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A
VOYAGE TO ABYSSINIA,
AND
TRAVELS

INTO THE INTERIOR OF THAT COUNTRY,
EXECUTED UNDER THE ORDERS OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT,
IN THE YEARS 1809 AND 1810;

IN WHICH ARE INCLUDED,
AN ACCOUNT OF THE PORTUGUESE SETTLEMENTS ON
THE EAST COAST OF AFRICA,
VISITED IN THE COURSE OF THE VOYAGE;

A CONCISE NARRATIVE OF LATE EVENTS IN ARABIA FELIX;
AND
SOME PARTICULARS RESPECTING THE ABORIGINAL AFRICAN TRIBES, EXTENDING
FROM MOSAMBIQUE TO THE BORDERS OF EGYPT;

TOGETHER WITH
VOCABULARIES OF THEIR RESPECTIVE LANGUAGES.

ILLUSTRATED WITH
A MAP OF ABYSSINIA, NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS, AND CHARTS.

BY HENRY SALT, ESQ. F. R. S. &c.

"Providentiam divinam summis laudibus celebrandum quod inter tot barbaros, inter tot Muhamme-
danorum persecutiones Ecclesiam Aethiopicam in Africa per tot secula conservaverit."
Speech of Ernest Duke of Saxony to Father Gregory. Vide Ludolfi Comment.

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No. IV.

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The animals domesticated throughout the kingdom consist of oxen, sheep (of a small black species), goats, horses, mules, asses, and a few camels. Two different species of dogs are commonly met with, one of which, like the paria dog of India, owns no particular master, but is attached in packs to the different villages; and the other is a strong and swift animal employed in the pursuits of the chase. The latter from its earliest age is taught to run down its game, especially guinea-fowls, and it is astonishing how expert it becomes in catching them, never for an instant losing sight of the birds, after it has once started them from their haunts. Tame cats are likewise to be found in every house in Abyssinia.

The wild animals, called *Ansissa Gudam*, inhabiting the forest or "*bar-raka*," form a very numerous tribe, of which a concise list, with their names in *Tigré* and *Amharic*, may tend to convey a sufficiently accurate idea.

The elephant, (*armaz*, T. *zohan*, Amh.) is found in all the forests bordering on Abyssinia, and is commonly hunted by the *Shangalla* for the sake of its teeth.

The camelopard, (*zeratta*, T. *jeratta ketchin*, A.) is an animal rarely to be met with, owing to the shyness of its nature, and from its frequenting only the interior districts uninhabited by man. Its skin forms an article of barter in some of the provinces, and an ornament made of the hair plucked from the tail is commonly fastened to the butt-ends of the whips, used by the inhabitants for the purpose of brushing away flies, which are exceedingly troublesome during the hot season. The whips themselves are formed out of the skin of the hippopotamus, and are called "*Hallinga*."

The only species of *Rhinoceros*, (*arve haris*, T. *aweer haris*, A.) which I could hear of, was the two-horned rhinoceros, similar to that found in the neighbourhood of the Cape of Good Hope; of which a very admirable

drawing is given by Mr. Barrow. This I believe was first described by Mr. Sparman. I myself never met with it alive, as it frequents only the low countries bordering on the *Funge*, or the wild forests of *Wojjerat*; but I procured several sets of the horns, fastened together by a portion of the skin; whence it appears that they have no connection whatever with the bone of the head, a fact which gives a considerable degree of credibility to the notion generally received among the natives of Africa, that this animal possesses a power of depressing or raising the horns at will. Bruce ridicules Sparman for mentioning this circumstance; but as the drawing given by the former is evidently very incorrect,* no great weight can be attached to his opinion. This animal is sought after by the hunters on account of the skin, which is much used in Arabia for shields; as also for its horns, which form a valuable article of barter throughout the East, being in great demand for making handles to swords and daggers. From the generally small size of the horns which are exported, it seems that the natives seldom kill the animal when at its full growth; Mr. Pearce has lately sent me one pair, however, the foremost of which measured two feet in length, and this was considered as the largest ever seen at *Antálo*.

The buffalo, (*gōshee*, T. *gōsh*, A.) is common in the forests of *Ras el Fil*. Its skin is employed for the purpose of making shields, in the construction of which much art is displayed; and a handsome one, well shaped and seasoned, will sell in the country for four and five dollars.

The Zebra, or *Zecora*, is found chiefly in the southern provinces. The mane of this animal is in great demand for making a particular kind of collar, which is fixed on state days, as an ornament, round the necks of the war-horses belonging to the chiefs. The privilege of wearing this ornament appears to be confined to only a few of the principal men, which may perhaps, however, only proceed from its scarcity. The wild ass, possibly the *Quacha*, (*erge gudam*, T.—*ebuda hiyah*, A.) is found in the same districts as the *Zecora*.

Lions, (*ambāsā*, T. A.) are occasionally to be met with in the sandy districts bordering on the *Tacazze*, and the killing one of them confers

* The drawing of Mr. Bruce appears to have been copied from Buffon's one-horned rhinoceros, and to have had the second horn annexed to it, as the two-horned rhinoceros wants the folds in the skin which are there given.

