirby 1939, 1940; Smith ed. Lye 1975; Livingstone and Vedder 1937 in Thurner 1983; Van Warmelo 1965.
<i>Bantu Central Africa</i>	Zuure 1929.
<i>Bantu general</i>	Willoughby 1928.
<i>East Africa</i>	Baumann, O. 1894; Dundas 1913; Huntingford 1953.

<i>Further African countries</i>	Baumann, H. 1936.
<i>North Africa</i>	Hermann 1961.
<i>Arabian</i>	Krenz 1970.
<i>Asia</i>	Boerger 1970.
Europe:	
<i>Greece, ancient</i>	Hunger 1981.
<i>Germany</i>	Handbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens; Schmidt 1970.
<i>Sweden</i>	Küppers 1976.
<i>America</i>	Ray 1933.
<i>Canada</i>	Jenness 1955.

The Sources:

Albat, A., (ca. 1965). *Getarntes Heidentum. Bedrohte Gemeinde in Südwest*. Verlag der Rheinischen Missions-Gesellschaft.

p. 4: Verlassen liegen die Heitsi-//khogu, die Begräbnisstätten eines Helden der Vorzeit, Heitsieibeb, dem man an seinen vielen Gräbern religiöse Verehrung hat zuteil werden lassen. Etwa 50 solcher Heitsi-//khogu (Sing. Heitsi-//khob) sind im Bezirk der Gemeinde Bethanien zu finden. Aber niemand beachtet sie. Kinder fürchten gelegentlich diese „Gräber der Fremden“, wie sie auch genannt werden; denn wenn es „spukt“, dann geschieht es oft in der Umgebung eines Heitsi-//khob. Auch aber-gläubische Weiße fürchten dort die Begegnung mit Geistern. Aber niemand grüßt mehr den Helden der Vorzeit dadurch, daß er einen Stein oder einen Zweig auf seinem Grabe niederlegt.

Alexander, J.E., 1837. *Narrative of a voyage of observation among colonies of western Africa*. 2 vols. London: Colburn.

I, 402: There are many ancient cairns, or heaps of stones, in Kaffir-land, of which the present race can give no distinct account. They always, however, add a stone to the heap when they pass: perhaps, as an offering to the manes of a dead chief below.

Alexander, J.E., 1838. *Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa*. 2 vols. London: Colburn. – Reprint: 1967, Cape Town: Struik.

I, 166: These Namaquas thought that they came from the east. In the country there is occasionally found (besides the common graves covered with a heap of stones) large heaps of stones, on which had been thrown a few bushes; and if the Namaquas are asked what these are, they say that Heijé Eibib, their great Father is below the heap: they do not know what he is like, or what he does; they only imagine he also came from the east, and had plenty of sheep and goats; and when they add a stone or branch to the heap, they mutter “Give us plenty of cattle.”

II, 226-227: This water place was called Kuma Kams, or the water of the beast tribe, and near it was a heap of stones, eight yards long by one and a half high, in a cleft between two eminences, which the Namaquas said was a heap over their deity, Heije Eibib.

Andersson, C.J., 1856. *Lake Ngami; or Explorations and Discoveries during Four Years' Wanderings in the Wilds of South/Western Africa*. London: Hurst & Blackett.

p. 327: The Namaquas ... believe in Heitjeebib, or Heitjekobib... But whether Heitjeebib is a deity, a goblin, or merely a deified ancestor, I shall not presume to say. At all events, they affirm he exists in the graves of all deceased people; and whenever a Hottentot passes a burial-place, he invariably throws a stone, a bush, or other token of offering and affection, on the tomb,

pronouncing the name of Heitjeebib, and invoking his blessing and protection in his undertakings. From being thus constantly added to, these heaps often attain a great size. They are found throughout the country (I have observed them even in Damara-land), and frequently in situations perfectly 'stoneless', from which it may be inferred that the natives carry the materials a long distance. Captain Harris mentions having seen similar heaps amongst the Matabili, but was unable to account for their presence. The Hottentots have an indistinct notion that they came from an easterly direction, and it is possible that the stone tumuli found by the traveller may have something to do with this tradition.

Baumann, H., 1936. *Schöpfung und Urzeit des Menschen im Mythos der afrikanischen Völker*. Berlin: Reimer / Andrews & Steiner.

p. 14: Heitsi Eibib: Unzählige Steinhaufen, auf welche die Vorübergehenden Zweige werfen, werden als sein Grab bezeichnet (Hahn).

p. 40: ... daß man auch im Yaoland pyramidenförmige Haufen an Kreuzwegen findet, auf die jeder Vorbeigehende eine Blüte für „mulungu“, die Geisterwelt, den Beschützer der Reisenden wirft. Wir haben hier also die Heitsi-Eibib-„Gräber“ der Hottentotten, die sich auch sonst in Afrika vielfach finden, vor uns.

p. 76: Hollohollo am Westufer des Tanganyika: Auch Steinhaufen am Wegrand, auf den Gipfeln steiler Berge, auf die der Passant einen Kiesel oder ein Blatt legt, wird als Gabe an Kabedya [Gott der Lebenden] aufgefaßt.

Baumann, O., 1894. *Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle. Reisen und Forschungen der Massai-Expedition des deutschen Antisklaverei-Komitee in den Jahren 1891-1893*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer.

p. 207: Watussi: Von eigenen religiösen Anschauungen konnte ich nichts erfahren. Was Speke diesbezüglich anführt, vor Allem das Bewerfen gewisser Lokalitäten mit Steinen, die sich nach und nach zu grossen Haufen aufthürmen, oder mit Gras zum Schutz gegen böse Geister, ist nichts charakteristisches und auch den Bantu eigen.

Berglund, A-J., 1976. *Zulu Thought-Patterns and Symbolism*. Studia Missionalia Upsaliensia 22. Claremont, Cape: Philip.

p. 334ff.: I suggest that spitting on a stone and throwing it on *isivivane* (cairns) is a symbol of innocence, the heaps themselves probably being traditional roadsigns as they are found alongside frequented paths and located so that they can be recognised. (p. 344: Bryant, *The Zulu People*, p. 732; Callaway, *The Religious System of the Amazulu*, p. 66; Bryant, *Dictionary*, p. 682; Doke-Vilakazi, *Dictionary*, p. 836; Leslie, *Among the Zulus and Amatongas*, p. 146; Kidd, *The Essential Kaffir*, pp. 263 f.; Jenkinson, *Amazulu*, p. 33. Spitting on the stone is mentioned by Bryant, Callaway and Kidd.)

Passing a cairn in the company of a group of men going to a local farmer with the object of settling a dispute with him I saw each of the men, except he whose cattle had been confiscated by the farmer because of their trespassing into his fields, pick up a small stone, spit on it and throw it on the heap. Everybody readily accepted that the owner of the cattle did not throw a stone on the heap, although I, on the other hand, was graciously told of the heap before we reached it and instructed what to do. Passing the cairns later in the afternoon after successfully negotiating with the farmer, all, again, threw a small stone on the heap after spitting on it. On this occasion the owner of the cattle did so also. He described his behavior thus: "When we passed it (the cairn) the first time I was hot because of the cattle. Also the men (accompanying us) knew that I was hot. So I could not throw a stone." We discussed his heat, and from our discussion it was quite plain that he had been angry. "It (the anger) was burning inside me. That is why I could not throw a stone, not even speaking along the whole way, the heat burning strongly." But with the successful negotiations, both parties speaking out their points of view and the subsequent promise by the cattle-owner that the responsible herdboys could be punished, and the angered man whose fields had been trespassed agreeing to return the cattle without a fine (expressions of goodwill), the anger was "cooled". "So I was nice when we returned. Then I could throw a stone." The men in the party stressed that the behaviour of the cattle-owner had been correct.

Berichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft 1849 (editor)

p. 322: So lange man denken kann, wohnen die Namaqua links und rechts vom Garip in dem von ihnen benannten kleinen und großen Namaqualande. Hier finden sich die Heizi-Eibib-Gräber, jene uralten wunderlichen Steinhäufen, auf welche der alte vorbeigehende Namaqua Steine und Holz als Opfer warf und seine wunderliche Sage von dem Manne Heizi-Eibib erzählte, der gestorben und wieder auferstanden sei. Diese Namaquaheiligtümer reichen indessen nur bis 260 d. Br. Weiter nördlich hören sie völlig auf, obgleich das Volk, welches sie aufthürmte, weiter nach Norden hinauf wohnt.

Berichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft 1850 (editor)

p. 263: (Tagebuch Vollmer, Rehoboth. Zeremonielles Schlachten.) Unblutige Opfer haben sie auch gehabt, letztere legten sie auf das Grab eines gewissen Heidsche Ebbi, der aber sehr viele Gräber hat. Diese unblutigen Opfer sind noch unter den Unbekehrten sehr gang und gäbe. Sie bestehen aus kleinen Theilen ihrer Waffen, oder was sie sonst finden, oft ist's nur ein Ast vom Baume oder ein Stein.

Beutler, A.F., (1752). Landtocht naar het Kafferland, tot aan de Key Rivier in 1752. In: Godée-Molsbergen, E.C., 1922. *Reizen in Zuid-Afrika in de Hollandse Tijd*. Vol. III: *Tochten Langs de Z.O.-Kust en Naar het Oosten 1670-1752*. Lindschoten Vereeniging 20, pp. 265-336.

p. 289: ... kwamen vervolgens een klippige hoogte af waar op 2 klip hoopen vonden op dewelke capt. Claas een groen takje onder 't mompeln van eenige woorden wierp, wy dit siende waaren eerst van gedagte, dat het Hottentotten begraafplaatsen waaren en dat sulx onder hun lieden een soort van ceremonie was, maar wanneer wy saagen dat capt Ruyter dien wy die twee hoopen weesen hetselve meede deede, vroegen wy hem wat die plaats en betekenden en waarom sy luyden dit deden die ons geen ander reede daarvan wist te geeven dan den duyvel deselve gemaakt hadde en dat se die takjes daar op wierpen om hem af te bidden hum lief te hebben, veel geluks en een lang leeven te verleenen.

Boerger, A. W., 1970 (Juli). Heitse-Eibeb-Gräber im Innern Asiens? *Mitteilungen der SWA Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft* 11/4, 6.

Zu dem Artikel von Herrn F.K. Krenz in der Januar-Februar Ausgabe der „Mitteilungen“ (No. X/10-11, S. 2) möchte ich bemerken, dass die sog. „Heitse Eibeb Gräber“ in Gestalt von Steinhäufen an Bergpässen sich in der Tat, wie Herr Krenz vermutet, bis ins Innere von Asien erstrecken.

Im Zuge meines von Pokhara (West-Nepal) aus in Richtung tibetanischer Grenze im Februar dieses Jahres unternommenen „Jomsom Treks“ fand ich auf dem, von Tibetanern häufig begangenen, Gorapani-Pass am Annapurna zahlreiche kleine Steinpyramiden, von Stangen mit Gebetswimpeln und Tuchfetzen überragt, und beobachtete, wie mein tibetanischer Führer einen dieser Häufen mit weiteren Steinen vergrößerte.

Ich legte ebenfalls einige Steine dazu, um diese, wie ich annahm, alte Landessitte zu ehren, durch die man den höheren Mächten für den gewährten Schutz dankt. Ich war der Meinung – und versäumte deshalb, meinen Führer um eine Erklärung zu bitten – es handele sich bei den Steinen, trotz der buddhistischen Gebetswimpel, um ein Symbol für den Shiva-Kult, wie er in Indien auf den Bergen durch Verehrung von – meist mit dem Dreizack bemalten – Steinen und Felsen Ausdruck findet.

Dann fand ich aber, kurz bevor ich den Artikel von Herrn Krenz las, in dem Buch „Tibet – Land of Snows“ von Professor G. Tucci (Elek Books, London) folgende Beschreibung tibetanischer Sitten: “On arriving at a mountain pass the traveller pauses. It will be the dwelling place of a spirit, marked by a pile of stones on the ridge of the pass, with branches pushed into it; banners with sacred words on them and scraps of material and coloured wool are tied to the branches, and the traveller, as soon as he arrives at the top, adds another stone to the pile, shouting the ancient words “the god is victorious”. He then proceeds on his way, keeping the heap of stones to his right, sure of his safety as he makes the descent of the mountain. This custom is a legacy of an older religion which Buddhism has not been able to eradicate”.

Brownlee, Ch., 1955. A Fragment of Xhosa Religious Beliefs. Ed. by C.M. Doke. *African Studies* 14, 37-41.

p. 39: No native has been able to tell me the origin of Sivivane³, so far as my memory serves me they are also to be found in Zululand. The vague idea regarding them is that there is a supernatural or spiritual power existent or resident in the Sivivane, how or when it came there or what spirit it is no one knows, but anyone in passing casts another stone on the cairn with this short prayer “ete amandla Sivivane” (Bring strength, O Cairn!)

Budack, K.F.R., 1965. 'n Volkekundige Studie van die Tses-Reservaat (Distrik Keetmanshoop, Suidwes-Afrika) met besondere verwysing na die geskiedenis en die inter-etniese verhoudinge van die bewoners. M.A. thesis University of Pretoria. Unpublished.

p. 165: Die vergaderplek van die *otjira tjojtjiserandu* by hierdie geleentheid is op Ombero (Enoch) in die oostelike gedeelte van die reservaat. Naby hierdie nedersetting lê 'n koppie wat deur die OvaHerero Ombindi⁴ genoem word. Bo op hierdie koppie is 'n kunsmatige graf van klippe opgerig, met 'n grafsteen aan die bopunt...

Burkhardt, G.E., 1877. *Die evangelische Mission unter den Völkerstämmen Südafrikas*. 2. Auflage, gänzlich umgearbeitet und bis auf die Gegenwart fortgeführt von R. Grundmann. Bielefeld / Leipzig: Burkhardts Missions-Bibliothek Bd. 2: Afrika.

p. 138: Forschen wir aber schließlich nach der Religion der Namaqua in ihrem ursprünglichen Zustande, so können wir nur geringe Spuren einer solchen entdecken, verschmolzen mit Aberglauben und Zauberei. Was davon konstatiert worden ist, ließe sich am ehesten in die Klasse Ahnenkulte rechnen. Heitsi-Eibib wird angerufen, wobei man Segen erfleht. Dies geschieht besonders bei den schon oben erwähnten Grab-Steinhaufen, die sich überall finden, wo Koikoin gehaust haben. Der Vorübergehende legt auf einen solchen Stein einen grünen Zweig oder eine Blume und ruft den Heitsi-Eibib an, daß er ihm günstig sein und irgend ein irdisches Wohl, das näher bezeichnet wird (Glück auf der Jagd, Erhaltung der Gesundheit etc.) gewähren möge. Hat der Namab diese Ceremonie vernachlässigt und es trifft ihn ein Unglück, so regt sich in ihm ein böses Gewissen und treibt ihn, das Versäumte nachzuholen. Trifft ihn ein Unglück ohne solche Versäumnis, so wird er böse und schilt den Heitsi-Eibib.

Büttner, C.G., 1879 (May). The Berg-Damara. *Cape Monthly Magazine*, pp. 285-294.

p. 291, note: The Berg-Damara bow at the stone hills of the Heitsi eibib in the same manner as the Hottentots. But perhaps they only copy the Hottentots, as plenty of Herero do the same.

³ A term used in both Xhosa and Zulu. Of this Kropf & Godfrey record: “A heap of stones thrown together by travellers at certain steep and dangerous passes on a difficult, tiring journey, a small stone being added by every passerby, who says, Thixo ndincede, God help me; or siphe amandla, give us strength.”

⁴ *Ozombindi* is eintlik kliphope wat gewoonlik in poorte en op bergpasse aangetref word. Elke verbyganger gooi 'n klip of blare van die mopanie-boom (*omaso uomutati*) daarop.

Campbell, J., 1815. *Travels in South Africa. Undertaken at the Request of the Missionary Society*. London: Black, Parry & Co.

p. 82: There are several great Hottentot captains buried in the interior. When a Hottentot passes their graves, he throws a stone or branch upon it; should he neglect to do this, he thinks he shall be drowned in the first river he attempts to cross. Cupido, our Hottentot driver, having surmounted this superstition, when passing any of these graves, used quietly to get from the waggon, and scatter the branches and stones which happened to be on them and resumed his seat without a word. (Source of quotation ?)

Campbell, J., 1822. *Travels in South Africa. Being a Narrative of a Second Journey into the Interior of that Country*. 2 vols. London: Westley.

I, 217-218: (On the way to Kurreechane, Tswana area): At the summit of the Ascent we found a large heap of small stones, which had been raised by each passenger adding a stone to the heap; it was intended as a monument of respect to the memory of a king from a remote nation who was killed in the vicinity, and whose head and hands were interred in that spot.

Chapman, J., 1868. *Travels in the Interior of South Africa*. 2 vols. London: Bell.

