
Notes on African Geography

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with the existence of perpetual ground-ice, which doubtless exists in the northern parts of America as well as in Siberia. In Western Caledonia, the most northern position in which I have resided permanently, the mean annual temperature is considerably above the freezing point. Although in a pretty high latitude, it shares, in common with all positions on the W. side of the Rocky Mountains, perfect immunity from protracted cold. In this vicinity, therefore, the ground is never permanently frozen at any depth to which I have had access, either by digging or on inspecting the landslips that are occasionally formed.

VI.—*Notes on African Geography; communicated by Mr. MACQUEEN.*

I. *Visit of Lief Ben Saeid to the Great African Lake.*

LIEF BEN SAEID, apparently a very intelligent man, about forty years of age, and born in Zanzibar, of the Manmoise* tribe, states he has been twice at the Great Lake in Africa, for the purpose of bartering for ivory, and describes his last visit as follows.

He left Zanzibar in the month of September, 1831, and landed at a town called Boramy,† on the African main, situated a little to the southward of the south end of Zanzibar. After remaining there for some days, he left with a caravan, or kafila, of about five hundred persons. He had about seventy of his own followers; the rest consisted of returning Manmoises. The first day he travelled a distance of about 9 miles, on a plain road, where, at half that distance, they crossed a small river called Mazinga.‡ Putting up at the village of Qua, which is the principality of a tribe called Mazeamoo.§ The next day travelled, about the same distance, to Beonee;|| and the next day to a village called Ma Kunda¶ —during this journey crossed over a hill: next stage arrived at Konjee, and then at Moktanero, near which is a river about 200 yards broad, infested with alligators and hippopotami. The next night slept at Deejamora; the next stage passed under a high range of hills without vegetation, the road being sand, and which has been the case from the time they left the coast; passed Kedonda, and slept at Onegata, where two large rivers join; slept at Datomee. Passing between two high hills at this place there is another tribe called Koto.** Again slept at Zohgomero, where

* Mono-moézi.—Ed.

† Buro-maji, Buro-water.—Ed.

‡ The name Mazinga may be correct, but it is nevertheless to be suspected, since the tract described is inhabited by the Mazingea.—Ed.

§ Mozimo.—Ed.

|| Bióni.—Ed.

¶ Macunda.—Ed.

** N'cutu.—Ed.

there is a small creek or river; continued travelling for 6 days, through various ranges of hills, through the country of the tribe of Loamby. The next two days passed the town of Kesunga; their king is called Keringawarha, who is an usurper; the name of the tribe is Wamefee: * this is all a hilly country. From thence travelled 2 days to Marora; the king's name is Negaboo; the name of the tribe Osagara † (many sold in Zanzibar): at this place there are two rivers which irrigate the country, and food in plenty; there are also numerous running streams from the hills. From Marora in one day reached the Bahar (the river, viz. the Lufigi?): there is a large river, called Matoney, infested with hippopotami; travelled close to the banks of the river for 8 days, through the tribe called Yoaha: ‡ the country is hilly; and we were constantly falling in with villages, at which we slept every evening; when we got to Powaga. Travelled thence, through a plain country, on the banks of the same river for 5 days longer till we reached Osanga; from thence proceeded to Sanga in 3 days, leaving the river Matoney on our left hand, the hills were also all left to the south; and the other part of the country was perfectly level, principally sand and ironstone: thence travelled for 5 days through the tribe of Toomba; the country quite plain, and well populated—during the whole time from leaving the coast had no rain. From Toomba to Jangwera 2 days; thence to Sangara 3 days: no villages or people. Sangara forms the east limit of the Manumuse (Mono-moezi) tribe, and one of the kings lives there; from this to the lake is occupied by the Manumuse (Mono-moezi) tribe, which is under four independent sovereigns: the people are very honest and civil to strangers; no instance has occurred of ill treatment or injury. The road to the lake is plain, without hills. Sangara to Ganda 5 days, quite plain, country well populated, more so than before entering the Manumuse (Mono-moezi) country. Sheep eight for one dollar, bullocks four for one dollar; but they prefer a quarter of a dollar's value of cotton cloth. From Ganda to Shesha 3 days; here is a sultan or king: the appearance of the country as before. Hence to Sanjee 5 days; here another sheik or sultan: at this place there is an abundance of iron-ore—country quite level. From this latter place to Sagosee 2 days, country as before; thence Ogaree 3 days, where there is a very large river called Magrazie, with numerous hippopotami in it. From this place to the Grand Lake is 12 days, through a country called Oha, a plain level country: on the banks of the lake is the great Sultan of the Manumuse (Mono-moezi), whose minister's name is Kegaw; the appearance of the people near the lake is that of the Abyssinians. The whole time from the shore of Africa being 140

* Wamiva.—Ed.