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great honour upon a chief, giving him the privilege of wearing its paw upon his shield.* Its skin is afterwards formed into a dress, very similar to that worn by the Kaffer chiefs in the neighbourhood of the Cape of Good Hope, though more richly ornamented.

Several species of the leopard tribe are found in the country. The common one is called nimeer in Tigre, nibr in Amharic—the second is the black leopard (gussela, T. and A.); the skin of which fetches a high price in the country, and is worn only by governors of provinces—the third, (muntillut T. wobo A.) appears to be an unknown species, and is said to be very fierce, occasionally carrying away children, and even men, when it accidentally finds them asleep: its face is described as resembling the human countenance. Of the lynx kind may be mentioned one nearly allied to the common lynx, (nibre arrar T.)—the lion cat, or caracal. (chon ambasa, T.)—the tiger cat, or grey lynx, (nibre gulgul, T. :)—and the wild cat, (akul dimmo T. yedeer dimmut A.) of which a drawing is given by Mr. Bruce; to these may be added the zibet, (turing dimmo,† T. ankeso, A.) which produces a quantity of civet that constitutes a considerable article of commerce.

Of the dog kind may be enumerated, the hyæna, (zibee, T. gib, A. :)—a small species of wolf, (wachâria, T. kabbaro, A. :)—a common sort of fox, (cõnsul, T. wolga, A. :)—the sea-fox, (wuggera, T. tokela, A. :) and the jackal, (akul mitcho, T. michael chitlo, A.) which last is an animal exceedingly destructive to poultry.

A great variety of the antelope kind is to be met with. The largest of these are the “kudoo,” (agayen, T.) found also in the interior of the Cape;—the harte-beest, (wéc'l, T. bolur, A.) the spring-bok, (sassu, T.) and another very small species, little bigger than a hare, found commonly also at the Cape and Mosambique, called in Tigre “madoqua.” Besides these are the wild goat, (taille budde, T. ebada fe-el, A.) and another species of antelope (wital, T.) probably allied to the chamois, which is found on the highest parts of the cold and mountainous districts of Samen.

Several species of monkey abound throughout the wilder districts, the

* Some similar custom to this probably first gave rise to the idea of quartering heraldic arms.

† This animal is erroneously said in Buffon to be called Kankan, in Ethiopia.

largest of which, (heveve T. gingero A.) is nearly allied to those found in Arabia. Another smaller species, with a black face, is named alesteo, in the Tigre, and tota, in the Amharic language.

The rest of the animals are as follows: the wild boar, (arowjah akul, T. eryeah, A.) the porcupine; (cõnsul, T. zurt, A. :) a species of cavy; (gihè, T. ashkoko, A.) nearly allied to that found at the Cape; a small grey species of hare, (muntilé T.) considered as *unclean* by the Abyssinians; the squirrel, (shele el hehoot, T.) the rat, (inchwa, T. ait. A.) with which the fields are over-run, and an undescribed species of makis, or lemur, (faunkus T. gueréza, A.) of which an imperfect drawing has been given by Ludolf. This last animal is about the size of a cat, and is commonly seen among the branches of trees; it has a long tail, faintly striped black and white, with white bushy hair at the end; the hair on the body is long, and of a clear white colour throughout, except on the back, which is marked with a large oval spot of short hair, of the deepest black. The skins of these animals are brought out of Damot and Gojam, and are commonly found in the markets, selling at about half a dollar each, every man in Tigre wearing a piece of this skin as an ornament on his shield. When a number of them are sewed together, it forms a very splendid covering for a couch, which I never met with except in the house of the Ras: one of these was presented to me by the Ras himself, which is at present in the collection of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent. The hippopotamus, (gomari,) and the crocodile, (agoos,) which abound in the lakes, as well as principal rivers in the country, have been before mentioned. A great many other species of animals are doubtless to be found in the country; but the above list contains the names of all that I either saw or heard of, during my stay there.

Among the larger birds indigenous to the country, is a great variety of species of the genus falco; the most remarkable of which, are the two described and drawn under the directions of Mr. Bruce. The larger of these he has termed Golden Eagle, by way of distinction. This is classed among the vultures by Dr. Shaw, and is called the “bearded vulture,” on account of the straightness of its bill; but its general appearance in a natural state, together with the vigour and animation which it displays, incline me to think it more nearly allied in the natural system to the eagles, and I should therefore be inclined to call it the African Bearded Eagle. The head of one,

- 77 RODRIGUEZ (Eugenio). *Descrizione del Viaggio a Rio de Janeiro della Flotta di Napoli*.

First edition. Engraved portrait, large folding map & large folding panorama. Small folio. Modern half leather, some very light dust soiling & occasional very light foxing. 106pp. Naples, Caro Batelli, 1844. £3500

Rodriguez provides an account not only of the voyage to Brazil but also of his time in Rio, which is most beautifully illustrated with a fine panorama and a large map. A Sicilian officer, he served on board one of the four Neapolitan ships which accompanied the Brazilian fleet carrying Pedro II's wife, the Empress Tereza Cristina to her new home in Rio. *Borba de Moraes II*, p. 743.