I, 394-395: I observe that the natives here have the same custom that prevails amongst the various Kaffir and Bechuana tribes, of raising monumental piles of stones in memory of their departed chiefs. These piles, by added contributions, sometimes attain to very large proportions. The Damara graves can be easily enough distinguished when recent, there being generally a pile of bullocks' horns heaped over them, or suspended between the forks of the nearest tree. But the Namaquas and Berg-Damaras have a more peculiar custom of adding their mite of rock to a pile which they build at every crossing of a road they come to when they go out hunting. This is done to insure them luck. We find many of these conical piles all over the country, and, as nobody lies buried there, they are very probably intended to propitiate the powers that are supposed to aid the hunter. They give distinguishing names to these piles.

Crosby, O.T., 1931. Notes on Bushman and Ovambo in SWA. *Journal of the African Society* 30, 344-360.

p. 349. Question: Does a spirit of the dead sometimes come back to help or hurt the living? Answer (Bushman): Yes. Question: How do you try to stop a bad spirit from doing harm? Answer: "Doctors" take shavings of arrows or dirt from the grave of a dead man. These they mix with medicine and rub into an incision. Then they dance and sing to drive away the bad spirit. Also they will put branches of trees on his grave saying: "Help me to find veld-kos. I give you shade."

Debus, P., 1982. Leise, dann kannst du sie hören. *Afrikanischer Heimatkalender* pp. 21-28.

p. 25: Foto von Grab eines 1896 von den Deutschen erschossenen Herero-Häuptlings, mit Psalm auf Grabstein und daneben einem sehr großen Steinhäufen, der durch Besucher entstand. [Photo of a tomb of a Herero chief who was shot in 1896 by the Germans, with a psalm on the gravestone and next to it a very big pile of stones which was accumulated by visitors.]

Dornan, S.S., 1925. *Pygmies and Bushmen of the Kalahari*. London: Seeley, Service & Co.

p. 147: Thus they [the Bushmen] avoid these localities [graves] as much as possible, and if they have occasion to pass them, give them as wide a berth as possible, and often throw a small pebble on the grave, muttering at the same time some words to the spirit to ensure good luck. This is to appease the spirit lest he might resent the intrusion. Any Bushman in the hunting field if he comes suddenly on a grave either of one of his own people, or other native, will avoid stepping over it if he possibly can, and will throw a small stone upon it as above.

p. 282: (Tswana): throwing stones on graves, until a heap is formed. The old Betchuanas paid much attention to these and never passed them without adding a stone or a stick to the heap, saying at the same time “Dumela Khosi,” (Hail, chief), and asking for success in whatever enterprise they might be engaged in. This, of course, in its origin is Hottentot and Bushman.

Dundas, K.R., 1913. The Wawanga and other Tribes of the Elgon District, British East Africa. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 43, 19-75, (p. 31). Quoted in: **Willoughby**.

Du Pisani, E., 1976. Die Nama van Gibeon. ‘n Etnografiese studie met besondere verwysing na sosiaal-ekonomiese aspekte. MA thesis, Stellenbosch University. Unpublished.

p. 171: ‘n Segspersoon het ons die volgende omtrent Heiseb meegedeel: Sy oupa het hom van Heiseb vertel. Almal het hom gevrees omdat hy besondere dinge kon doen. Op een van sy omswerwinge het hy in ‘n geveg betrokke geraak en is gedood. Almal wat van sy dood verneem het, was só bly daaroor dat hulle hand geklap het. Heiseb is hierna begrawe. Hy het egter nie net een graf nie, want sy grafte is op verskeie plekke te sien. Dit word Heitsi-//khob genoem. In die verlede moes almal wat by een van sy talle grafte verbygeloop het, ‘n klip neem en dit daarop plaas. Dit is “uit vrees vir sy gees gedoen.”

Du Toit, S.J., 1959. Wat van Heitsi-eibib? *Tydskrif vir Volkskunde en Volkstaal* 14/2, 1-8. – Not available.

Estermann, Ch., 1976. *The Ethnography of Southwestern Angola*. Vol. 1: *The Non-Bantu Peoples; the Ambo Ethnic Group*. Translated and edited by Gordon D. Gibson. New York / London: Africana Publishing Co.

p. 10: Bushman funeral. Some time after the death of an adult the site of the encampment is changed. At the moment of departure the men throw green branches on the grave. They go through the same procedure if they happen to have to go near the site of burial at a later time.

Flachsberger, I., 1971. Das Glaubensleben der Namaqua von 1777 bis 1837. Ph.D. thesis Wien. Unpublished.

pp. 82-84: Heije Eibib – Steinsetzungen.

Quellen in deutscher Übersetzung: Wikar 1778/79; Thunberg 1772/79; Lichtenstein 1803/06; Campbell 1815; Thompson 1824; Alexander 1838.

pp. 124-129 – Diskussion der Quellen.

p. 124: Wikar ist der einzige Autor, der Tsoekoap mit Gräbern in Verbindung bringt.

p. 125: Erst James Edward Alexanders (1836/37) Mitteilungen bringen etwas Klarheit in diese verworrenen Überlieferungen. Er schreibt:

Es gibt zwei Arten von Gräbern

a) die gewöhnlichen Gräber (common graves), die mit einem Haufen Steine bedeckt werden, und b) die großen Steinhaufen (large heaps of stones), auf welche Büsche (bushes) geworfen werden. Unter diesen großen Steinhaufen ruht Heije Eibib, ihr großer Vater. Sein Aussehen und sein Tun sind unbekannt.

p. 125: Das Niederlegen einer Gabe, verbunden mit einer einfachen Gebetsform, ist wohl als eine kultische Handlung anzusehen. Opfer und Gebet stellen aber Hauptformen des Kultes dar. Demnach realisiert sich in dieser bescheidenen Opfer- und einfachen Gebetshandlung die einzige im gegenständlichen Zeitraum erfassbare Kultausübung im Glaubensleben der Namaquahottentotten.

p. 126: Zwei Quellen, und zwar die Berichte Thompsons und Alexanders, geben bekannt, daß diese Steinsetzungen gewaltigen Ausmaßes vorwiegend in Schluchten anzutreffen sind.

Es ist zu fragen, ob es sich hier tatsächlich um Gräber handelt; wenn ja, wer ruht darin: jeder Verstorbene, bestimmte Verstorbene, Häuptlinge, oder nur Heije Eibib oder handelt es sich bei den „Steinhaufen“ um Opferstätten oder konnte es sich, wie Vedder meint (1923), um Grenzmarken handeln.

Wann diese Steinsetzungen entstanden sind, wissen wir nicht. Immerhin sind gewisse Steinhaufen zu Opferstätten geworden. Für die gegenständlichen sechs Dezennien fehlen jegliche Hinweise dafür, daß es sich bei den Steinhaufen um Grenzmarken handeln könnte oder um errichtete Schreckzeichen für Strauße (Missionar Knudsen, 1842).

Es soll der Zeitraum 1777-1837 nicht überschritten werden, denn auch durch die späteren Autoren (Kleinschmidt, vor allem Knudsen, beide 1842) und Andersson wird die Gestalt Heije Eibib nicht wesentlich erhellt, erst Theophilus Hahn, der unter den Bethanier-Namaqua als Sohn eines Missionars aufgewachsen ist [sic!], sammelt die Heije-Eibib-Mythen und veröffentlicht sie im Jahre 1881.

p. 127: Vor 1777 liegt lediglich ein Bericht des Korporals Müller (1655) vor, der von einer Begegnung mit Hottentottenfrauen in der Nähe der False Bay spricht, die zu einem großen Stein gehen. Eine der Frauen hält einen grünen Zweig in der Hand, hält ihr Gesicht auf den Stein und spricht hierbei Worte, die wir (Müller) nicht verstehen konnten. Als wir fragten, was das bedeute, antworteten die Frauen: „Hette, hie“ und zeigten nach oben, als ob sie sagen wollten, es sei ein Opfer an Gott.

Theophilus Hahn (1881) hält „hette hie“ für eine Wortverdrehung und meint, daß es Heitsi Eibib bedeute... Es ist eher anzunehmen, daß es sich hierbei um den Ausruf der Verwunderung handelte.

p. 128: Eigenartig ist, daß uns Peter Kolb (1705/12) gar nichts über dieses Wesen zu berichten weiß. Es läßt darauf schließen, daß „Heije Eibib“ den Kaphottentotten unbekannt war.

p. 128: Mit Toten- oder Ahnenverehrung hat jedenfalls die Darbringung von Zweiglein oder Steinen an den Gräbern (Steinhaufen) nichts zu tun.

p. 129: Kurzum: Heije Eibib ist ein mythischer Vorfahre der Namaqua, der an den gewaltigen Steinsetzungen durch Darbringung von Opfer in Form eines Steines oder Zweigleins und durch Anrufung, die jedoch mehr einer Bitte gleichkommt, eine bescheidene kultische Verehrung erfährt.

Gaerdes, J., 1969 (Dez.). Neue Höhlenfunde in der Naukluft. *Mitteilungen der SWA Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft* 10/9, 3-5.

p. 5: Während unserer Fahrten stießen wir wiederholt auf einzelne im Gelände liegende kleinere geschichtete Steinhaufen, die weder Baken, noch – wegen ihrer geringen Größe – Heitsi-Eibib sein konnten; die letztgenannten sind zudem den von uns befragten örtlichen alten Nama bekannt. Wir trafen solche Steinhaufen u.a. auf den Farmen Nudaus No. 17, Lichtenberg No. 121, Sesriem No. 137, Wolwedans No. 114, alle im Bezirk Maltahöhe. Die alten Nama-Gräber dieser Gegend liegen meist bei Wasserstellen an Rivieren, wo ihr Ausheben in anliegendem Schwemmland auch mit einfachem Gerät möglich war. Solche auf Nudaus, ohne darüber geschichtete Steinhaufen, sind an ein paar aufrecht stehenden Flachklippen kenntlich...

Für unsere Fachleute gäbe es im Süden des Landes ein paar immer dringender werdende Aufgaben: einmal die Bestandaufnahme der dortigen Heitsie-Eibib, und anschließend deren Stellung

unter Denkmalschutz – wie die der Gräber von früheren Herero-ovahona, zweitens die Deutung der Nama-Ortsnamen, für die Sir James Alexander bereits 1838 in seinem “A Voyage of Discovery to the Interior of Africa“ ein Vorbild gab.

Graevenbroeck, J.W., (1695). Graevenbroeckii Elegans et accurata gentis Africanae circa Promontorium Capitis Bonae Spei vulgo Hottentotten nuncupata Descriptio epistolaris (Vertaling door Dr. J.W.G. van Oordt). In: Godée-Molsbergen, E.C., 1932. *Reizen in Zuid-Afrika in de Hollandse Tijd*. Vol. IV: *Tochten in het Kafferland 1776-1805*. Lindschoten Vereeniging 36, pp. 251-305.

IV, 288: Funeral: Het graf siert men met een hoop keisteenen en een of anderen hoogen balk als gedenkteeken. Bij de overbergschen maakt een lijkkoffer het einde der begrafnis uit. Het graf verlatende bidden zij den overledene toe dat zijn gebeente zacht moge rusten, und smeeken zij hem tevens om menschen en vee niet te schaden. Zoo dikwijls zij het graf voorbijgaan leggen zij er een takje op dat zij in de buurt geplukt hebben, of wel een bondeltje gras, en klagen zij, neergebogen, het lot van den doode.... en smeevende dat hij toch eindelijk, hun onverdiende smart met medelijden aanzierende, hen helpen zal...

Hahn, C.H. – *Carl Hugo Hahn Tagebücher 1837-1860, Diaries Part IV 1856-1860*, ed. by B. Lau. Archeia 4. Windhoek: Archives Services Division.

pp. 1032-1033: [18 July 1857] Am Nachmittag kamen [wir] an den Omumborombonga, den Urvater der Ovaherero und Ovambo. Es [ist] ein alter, vertrockneter Baum, der wahrscheinlich mehrere 100 Jahre, vielleicht 1000, alt sein mag. Die Sage von diesem Baume, aus welchem alle Menschen und Tiere heraus geboren seien, welche Sage auch die Ovambo halten, ist in früheren Berichten umständlich erzählt. Die Ovaherero halten, wenn sie ihn passieren, eine Klage, wie bei einem Langverstorbenen gebräuchlich ist. Früher opferten sie zu seinem Gedächtnis auch Vieh; aber jetzt begnügen sie und die Ovambo sich damit, einige grüne Zweige abzupflücken, den alten Baumstamm damit zu berühren, einige Worte in Form eines Gebetes herzumurmeln und sie dann am Fusse desselben niederzulegen. Die Zeremonie nennt man in Otjiherero okuyambira, das heisst etwas zum Gedächtnis jemandes, namentlich eines Verstorbenen, tun, seiner gedenken, von ihm reden. Tjizemba wollte, dass Herr Green und ich das auch tun sollten, wenigstens eine Pfeife Tabak zu Ehren des Baumes rauchen.

Hahn, Th., 1867. Die Nama-Hottentotten. *Globus* 12, 238-242; 275-279; 304-307; 332-336.

p. 275: Ein eigener Mythencyklus handelt über jene räthselhafte Persönlichkeit, dessen Gräber sich noch heute sowohl in der Capcolonie bis zum Kiskamma, als auch im ganzen Großnamalande und sogar nordöstlich hinauf bis zu den Matabele verbreitet finden. Diese Gräber selbst bilden Gruppen von 5 bis 10, oft 20 Steinhaufen, die sogar in solchen Gegenden angetroffen werden, wo auch nicht ein einziger Stein vorkommt.

Hahn, Th., 1869. Beiträge zur Kunde der Hottentotten. *Jahresberichte des Vereins für Erdkunde Dresden* 2, 1-73.

p. 8: Ausbreitungsgebiet der Hottentotten: südlich Kunene und Zambesi, dort auch die Heitsi-Eibib-Gräber, mit denen der Bantu nichts anzufangen weiß.

p. 64: zitiert Lichtenstein.

p. 65: Auch Sparmann berichtet von diesen Gräbern, die er auf seiner Reise in der südlichen Colonie gefunden hat; er weiß aber nichts Näheres über deren Zweck anzugeben. Ich selbst habe die Gräber wiederholt im Großnamalande gesehen. Außerdem kommen sie im Hereroland, im Kafirlande und in Mosilikats-Reiche vor und beweisen, wie oben schon gesagt, die ehemalige Ausbreitung der Khoikhoi in jenen Gegenden. Was Lichtenstein über die Gräber sagt, ist ganz richtig; dasselbe wird jeder Nama dem Reisenden sagen. Es sind die räthselhaften Heitsieibigräber, über welche James Alexander Folgendes sagt:

p. 65: zit. Alexander 1838 I, 166.

p. 67: Bericht von Bastard J. de Vries an Hahn: Was ich sagen hörte. Alte Lappen von Kleidern und Fellen werden auf sein Grab geworfen, Zweige von Bäumen, Holzstücke, auf daß man auf dem Wege, den man geht, Glück hat; denn die Gräber mit hohen Steinhäufen sind in den Pforten der Wege (Engpässe). Es scheint mir, daß er (Heitsi-eibib) wohl für allmächtig und für ihren Gott galt und daß ihm in der alten Namaquazeit gedient worden ist.

p. 67/68: Eggert unter Datum 30.4.1868 (Brief an Hahn?): Daß man Steine, Holz und Gras auf sein [Heitsi-eibib's] Grab wirft, geschieht ihm zur Ehre. Er soll sich darüber freuen, wenn er vom Felde, wo er Ointjes (Zwiebeln) gräbt, zurückkommt, und sieht, daß man seiner nicht vergessen hat. Giebt man ihm nur wenig Honigwasser, so wird er böse und sagt: „Ihr seid nicht gut, volle Backen begehre ich.“ Giebt man ihm, dann ist er froh und sagt: „Ihr seid gute Leute!“

Hahn, Th., 1870. Die Buschmänner: ein Beitrag zur südafrikanischen Völkerkunde. *Globus* 18, 65-68; 81-85; 102-105; 120-123; 140-143; 153-155.

pp. 140-141: Der Missionar Tindall berichtet, daß in der Nähe einer ehemaligen Missionsstation, Blyde-Uitzigt im Caplande sich ein Ort befindet, „Teufelsnacken“ genannt. Dort soll „Schwarze Majestät“, d.h. der Teufel begraben sein. (Wahrscheinlich wohl ein alter Buschmannshäuptling von besonderem Ansehen.) Damit er nicht wieder aufstehen könne, hat man um das Grab her noch eine Menge Steinhäufen errichtet. Der Buschmann, welcher den Missionär begleitete, ergriff beim Anblick dieser Steinhäufen sofort einen Stein und warf ihn darauf, mit der Bemerkung: bei der Unterlassung dieser Handlung würde sein Nacken sofort verdreht werden, so daß er für immer rückwärts schauen müßte. Zu diesen Gräbern, sagte der Sab, wallfahrten sie in Krankheitsfällen; sie flehen den Geist des Ortes unter Reibung der kranken Körpertheile um

Heilung an und rufen dabei: „îtse, îtse!“ d.h. weh, weh! Auch bei besonderen Unternehmungen begeben sich die San dahin und erleben des Geistes Beistand.

