

## **670 The Man Who Understands Animal Languages**

(previously The Animal Languages).

A grateful snake gives a man the power to understand animal languages [B350, B491.1, B165.1, B216], and tells him that if he reveals the secret, he must die [C425].

Once the man hears animals talking and laughs. His curious wife insists on knowing why he does so [N456]. Worn down by her nagging, he is about to give in and tell her [T253.1]. Then he hears a rooster say how easily he rules his many wives, while the man cannot rule even his one wife [N451, B469.5, T252.2]. The man keeps his secret and does not tell her anything. Cf. Types 517, 671, and 673.

Combinations: 207 A, 671.

Remarks: Seemingly of Indian origin with European literary versions from the Middle Ages, e.g. *Gesta Romanorum* (nos. 55, 61, 84) and later in the Italian novella, see Girolamo Morlini (No. 71).