- 78 [ROSE (William Stuart)]. *Letters from the North of Italy*. Addressed to Henry Hallam, Esq.

First edition. 8vo. Particularly fine straight-grain red morocco, richly gilt, spines very, very slightly faded, with matching slip case. a.e.g. xii, 339; viii. 230pp. London, John Murray, 1819. £1200

With interesting remarks on the substitution of Papal and Austrian government in Italy by that of Napoleon. The free front endpaper bears the neat signature of the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

- 79 SALT (Henry). *A Voyage to Abyssinia, and Travels into the Interior of that Country, executed under the Orders of the British Government, in the Years 1809 and 1810...*

First edition. Eight maps, 2 vignettes & 27 plates. 4to. Nineteenth-century half morocco. xviii, 506, lxxvpp. London, Rivington, 1814. £1500

In January 1809 the traveller and archaeologist Salt (1780–1827) was sent to Abyssinia by the British government to report on the state of the country, and to cultivate friendly relations with the tribes on the Red Sea coast. "He was unable to proceed to the king at Gondar, but delivered the presents of ammunition and richly ornamented arms to the Ras of Tigre, whom he delighted with a display of fireworks. Salt again reached England on 11 January, 1811. He subsequently received an affectionate letter from the Ras: "How art thou, Hinorai Sawelt? Peace to thee, and may the peace of the Lord be with thee! Above all things, how art thou, my friend, Hinorai Sawelt?" (DNB).

The plates show views, costumes, portraits, architecture as well as some of the works of art of the region. *Gay*, 2683.

boards, minor wear to outer margin of text, internally clean. The whole in a half morocco box. [8], 136, [2]; [8], 111; [6], 136, [1]; [6], 123pp. Nounqme [Godthaab, Greenland: Printed at the Inspectorate Press by L. Moller], 1859–1863. £25,000

This series of volumes of collected Greenlandic folktales, printed on the first permanent press to operate there, and illustrated with remarkable woodcuts prepared by a native Greenland artist, must rank among the rarest and most extraordinary of exotic imprints.

Although ephemeral pieces had been printed on a small hand press in Greenland as early as 1793, the first real press was brought there by the enthusiastic Danish Crown Inspector for Southern Greenland, Hinrich Rink, in 1857. He began his career as an administrator based at the Moravian mission at Godthaab, on the southwest coast of Greenland, and used the press to produce both official notices and literary works. Rink was determined to collect legends and folktales of Greenland natives and publish them, an ambition achieved in these four volumes published over a five year span. All of the letterpress was printed in a small, unheated workshop next to Rink's house, mostly executed by Lars Moller.

Rink collected oral tales from throughout Greenland, although mainly in the southern area he administered. The remarkable oral tradition of the Eskimos, polluted by few outside influences, stretched back to the early Middle Ages. Many of the stories, especially in the first volume, describe the clashes between the Norse and the Eskimo. Rink recognized that some of the tales existed in the realm of pure myth, but that others represented recollections, passed from one generation to the other, of events of many centuries earlier. In the preface to the third volume Rink sets out his theories on the tales, laying the foundation for scholarship on the Greenland Eskimo. All of the text is given in both Greenlandic and Danish.

The most amazing aspect of these books are the illustrations. In the first two volumes these were supplied by an Eskimo named Aron of Kangeq, a sealer and walrus hunter who lived at the Moravian mission at the small trading station of Kangeq. Aron was stricken with tuberculosis (which was epidemic in Greenland in this era), and confined to bed. Having heard of his raw artistic talent, Rink supplied him with "paper, coloured pencils, and the necessary tools for woodcutting." Thirty of these, about half of them hand-colored, appear in the first two volumes. Aron illustrated the myths. As Oldendow says, "With his fertile imagination Aron drew men in violent motion... he depicts the legendary world of the Greenlanders with insight and ability... He makes us understand the vastness, loneliness, and weirdness of the majestic Greenland landscape and evokes the soul of the country as the ancient Eskimos have known it..." Indeed, Aron created pictures of remarkable power, all the more extraordinary for the circumstances of their production. In the third volume Lars Moller, the printer, supplied a series of illustrations of Greenland life created on the first lithographic press in Greenland.

This set is notable for containing two folding maps not regularly issued with the set, but published to be distributed separately. Both were prepared by S. Kleinschmidt, and are lithographic maps showing the fjords around Godthaab, with accompanying letterpress text. These maps are extremely rare in their own right.

Needless to say, Rink's volumes were produced in small editions, and the attrition of the Greenland climate could not have aided their survival. They are today of the greatest rarity. An imprint, and ethnographic document, of stellar importance. *cf. Knud Oldendow (The Spread of Printing... Greenland), Amsterdam, 1969, pp. 39–44.*