Am Suga fand Livingstone das Grab eines Buschmanns. Die begleitenden Buschmänner gaben deutlich zu verstehen, daß der Todte noch ein jenseitiges Leben habe, denn sie redeten ihn an und baten um Glück auf der Reise.

Hahn, Th., 1878 (May). The Graves of Heitsiebib. *Cape Monthly Magazine*, pp. 257-265.

p. 257: quotes article “Sparks from Kafir Anvils”, *Cape Monthly Magazine*, March 1878: In various parts of the Kafir country there are artificial heaps of stones, and a Kafir when travelling may often be seen adding one to the number. He repeats no words, but merely picks up a stone and throws it on the heap. Why does he do it? That good fortune may attend him, that he may not be carried away by the river spirit when crossing a stream, that he may find food, etc., etc. But old men have told me, when I enquired the object of this act, that it was for ‘Qamata.’ At the very outset, I must state that this peculiar superstitious act is originally not a Kafir custom, but, like many ethnological and linguistic peculiarities, has been taken over from the Hottentots.

p. 261: These Heitsi-eibega (plur. masc. obj.) I have found all over Great Namaqualand and Damaraland; and I hear from traders that they are met with even at the Okavango River and in the Lake N’Gami territory. All along the Western Kalihari I found them even at spots where no stones are to be found near at hand. They are now still to be seen at Van der Merwe’s farm Hexriver, close to Botha’s place in the Goudini, and in the neighbourhood of the Tradouw Pass.

The learned Liechtenstein on a journey with Governor Janssens in about 1804, found these Heitsi-eibib graves in the country of the !Gonaquas. He saw still fresh leaves and flowers on those graves, and his hospitable guide, the Field-cornet Rademeyer, informed him that the Hottentots throw those branches and flowers on that grave in honour and in memory of an old doctor and wise man, who is said to have lived amongst the Redmen long before the Europeans arrived in South Africa. (See Liechtenstein, German ed. I, p. 349.) The same kind of sacrifice is still at the present moment in use amongst the great Namaquas. I have myself often found fresh leaves and branches on the Heitsi-eibib graves, and often I had occasion to observe in passing such graves, how my Hottentot servants eagerly added stones to the number. When I questioned them as to the reason of their so doing, they answered: “Gâi-!o he ta ni ga,” “That I may be lucky.” They approach those heaps and throw branches and pieces of clothing and skins on it, praying to Heitsi-eibib for good luck, rain, &c., &c.

p. 262: The custom of kneeling before or on the Heitsi-eibib graves was still prevalent when the first European settled at the Cape, for Dapper in his *Description of Africa* (Amsterdam, p. 627 Germ. E.) says “that the women and children of the Hottentots kneel before erected stones.”

p. 262: Sparmann and Thunberg mention having seen these peculiar heaps on their journeys through the eastern part of the Colony. It is noteworthy that they are also found in such localities of the Hottentot territory as are desolate on account of the barrenness, and where doubtless never a Bantu man has put his foot, so that we are induced to believe that they have been raised in pre-historic times. The present Damara, or better “Herero-land” cannot tell what the object of those Heitsi-eibib graves is.

p. 264: The custom of erecting stone-heaps in honour of deities, or in memory of the deceased, especially of eminent men, is a world-wide one. Burton, on his journey to the Tanganyika, found such heaps, on which the natives used to throw stones, for the purpose of having good luck. The Kalmoucks still now-a-days construct such artificial stone-heaps in honour of their gods, and every one who passes by has to add a stone to such a heap. Travellers tell us that these heaps are to be found connected with a certain kind of worship all over China, in Central and West Asia, especially in the neighbourhood of the City of Mosha in Korassan. On the road from this city to Mishapoor is a large stone-heap, on which the inhabitants of that country in passing by, “*will throw a stone in honour of the spirit of the place.*” (Le Tour du Monde) Wilhelm von Humboldt, in his essay “Researches into the early history of the Aborigines of Spain,” says, p. 176, “*that he found large artificial stone-heaps in the province of Galicia, on which every one who passes by has to throw a stone as a kind of pious sacrifice.*” In the province Pommerania (Northern Prussia) it still happens, that people throw on certain stone-heaps (Runenhügel) leaves and branches, as they say that a murdered man lies buried under that heap.

Hahn, Th., 1881. *Tsuni-//Goam, the Supreme Being of the Khoi-Khoi*. London: Trübner.

p. 23: The most costly present lovers could lavish on each other was buxu, and these sweet aromatic herbs of a certain Diosma were also sprinkled on those cairns which still are objects of worship, and where they assembled to offer prayers to the deceased or to the Supreme Being Tsûi//goab.

p. 36: Corporal Müller, travelling with the Hottentot interpreter Harry along the False Bay, east of the Cape, in October, 1655, says: “We were marching generally in a S.E. direction; after marching half an hour one morning we saw a strange proceeding of the Hottentot women on the side of our path, where a great stone lay. Each woman had a green branch in her hand, laid down upon her face on the stone, and spoke words, which we did not understand; on asking what it meant, they said, ‘Hette hie,’ and pointed above, as if they would say, ‘It is an offering to God.’” – (“Sutherland Memoir respecting the Kaffers, Hottentots, and Bosjesmans,” vol. ii. p. 88.)

As will be seen from the sequel of this chapter, the word “Hette hie” is only a distortion of “Heitsi-eibib,” and the form of worship, described here at the cairn, is nothing else but the Heitsi-eibib worship, as it is practiced still up to this day all over Great Namaqualand and in

!Koranaland, where Heitsi-eibib has changed names, and the worship is offered to /Garubeb or Tsûi//goab.

p. 45: quotes Thunberg.

p. 46: quotes Sparrmann.

p. 53: quotes Alexander 1838.

p. 56: quotes Knudsen: "Heitsi-eibib died several times and came to life again. When the Hottentots pass one of his graves, they throw a stone on it for good luck."

p. 69: Heitsi-eibib's Graves: His graves are generally to be met with in narrow passes, between two mountains, on both sides of the road. Those who pass by throw pieces of their clothes, or skins, or dung of the zebra, or flowers, or twigs of shrubs and branches of trees, and stones, on those graves. And this they do to be successful on their way. They generally, if hunting mutter the following prayer:

Oh, Heitsi-eibib,
Thou, our Grandfather,
Let me be lucky,
Give me game,
Let me find honey and roots,
That I may bless thee again,
Art thou not our Great-grandfather?
Thou Heitsi-eibib!

Sometimes honey and honey-beer is left as an offering at his graves. The Namaquas say that if he returns from his walks over the *veldt*, in the evening, he is glad to see that they still honour him. He gives the Khoikhoi good advice, and tells them how to kill the Lion's children and other wild animals. He also prevents danger befalling men, if they honour him.

Hahn, Th., (1905). *Collectanea Hottentotica*. MS in Public Library Johannesburg.

p. 43: Was bedeutet !goreb (!go), warum pflegte man als Opfer auf Heitsi-eibibgräber gerade Mist des Zebra zu werfen und nicht auch von Rindern und sonstigem Wild?

p. 120: !Goreb Zebra. Why is just, besides pieces of clothing, and branches of wood, trees and shrubs – Zebra dung thrown on the mounds (graves) of Heitsi-eibib. What has he to do with Heitsi-eibeb the Dawn-God. Are the Zebras the swift runners, !goregu analogous to the Asvins of the Veda? Do the black long beautiful and white stripes of the Zebra skin have a symbolical meaning with regard to the beams of light, Morgenstrahlen of the Dawn.

p. 50: About two miles from our camp there was a long flat granite rock etc. etc. and we were told that it is a lucksign, which they do on undertaking a journey to ensure them from danger by the way. Theodor Bent: *The ruined cities of Mashonaland*. London 1893, new ed. pg. 83.

Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens Vol. 8, 1937, ed. by H. Bächtold-Stäubli / E. Hoffmann-Krayer. Reprint Berlin / New York: de Gruyter, 1987.

Olbrich: 406-413: Steinhäufen, Steinopfer, Steinwerfen.

The article documents an immense amount of examples from German speaking areas relating to heaps of stones, sacrifice of stones, stone throwing. Particularly in eastern parts of Germany there are (were) heaps of stones to which each passer-by added a stone at places where somebody was murdered or killed in an accident. In Roman Catholic western and southern Germany these heathen customs were substituted by “Marterln” (wayside shrines with a crucifix). – Stones were thrown at graves of dead whose return people feared (murderer, robber). – Throwing stones as sacrifice to supernatural beings, e.g. “Auf dem Steige zur Zerzeralp (bei Burgeis im Vintschgau) heißt ein Platz ‘Zu den wilden Fräulein’. Dort befindet sich ein Steinhäufen. Kinder, die zum erstenmal auf die Alp gehen, müssen hier Steine aufheben, sie anspucken und mit den Worten: “Ich opfere, opfere dem wilden Fräulein” auf den Häufen werfen. Wer es unterläßt, setzt sich großer Gefahr aus.” (410). - Here are the same elements of the African ritual: heaps of stones at the roadside, people, particularly those who pass for the first time, have to offer, spittle on stone as part of the person, short prayer, threat of misfortune if not carried out.

Henrichsen, Dag, 2011. *Herrschaft und Alltag im vorkolonialen Zentralnamibia. Das Herero- und Damaraland im 19. Jahrhundert.* Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliographien / Windhoek: Namibia Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft.

p. 10: Obgleich Herero Weidegebiete optisch mit Hilfe von Steinhäufen markierten, die zugleich Schutzzeichen gegen Viehraub darstellten⁵, mussten Siedlungs- bzw. Nutzungsansprüche mit weiteren Legitimationen untermauert werden.

Herrmann, F., 1961. *Symbolik in den Religionen der Naturvölker.* Reihe: Symbolik der Religionen Bd. 9. Stuttgart: Hiersemann.

p. 207: (Kabylen, keine nähere Quellenangabe): Noch weiter entfernte man die Leichen jener Männer, die bei der Jagd erlagen, über die also die Rache des Tieres gekommen war. Sie wurden meistens am Ort ihres Unglücks, mit Lederriemen gefesselt und zu einem Bündel verschnürt, an einen Steinfeiler oder Baumstamm gebunden. Neben sie legte man ihr Horn und schaffte dann so viel Steine bei, daß ein Hügel entstand, der die Säule und sie völlig verdeckte. Jeder Teilnehmer warf schließlich beim Weggehen – ohne sich umzusehen – einen Stein über die Schulter auf den Häufen, auf den später auch jeder Vorübergehende einen Stein zu werfen pflegte.

⁵ AVEM 2.613, Beilage IV., I.2, J. Irle: „Welche heidnische Sitten und Gebräuche haben unsere Getauften aus dem Heidentum mitherüber ins Christentum genommen?“, 1886. (AVEM = Archiv der Vereinigten Evangelischen Mission 2.613 Missionskonferenzen im Damaraland).

Hoernlé, W. (1912, 1913, 1922-23). Carstens, P. /Klinghardt, G. /West, M. (eds.), 1987. *Trails in the Thirstland. The Anthropological Field Diaries of Winifred Hoernlé*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town, Centre for African Studies, Communications No 14.

p. 113: Spent morning E. of Klein Windhoek looking at Heitsi Eibib graves. Took 3 photos. One was in excellent condition and had sticks recently thrown on, i.e. within last six years.

p. 118: The present-day natives explain the Heitsi-//o to themselves often as the graves of people of the olden times. (33)

p. 121: Spent the afternoon with Hannah and Cornelia rather unprofitably until we got to Feldkost ... No stone is laid on the spot where these fruits have been found. (I had an idea perhaps the Heitsi Eibib graves were started so). Their own idea of Heitsi Eibib graves is that there are people buried there. Some of the women have never seen one at all.

p. 164, note 33: "Heitsi-/o" is probably another term for "Heitsi Eibib", a mythological figure associated with large mounds of stones which people would add to with a greeting when passing by.

Hunger, H., 1981. *Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*. Reinbek: Rowohlt.

p. 176: Hermes. Die Etymologie des Namens H. führt auf das griech. hermax und hermaion = Steinhäufen. Dem H. waren die in aller Welt verbreiteten, in Hellas offenbar sehr beliebten Steinhäufen heilig, die der Orientierung des Wanderers dienten (vgl. die Steinmandln in unseren Alpen!) und sich dadurch vergrößerten, daß vorübergehende Wanderer einen neuen Stein dazulegten.

Hunter, M., 1961. *Reaction to Conquest. Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*. London: Oxford University Press.

pp. 270-271: *Isivivane*. All through Pondoland there are cairns of stones called *isivivane*. Passers-by used to pick up a stone, spit on it, and say as they placed it on the pile, 'Isivivane give me strength and health', or 'Look upon me God (Thixo) of our people. I ask strength of you, you God who created us in the earth. Look upon us. Give us to eat.' No one ever went specially to a cairn to place stones, but they never passed without putting one on. It gave them strength for a journey, and strength to walk. They would place a stone even if they came across a cairn in a foreign country. There is no tradition as to how the piles of stones originated. The cairns are found all through Xhosa and Pondo country, and Callaway speaks of them in Zululand. (1: Callaway, *Religious System of the AmaZulu*, p. 105; H. Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa, 1803-6*, p. 254). The custom seems to have no connexion with any other custom of the Pondo, and has now completely died out.

Huntingford, G.W.B., 1953. *The Southern Nilo-Hamites. Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, ed. by Daryll Forde. East Central Africa, Part VIII. London: International African Institute.

p. 90: (The Suk) Cairns. In all the tribes living in the hills above the escarpment, says Dundas, there are to be found stone mounds, some of which are graves, others memorials to those who met violent deaths. Others again mark the spots where lightning or meteorites have fallen. (Dundas, Hon. K.R.: Notes on the tribes inhabiting the Baringo district. *Journal of the Royal African Institute* XL, pp. 49-72).

p. 126: (Masai). The bodies of laibons and rich men are buried in shallow graves under stone cairns; anybody passing a cairn is supposed to throw a stone on it. Cairns attributed to the Masai exist in Nandi, where they are said to be the graves of men killed in battle.

Jeffreys, M.D., 1968. *Some Semitic Influences in Hottentot Culture*. Johannesburg.

p. 19: It was a common practice of the Hottentots to raise cairns of stones and to refer to them as graves of their cult hero, Heitsi Eibib. Much the same practice was recorded by Ibn Jubaya in his travels in Arabia in A.D. 1183-85. In Broadhurst's (1952, pp. 160-161) translation, one reads of roadside cairns of stones created by passing travellers.

Jenness, D., 1955, Canadian Indian Religion. *Anthropologica* 1, 1-17.

p. 4: Before attempting to run a dangerous rapid, or to cross a perilous defile in the mountains, the Indians would throw a little tobacco into the water, or add a stick to a pile already raised by previous travellers, in the hope that the supernatural power dwelling in the neighbourhood (fairy, if you wish to give it that name) would grant them safe passage.

Karow, M., 1909. *Wo sonst der Fuß des Kriegers trat. Farmerleben in Südwest nach dem Kriege*. Berlin: Mittler.

p. 71: Seitwärts vom Wege (auf der Fahrt zur Farm) lag ein größerer Steinhaufen, ein Heitseeibeb-Grab, dem jeder vorübergehende heidnische Bergdamara opfernd einen Stein hinzufügt, damit der gute Gott ihn vor Krankheiten und Unglück bewahre und ihm alles nur Wünschenswerte zuwenden solle. Zwischen den Steinen lugten neugierig die ... Eidechsen...

Tafel 22, vor S. 161 ist Foto von Steinhaufen „mit opferndem Bergdamara“.

p. 159: Der Religionsbegriff der heidnischen Bergdamara ist ein ziemlich unklarer. Sie glauben an einen Gott, „Heitseeiseb“, auch „Heitseeibeb“ genannt, der sie straft oder belohnt. Im ganzen Lande sind die „Heitseeiseb“-Gräber (Steinhaufen) aufgeworfen, unter denen ihr Gott angeblich wohnen soll. Um ihm zu opfern, wirft jeder heidnische Bergdamara einen neuen Stein hinzu, damit der gute Gott „Heitseeibeb“ alles Böse von ihm abwende und ihm dafür viel Gutes

zuteil werden lasse. Anderen genügten Amulette aus Raubtierzähnen, kleinen Knochen u.a., die sie gegen Seuchen oder angehexte, tückische Krankheiten feien sollten.

Kinahan, J., 1984 (Feb.). Mapping the Hungorob Entrance Complex. *Mitteilungen der SWA Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft* 24/2, 1-3.

p. 1: Low stone cairns, sometimes known as *haitse aibeb* mounds, have been found at the entrances of many of the ravines that drain from the Brandberg massif in Western Damaraland. It is commonly believed that these cairns mark the routes of frequent travel by indigenous people in both prehistoric and modern times. This explanation seems quite reasonable, for the Brandberg ravines provide the easiest access routes to the waterholes at the top of the mountain. One of the largest of such cairns is at the foot of the Hungorob ravine on the south-western side of the mountain.

