

## **In Search of the ‘Black Bamboo’: The Myth of African Penile Superiority and the Dialectics of Sex Tourism in Kenya**

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In contemporary Africa, transitional movements has become significant to identity formation. Travel is not only a sensory experience of sights and sounds, but also a space wherein individuals may be freed from the socio-cultural norms and expectations that govern interpersonal interactions and everyday behaviour. As a liminoid space, travel often incorporates moments of heightened sociability and corporeality. Subsequently, in the backpacking community hedonistic desires and touristic impulse tend to rule in equal measure. More accurately, at the end of the cold war, female tourists from Europe, USA, North America, Australia and Japan, increased their flights into Kenya driven by an erotic nostalgia for the ‘beastly’ black Africans warriors specifically the Maasai Samburu and Luo whom they believed to possess gigantic penises. The image of tall, slim bodies, dressed in red, wearing spears and carrying clubs led to a stereotypical ‘aesthetization’ of the of these men. How did such myth come to be invoked into the mind of such tourist, what are some of the narratives generated within such relationships especially from the ‘natives’ as well as tourists? This paper explores the significance of some of the more hedonistic elements of the backpacking culture as they are witnessed in ethnography, relayed in travel narratives and evoked in the media. In this paper, I will also seek to investigate the intersection between various embodiments and sexualities in the context of tourism in a historical perspective. In doing this I will seek to review of the past record of societal beliefs about the Maasai, Samburu and Luo sexuality and reveals an attitude that paints these Africans as representing the sexual instinct in its raw state. Moreover, the folk view or the myths surrounding the sexuality of African is often hard to distinguish from what appears in the scientific literature. I will explain the extent of myths that the African man's penis is larger than the penis of the white man; that African men are obsessed with the idea of having sex with white women and so on