† M'Sagara.—Ed.

‡ Wohaha.—Ed.

days, or $4\frac{1}{2}$ months, on the road; and during which time we travelled 62 days, at about the rate of 9 or 10 English miles daily; but I have no means of ascertaining the exact distance.

The extent of the Manumuse (Mono-moezi) country is about 2 months from N. to S., and from E. to W. $1\frac{1}{2}$ month. In standing on the banks of the lake it can be seen across, in the same manner as from Zanzibar to the main (which is 24 English miles). Several islands were observable in it. On leaving the African coast we travelled in a direction for the first month about two points S. of where the sun sets, and afterwards continued to travel exactly in the direction of the setting sun.

The river called Magrazie takes its origin from the lake, and disembogues itself into the sea between the rivers Lindy and Keelwa; and I am sure the rivers Lindy and Masoryre are branches from it. Across the lake there is a great trade of ivory, oil of a red colour, and slaves like those of Nubia. There is a trade carried on from the W. bank of the lake to the W. coast; it consists of white and blue cotton cloths, and some broad-cloths, which are bartered for ivory. The time taken to reach the W. coast from the lake is about 6 months. For two trassalors* of beads you get four of ivory; the beads costing about five dollars per trassala.

Never heard of the dwarf human species spoken of: the people near the lake are fairer than those near the coast. There is a great sea or swell on the lake when the wind blows fresh: and it is well known by all the people there that the river which goes through Egypt takes its source and origin from the lake. The banks of the lake are composed of sand-hills, thrown up by the waves; the water is very deep, with great quantities of fish. On the W. side of the lake the name of the tribe is Yoah; they are circumcised, and call themselves Mohammedans. Some of the boats are 6 fathoms long, very narrow, and without sails. The Manumuse (Mono-moezi) are pagans; and both sexes go nearly naked. Near the lake, and through the Mono-moezi country there are no horses or camels, but plenty of asses and a few elephants. In travelling in the country from the E. side to the lake there is no danger; and from the W., by paying a little to the different sultans, they would forward you with the greatest safety. During the whole distance the people with the caravan were healthy; they got plenty of good and cheap food and water. The houses on the road and at the lake are made of wood, and thatched with grass; no upper stories, nor is there any chimney. Dogs are very numerous and troublesome, some of a very large kind.

* Ferásalah, 1 farsalah = 20 rotl.—ED.

Does not know in what direction the great body of the lake extends, but thinks to the westward of S.

N. B.—The Masogra river, here * mentioned, is no doubt the Luffia or Cuavo, but named the Masogre or Masagora,† from the country of this name, which country is situated in $7^{\circ} 25'$ S. lat., and betwixt 36° and 37° E. long.

II. *Information obtained from Thomas Wogga, an African.*

THIS man is at present in this country: he had been previously, fourteen or fifteen years, on board of a British man-of-war; and liberated from slavery about the year 1815 or 1816. He is a native of a country which he calls Kimcoul; and which, as far as the accounts which he gives are correct, must be situated near the sources of the Tshadda, in about 10° N. and 18° to 19° E. He was exactly 68 days actually travelling from thence to Calabar, and always in the direction of the setting sun. From the rate at which he travelled, and the time occupied, he must have made good at least 10 geographical miles daily, if not more. He states that Donga was 6 days' journey, on foot, eastward from his country; that he had been there, his country having been engaged in war with the people of that district; that there were plenty of rivers, great and small, in the country of Donga; that they were not the same as the river in his country, but ran in an opposite, or rather in a southerly and westerly direction. He was very closely questioned about his knowledge of this place, and he always adhered to the statement that he knew it perfectly. He also stated that he had heard of a country called Ferttee, to the eastward of his country and of Donga. He gave the name of every place or town at which he halted in his journey to the coast. Gold and silver were abundant in Ferttee.