Kling, H., 1932. *Onder die Kindere van Cham*. Kaapstad et al.: Nasionale Pers.

p. 11: Laat my nou kortliks melding maak van die Heitsi Eibib, d.i. geheimsinnige, hoë steenhope en ander klipvertonings. Begrafnisplekke is dit nie, want ek het twee of drie daarvan ondersoek en geen spoor van bene daarin gevind nie. Die Heitsi Eibibs is puur en simpel landbakens van die verskillende Boesmankapteins opgerig. Boesmans, wat daar verbygaan, eer die kaptein deur 'n klein offer te bring, al is dit deur slegs 'n takkie van 'n bos op die bakens te gooi. Daar is Heitsi Eibibs op 'n berg of uitgestrektheid van land, wat vandag nog in Boesmanland die naam van ou kapteins of hoofde dra, plekke soos Naib-Kabib, en so meer.

Krenz, F.K., 1970 (Jan.-Feb.). Heitse-Eibeb-Gräber. *Mitteilungen der SWA Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft* 10/10-11, 2.

Bezieht sich auf J. Gaerdes in Mitteilungen der *SWA Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft* Dez. 1969: Herrn Gaerdes Bemühungen brachten ein Skelett zutage. Da Herr Gaerdes erwähnt, dass dieses Felsengrab sich fern „von alten Fusswegen“ befand, so kann es sich nicht um ein „Heiseb“ (Damaqua)-grab handeln, denn „Heisén“ werden fast meistens an seit Urzeiten begangenen, wenn auch in Vergessenheit geratenen, Bergpfaden und Pässen gefunden. In dem von mir bekannten Kaokoveld-Gelände gibt es kaum namhafte Bergpässe und Pforten ohne Heisé-Mäler... Ein alter Passweg nach Franzfontein ist gekrönt von einer sehr markanten Spitzkuppe, bekannt unter den sesshaften Nama und Dama als der „#Go-dana Heisé“, also der „spitzköpfige Heisé“... Ich kann mich an einen Passübergang in meiner Jugend entsinnen. Wir waren 3 Berittene nebst einem alten hartgesottenen Bergdama-Führer; sobald wir uns „Heisén-gräbern“ näherten, verschwand er stillschweigend von der Spitze. Ich beobachtete ihn, wie er an jeden Steinhaufen wie ohne Absicht einen Stein hinzulegte. Als ich ihn daraufhin ansprach, gab er nur ein kurzes „Hin ta ra /aus“, d.h. „alte Sitte“ zur Antwort.

In diesem Zusammenhang ist es vielleicht interessant, das immer wieder sehr lesenswerte Buch „Seven Pillars of Wisdom“ von T.E. Lawrence zu lesen. Von einem seiner vielen Ritte (um nicht aufzufallen, meist nur mit einem Begleiter) durch unwirtliches und unsicheres Gelände, schreibt er (dieses Mal auf dem Weg zum Lager des Emir Feizal): “The neck was strong but brief: on each side the blue lava humped itself into low shoulders, from which, so Tabas (Begleiter und Führer) said it was possible to see ships sailing on the sea.... Pilgrims had built cairns here by the road. Sometimes they were individual piles of just three stones, set up one above the other; sometimes they were common heaps, to which any disposed passer-by might add his stone – not reasonably nor with known motion but because others did, and perhaps they knew”. Sehr treffend ausgedrückt: Nicht aus ersichtlichen Gründen, sondern weil Andere es vor ihnen taten. Vielleicht eine bewusste Ehren- und Dankesbezeugung an den Berggeist, den „Heiséb“, der dem Wanderer auf beschwerlichem Wege bisher geholfen hatte und die Bitte um weiteres sicheres Geleit. Es sollte interessant und lehrreich sein, an Hand von Vorkommen und Verbreitung der „Heitsi-Eibi“ Gräber, über ganz Afrika bis Arabien, Vorgeschichte und Wanderung der Khoi-Khoin-Saan zu verfolgen. Wahrscheinlich wird sich dabei herausstellen, dass sich diese Stein-Mäler bis ins Innere Asiens erstrecken.

Krönlein, J.G, 1889. *Wortschatz der Khoi-Khoin (Namaqua-Hottentotten)*. Berlin: Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft.

p. 161: Sogenannte Heitsi-eibebgräber findet man öfters beim Eingang in tiefe und enge Bergschluchten rechts und links. Auf sie warfen die Khoi-khoin Kleinigkeiten, wie Holz, Steine oder Lappen als Opfer mit der Bitte, dass Heitsi-eibeb sie vor Uebel bewahren möge.

Ku’eep, 1857 (June). *Sketches and Recollections of Great Namaqualand. Cape Monthly Magazine*.

p. 367: All over the country you may find large heaps of stones, mingled with bits of wood: these are called Hydie Ibib’s heaps, and every Bushman, when he passes, throws his offering on the top, either a stone, a piece of wood, a broken arrow, or a rag, and says, “Give me success in hunting” or whatever his wish may be for the time being.

Küppers, G.A., 1976. Sinndeute der “Sieben Trappen”. *Heimatland* 1976/3, 137-141.

p. 140: Die Insel Gotland ist noch heute ein reiches Freilichtmuseum mit seinen in der Feldmark stehenden Denk- und Sühnesteinen, mit seinen Steinringen und Bannkreisen um Steinkistengräber, mit seinen Steinhügeln, entstanden aus zusammengeworfenen Steinen Vorübergehender.

Kuhlmann, E., 1930. Zur Psychologie des Glaubenslebens unserer afrikanischen Christen. *Berichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft 1930*, 52-60 (Herero).

p. 58: Die nicht zu einem christlichen Symbol auf demselben [Grab] zusammengelegten Steinchen, Erdklümpchen und Zweige werden stets von einem „Gruß“ der Verwandten an den Toten zeugen und damit von einer heidnisch-religiösen Handlung. Ihr Zweck ist, den Geist des Verstorbenen bei guter Laune zu erhalten, damit er nicht die Seele des Lebenden in sein finsternes Totenreich holt.

p. 59: Ein Christ empfand auf einer Reise durchs Feld plötzlich große Schmerzen. Sein Begleiter erkannte gleich die Ursache, er wandte sich mit den Worten an ihn: „Das kommt daher, daß Du keine Erde auf das Grab Deines Vaters, an dem wir soeben vorbeikamen, geworfen hast.“

Lebzelter, V., 1934. *Eingeborenenkulturen in Südwest- und Südafrika. Wissenschaftliche Ergebnisse einer Forschungsreise nach Süd- und Südwestafrika in den Jahren 1926-1928*. Leipzig: Hiersemann.

p. 165: Heisebgräber.

Die im Volksmunde als Heisebgräber (*/Heiseb //ko//ko won*) bezeichneten Steinhäufen haben verschiedenen Ursprung. Zum Teil sind es Opferstellen, manchmal aber auch wirkliche Gräber. Man warf auch Steine auf die Gräber von Männern, die sich im Guten oder auch im Bösen hervorgetan hatten. Besonders aber warf man auf die Gräber von Mördern Steine, wenn man daran vorüberging. Die eigentlichen „Heisebgräber“ sind aber nach den Angaben meiner Gewährsmänner ursprünglich Opferstellen gewesen. Dem Heiseb legte man die Erstlinge der Feldkost als Opfer hin, weil Heiseb das Recht darauf hat. Und so brachten alle Leute die Erstlinge an einer Stelle zusammen. Wer aber auf eine Reise ging, der opferte etwas, um ohne Gefahr ans Ziel zu gelangen. Man legte Lebensmittel oder Steine hin. Die Steine bleiben natürlich im Laufe der Jahre übrig. Und je mehr die alten Sitten abnahmen, um so öfter legte man statt wertvoller Dinge Steine an diese Stellen. Aber auch heute ruft man bei dieser Gelegenheit Heiseb mit den Worten an: „!gai!oxa !gunsa /kai te re“ (gib mir einen glücklichen Weg!). Wer an einem Heisebgrab vorbeigeht, ohne etwas zu tun, dem spielt Heiseb einen Schabernack (Windhuk).

Wenn man eine Reise machte, mußte man sich zu einem Heisebgrab begeben und dort etwas hinlegen. Auch bei der Heimkehr von der Jagd und Feldkostsammeln wurde einiges bei den Heisebgräbern geopfert (Okombahe).

Lichtenstein, H., 1967. *Reisen im südlichen Afrika in den Jahren 1803, 1804, 1805 und 1806*. 2 vols. Stuttgart: Brockhaus (Original edition 1811-12).

I, 349: Gonaaqua: Der wohlunterrichtete Rademeier, der uns eine Strecke als Wegweiser zu begleiten sich erboten hatte, zeigte uns auf dem fernern Wege nahe an der Straße das Grabmal eines Hottentotten, der nach der Sage dieses Volks, lange bevor Christen in diese Gegenden einwanderten, unter ihnen als Arzt und Weiser gegolten und dessen Andenken noch jetzt durch

die Sitte geehrt war, daß jeder vorübergehende Hottentott einen frischen Blumenzweig auf das Grab wirft. Wir fanden deren in der That noch mehrere, die kaum vor einigen Tagen hingestreut zu sein schienen. Uebrigends bestand das Grabmal aus einem roh aufgehäuften Hügel von mäßigen Kieseln, der aber wohl ein zwanzig bis dreißig Schritt im Umfang haben mochte. Interessant ist dieser, von den früheren Reisenden unbeachtet gebliebene Umstand, als Beweis von der höhern Cultur, auf welcher schon damals der Stamm der Gonaaquas, denn zu ihrem Gebiete gehörte das Land, vor den übrigen Hottentotten gestanden. Wir fanden in der Folge noch oft solche Grabmäler gegen die Grenzen des Kafferlandes hin, nie aber ist mir etwas ähnliches in den übrigen Landstrichen des südlichen Africa zu Gesicht gekommen. Allen Hottentottenstämmen ist die Sitte gemein, daß sie ihre Todten sorgfältig und tief verscharren, ja die meisten begnügen sich nicht, den Leichnam auf den Boden des Grabes zu legen, sondern scharren mit Mühe in dem Grunde desselben noch eine Seitenhöhle, eine Art von Stollen, die sie, wenn die Leiche hineingelegt ist, mit Büschen und Strauchwerk verschließen, und um den Raubthieren eine jede Verletzung des Grabes zu wehren, belasten sie es mit einer Schicht von Steinen; aber das Andenken des Verstorbenen ist erloschen, ehe noch das Gras zwischen den Steinen wieder aufkeimt. Es ist daher billig, daß man der dankbareren Gonaaquas, die das Verdienst noch nach halben Jahrhunderten ehren, auszeichnend erwähne.

I, 411-412: Xhosa: Es gibt Stellen, an welchen Niemand vorüber gehen darf, ohne einen Stein, einen Zweig oder eine Handvoll Gras darauf zu werfen. Sie wissen den Grund davon nicht anzugeben; wahrscheinlich aber sind es Gräber verdienter Personen, deren Leichen der fromme Aberglaube vor dem Ausscharren der wilden Thiere bewahren will, indem er jedem Vorübergehenden gebietet, den Grabhügel durch das Hinzuwerfen von Steinen und Sträuchern zu erhöhen. Daß bei den Gonaaqua-Hottentotten dieselbe Sitte herrsche und daß diese die Bedeutung derselben noch kennen, ist oben (S. 229) erwähnt.

582: Noch ehe es dunkel geworden war, passirten wir eine kleine Berg-Enge, die *de Israëlitische Kloof* genannt wird. Hier finden sich mehrere große Grabhügel von Hottentotten, die aus Kieseln angehäuft sind und von denen die ersten Colonisten, die diese Gegend bevölkerten, in frommer Einfalt annahmen, es seien Denkmäler von den Kindern Israels, die auf ihrem Zuge durch die Wüste hier durchgekommen wären.

Mitteilungen der SWA Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft (MSWAWG)

Boerger, A.W., 1970 (Juli). Heitse-Eibeb-Gräber im Innern Asiens? *MSWAWG*.

11/4, 6.

Gaerdes, J., 1969 (Dez.). Neue Höhlenfunde in der Naukluft. *MSWAWG* 10/9, 3-5.

Kinahan, J., 1984 (Feb.). Mapping the Hungorob Entrance Complex. *MSWAWG*

24/2, 1-3.

Krenz, F.K., 1970 (Jan.-Feb.). Heitse-Eibeb-Gräber. *MSWAWG* 10/10-11, 2.

Schmidt, S., 1970 (Mai). Zur Frage der Heitsi-Eibeb-Gräber. *MSWAWG* 11/2, 2-3.

Viereck, A., 1970 (Juli). Was sind Heitse-Eibeb-Gräber? *MSWAWG* 11/4, 5-6.

Müller, Corporal (1655) – quoted in Hahn 1881, 36.

Olpp, J., 1876. Zur Charakteristik der Namas (Namaquas). *Berichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft*, 71-82.

p. 74: Das einzige, was sich bei ihnen an religiösen Gebräuchen findet, ist eine Art Ahnenverehrung. Dieser Dienst ist aber so erbärmlich, daß er weder Zeit noch Mühe noch Geld kostet. Gelegentlich, wenn man gerade an dem Grabhügel des Ahnen vorbei geht, bereichert man ihn mit einem Steinchen, Lappen, Hölzchen und bittet dabei zugleich „den Alten“ um viel Kinder und Vieh. (Grab? Heitsi-eibeb?)

Otto, A., 1983. Feste, Farben und Fahnen der Herero und Mbanderu in Südwestafrika. *SWA Annual*, pp. 49-54.

p. 53. Foto Grabstätte Kahimemua ... in Okahandja, zu dessen Ehren das Kahimemua-Fest gefeiert wird. Daneben großer Steinhäufen. Vgl. Texte, auch Nikodemusfest der Mbanderu (*SWA Annual* 1979, 127-129) wo beschrieben ist, daß jeder Teilnehmer Stein auf Steinhäufen wirft.

Pechuël-Loesche, E., 1907. *Die Loango-Expedition*. Dritte Abteilung, Zweite Hälfte. Stuttgart: Strecker & Schröder.

p. 234: (Bei gewissen Schwurzeremonien wurden drei- und vierarmige Speichenkreuze auf die Erde gemalt. P.L. machte ähnliche Zeichen auf den Weg und beobachtete Reaktion.) Das auf einem viel belaufenen Pfade eingerissene Kreiskreuz blieb während des ganzen Tages unberührt. Die Passanten drängten sich seitlich längs des hohen Grases vorüber und liessen an der Stelle vielerlei Blätter und Halmstückchen fallen. Das sollte bedeuten: ich denke daran... Das Hinwerfen von Merkzeichen an solchen Stellen hängt mit einem anderen Brauche zusammen, der geübt wird, nachdem es gelungen ist, einen ernsthaften Streit zwischen Erdschaften in Güte zu schlichten. Falls man nicht einen Merkpfosten setzt, kubanda macht, wird ein Feindschaftsbegraben gefeiert. Die ganze Angelegenheit wird sinnbildlich unter allerlei Zauber in einen Topf oder Korb getan, und dieser auf einem Mpambu (Weggabelung oder –kreuzung) der Erde anvertraut. Damit ist die ganze Geschichte endgültig abgetan. Alle dabei Gewesenen nebst Anhang pflegen beim Passieren etwas Grünes hinzuwerfen, was auch andere mittun, da es nicht schaden kann. *Vielleicht verwendeten die Leute Steine oder Zweige, wie bei uns daheim vielfach an einem sogenannten Mordfleck* (Markierung S.Sch.), wenn die allenthalben zur Hand wären.

Ray, V.F., 1933. Sanpoil Folk Tales. *Journal of American Folklore* 46, 129-187.

p. 172: (End of a tale): The girl agreed and started to get up but she couldn't move. She had turned to stone. The stone is still there to this day, shaped just as she was sitting. (Note: Ever since that time when a traveller has passed this stone, (called xi'xi in Chinook jargon), he has left a piece of cloth, hair, money or some such thing to insure good luck on his trip.)

Rust, F., 1928. Haben die Hottentotten Opfer gekannt? *Neue Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift* 5, 301-313.

p. 311: Jetzt wird ihnen (den Leuten beim [Toten]Mahl) dann von den Werftältesten gesagt, sie könnten nun wieder ausgehen, auf die Jagd oder zum Einsammeln der Feldzwiebeln, sie würden jetzt Glück haben. Und wenn sie gehen, dann müssen sie einen biegsamen Zweig des Rosinenbusches und etwas Blüthengras nehmen und müssen es aufs Grab legen, dann können sie auf Jagd- und Feldkostwege gehen.

