

two different types, one of which was probably Mediterranean. If a Mediterranean tongue was spoken by some of the ancient Sumerians and by the proto-Egyptians from whom it descended to the Automoli, any connection between the languages would be explained and the few Aramaic words in Borneo may be merely loan-words the result of subsequent trading intercourse in Solomon's time.

In conclusion, the writer wishes again to suggest that we must judge the actions of older empires by our own and when we consider how English and Christianity have spread to races with hardly a drop of English blood in their veins, we may expect moon goddess worship and ancient dialects to be found amongst races not connected by blood with the nations from which they learn their religion and language. Also from the old world civilisation, adventurers and traders would have made their way into the unknown even as Europeans have done recently. Here in Kenya and Uganda on the borders of an old time civilisation, we may well expect to find traces of its influence, and when we consider the difficulties of mass migrations owing to desert and drought we need not expect to find any vast influx of alien blood amongst the indigenous savages, but only the vague memories of religious teaching and language, which a few explorers and traders bore southwards from their civilised home. The peculiar physique tradition and language of the Masai-Nandi however point to an actual influx of alien blood and the most likely source of which history tells us is the Automoli of Herodotus, but even they were probably $\frac{1}{2}$ negro, so that the strain of Mediterranean blood in the Masai-Nandi is only small. Judging by the analogy of the local fauna and flora, we should expect to find the human race in this area essentially African with a few immigrants from Eurasia. Physically this appears to be the case and any theory of racial origins must be based on physical as well as linguistic and traditional evidence.

To The Editor, E. A. & U. Nat. Hist. Society.

Dear Sir,—

I wonder if you will allow me to make a few comments on Mr. Cardale Luck's paper on the "Origin of the Masai" and the authors he quotes; not with the idea of criticising its theme for I cannot pretend to Mr. Luck's patience and erudition, but to try and remove some exaggerated and even erroneous ideas about the Nandi and so-called Lumbwa.

I must give you my excuse for this request, viz.:—that I have lived 16 years almost continually amongst the Kipsigis (Lumbwa) and have been fond of wandering on foot in their Reserve and accepting

their hospitality. Having always liked and respected this people I have reached a state of intimacy which few Europeans care to with natives of East Africa and I myself would not except in the case of the Nilotic tribes, who seem to differ from the other tribes in some subtle way which one can only describe by saying that they seem more gentlemanly.

I have not made a study, in the scientific sense, of the Kipsigis; but I fancy I have considerable understanding of the mentality of the people. It is now many years since I gave up the use of Swahili entirely for I believe the only way to obtain a real understanding of any people is to speak their language every day for years.

One seems to notice a tendency in many books on Native Customs a tendency to approach them with a bias due to previous reading and the desire to and expectation of finding certain customs and certain meanings in their beliefs and customs. Frequently there are simple explanations of names and customs, etc., which should not be entirely neglected even though there may be abstruse and more exciting possible origins. Asking questions as to customs, beliefs, etc., especially in a foreign and crudely spoken language is hardly reliable. To get the nett results one must experience sympathetically the customs and beliefs as they crop up spontaneously.

Tribal Names.

The two very similar tribes known to Europeans to-day as Lumbwa and Nandi were not so long ago a single tribe calling themselves "Kipsigis" as a whole but called by the Masai "Elumbwa". The Masai on the other hand were and are still known to the Kipsigis as "Ikwopek". A little more than 100 years ago perhaps, that is in the time of the great grandfathers of the present old men, the whole tribe of Kipsigis moving Southwards across country occupied by the Masai, probably the present Uasin Gishu country, accidentally got split into two by a wedge of Uasin Gishu" (Masai) living in the Kipchoriat (Nyando) valley. One section moved westwards to the north of that valley and the other crossing the head of the valley found it occupied by Masai. They apparently halted first at a hill, 10 miles along the present Lumbwa Kericho road, which has retained the name of "Diluapsigis." "The hill of Kipsigis." Finding the Masai in strong possession of the valley they proceeded South and West ousting the Sirikwa and Kosopek (Kisii) who were in possession. It was many years before the Maasai were driven out of

* Page 169, *Natural History Journal*.

the Kipchoriat valley separating the two halves of the Kipsigis tribe and when this finally occurred, the two sections had already become somewhat differentiated, a difference which was perpetuated by the difficult nature of the Kipchoriat gorge between them.

After the separation the Northern Kipsigis began to be called "Chemngal(ek)". The reason given by old men of the Kipsigis (whose people have been in touch with the Nandi continually) is ready and simple though of course it may not be correct. At the time of the separation the elders of the section of the tribe which went North were fond of standing up on the rocks and haranguing the people (talking a lot literally) *Kikocham kotelel en goinwek barak sikomwai ngalek chechang*]

Ngaliot (singular) = word.

Ngalek (plural) = words, news, talk, conversation.

It is *very* commonly used of persons who have too much to say or as we say colloquially "hot air." And it seems to have been considered that the elders had "too much talk."