In his country, he says, there is a great river called Ayah, broader than the Thames. It comes from the E., and runs to the W. or the setting sun. Its course from his country passed first through a place called Komse, second Mongell, third Pambe, and fourth Mondell. In his way westward he passed several rivers, but all smaller, except one about midway; and they all ran in the direction of and to join the Great River. This river is joined on both sides by small streams. During the dry season the Great River is about 3 feet deep. There are no canoes on the Great River: the people either swim across it or pass it on rafts. During the rainy season there is plenty of hail; the children pick it up and put it in their mouths as amusement, as it makes them feel cold: it lies three or four hours on the ground before melting. Plenty of

* Where?—Ed.

† The name here intended is M'Sagara, in about 8° S. and 35° E.—Ed.

hills, some of them so high as to be always white with snow or hail. Rain sometimes incessant throughout the year; sometimes dry. Old people make rain fall—make fires and offerings to bring it. Many shooting-stars or comets: these run like serpents, and explode. This takes place before the kings die. Thunder and lightning very heavy, and very frequent. There are plenty of elephants and monkeys; the monkeys do no hard work. There are plenty of cows and horses, but these are never employed in work. There are plenty of sheep, goats, and tiger-cats. There is also plenty of fish in the rivers: both men and women catch them in nets; these nets are made of a kind of grass or hemp. There are plenty of crocodiles and alligators: the people eat them, and also the guana: sometimes the crocodile kills people in the river. There are plenty of large trees and plenty of brush. The houses are made round; they are built of mud, thatched all over, and have small fire-places. They have plenty of fowls. Each kind of stock live separately. They have plenty of Guinea corn and Indian corn; plenty of yams and sweet potatoes of a description resembling beet-root.

They have as many wives as they like: the king has ten, or more. They have many slaves, which are either bought or taken in war. There are also plenty of yellow and brown people—God made them as well as the blacks: the brown or red coloured people come with camels to buy slaves, &c.; these red people bring the camels in order to carry themselves and their goods. His country made war with different nations—one called Koome, another Korre, a third Komante, and a fourth Juke: the latter are marked like the New Zealanders. All these nations are black, and speak different languages. In his country they make images of wood and worship them: they also pray to stones. The common people build their images of clay. They also build a large image with stone; this image only the king and courtiers worship: they make him like a man, with a hole in one side in order to give him victuals to eat, consisting of flesh, fowls, &c.

Thomas Wogga is of a deep black colour, but without any of the real negro countenance, such as the flat nose, thick lips, &c. He is now considerably advanced in years, but when young must have been a good-looking man. His country marks are numerous and full. He describes the general features of his own county, and of those through which he travelled, with considerable clearness; but, like every other African black, he can give no explanation about names of places which are known to us from other quarters, or of geographical bearings and distances, with any precision, except as from E. to W., or from the rising to the setting sun, or by the sun being to the N. or the S. of the road.

The following is a more particular description of his route :—

	Days.
Kimcoul to Uppe . . .	1
Uppe to Auzilliga . . .	1
Auzilliga to Ocoom . . .	7 (long journeys.)
Ocoom to Mousookko . . .	4
Mousookko to Ungwa . . .	6
Ungwa to Uvangah . . .	30 (constant travel.)
Uvangah to Umblisse . . .	9
Umblisse to New Calabar . . .	10

Total . 68 days.

Uppe is 1 day from the great river Ayah. At Auzilliga there is a considerable river, but smaller than the Ayah: it runs westward to join the latter. At Ocoom there is a river, called Moniah, not so large as the Ayah. Ocoom is N. of the large river, and not far from it. Ocoom River not far from Great River. Plenty of yams and tobacco at Ocoom. There is no river at Monsookko, but plenty of water from springs. The women here have very large heads. There are large hills here, but not so large as those in his country. Plenty of brush. Ungwa is a large town, with a river 20 yards broad, but deep. There is no river at Uvangah: it is a large town, with plenty of bush in it and around it; there are many hills in its vicinity, some large and some small. Between Ungwa and Uvangah one river, not fordable; swam across it. No river from Uvangah to Umblisse; but the country is hilly, with plenty of water from springs and rivulets. From Umblisse to New Calabar the country is flat. In these journeys the people of the caravan carried each yams for their food.