Schapera, I., 1930. *The Khoisan Peoples of South Africa. Bushmen and Hottentots*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

pp. 384-385: His [Heitsi Eibib's] "graves" are found all over the country, in the Cape Colony as well as in South-West Africa, generally in narrow mountain passes on both sides of the road. Natives passing these graves, which consist of great heaps of stones piled up high, throw pieces of their clothing, or skins, or dung of the zebra, or twigs of shrubs and branches of trees, as well as stones, on the heap. This they do, says Hahn, to be successful on their way; and they generally, if hunting, mutter the following prayer:

O Heitsi Eibib,
Thou, our Grandfather,
Let me be lucky,
Give me game,
Let me find honey and roots,
That I may bless thee again,
Art thou not our Great-grandfather?
Thou Heitsi-eibib.

Sometimes more substantial offerings of honey and honey beer are left at his graves. The Nama say that when he returns in the evening from his walks in the veld he is glad to see that they thus honour him.

Schmelen, H. (1815). Diary MS (Library of the London School of Oriental and African Studies). Parts edited: Schmidt, S., 1979. Auszüge aus dem Tagebuch 1815/1816 des Missionars Heinrich Schmelen in Bethanien. *Namibiana* 1/3, 53-68.

p. 58: (cf. Noah's Ark). At last the great dish stopped on a high mountain, and from thence all the people went out into the country. One man who had been preserved in the dish was called

Haicikooip, he and his people came to the Namaqualand and travelled about in the country as they do till they died, but their graves are, as they suppose yet to be seen. Every time they pass such a grave they will tacked a few stones and a few sticks and cast them at it as a token of love, and say that he might preserve them from death. Sometimes they will say. Give me an abundance of cattle sheep and goats.

Schmidt, S., 1970 (Mai). Zur Frage der Heitsi-Eibeb-Gräber. *Mitteilungen der SWA Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft* 11/2, 2-3.

p. 2: Dass es auch außerhalb Südwests solche „Gräber“ gibt, ist seit langem bekannt; Autoritäten wie H. Baumann und W. Hirschberg geben da auch weitere Beispiele. M.E. gibt es aber auch in Europa dazu Parallelen (oder Zusammenhänge?), die noch keiner beachtet hat. Hier zwei Auszüge aus deutschen Sagen:

K. Müllenhoff: *Märchen, Sagen, Lieder aus Schleswig-Holstein*. Kiel 1845, Nr. 382:

Die Ofensteine bei Alversdorf: Zu Oster-Alversdorf in Süderdithmarschen liegt ein Stück Ackers, von alters her Brutkamp genannt, auf welchem in der Mitte sich ein kleines Gehölz befindet um einen Hügel. Darin ist eine Kuhle, die von fünf großen Steinen gebildet wird; einer liegt oben darüber. Man kann auf der westlichen Seite hineinkriechen, und ein Mann kann vollkommen darin stehen. Dieser Stein heißt der Abenstein, d.i. Ofenstein. Vorzeiten haben die Unterirdischen darin gewohnt. Darum musste jeder, der vorüberging, entweder jedesmal oder zum wenigstens doch das erstemal etwas da zurücklassen, wenn es auch nur ein Bändchen oder ein Senkel wäre. Jedem, der einen Sechsling in die Höhle opferte, soll, wenn er eine Strecke vorwärts gegangen, immer ein kleines Brot vor die Füße gelegt sein.

A. Haas: *Rügensche Sagen und Märchen*, Leipzig 1859, Nr. 22.

Der Spuk beim Sprockenkreuz: Auf dem Wege von Hoekendorf nach Kolow (Krs. Greifenhagen) liegt ein Platz, welcher das Sprockenkreuz genannt wird. An der Stelle ist vor vielen Jahren einmal jemand erschlagen worden, und seit der Zeit pflegt jeder Vorübergehende – wenigstens war es früher allgemein Brauch – einen Strauch darauf zu legen; daher kommt es, dass man in der Regel einen ansehnlichen Reisighaufen auf der Stelle erblickt.

Beide Zitate aus Gustav Neckel: *Sagen aus dem germanischen Altertum*. Deutsche Literatur, Sammlung literarischer Kunst- und Kulturdenkmäler in Entwicklungsreihen. Reihe deutsche Sagen Band 1. Darmstadt 1964.

In der ersten Sage handelt es sich offensichtlich um ein Hünengrab, die zweite Sage betont noch mehr, dass es sich um einen mit einem Toten zusammenhängenden Platz handelt. Die zweite Sage meldet nur, dass es eben Brauch sei, etwas an der Mordstelle niederzulegen, die zweite erzählt deutlich, dass man dann für sein kleines Opfer einen Vorteil erringt. Beides passt genau

mit den Opfern an den Südwest-Heitsi-eibib-Gräbern zusammen. Denn man legte dort etwas nieder, um Glück auf der Reise zu haben oder auf der Jagd, zu der man unterwegs war. Aber es wurden auch Gebete und andere Wünsche geäußert. (Alexander: „Give us plenty cattle.“) Th. Hahn (Tsun-i-Goam, the Supreme Being of the Khoi-khoi. London 1881, S. 69) gibt folgendes Gebet:

Oh, Heitsi-eibib,
Thou, our Grandfather,
Let me be lucky,
Give me game,
Let me find honey and roots,
That I may bless thee again,
Art thou not our Great-grandfather?
Thou Heitsi-eibib.

Das wurde an den Heitsi-Eibib-Gräbern gesprochen. Bei Hahn und den Aufzeichnungen des 19. Jahrhunderts geht auch klar hervor, dass man nicht nur Steine dort niederlegte, sondern auch Fetzen von der Kleidung und Zweige.

Es wäre also zu untersuchen, ob die Sitte der Heitsi-Eibib-Gräber nicht in eine sehr frühe Zeit zurückgeht und auf eine Gegend, die dann Ausstrahlungen nach verschiedenen Erdteilen hatte. Vielleicht mit der Verbreitung von Rindviehzucht? Oder der Metallverarbeitung? Oder ??? Vielleicht haben wir in den Heitsi-Eibib-Gräbern noch deutliche Überlieferungen von Vorstellungen, die einst auch bei unseren Vorfahren verbreitet, inzwischen aber vergessen sind. Das sind nur Gedanken, die mir kamen, als ich auf die Beispiele unter den deutschen Sagen stieß. Das zu untersuchen möchte ich einem andern überlassen. Vielleicht ist dies aber dazu Anregung.

Schultze, L., 1907. *Aus Namaland und Kalahari. Bericht an die Kgl. Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin über eine Forschungsreise im westlichen und zentralen Südafrika, ausgeführt in den Jahren 1903-1905.* Jena: Fischer.

p. 317: Alle Angehörigen und Freunde bis zu den kleinsten Kindern, die sonst noch zu keiner Arbeit angehalten werden, helfen das Grab schließen. Wie wir Blumen niederlegen, so streuen sie wohlriechendes Buchupulver auf den Hügel.

Wer nach langer Abwesenheit zum Grabe zurückkommt, legt einen Stein oder ein Holzsplitter oder einen Zweig dort nieder. Das gleiche tut jeder, der in den Ort kommt und einen Freund nicht mehr am Leben findet, als Symbol dafür, daß auch er ihn mit bestattet hat.

Smith, A.: Kirby, P.R., (ed.), 1939, 1940. *The Diary of Dr. Andrew Smith, Director of the "Expedition for Exploring Central Africa" 1834-1836.* Vols. I and II. Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society 20, 21.

II, 230: When the Baquans (Bakwena) go on a journey, in order to ensure food for the men whither they go they take a stone and lay it on the road, or on one side of the road, and sometimes they place a portion of a twig under it.

Lye, W.F. (ed.), 1975. *Andrew Smith's Journal of his Expedition into the Interior of South Africa 1834-36*. Published for the South African Museum by A.A. Balkema, Cape Town.

pp. 46-47: (Caledon River). In the vicinity of one of those kraals (Bushmen) we observed a number of slender piles of stone raised to the height of about three feet and disposed along the summit of a low rocky ridge within a short distance of each other. They were the work of the Bushmen and had been erected to impress the game with a belief that they were men and thereby deter them when chased from making their escape in those directions rather than along an adjacent ravine in which men are concealed to wound them as they pass. By this artifice a few men secure, from time to time, an abundant supply of food, and, as only two or three are required to drive the animal towards the pass, the others can be spared for the ambushade.

p. 72: Large piles of stone were observed wherever the summit could be reached and, as these were the only positions requiring defense in the event of an attack from without, to them the inhabitants rush in case of alarm. The enemy is permitted to approach within a moderate distance when a shower of stones of such size as can just be projected by the defendant is poured upon them, the effects of which hitherto in every instance have been such as to cause immediate retreat. (Sotho)

Sparman, A., (1785-1786). *A Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope Towards the Antarctic Polar Circle Round the World and to the Country of the Hottentots and the Caffres from the Year 1772-1776*. Ed. by V.S. Forbes.

1975. Vol. 1. Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society II,6.

p. 283: At Krakeel-rivier the ground was very stony, and there were a great many heaps of stones, three or four feet in height, that had lain there time out of mind.⁵³

⁵³ Possibly the graves of those killed in the strife commemorated by the name of the river. But Thunberg I, pp. 199, 120, concluded that these were the tombs of Hottentots who had died in a smallpox epidemic, chief of which occurred in 1713, 1755 and 1767. Certain Bushman and Hottentot groups constructed grave cairns, presumably to protect the corpses from wild animals... Some cairns honoured Heitsi Eibib, legendary magician (Schapera 1930, pp. 384-386). Here or hereabouts was a single large cairn from which the farm on which it lay was called Dooden Graaf (The Grave). See Molsbergen 1916, plate 6; 1922, p. 289; 1932, p. 234; Forbes 1965, Appendix C part II.

1977. Vol. 2. Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society II,7.

pp. 201-202: I had before this, during my first residence near Groote Bosch-rivier, observed heaps of stones larger than those few I had seen near Krakeel-rivier, and also composed of very large stones. They were from three to four or four feet and a half high, and the bases of them measured six, eight, to ten feet in diameter.⁶ They likewise lay ten, twenty, fifty, two hundred paces, and even farther asunder, but constantly between two particular points of the compass, and consequently in right lines, and those always running parallel to each other.

I likewise found these heaps of stones in a considerable number, and knew from the account I had on this subject from the colonists, that they extended in this manner several days journey from this spot, in a northern direction, through uncultivated plains, into the *Sneese Vlaktes*, as they are called, where they are said to be met with in a still greater number of parallel lines.

pp. 202-204: Sparrman excavated a heap of stones and “found nothing more than some rotten bits of trees, and something that appeared to be a piece of a bone quite mouldered away”. Most likely this was a grave.

Stow, G.W., 1905. *The Native Races of South Africa. A History of the Intrusion of the Hottentots and Bantu into the Hunting Grounds of the Bushmen, the Aborigines of the Country*. Ed. by George McCall Theal. London: Swan Sonnenschein.

p. 126ff.: Chapter VII: Mode of Burial of the Bushmen – Heaps of Stones – Some of their Beliefs

p. 127, Note 1: A writer of a letter to the Graham’s Town Journal, February 1865, in describing some of the stone heaps, states that two of them are to be found in the vicinity of the missionary institution of Hankey, on the Gamtoos river. “One of these ancient heaps,” he continues, “stands a little above the junction of the Zuurbron and Vley Plaats road, in the Zaat Kloof, on the line of road from Hankey to the Zuurveld, via Zuurbron.” It consists of a vast heap of stones, few of which are larger than a man’s fist, intermixed with fragments of boughs plucked from the surrounding bushes. The other is to be found in the neighbourhood of Hankey, in a narrow gorge of the Klein or Palmiet river. These he attributes incorrectly to Hottentots.

p. 128: quotes Sparrman.

p. 128: ... Borchers found near the drift which he crossed in the upper portion of the ‘Gariiep, on the right bank, a grave of a Bushman Captain or chief, which consisted of a large cairn of stones and branches of trees; and every “Bushman on passing the pile was in the habit of adding a stone to the heap, as a mark of respect for the deceased.”

⁶ Suggested above, vol. I, p. 283, note 53 that the cairns near Krakeel River were Hottentot graves. These larger more numerous heaps may have been those made by Xhosas and called *isivivane* which accumulated at points of significance or difficulty on a route. Each passer by added his stone to bring him luck.

p. 128: quotes Thompson.

Tenbrock, U., 1966. *Die Wunschlöhle und andere Märchen aus dem Orient*. München: Hueber.

p. 118: Koreanisches Märchen „Das goldene Beil.“ Die alte Kiefer... Früher war sie wohl dem Berggeist geweiht gewesen, denn an ihrem Fuß lag ein großer Haufen Steine, die zu seiner Verehrung dorthin geworfen waren. Auch jetzt warf noch manchmal jemand im Vorübergehen einen Stein dazu oder sogar ein paar Reis- oder Getreidekörner. (Aus A.Eckardt: *Die Ginsengwurzel*. Eisenach: Röth Verlag, 1955)

Theal, G. M., 1910. *The Yellow and Dark-Skinned People of Africa South of the Zambesi*. London: Swan Sonnenschein.

p. 189: In various parts of the Xosa and Tembu country there are artificial heaps of stones, and a man, when travelling, may often be seen adding one to the number. He repeats no words, but merely picks up a stone and throws it on the heap. Why does he do it? That good fortune may attend him, that he may not be carried away by the river spirit when crossing a stream, that he may find food prepared for him where he is to rest, that he may be successful in the business he is engaged in, or something of the kind he is thinking of at the time. It is an act of superstition. The old men said “it was for Qamata”. How? They did not know; but their ancestors had done the same thing and said it was for Qamata, and so they did it too.

Here then is an instance of a foreign belief adopted by a section of the people, for the above is simply the worship of Heitsi-eibib, and must have been introduced by the Hottentot women who were incorporated in the Xosa and Tembu tribes when they were advancing southwestward. But it was further modified by the percolation of missionary teaching, as is shown by the answers of the old men, though not one of them was a professed Christian.

Thomas, E.W., 1950. *Bushman Stories*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

p. 3-4: We do not know where he (Heiseb) is buried. There is a mound at Kauas, and one on the road to the hills; and there are others in the land. Bushmen, passing, must always place a stone or twig on these mounds for remembrance, for Heiseb was our God.

Thompson, G., 1968. *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa*. Parts 2 & 3. Ed. by V.S. Forbes. Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society 49.

p. 13: In a narrow defile between two mountains, called Morderaar’s Poort (Murderer’s Gate), on account of several colonists having been killed here by the Bushmen, - my guide pointed out six very large piles of stones or cairns.⁷

⁷ These were probably Hottentot graves, erected as described by Schapera, I., *Khoisan Peoples of S.A.*, p. 363) which had been raised, he said, by the Hottentots, to commemorate a bloody conflict that had taken place here between two tribes of their

Thunberg, C.P., 1986. *Travels at the Cape of Good Hope 1772-1775*. Ed. by V.S. Forbes. Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society II,17.

p. 97: Here [across Krakeel Rivier] I saw a great number of tombs, consisting of small heaps of stones. I strictly enquired after their origin, but no European could give me any account of them. An old Hottentot informed me, that the inhabitants of this tract had died of ulcers, in great numbers, which gave me no small reason to conclude, that this place had been well inhabited, and even populous, and that it was the small pox which had made this extraordinary devastation.

Thurner, I., 1983. *Die transzendenten und mythischen Wesen der San (Buschmänner). Eine religionsethnologische Analyse historischer Quellen*. Acta Ethnologica et Linguistica 56. Wien: Föhrenau.

p. 246: David Livingstone (1857:165), der am Suga (heute Botletle) das Grab eines San gesehen hat, schreibt, dass die ihn begleitenden Buschmänner den Toten anredeten und um Glück auf der Reise baten. Wie wir noch sehen werden, sind gerade die San dieses Gebietes verstärktem Bantu-Einfluss unterlegen, und so ist denkbar, dass die San Aspekte des Ahnenkultes übernommen haben.

p. 251-252: Vedder (1937:434) sagt, man solle nicht ohne triftigen Grund am Grabe eines Toten vorbeigehen, um seine Ruhe nicht zu stören; ist es jedoch unvermeidbar, grüsst man den Toten, indem man einen Stein auf das Grab wirft. Interessant ist dabei, dass Vedder an anderer Stelle (1937:424) sagt, dass die Steinhäufen Huee-Gräber sind, vergleichbar den hottentottischen Heitsi Eibib-Gräbern. Dies kann natürlich als weiteres Anzeichen eines manistischen Zuges von Huee interpretiert werden.

Aus den Quellen offensichtlich nicht geklärt werden kann, ob jedes Grab ein Huee- (bzw. Heitsi Eibib-) Grab ist, beziehungsweise zu einem solchen wird. Denkbar ist, dass ein gewöhnliches Grab, wenn der Steinhäufen zu einer gewissen Größe angewachsen ist und die Erinnerung an den Toten – die übrigens bei den Buschmännern sowieso verdrängt wird – verschwunden ist, zu einem Huee- (bzw. Heitsi Eibib-)Grab wird. Ausserdem ist jedes Grab nur einer geringen Anzahl von Leuten als Grab eines bestimmten Verstorbenen bekannt. Für alle anderen kann das Grab von vornherein als ein Huee- oder Heitsi Eibib-Grab gelten. Es konnten keine Quellen aufgefunden werden, die in dieser Frage Klarheit schaffen könnten.