Corresponding to the Maasai word Elmegi the the Kipsigis apply the word Lemek (sing Lemindet) only to uncircumcised tribes, i.e., all the Kavirondo tribes but not to the Kikuyu and Kisii.

From their name then and their present numerical superiority it would seem that the Kipsigis (Lumbwa) are the main section of the tribe. I would suggest that there is no more reason for calling them Lumbwa than there is for calling the Maasai Ikwop, or the Jaluo Lemek. Might we not then call them by their proper name of Kipsigis. It would be very interesting if Mr. Luck could find a derivation for the word. The root "Sigis" means, Kick, but is not thought by the people to have anything to do with the proper name. If one asks why they are called Kipsigis they will reply "Why is an Elephant called an Elephant."

II. SUNWORSHIP.

It may interest Mr. Luck to know that Asis (ta)* has other names which are only used in the sense of God and not as Asista is used for the actual sun in the everyday sense. These names are "N'golo" and "Chebtalil." Their derivations I do not know (c.f. the Elephant reply above).

Mr. Luck is correct in thinking that special woods and scented ones at that were used in the sacred fire at the "Kapkorosit." Being no botanist I can only give the Kipsigis names for them.

The generic name for all plants and woods used at ceremonies is "Korosek." The one chiefly burnt at the Kapkorosit is (1)

* Pages 160-162, *Natural History Journal*.

Segejuwet (or Chegechewet), a plant about 6 ft. high with rather a climbing habit. It has bluish pink rosettes of flowers and strongly scented leaves. The sacredness of cowdung seems a little doubtful, for naturally amongst a pastoral people it is used for a great variety of domestic purposes, as also is goat and sheep dung.

The quotation from Mr. Ward's article on the "Kapkorosit" rather gives the idea that the festival is still celebrated. It is about 22 years or so since the last Kapkorosit (which used to be roughly annual and held during any month but August) was held. The occasion of its abandonment was the building of the military road from Lumbwa Station to Kericho. Possibly the people thought it was no use praying to God after that, for they say "we were scattered and families separated."

As to the orgies and debaucheries† so often referred to by Europeans, without, I think, sufficient evidence, I wish to say most emphatically that I have never been able to hear of them or find them amongst the Kipsigis. At the Kapkorosit, for example, which I take is one of the "high places" Mr. Luck refers to, cohabitation during the day and night of the festival was strictly prohibited, man and wife could not sleep together.

To say that "practically unrestricted free love exists" amongst the Kipsigis is most misleading. It is very difficult for Europeans to believe that when men and girls before initiation live freely together cohabitation is not the rule. It is nevertheless a fact that about 75% of unmarried girls are virgins. Nearly every girl has her sweetheart and sticks to him and more often than not is married to him after she comes out of the six months initiation unless he happens to be too poor and even then there are recognised ways of overcoming that impediment.

Considering again the statement that "they take particular trouble not to cover themselves before girls and unmarried women."* It had already been stated in the same paper that it is the custom of the men to go naked, *i.e.*, it is natural to them (and their womenfolk) and so the fact of nakedness is not felt by them as it is by people accustomed to be clothed. Therefore to say that they take *particular trouble not* to cover themselves is hardly appropriate. Rather does it seem to them and to those familiar with them that they take "particular trouble" to cover themselves before married women (all grown-up women are *ipso facto* married women except a few outcasts.

An example of the effect of point of view may be apropos. When the Kipsigis see for example a picture advertising gramophones of

† Page 156, *Natural History Journal*.

* Page 156, *Natural History Journal*.

men and women dancing they think it is indecent. If Victorian women saw our present day dress and behaviour or some of our illustrated papers what would they think of us, even though they are of the same race?

The Kipsigis-Nandi have faults enough without our exaggerating them.

III. THE CHEMOSIT.

Amongst the Kipsigis one finds no belief that the Chemosit is a devil or spirit or god or man. The only reference to its being like a man is that some say that at a distance it looks like a huge man because it stands up on its hind legs. Even those who say it has only one leg say that it has no arms and that its footprint is something between that of an elephant and a rhino and insist very strongly that it is only an animal. A few old men even say they have seen it at night and give descriptions—very wild ones but all quite unlike man or spirit, for they include fur, whiskers ("wawechnik" = whiskers or antennae of animals and insects only). The crutch of Hollis' book is quite unknown here for they say how could an animal use a crutch. A curious detail is that the urine of the Chemosit is said to be so evil smelling that no man can stay near it. All the young men deny having seen it or knowing what it is like, but love to tell children and unsuspecting Europeans fancy tales of it.

The name Chemosit however might not be said at night just as in the case of the Chief Witch Doctor. At night it was given another name, viz., "Gononet," of which I do not know the derivation. Chemosit is a fairly common man's name and it is also used by mothers to make their children obey, *e.g.*, "If you don't eat your food the Chemosit will come and eat you."

Iletnemie and Iletneya are quite unknown to the Kipsigis. Ilet, the lightning, however, is universally and firmly believed to be a huge birdlike animal.

Yours, etc..

I. Q. ORCHARDSON.