

or elsewhere that I have claimed that the Bertus are the direct descendants by consanguinity of the Vandals. I do consider, however, that the Bertus and Tuareg are remnants of tribes which were Vandalised or dispersed by the Vandals, Byzantines or Moslems.

What became of the large Jewish population settled near Philæ or the Automoli is merely conjecture, and I do not propose to connect either of these migrations with non-negroids in East or West Africa.

The Falasha of Abyssinia apparently represent the remnants of a Judaicised people who refused to accept Christianity at the hands of Frumentius. Whether the Semitic ruling race were the descendants of the Habash (company of Jewish merchants) whose boasts of the splendour of their king caused Queen Maqueda to visit Jerusalem I cannot say. Most of the records in Africa have been destroyed by Christian iconoclasts apparently.

From the earliest times we have records of invasions of Africa by non-negroids from the East via the Isthmus of Suez, and there seems to me to be no reason whatever why similar invasions should not have taken place across the Eritrean sea as the results of the conquests and dispersals of the populations of Syria, Northern Arabia, Mesopotamia and Persia during the past 4,000 years.

The destruction of the pagan temple at Meroe (near Shendy) by the Axumites is an historical fact and I should like to point out that in all my articles I only deal with displacement of existing populations by emigration or conquest. The effects of the commingling of these peoples are matters of history, but I fear that knowledge of the origins of the displaced peoples mentioned in my papers is outside my province.

In conclusion I beg to thank Mr. Hobley for his remarks, and if I can be of use, and the Editor so desires, I could write a brief paper summarising the early traditions and history of the Eastern Sudan and Axum.

Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR E. ROBINSON.

2 Brampton Road,
St. Albans,
9 February, 1929.

To the Editor of the JOURNAL OF THE AFRICAN SOCIETY.

ANIMALS IN AFRICAN STORIES.

DEAR SIR,

In a footnote on p. 159 of Miss Werner's article on "Some Bantu Linguistic Problems" occurs the statement that "in current Swahili, the word *watu* is seldom, if ever, opposed to *nyama*, (*binadamu* is used to express the distinction)."

[*Watu* = people. *Nyama* = animals. *Binadamu* = human being.]

This may be so among Coast Swahilis, but an experience of over a quarter of a century in Eastern Equatorial Africa enables me to state that up-country this is not the case. I made it a practice for years to converse with members of all tribes with whom I came into contact on the subject of their experiences with the animal world, both tame and wild. The subject would, of course, fill many articles. It is not perhaps generally known, for instance, that cattle herdsmen among both pastoral and agricultural tribes call each beast under their care by a separate name, and know the colour of each sheep or goat. These facts are elicited during the hearing of cases in court, particularly in the process of cross-examination.

As regards wild animals, all my informants agreed on the peculiar place held by the elephant and baboon. I cannot positively state

whether *all* members of the monkey family come within this classification, but the *nyani* certainly does. Both elephant and baboon are alluded to as "persons."

In 1902 I was crossing the Lailkipia plateau in elephant country with a big safari *en route* to the Samburu and Rendile grazing grounds. A sentinel elephant on our front trumpeted and the Abyssinian orderly of Capt. Barrett, who was in charge of my escort, remarked in Arabic "One person (*wahid nafas*) speaks." Later he informed Capt. Barrett that some Abyssinians held that elephants had been human beings in a previous existence. To the human intelligence of elephants all natives without distinction testify.

When I was stationed in Taita in 1911 there was at the Government Post of Voi a Dabida interpreter who had been gun-bearer to the late Mr. Harold Hyde-Baker. (The hit he held from his former master was endorsed, "This boy does not know fear.") In the course of many talks with him about men and animals he informed me quite definitely that it was a native belief that baboons formerly consorted with humans and spoke their language, but that owing to misbehaviour they had been driven out and had lost their knowledge of our speech and could now jabber monkey-talk only. Other readers of the JOURNAL can perhaps tell us what views are held by natives who live near the forests of the great anthropoid apes, but as regards the tribes who inhabit what is now known as Kenya Colony, I am quite clear that up-country *nyama* and *watu* are definitely distinguished in the stories told round the camp fire and on the march. The word *binadamu* is little known up-country, and that only to educated natives who can tell but few animal stories, and those only at second hand.

A Mnyamwezi who had once been an elephant hunter in the employ of King Mwanga gave me a most delightful description of how he and other hunters used to lie in wait near elephant drinking-places. When the animals were gorged with water they generally retired to the shade of the trees near by, when they offered a good target for the hunters awaiting them. He detailed in graphic language how on one occasion a big crocodile had seized hold of a calf elephant, and told of the screams of the victim, the furious onslaught of its mother's rescue by means of coiling her trunk around its body and the "pull devil, pull baker" contest which followed. The indignant trumpeting of the other members of the herd, the extent to which the water was churned up and lashed into foam in the *mélée*, and the tense excitement of the onlookers was vividly word-painted by the narrator and you may be sure the story lost nothing in the telling. Readers of the JOURNAL will be glad to hear that the calf was successfully rescued, though considerably scarified.

The late Mr. Arthur Neumann informed me once that he had shot a rhino with a bad ulcerated wound just above the first joint of one foreleg. He had come to the conclusion that this had been caused by the teeth of a crocodile. Some readers may remember the description and photos of the drowning of a rhino by a crocodile on the Thika River given by Mr. Fleischmann in his book several years ago.

Both Mr. Neumann and the late Sir Frederick Jackson possessed a store of most fascinating experiences of unique interest of the habits and peculiar traits of birds and beasts in East and South Africa. Both were reserved as regards their own exploits, but when once started their reminiscences were of compelling interest, and, of course, great value to naturalists.

Faithfully yours,
HARRY R. TATE.

Shillingstone, Dorset,
26.3.29.