Tindall, B.A., 1959. *The Journal of Joseph Tindall, Missionary in South West Africa 1839-1855*. Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society 40.

p. 63: Another Damara said his father told him of a Being who lived above, and to secure His blessing he must lay a stone or stick, or small bough, on a certain heap of stones by the way

countrymen, before the Europeans came and reduced them all to bondage.

side, leading to the hunting-field; and must sit on the heap and repeat, 'I am going to hunt. If Thou leavest me to myself, how can I get food?' The same ceremony was to be performed on commencing a journey for preservation from wild beasts. The above custom accounts for the prodigious heaps of stones frequently met with in travelling in Namaqualand.

Van Niekerk, G.S., 1981. Enkele Himba-Beskouinge Aangaande die Opperwese en die Geeste van Gestorwenes. *Khoisis* No. 2, October.

p. 39: c) *Ombindi*

'n *Ombindi* bestaan uit 'n klipstapel en mopanietakkies. Dit kan óf op die grond óf in die mik van 'n mopanieboom opgerig word. Die ontstaan daarvan hou verband met bepaalde plekke waar die draers van die lyk van 'n hoog aangeskrewe persoon gerus het. Die *ombindi* behoort aan die patriclan (*oruzo*) van so 'n gestorwe persoon.

p. 40: Die *ombindi* sowel as die onmiddelijke omgewing waarin dit geleë is, word as woonplek van sommige geeste aangewys. By elke *ombindi* voer die Himba 'n rituele handeling uit en tree hulle met dié geeste in gesprek.

Wanneer 'n Himbareisiger by 'n *ombindi* kom, neem hy 'n klip of 'n takkie met blare van 'n mopanieboom en plaas dit op die *ombindi*. Terwyl hierdie handeling uitgevoer word, rig hy die volgende woorde tot die geeste:

„Ndjipee erao otjiwa mbikahondje nawa.“

„Gee my geluk dat ek voorspoedig kann reis.“

Hierdie versoeke word aan die geeste gerig, omdat die reisiger glo dat 'n aantal geeste in die nabyheid von die *ombindi* setel, ongeag die moontlikheid dat die *ombindi* aan 'n ander *oruzo* as sy eie mag behoort. Deur hierdie wyse van respektbetoning aan die geeste, al is hulle nie-verwante geeste, is die reisiger van hulle beskerming verseker.

Van Warmelo, N.J., 1965. A Tale of a Heap of Stones. *Africana Notes & News* 16, 278-283.

The accounts of old travellers in Southern Africa make mention of "heaps of stones" encountered at certain spots along recognized routes, and regarded by their Native guides and companions with what they termed "superstitious" awe or respect. Over the vast area of the two related languages Xhosa and Zulu (i.e. below the interior plateau, from the Ciskei to Swaziland) there is one term for them: *isiVivane*.

The Kropf-Godfrey Dictionary gives the meaning in Xhosa thus: "a heap of stones thrown together by travellers at certain steep and dangerous passes on a difficult, tiring journey, a small stone being added by every passer by, who says, *Thixo ndincede*, God help me; or *siphe aman-*

dla, give us strength, whereby the traveller asks for help to accomplish his enterprise or errand. Whether his object is good or evil, whether he is going to steal his neighbour's cattle, or to pay a visit to his friends, or to pay his addresses to a young woman, he will use the same form."

The Zulu Dictionary says:

"cairn, accumulated heap of stones, memorial collection of stones, 'rocky heap' (on which Natives throw stones as they pass at cross roads or some outstanding place, the action being believed to bring good luck)."

For years I believed that to see an *isiVivane* one merely went out and asked to be shown the nearest. It was therefore only the necessity of providing a photograph for a book that made me willing to spend time on finding a specimen. This is where, as usual in research, matters began to get interesting.

I alerted my colleague Dr. D. W. Hammond Tooke, at that time Government Ethnologist at Umtata, and appealed to Mr. H. W. Pahl, Inspector of Schools.

For sure, everybody knew what an *isiVivane* was. No trouble at all. But we wanted to see one. Well, that apparently was another matter. Eventually one reliable official was found who said he knew one well, in a neighbouring district, where he had grown up and known it since his earliest days as a herdboys. So we took a day off and, with him as guide, drove to the place. We searched around without success, but finally discovered some local people who said they knew this particular *isiVivane*. However, only a few months earlier the Roads Department had scooped the whole heap up and carted it away for gravelling a road somewhere else. One more relic of ancient times destroyed!

By further enquiry someone was found who said he knew the *isiVivane* above Clarkebury Mission, and described the exact spot. In a letter Dr. Tooke described the discovery of the elusive *isiVivane*. It is quoted to show how anthropological research sometimes works in practice. I must add that Mr. Pahl speaks Xhosa very well, but of course the party were strangers to the local people.

Dr. Tooke wrote as follows, shortly after Christmas 1958:

"A final report from the office of the Ethnologist! We have at last tracked down (materialized?) an *isiVivane*! On the Monday after you left, Pahl, Röntsch and self went to Clarkebury. We climbed half-way up the mountain behind onto a shoulder and asked at a kraal there. Never heard of it. So we toiled to the top, muttering curses, and asked at the headman's kraal and a couple of others. Drew a blank. It then came on to rain and, as we had left the car near the bottom of the mountain, we got soaked. We decided to call it a day but half way down, on the shoulder I spoke of, we saw a large spread of small stones, - about seven of Pahl's paces in di-

ameter (21 ft.). We checked with the inmates of the first kraal. ‘Oh yes. That was an *isiVivane*, and the place’s name was *esiVivaneni*. People used to spit on a stone, throw it on and say, “*Ah! Sivivane!*” None dares to go near the place at night.’ I presume the thing was originally higher but doubt whether it ever was a cairn in the true sense. It was anything but photogenic, and not frightfully impressive, being merely a very low mound of stones, so I hope you and Miss Shaw will not be disappointed...”

Field researchers will be reminded of their own experiences: you stand on the very spot but nobody tells you; you have the truth under your eyes but you cannot see it, and because you don’t ask the question in exactly the right way, there almost seems to be a conspiracy not to reveal it.

I subsequently visited this *isiVivane* myself, and took some pictures. It seemed likely that rains and other agencies had over years dispersed the stones a little. For the purpose of the photograph (see illustration) we therefore threw some of the stones that had obviously rolled down all round, back onto the heap. In view of the unanimity of the early sources in referring to “heaps” I do not think this was unwarranted interference or distortion.

Heaps of Stones Elsewhere

The tribes of the interior also had these “heaps of stones”. The Tswana called them *sefika-ntle*, which would appear to mean “something of stone, in the veld” (prefix *se-*, cf. *le-fika* “stone”; *ntle* “outside”).

East of Pietersburg, on a path between Molepo’s and Mathabatha’s, there also is such a heap of stones, and the place is known as *Ga Mmakgolo ke a feta!* Place of “Ancestor! I am passing on!” because every passer-by throws his contribution on the heap whilst invoking his forefathers in these words.

The first question with regard to the term *isiVivane* naturally is: “What is the origin and exact meaning of this word?” It has no other meaning. It is a diminutive (ending *-ane*), but of what? To the philologist, the root *-vivi* suggests itself, derived from common Bantu *-vîvî* (a hypothetical form). There is nothing in Nguni itself (Zulu or Xhosa) or the Sotho–Tswana languages that gets us any further on that, but it is surely of interest that in Venda the normal permutation of the postulated root *-vîvî* is found in the word *tshizwizwi* “place where a chief lies buried in a grove”. Ancestor-cult again. This is not to suggest an *isiVivane* is associated with a place of burial. Nor is a Venda *tshizwizwi* like an *isiVivane*, for the groves where chiefs are buried are avoided and guarded, and are not situated along major routes at places where the traveller, having surmounted some obstacle or finished a climb, gratefully bethinks himself of the aid received from his ancestors up to here, and invokes further blessings on the road ahead.

The Venda also have such places, but they differ in that, since most of Venda is lacking in stones, leaves and twigs are cast down as offerings, and these sites are called *tshiwelo* “place of rest”. It is said that at these places the corpse of an important personage, being carried somewhere for burial, was put down by the bearers when taking a rest. Whilst not improbable in some cases, this is very hard to believe with regard to many others, for a variety of reasons we need not consider here.

A Historic Site in the Western Transvaal

To round off these notes and illustrate in another way the part played by the fortuitous in research I record the following:

There is, in the Western Transvaal, one particular “heap of stone” to which special interest attaches, for historical reasons.

Shortly after Christmas 1964, Mr. H. P. Kloppers, a colleague in the Department of Bantu Administration, casually dropped in at my office, and in the course of conversation happened to mention that someone had given him a fascinating book to read, viz. the recent reprint of W. Cornwallis Harris’s *The Wild Sports of Southern Africa*. He had found this book very interesting. “And what is more,” he added, “Harris hunted and trekked about in the vicinity of the Hartebeest-poort Dam where I grew up, and once on a ride his party came right over the Magaliesberg and across our family farm. I know because there were two big trees there, visible far and wide, which was why the farmers called it ‘Twee-boompiesnek’. Just at that spot Harris also saw a heap of stones. His Native companions each threw a stone on it. And that is the very heap of stones that my brothers and I have known since we were boys. Our Natives also threw stones on it whenever they passed, and warned us to do the same.”

Now this is the sort of conjunction of chances that one learns to wait and watch for. I went to a filing cabinet and drew a file marked “Harris” and showed Mr. Kloppers a passage I had copied from *The Wild Sports* exactly 30 year ago, with a view to tracing this route and hoping some clue would offer itself unsought, thereby saving the time and trouble of an investigation. The words “a large heap” were underlined; they had always stuck in my memory, as it seemed here was a feature in a remote place and likely to survive, unlike many stone hut settlements on the Eastern Highveld, where the farmers have carried away the stones for building material.

The long-awaited clue had now presented itself. On 2 January 1965 a visit was accordingly paid to the farm Hartebeestfontein 473 (formerly 119), and Mr. Kloppers guided us up the southern slopes of the Magaliesberg to the nek, where the heap of stones was found as shown in the illustration. Very near it, level with the ground, was what remained of the stump of a boekenhout tree that had burnt through and fallen northwards many years ago. The distance to where its tip had lain, as remembered by Mr. Kloppers, shows it to have been an enormous tree. The diam-

eter of the bole, c. 44 cm, confirms this. This was one of the two prominent boekenhout trees that stood near the heap of stones in the olden days, and which, being visible from all over the southern plain, gave rise to the name given to the nek by the early settlers: “Twee-bompies-nek”.

It is practically certain that we have here the heap of stones seen and described by Harris. After mentioning that during the first few days of November 1838 his wagons had been skirting the Magaliesberg range (Cashan Mts.) and had reached the Ooli (Odi, the Crocodile) he writes that report of elephants on the north side made him cross over the range. He then saw “the whole plain studded with detached pyramidal stony hills” (i.e. the area around the present Brits). He continues: “The tracks of the elephants leading back again to the mountains, we re-ascended by a steep foot-path considerably to the westward of the defile through which we had come, and, on arriving at the summit, perceived our wagons, like small white specks, in the distant valley. Bare and sterile rocks occupy the highest elevation of these mountains, commanding an extensive view, and forming a strong contrast with the middle and lower regions, so thickly covered with verdure and forest, the latter chiefly occupying the ravines. Having reconnoitred the whole country with a telescope without being able to discern the animals of which we were in quest, we descended by a steep foot-path, the face of the mountain being strewn with round white pebbles. Near the summit grew a venerable mimosa, which completely overshadowed the path, and a little on one side of it we observed a large heap which had been formed by each passenger contributing one of these pebbles as he passed. Our savages added their mite, simply picking up the nearest, and casting it irreverently towards the hill. This being the only approach to external worship or religious ceremony that we had seen, we naturally became very inquisitive on the subject, but could elicit no satisfactory information. Mohanycom said it was ‘the king’, from which very sapient reply we were left at liberty to conclude, either that the tumulus was a monument of respect to royalty, or that they had been engaged in an idolatrous rite...”

A few more details should be recorded. The site is at about 25° 47' lat. S. and 27° 39' long. E. on the northern boundary of the farm Haartebeestfontein 473...

The original inhabitants of this area were survivors of the massacres and raids of Mzilikazi's Matabele. They had been hiding in the kloofs and rock-shelters of the Magaliesberg, and came out when they saw better times. They were Tswana, of the Kgatla tribe, the bulk of which is still living on the north side of the range. They remained on the farm as “plaasvolk”. Amongst them was a man named Rondekop Ntleng, who lived to a great age (well over a hundred, it was thought) until his death in c. 1925. His son Niklaas Ntleng was exactly the same age as Mr. Kloppers' father, and died in 1964, aged 85, only a few months before we learnt of this historic site.

Mr. Kloppers recalls that when they were boys this man always insisted on their throwing a stone on the heap whenever they passed it, and impressed upon them the importance of not omitting to do so. He evidently held the place in awe, as did all the other passers-by who travelled this shortest and most convenient pass between the populous northern area and the valley of the Magalies river. Needless to say, each of us threw his stone.

7 photos.

Vedder, H., 1912. Die Buschmänner. *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* 39, 403-416.

p. 412: Man darf aber nicht vergessen, die Erstlingsfrüchte auf dem Grabe niederzulegen; in der übrigen Jahreszeit würde es Unglück bringen, an dem Grabe vorbeizugehen, ohne einen grünen Zweig eines Baumes dort niederzulegen.

Dieser Brauch wirft vielleicht etwas Licht auf die rätselhafte Verehrung der Heitsi-eibebgräber, die im Nama- und Hererolande angetroffen werden. Heitsi-eibeb oder Heiseb ist ein mythisches Wesen, von dem man eigentlich nicht mehr zu erzählen weiß. Die Gräber bestehen aus zum Teil gewaltigen Steinhäufen. Jeder, der vorübergeht, wirft einen Stein, einen Zweig oder den Inhalt seiner Tabakspfeife auf das Grab. Würde dies nicht geschehen, so ruft Heiseb: „Warum gehst du vorüber und grüßest mich nicht?“ und ein großes Unglück würde den pietätlosen Wanderer treffen. An dieser Verehrung der Heitsi-eibeb-gräber beteiligen sich die Nama sowohl als auch die Herero und Bergdamara. Jeder Stamm aber lehnt es entschieden ab, daß etwa Volksangehörige dort begraben sein könnten, oder daß die Gräber von ihren Vorfahren etwa errichtet sind.

Vedder, H., 1923. *Die Bergdama*. 2 vols. Hamburger Universität, Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiet der Auslandskunde, Reihe B, vols. 11 und 14. Hamburg: Friedrichsen.

I, 132-135: In diesem Zusammenhang sollen auch die *Heiseb*-Gräber erwähnt werden, die sich an allen Orten des Landes befinden und über deren Bedeutung die widersprechendsten Anschauungen im Umlauf sind, da eine einheitliche Aufklärung von den Eingeborenen nicht gegeben wird.

An vielbetretenen Wegen oder auf Bergpässen findet man nicht selten zum Teil recht ansehnliche Steinhäufen. Diese Steinhäufen genießen unter allen Eingeborenen des Landes eine gewisse Verehrung. Der vorbeiwandernde heidnische Herero, Omuambo, Nama, Buschmann oder Bergdama geht nicht vorüber, ohne bei Insichtkommen des Steinhauens einen Stein oder einen Zweig aufzunehmen und auf die Stätte zu werfen. Aus diesem Grunde sind manche Heiseb-Gräber so imposant angewachsen. Es genügt auch, den letzten Rest der Tabakspfeife auf dem Haufen auszuklopfen. Diese Sitte, *ao-eis* = Daraufwerfen genannt, wird von den Eingeborenen als Gruß angesehen. Wer sich nach ihr richtet, darf erwarten, auf seinem weiteren Wege Glück zu haben. Wer sie verachtet, wird sich die Füße wundlaufen, sich verirren oder sonst von einem

Mißgeschick verfolgt werden, und ihm ruft aus dem Steinhäufen eine Stimme nach: „Warum gehst du vorüber und grüßest mich nicht?“ Das, was jetzt als Gruß aufgefaßt wird, mag ursprünglich Opfergabe gewesen sein.

Woher stammen nun diese Steinhäufen? Alle eingeborenen Völkerschaften behaupten, daß weder sie noch ihre Väter sie errichtet haben, daß sie nur den Brauch kennen, im übrigen aber nichts über die Bedeutung der Steinhäufen zu sagen wissen. Da sie sich aber sowohl im Nama-land als im Hereroland, ja bis ins nördliche Kaokofeld hinein vorfinden, so ist es der Mühe wert, die Frage nach der Bedeutung nicht nur aufzuwerfen, sondern auch soweit wie möglich zu beantworten.

Die Nama nennen diese Steinhäufen *Heitsi-eibeb*. Sie benennen sie nach einem Volksheros, von dem man nur weiß, daß er durch Klugheit und Tapferkeit wunderbare Dinge vollbracht hat. So werden gewöhnlich auch die alten Buschmannzeichnungen, in Farbe oder durch Ausmeißelung ausgeführt, nicht den Buschmännern zugeschrieben, sondern dem *Heiseb*. „*Heitsi-eibeb*“ bedeutet demnach einen Ort, (-be = altes Lokalsuffix), auf (ei = auf) dem ein *Heiseb* zu verehren ist. Die Partikel *tsi* in dem Wort *Heitsi-eibeb* ist sehr wahrscheinlich nach Analogie einiger anderer Wörter die Genitivpartikel *di*, die in alter Zeit oder in anderen Namadialekten die Form *tsi* gehabt haben muß. Damit ist nun aber noch nicht viel gewonnen, wenn nicht der Stamm des Wortes *hei* genügend erklärt wird, aus dem der Name des Helden *Heiseb* entstanden ist. *Heis* ist die Bezeichnung eines Baumes mit umfangreicher Krone. Ein Stamm der Buschmänner, der nahe mit den Nama verwandt zu sein scheint, weil er deren Sprache spricht, nennt sich nach obigem Wort *Hei-//omn* = Leute (*n*), die im Gebüsch (*hei*) schlafen (*//om*). Dies nur als Beweis, daß aus dem Stamm *hei* nicht nur Personennamen, sondern sogar ein Volksname gebildet wurde. Da nun die Nama in uralter Zeit keineswegs die Religion der Bergdama hatten, sondern eine Naturreligion besaßen, so ist es wahrscheinlich, daß sie sich nach Art der Naturreligionen auch das weite, offene oder mit Busch bewachsene Feld als von einem mächtigen Geist bewohnt dachten. Wo sollte dieser mächtige Geist anders wohnen als in besonders auffälligen und großen Bäumen oder auf den hohen Bergen, deren lange Wälle nur in den Gegenden der Bergpässe überschreitbar waren? Wie sollte man den Geist des weiten Feldes passender benennen als nach dem Baum, in dem er wohnte? Darum mag man ihn *Heiseb* genannt haben. Fand man nun in diesem weiten, menschenleeren Felde auffällige Steinhäufen vor, die zu grüßen althergebrachte Landessitte war, so mochte man diese Steinhäufen ebenso mit dem Namen des *Heiseb* in Verbindung bringen, wie man heute noch die Buschmannzeichnungen mit ihm in Verbindung bringt, weil man eben die Ursache beider Erscheinungen nicht auffinden konnte.

Da aber für das Auge des Bergdama diese Steinhäufen die größte Ähnlichkeit mit den Gräbern hatten, die er selbst anzulegen pflegte, außerdem ihn die allgemein übliche Verehrung darin unterstützte, nannte er seinerseits diese Stätten *//kho //khowos*. Dieses Wort ist alt und

kommt im heutigen Sprachgebrauch nicht mehr vor. //Kho heißt zwar heute noch „begraben“. //Khowos aber ist aus dem Sprachgebrauch verschwunden, kann indes leicht erklärt werden, wenn man beachtet, daß aus zahlreichen ursprünglich zweisilbigen Worten der Sprache der *w*-Laut verschwunden und die zusammentreffenden Vokale verschmolzen sind. //Khowo war also ursprünglich dasselbe wie das heutige Wort //kho = begraben. Die Verdoppelung deutet dabei an, daß nach Anschauung des Bergdama hier etwas von besonderer Bedeutung begraben ist. Fragt man ihn aber, was denn dort begraben worden sei, so erhält man entweder überhaupt keine Auskunft, oder es wird erklärt, daß man wohl den Platz als Begräbnisplatz bezeichne, daß aber niemand dort begraben liege. Um dies festzustellen, öffnete ich ein solches „Grab“ und fand nichts, absolut nichts darin, was an ein Grab hätte erinnern können. Wie mir ist es auch anderen ergangen, die derartige Steinhäufen wegräumten, um die darunter befindliche Erde zu untersuchen.

Wie also die Nama alles ihnen Unerklärliche mit dem Namen des *Heiseb* in Verbindung bringen und die rätselhaften Häufen mit *Heitsi-eibeb* bezeichneten, ohne damit zu sagen, daß ihr *Heiseb* darin begraben liege, was erst die Europäer hineinerklärt haben, so bringen die Bergdama dieselben Häufen nach ihrer äußeren Erscheinung mit einem Grabe in Verbindung, behaupten jedoch zugleich, daß niemand daselbst begraben sei.

Die Herero bezeichnen die in Rede stehenden Stätten mit *ombindi*. Auch sie behaupten ihrerseits, daß sich unter den Steinhäufen Ahnengräber, aber nicht solche von Herero befinden. Welchem Volke die Ahnengräber zugehören könnten, kann man auch von ihnen nicht erfahren. Wir haben aber gesehen, daß die Steinhäufen gar keine Gräber sind. Es bleibt daher nur die Erklärung übrig, daß auch die Herero, verleitet durch den Augenschein, die Steinhäufen als Gräber erklären, weil auch sie ihre Gräber durch Steinhäufen vor wilden Tieren usw. zu schützen pflegen. In Korab befindet sich das Grab eines Hererohäuptlings, der etwa ums Jahr 1860 im Kampfe gegen die Buschmänner fiel. Sein Grab zeigt noch heute einen Steinhäufen von etwa 6 Meter Länge und ist 1 – 1 ½ Meter hoch. Es sieht einem *Heitsi-eibeb*-Hügel so gleich, daß einige Eingeborene, die die Geschichte dieses Grabes nicht kannten, Steine und Zweige darauf niederlegten, in der Meinung, an einem *Heitsi-eibeb*-Hügel vorbeizugehen.

Nun interessiert uns die Frage, wie die alten Herero dazu gekommen sein mögen, diese alten Steinhäufen, die sie offenbar schon vorfanden, als sie vor etwa 250 Jahren in das jetzige Hereroland einwanderten, mit einem besonderen Wort ihrer Sprache *ombindi* zu benennen. Dem Substantiv *ombindi* liegt das Verb *-vinda, -i*, zugrunde. Dieses bezeichnet aber in seiner Grundbedeutung: „mittels eines Umweges an einer Sache oder Örtlichkeit vorbeigehen.“ Daraus geht deutlich hervor, daß die alten Herero eine gewisse Scheu vor diesen Steinhäufen besaßen, sie wie ein Grab respektierten, einen Umweg machten, um an ihnen vorbeizukommen, und sie daher *ombindi* = ein Ding, das man umgeht, nannten.

Nun fand ich auf meiner Reise ins Kaokofeld im Jahre 1914 einen alten Ovatjimba-Häuptling, mit dem ich über diese auch dort vorkommenden Steinhaufen sprach. Dieser berichtete mir folgendes: „Wir wohnen hier in kleinen Sippen überall im Lande zerstreut. Jede Sippe hat ein bestimmt abgegrenztes Feld für Feldkostosucher, Hirten und Jäger. Da kommt es oft vor, daß eine benachbarte Sippe die angestammten Landrechte mißachtet und im fremden Gebiet jagt, Feldkost sucht oder gar die Ziegenherden, auch Rinderherden raubt. Um uns vor solchen Schädigungen zu schützen, errichten wir an den Zugängen des Gebietes einer Sippe Steinhaufen. Diese Steinhaufen werden durch Opfer und Gebet den Ahnen geweiht, damit sie dort Wache halten und jeden Fremdling, der mit seinem Raub vorbeizieht, verderben. So wird die Räuberei sehr eingeschränkt. Man fürchtet sich, auf den Zugängen eines Sippengebietes abzuziehen oder anzukommen. Denn dort halten die Geister der Ahnen an den ihnen geweihten Steinhaufen Wache. Sie zu umgehen, ist zwar möglich, aber sehr beschwerlich, sonderlich wenn man eine geraubte Viehherde in Sicherheit bringen will.“

Ich neige dazu, die Erklärung dieses Häuptlings auch auf die rätselhaften Steinhaufen, die an den Bergübergängen und Fußwegen des Herero- und Namalandes zu finden sind, anzuwenden. Zwar hatten die Nama und Herero früher nicht ihr Land in dem Sinne in Sippengebiete aufgeteilt, wie wir es bei den Bergdama, Buschmännern und Ovatjimba finden. Dafür sind die Herero und Nama aber auch gewiß bedeutend später eingewandert. Die Bergdama und Buschmänner bilden ohne Zweifel die Urbevölkerung des Landes. Sie wachen heute noch mit Eifersucht darüber, daß in ihr angestammtes Sammel- und Jagdgebiet kein Fremdling eindringt, und mancher, der es trotzdem versuchte, hat seinen Vorwitz mit seinem Leben bezahlen müssen. Dennoch kann man nicht sagen, daß diese das Sippengebiet und seine Zugänge schützenden Steinhaufen von den Bergdama oder Buschmännern herkommen: Es kann ein vergessener Brauch dieser Völkerschaften sein, den die Ovatjimba übernommen und treuer bewahrt haben.

Es ist aber sehr wahrscheinlich, daß die sogenannten *Heitsi-eibeb*-Gräber uralte, den Ahnen geweihte Steinhaufen sind, die an den Zugängen eines Sippengebietes aufgerichtet wurden, um räubernde Fremdlinge fernzuhalten. Die Verehrung, die man ihnen zollt, mag einerseits mit der Verehrung der Ahnen überhaupt erklärt werden, deren Geister man durch Gebet und Opfer bei Errichtung der Haufen willig machte, der Sippe Schutz zu gewährleisten, andererseits bietet die Gestalt der Denkmäler gegenwärtig den Herero, Nama und Bergdama die Deutung dar, diese Stätten als Gräber zu betrachten, obschon sich bei den Bergdama die deutliche Erinnerung erhalten hat, daß es sich nicht um wirkliche Gräber handelt.

Vedder, H., 1928. The Nama. In: Hahn, C.H.L. / Vedder, H. / Fourie, L.: *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*. Reprint 1966, London: Frank Cass, pp. 107-152.

pp. 131-132: Heiseb is said to have been an exceedingly clever Nama in a prehistoric time, who did miraculous things. He could change himself into different forms and was able to go through

mountains when pursued, etc. Above all, he died more than once and, according to Nama belief, was resurrected. Various graves of his are to be found in the Cape Colony as well as in Nama- and Hereroland. He who passes these graves, consisting of stones piled up along old native paths, must lay a stone, a twig or something to this description on the grave in salutation to him, lest he meet with an accident on his way. I was interested to know whether there were really human remains under these often stately monuments of piled up stones. Indeed, I was told that nothing of the kind was to be found under these heaps of stone, as Heiseb was resurrected; but I did not believe these sayings. I, however, found that the earth under these sepulchral monuments was indeed empty. This curious incident instigated me to investigate this matter further as such heaps of stone, worshipped by all natives, are found in all parts of South West and what is more, their worship was even known at the Cape according to old reports. My study of the Bushmen probably brought me on the right track and the customs of the Ovambo indicate similar phenomena. Up to this day the Ovambo pile up the hard fruit of a certain tree on the boundaries of the territory they lay claim to, to serve as beacons which are respected everywhere.

Among the Tjimba I found that they demark their pastures at certain points of the boundary with heaps of stones. Unless all the information is fallacious, the Bushmen, who were the only inhabitants of South West in olden times, also knew this custom. They erected stone beacons at those places where strangers used to cross their tribal boundaries on foot, i.e., where there were old paths. The implication of this for the strange hunter and gleaner was that all their activities within these boundaries would be regarded as robbery. It is not improbable that both the Ovambo and Tjimba of the Kaokoveld took over this way of demarking their tribal boundaries from the Bushmen.

Afterwards when the Bushmen had to evacuate their country for the new immigrants, the Hottentots, Bergdama, Herero, etc., these boundary-marks appeared to them as graves, which were revered as the graves of their own ancestors by piling stones on them. The myth now included these imposing tokens of love and called them Heitsi-eibeb, i.e., place, where Heiseb lingers.

Vedder, H., 1931. Drei merkwürdige Bäume. *Afrikanischer Heimatkalender*, pp. 63-65.

p. 64: Über den großen Omumborombongabaum zwischen Herero- und Ovamboland. Wenn wandernde Herero seiner ansichtig werden, so suchen sie irgendwo verborgene Pflanzen mit einigen Blättern zu erlangen, die sie zu dem Baum tragen, sie an der Stirn reiben, auf sie spützen und dann mit Grußworten und Gebetsworten in eine der zahlreichen Höhlungen seines Stammes stopfen. Nur so kann man auf der ferneren Wanderung Glück und Segen erwarten. Wer aber ohne diesen Gruß vorbeigeht, hat Widerwärtigkeiten zu erwarten.

Vedder, H. 1937. Die Buschmänner Südwestafrikas und ihre Weltanschauung. *South African Journal of Science* 34, 416-436.

p. 424: Merkwürdig aber ist, dass die Buschmänner vom Stamm der !Kû in ihrem *Huee* ganz genau denselben ehren, den die Saan und Nama als *Heiseb* verehren. Alle Buschmannmalereien werden als das Werk von *Heiseb*, resp. von *Huee* angesehen. In allen rätselhaften Steinhäufen, auf die man vorsichtshalber als Gruss einen Stein wirft, ist einst *Heiseb* begraben worden und dann wieder auferstanden. Die !Kû-Buschmänner aber sagen dasselbe von *Huee*; auch er pflegte aus purer Schauspielerei zu sterben, sich begraben zu lassen und dann wieder von den Toten zu erstehen.

Vedder, H., 1938. Alte Grabstätten. *Afrikanischer Heimatkalender*. Reprint: Wackwitz, A. (ed.). *Am Lagerfeuer*. Windhoek: Meinert, pp. 9-12.

Derives place name Kokobos in southern Namibia from //kho//khobos = “Begräbnis-Grab” (Heitsi-eibeb grave).

Contents correspond to Vedder 1923 and Vedder 1928.

Viereck, A., 1970 (Juli). Was sind Heitse-Eibeb-Gräber? *Mitteilungen der SWA Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft* 11/4, 5-6.

pp. 5-6: Die Heitse Eibebs sind keine echten Gräber. Wenn man alte Eingeborene (besonders Bergdama) nach der Bedeutung dieser Steinhäufen fragt, bekommt man verschiedene, zum Teil ausweichende Antworten. Mir scheint daher, dass sich die Bedeutung dieser, dem Aussehen nach, sehr alten Steinhäufen im Lauf der Zeit gänzlich gewandelt hat und zwar von Richtungsweisern zu Opferstätten. Ursprünglich sollten diese Steinhäufen wohl den Weg und die Richtung zu einer Wasserstelle weisen, ganz gleich, ob sie dauerhaft oder nur periodisch war, denn überall im ganzen Land stehen diese Heitse Eibebs zum größten Teil in der näheren Umgebung von Wasserstellen und Quellen. Viele dieser alten Wasserstellen führen heute kein Wasser mehr. Es ist erstaunlich, wie gut dem Kundigen durch diese Steinhäufen der Weg zur Wasserstelle gewiesen wurde, wobei die richtige Richtung, in die man gehen musste, am Aufbau des Geländes kenntlich war. Für die Anlage von Heitse Eibebs waren Engpässe und Pforten natürlich bevorzugte Punkte, da durch sie die Richtung der Wanderwege bestimmt wurde. Hier könnte man einwenden, dass nicht bei jedem Engpass oder jeder Pforte eine Wasserstelle war. Aber was wissen wir schon von den Wasserverhältnissen aus jener Zeit, die höchstwahrscheinlich andere waren als heute; und außerdem spielte bei den Menschen damals die Entfernung keine große Rolle. Sie waren weite Strecken gewohnt. Ich möchte auch nicht behaupten, dass die Heitse Eibebs nur wasserweisend waren. Sie hatten wohl auch noch andere Bedeutung, von der wir bloß nichts wissen. In von der Zivilisation abgelegenen Gegenden kann man mit Hilfe der Heitse Eibebs nach alten Wasserstellen suchen. Wiederholt habe ich nach der Wasserstelle gesucht (und auch meistens gefunden), wenn ich auf Heitse Eibebs stieß. Besonders schöne Beispiele sind die Schluchten des Brandberges, die Wasser führen oder früher führten. Besonders auffällig ist

der Steinhäufen aus faustgroßen Steinen oben auf einem Felsblock mit interessanten Malereien etwa 200 m vor der „Numas-Wasserstelle“ im Eingang der Numas-Schlucht. Im Kaoko-Veld fand ich Heitse Eibeb an fast allen Wasserstellen, die ich anlässlich einer großen Tour dort kennenlernte. Sie standen immer an den vom Gelände vorgezeichneten Zugängen zur Wasserstelle, oft zwei an einem Wasser.

Nach allen diesen Beobachtungen bin ich zu der Überzeugung gekommen, dass die Urbedeutung der Heitse Eibeb von hinweisendem Charakter war. Sie sollten dem durstigen Wanderer auf die Nähe von Wasser aufmerksam machen. Der Sinn der Opferstätte kann später von woanders mitgebracht worden sein, als wohl ein anderes Volk an die Stelle der eigentlichen Urheber dieser Steinhäufen trat und dafür keine andere Erklärung wusste, als die Wohnstelle eines Geistes, der anscheinend die in der Nähe sich befindliche Wasserstelle bewachte. Jeder, der zum Wasser wollte, musste an diesem Geist vorübergehen, der erst nach einer Opfergabe den Gang zum Wasser gestattete, die ursprünglich aus Lebens- und Genussmitteln bestanden hat. Später traten an ihre Stelle kleine und wohl auch größere Steine. Auf diese Weise wurden die Steinhäufen im Laufe der Zeit immer größer. Allmählich aber änderte sich anscheinend der Sinn der Opferung und man bat den Heitse Eibeb um alle möglichen Dinge, und schließlich wurden Steine gewohnheitsmäßig auf den Heitse Eibeb gelegt, „weil andere Menschen es auch tun,“ wie Herr Krenz es bei seinem alten Bergdama erlebte.

Leider gibt es vorerst keine Möglichkeit einer zuverlässigen Altersbestimmung der Heitse-Eibeb-Steinhäufen, weil sie keine organischen Bestandteile enthalten, die einen ¹⁴C-Test gestatten. Aber es gibt doch zu denken, dass diese Steinhäufen zum größten Teil bei alten Wasserstellen vorkommen.

Vinnicombe, P., 1976. *People of the Eland. Rockpaintings of the Drakensberg Bushmen as a Reflection of their Life and Thought*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.

p. 292: (Hunting methods of Bushmen) Sometimes ... circular hides about three feet high and built of stone were also erected in narrow passes and other strategic positions⁸ and similar structures can still be recognized in parts of the Karoo.⁹

Vollmer, F.H., 1866. Die Station Hoachanas. *Berichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft*, pp. 277-282.

p. 278: Von einer Religion unter den Namaqua läßt sich wenig sagen. Es finden sich einige dunkle Anklänge von Todten-Verehrung und besonders eine von einem Heitse eibeb, dessen Grab, oder besser Gräber in frühern Zeiten durch Opfer von Holz und Steinen verehrt worden sind.

⁸ Alexander 1838 II, 7.

⁹ Palmer, The Plains of Cambdeboo, 1966, 74.

Von Eckenbrecher, M., 1908. *Was Afrika mir gab und nahm*. Berlin: Mittler.

p. 89: Bergdama in Okombahe: Auch ihr Gottesbegriff ist ein dunkler, unklarer. Sie verehren den guten Gott Heiseb, der sie einst von einem Ungeheuer erlöste. In ganz Südwest gibt es die sogenannten Heisebgräber. Das sind aufgetürmte Steinhäufen, auf die jeder vorbeigehende Bergdamara einen neuen Stein oder in deren Ermangelung einen Lappen wirft. Dies ist eine Art Opfer. Unterläßt er es, dann verzichtet er auf den Schutz der Gottheit. Böse Geister und Krankheit gewinnen Macht über ihn, und die Amulette aus wilden Hunds- und Leopardenzähnen können ihn auch nicht mehr schützen.

Von Zastrow, B. / Vedder, H., 1930. Die Buschmänner. In: Schultz-Ewerth, E. / Adam, L.: *Das Eingeborenenrecht. Sitten und Gewohnheitsrecht der Eingeborenen der ehemaligen deutschen Kolonien in Afrika und in der Südsee*. Bd. 2. Stuttgart: Strecker & Schröder, pp. 399-435.

p. 409: Noch ein weiteres Grenzzeichen findet sich in dieser Gegend, die sogenannten Heisebgräber. Es sind dies 6-7 m lange, 1,5 m breite und 0,75 m hohe Hügel, die langen Gräbern ähneln und aus mittelgroßen Steinen bestehen. Sie finden sich gewöhnlich in Bergsätteln. Mit Gräbern haben sie aber nichts gemein. Jeder vorübergehende Eingeborene, gleich, ob Buschmann oder Herero oder Hottentott, wirft, wenn er vorübergeht, einen Stein auf das sogenannte Grab, um damit dem Geiste der Gegend zu opfern. Findet er keinen Stein, so nimmt er wenigstens ein Blatt oder klopft seine Tabakspfeife aus. So sind die Hügel entstanden. Der Name Heiseb ist eine Abkürzung von Heisi 'eibib, einem Geist, an den die Nama glauben.

p. 421: Man geht in großem Bogen um die Gegend, wo ein Grab ist. Kommt ein Buschmann aber unvermutet an einem Grabe vorbei, so nimmt er einen Stein und legt ihn darauf. Das ist ein Gruß für den Toten. Man macht dadurch sein Grab noch sicherer vor den wilden Tieren.

Wandres, C.F., 1913. Die Religion der Hottentotten. Evangelisches Gemeindeblatt. Nachgedruckt in B. Voigt, *Lesebuch zur Heimatkunde von Deutsch-Südwestafrika*. Stuttgart: Strecker & Schröder.

p. 78: Dieser Heitsi-eibib-Dienst war allgemein. Wir finden auch in unserem Lande vom Süden bis zum Norden die sogenannten Heitsi-eibib-Gräber. Noch heute werfen heidnische Naman und Bergdaman beim Vorbeigehen an diesen Steinhäufen kleine Steinchen als Zeichen der Verehrung auf sie. Die Sitte ist so fest eingewurzelt, daß selbst die christlichen Eingeborenen beim Besuche der Friedhöfe eine Handvoll Sand auf die Gräber ihrer Großen werfen. Ich habe auch gesehen, daß sie diese Ehre den Gräbern ihrer verstorbenen Missionare erweisen.

Wikar, H.J. (1779). Bericht aan den Weleedelen Gestrengen Heer Mr. Joachim van Plettenbergh... (MS). In: Godée-Molsbergen, E.C., 1916. *Reizen in Zuid-Afrika in de Hollandse Tijd*. Vol. II: *Tochten naar het Noorden 1686-1806*. Lindschoten Vereeniging 12, pp. 78-138.

p. 104: In 't groote Nomakkoaland, anderkant de Bokkerivier is 2 groote reye met grafte na haar bedeyding zeer gereguleert in een linie staande. Daar, zeggen zey, heeft *Tzoekoab* of God in de oude tyden volk begraven, en alle die daar voorbygaande moeten een takkie van een groene bos breeken, en op de grafte goeyen, anders krygen zy zwaare ziekte in haar land.

In: Mossop, E.E., 1935. *The Journal of Hendrik Jacob Wikar (1779) with an English Translation by A.W. van der Horst, and the Journals of Jacobus Coetsé Jansz (1760) and Willem van Reenen (1791) with an English Translation by E.E. Mossop.* Van Riebeeck Society 15.

p. 95: In Great Namaqualand beyond the Bakke River, as they tell me, there are two long rows of graves arranged very regularly in a straight line. They say *Tzoekoab* or God buried people there in olden times and all who pass by must break a twig from a green bush and throw it on the graves, otherwise a serious disease will break out in the country.

Willoughby, W.C., 1928. *The Soul of the Bantu.* London: Doubleday, Doran & Co.

p. 288: ... that the Wawanga, in the Elgon district of Kenya Colony, have little shrines which seem to fall into three classes: Msambue, Mukurru, and Were. Msambue consists usually of three stones put up to the male ancestors, with a miniature hut erected over them. The place for this shrine is facing the door of the chief wife's hut – the hut which will be the burial-place of the head of the house... Mukurru is the stone erected to the maternal spirits; it is usually to be found under the verandah of the chief wife's hut – that is, where women, children and unmarried males are buried... Were is a high god, of whom more must be said in a future volume. The place selected for his stone is usually just off the pathway leading to the village. As a rule, only one is put up; but when a Kavirondo crosses the Malaba River for the first time, he takes a stone from the bed of that stream and deposits it alongside Were's stone. It appears that the sacred stones in all these shrines are oblong in shape, but it is not clear whether they are set up like little pillars or laid flat like the pebbles in Karanga shrines.

Zuure, B., 1929. *Croyances et Pratiques Religieuses des Barundi.* Bibliotheque Congo No. 22. Bruxelles.

p. 178: Recettes populaires pour s'attirer la bonne chance ou pour se preserver du Malheur.

Ceux qui sont en route pour aller visiter un parent ou ami, cherchent une petite pierre, la déposent sur un coussinet en herbe et placent le tout sur le bord de la route, de préférence sur une termitière s'il y en a. Avec la pointe de la lance ils tirent une ligne sur la terre en disant la formule magique ... (garde-nous de la nourriture, pour que nous arriverons avant qu'ils aient fini de manger).

Appendix:

Excerpts from my interviews in Afrikaans

1) Bernhardine Khoe-aos, Usakos

I asked for Haiseb – they told right away about *Haiseb //kho//khob*. In the [very] old time the old people prayed there, when the old people passed by they only put stones there. They could not pass without doing so.

2) Ouma Christina and Constantia //Hoebes (47), Usakos

Ouma: Each person had to throw a stone. It was perhaps a holy site.

CH: When we were children we were afraid of playing there. The adults said we would be punished if we did so.

Ouma: People in the olden days had prayed there (not clear whether at Heitsi-eibeb grave or to Haiseb in general).

3) Kalista Howoses and elderly neighbours, Okombahe

There is nobody in the grave, we just throw the stones on it, but Haiseb was our god.

We just throw the stones, we do not speak. When you come back you throw stones (again?)

When they come to this tomb of the old time they take two white stones and without saying a word throw them on the tomb and go on, just as the old people had done.

(Spoken in the present tense but most likely referring to the past)

4) Moses Seibeb, Okombahe

When you pass by such a *Haise //kho //khowos*, for instance in the Erongo mountains, you take a stone and a stick and throw it on the heap... Yes, they pray, for they know it is the *//kho //khowos* of the god. Then they go on. A person prays that Haiseb may give a good journey, that he will not meet with any mishap. And this will become true.

5) Johanna //Naoses, a visitor who translated, Kalista Howoses, Okombahe

We prayed there. We did not say it was God but said it was Haiseb. We did as the grown-up

people did. We were given stones and put them down on the heap. We did not look back, we just put down and went on. We did not pray. We just put down the stone, threw it down, this was our prayer. Then we went on without looking back. ... They went on. For now they had asked to get something. Then they saw perhaps: there ahead lies a zebra or perhaps a gemsbok or there lies a koedoe, and then they butchered it and ate. For they had asked for it with the stone (“want hulle het nou klaar gevra met die klip”). – So, when you throw a stone there, then you wish that later you’ll get something? – The stone which is thrown there, this stone means that the person who had put it down, be it a child or an adult or an old man, may get something in return, whatever it may be, that he must get it.

We did not build these things. They had been built. By Haiseb. And when I pass by then I have to make my contribution, just like the collection to which we contribute today in the church. – You cannot build new ones. – They did not make extra visits to the cairns. They were at the roads and paths which they used.

6) Helena Namases, Okombahe

You may not take a stone from the heap and throw it on it again but have to take another one. When you look for stray cattle or donkeys, then, while throwing the stone on the heap, you say: “Show me where my donkey is or where my cattle are!” Then you will get it. You do not make an extra visit to the heap of stones to ask but when you come to a heap of stones while looking for the stray animals then you throw a stone and pray.

7) Aaron Tsameb, Okombahe (but coming from the east of the country)

When you come to such a heap of stones then you may not pass by, you first have to take a stone and put it there. Then you will end happily. If you do not do so, then you’ll take the wrong path and lose your way and will die.

Other man: Then you’ll become blind [see not well] and have no luck. If you do so and throw a stone you will be lucky and find your way well.

People only asked at the cairns when they passed by but did not go extra to bid there.

Aaron Tsameb next day (!)

In the olden days when the men went hunting the women went extra to the cairns and threw stones or twigs on them. And tobacco. - Where did they get tobacco in the olden days? – In the bushes, it had grown wild [wild dagga?]

They had gone to the cairns and had prayed: “Lord, our god Haiseb, help us, we are hungry, let us get meat!” So the old people did but Aaron himself did not. He was taught so while he was a child.

8) Petrina #Neis, Okombahe

In the olden days, did the people pray to Haiseb? – Yes, yes, yes, at the the *//kho //khowos*. My mother did so, too. At the road near Khachab and Okombahe. There were many of these heaps of stones. My mother came there and me, we two, and my mother prayed from all her heart. – What did she pray? – “Ti Elotse, my dear lord, ti îtse, my father!” – Did she say so? When they passed by the stones? – Yes, mother sat down and prayed. Then she took a little tobacco and a little bit of food, everything, and put it down. Then we went on. – The heaps of stones are always at the path. – Did the people go to these heaps and prayed there when they were ill or the wife did not get children, things we ask for today in the church? – I do not know these things from the old time, I only know Our Father.

9) Pastor Paul Pieters, Gibeon

They were perhaps graves in Haiseb’s time. *Haise //kho*. When you go to the veld, at places where the old Nama lived, there you see the heaps of stones. The Witboois [who immigrated in the 19th century] do not know them. The people did not go and pray there. Not here. The grave is perhaps a grave of some member of the family.

What is “Heitsi” in the name “*Heitsi //khob*”? *Heitsi //khob* is the heap of stones, but what Haiseb is you better ask the black people in the north, the Damara. We Nama do not know.

10) Swartbooi family on the Kalk, Pastor Petrus Kimm

No, here you do not throw stones on the heaps. We only do this at burial places. Say, when you come to the cemetery then you take a stone and throw this – of course not on every grave but only on the graves of your family or so. You take also sand, not only stones. This is a kind of greeting. You do so even a long time after the funeral, after ten years, twenty years. Just when you pass by the place.

11) Margarita Harageis, Mariental

This part of the country’s people say that Tsûi//goab formerly was the god, the Damara say Haiseb. There are stones. When you pass you throw twigs on them, you throw stones on them,

the heaps have to be very high. This is for the god whom always a present was given. It is a sacrifice, a sacrifice. When they pass by such a place, if they are ten people or how many, each of them must stop and throw stones. Then they go on. When they do not find stones then they must throw twigs. The twigs must be piled so high. After that they prayed. This is for Haiseb. Nama mense say Tsûi//goatse. But I do not know how they prayed to Tsûi//goab. .. There are no such heaps around... The heaps are at the paths.

12) Evangelist Jacobus Byl (Tseib from the south of the country), Mariental

Ho tsi //khob. This is a superstition which has come from the south. It was the time when I was a little school boy. My mother had good relations with suster Minna Sachs of the church and Christian life at home. But when we were out in the veld she followed the old superstitions. We went to fetch firewood in the mountains west of Keetmanshoop. And there I got a threshing because I did not throw sand on a *Ho tsi //khob*. This is a heap of stones, it looks like a decayed tomb. Now, there you always have to throw sand. There you always have to do what the adults have done. It is as if they get into a conflict (verwarring) with the spirit or what this may be, perhaps somebody who is dead here and has to be honoured. And now I just walked past it while I had my arm full of firewood. She noticed it. She struggled along with her arm full of wood to throw sand on it, too. But I walked on. Now there is a horn snake (horingman-slang), it lies right at the waterbag when we rested in the shadow of a tree. Now I first had to get my threshing. Well, this was because I did not honour the *Ho tsi //kob*. I should have thrown sand on it. Therefore this mishap awaited us here.

People did not pray there. But it was the habit to be quiet for a little while and look at the place. – They threw sand on the heaps of stones. Some women also cut off a little bit of their dresses and gave it there. It was a sacrifice which was given. – Did they regard this as a sacrifice? – I think so today. I don't know what they have thought at that time. I think it was an offering which they gave for this is an adoration or honouring what they did. Yes. Sometimes, even when there was only a little bit of water and the sun burnt so hot and we children were so thirsty as it was in the time of the wild raisins, nevertheless they sprinkled some of the water on the stones. – They did not take anything along from home to put there. - *Ho tsi //khob*. This means: where I find you I bury you. *Ho* means “find, get”.

13) Tina /Uiras and ouderling Simon Lambert, Mariental

SL: These cairns are a monument. This is just the same kind of monument as the one which the people set up when they left Egypt and went through the Jordan River. Then every one had to take a stone and put it there when they came to dry ground.

TU: We read in the Bible: they put stones together. [See Joshua 4]

14) Elias Gaoseb, Okombahe 1987

There were the heaps of stones when they went out for hunting. If they were ten men, each of them threw a stone on it. They say that this is for luck. You cannot pass without throwing a stone.

15) Magdalena Seibes, Karibib 1993

I was still a little child and also threw a stone on it when we passed by, we all took another stone and threw it on *Haiseb se //kho //khowos*. The stone heaps had become so high. But now the belief (Christianity) has come and people stopped Haiseb things.

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