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Extract Report on the Probable Geographical Position of Harrar; With Some Information
Relative to the Various Tribes in the Vicinity

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by the means of Lieutenant Barker's observations, was determined to be in lat. $9^{\circ} 34' 33''$ N., and by the protracted route is placed in long. $39^{\circ} 35'$ E. The boiling-point of the thermometer gives an elevation above the level of the sea of 8198 feet, corroborated by the mildness of the climate, the thermometer during August and September never having risen above 63° , and 46° having been the minimum.

Total—days' marches, 36 ; miles, 372 ; hours, 174.

VIII.—*Extract Report on the probable Geographical Position of Harrar ; with some Information relative to the various Tribes in the Vicinity.* By Lieutenant W. C. BARKER, I.N., attached to the Mission to Schwá.

SHORTLY after our arrival at Tajurra, a subject of the king of Shwá, Romeat Ullah by name, anxious to return to his native country, accompanied the mission as a horse-keeper. He gave me the following account of Harrar, together with a narrative of his journey thither, and thence to Zeilah, which I relate in his own words.

“ I am a native of Guburuah, a village situated about 2 miles to the N.E. of Aliu amba. About seven years ago I left my native country with a kafila of about 200 asses, these animals being used in preference to camels. The people of the kafila were principally natives of Harrar: they had many slaves with them.

“ We quitted Kuldás, a village about 14 miles to eastward of Ankóber (whither the Harrar kafila always resort), in the month of June. At the end of the second day's march we arrived at the banks of the Hawásh; crossing which we filled our water-skins, and proceeded two days without finding water. On the morning of the third day we came to a watering-place called Sirke or Sirge, where there are hot-springs. The third day after quitting these springs we arrived at Errur, situated in a place at the foot of the Galla hills, where there is a wadi with excellent water.”

The road thus far he described as passing through an uncultivated country, inhabited by wandering tribes of the Adáil, who subsist by plunder;—woe to the unfortunate straggler in these parts, for he is sure to be cut off. The Adáil in general bear anything but a good character; they are described as being exceedingly ferocious and bloodthirsty. For fear of them the kafila made two marches daily, or about 15 miles, until it arrived at Errur.

Errur is a place much resorted to by the surrounding tribes,

especially in the dry season. To the N. dwells the tribe of the Gurgurah, who are Mahomedans, and subject to the Essah Somauli; to the S. dwells the tribe of Argubah Galla; and to the E. the Nuli and Alla Galla—the former occupying the N. and the latter the S. side of the road to Harrar.

The Galla are generally pagans; there are, however, some few Mahomedans among them. From Errur to Harrar the road is over stony ground, tolerably level; guns might be conveyed by this road on their carriages. To continue the narrative of my informant:—

“On the morning of the fifth day after quitting Errur we arrived at Harrar, having travelled by daily marches of about 10 miles. We had water at each halting place; and the people we met with were very civil.

“I remained at Harrar and in the vicinity thereof for six years, during which period there were several battles fought between the Harrar people and the Galla, in one of which I was engaged on the part of the Emir, and received a spear-wound in my right cheek.

“Having determined to perform the hadj, I quitted Harrar with a kafila proceeding to Zeilah. The goods of the merchants and our baggage being carried on asses, we travelled slowly (for it was the hot season), marching about three hours, or 7 or 8 miles each day. We frequently had to carry water with us for two days. On the 20th day we arrived at Zeilah: thence I proceeded to Mecca; and, having performed the hadj, returned to Tajurah, intending to proceed to my native country through that of the Danákil.

“The Danákil tell you that the Essahaad Galla are thieves and murderers—do not believe them; I have seen them, and can therefore judge: the Danákil are bad people, and that you know.

“Having a little money, I shall become a trader; but God forbid I should ever pass through the country of the Danákil to Tajurrah.

“Inshúllah after the Ramadan. I shall go to Zeilah by way of Harrar.”

From Romeat Ullah's narrative the town of Harrar appears to be situated about 192 miles E. of Ankóber, and about 150 miles S.S.W. of Zeilah, in a verdant valley almost encircled by hills. It has a wall round it built of stone and mud, which is kept in good repair; its height is about 12 feet, and the thickness 3 feet, and in circumference 2 hours' quick marching.

There are five gates, viz. Esmá-din-burri—by this gate the Habesh kafila enters and departs; Suktal-burri, for the Arrusie kafila; Buddaru-burri, towards the Alla Galla; Argubah-burri, by which the Berbera kafila enters and departs; and Assum-burri, for the Zeilah kafila.

The Galla approach close to the town on the N. To the N.W. dwell the Nuli Galla; to the S. the Alla Galla—these two are very powerful tribes, mostly pagans; to the N.E. dwell the tribe of Giri Galla, who are Mahomedans; and to the S.E., towards Berbera, the tribes of the Jarsu, Babil, Bursub, Burtiah, and Gotti Galla—many of whom are also Mahomedans.

The houses of the Harrari are generally built of stone, and whitewashed, with flat roofs. There are, however, some few huts resembling those of Shwá. The emír and a few of the principal people have houses of two stories. There are many mosques, the principal of which is called El-Jamah: it has two tall minarets. The town is well supplied with water from numerous springs in its vicinity; there are no wells or springs within the walls.

The ruler of Harrar governs with the title of emír; the name of the present emír is Abu Bekr. The succession is hereditary. As is the case in Shwá, the male relatives of the reigning prince are said to be all confined in vaults, from which they are seldom allowed to emerge. Should the emír, however, at any time need their services, they are released, and frequently preferred to situations of great trust; but on the slightest suspicion that they are plotting against the government, or should they become too popular, they are speedily sent back to their vaults again.

The military force of Harrar is very small, consisting of from 150 to 200 matchlock men, 100 cavalry armed with long spears, 60 spearmen on foot, and a few archers. Insignificant, however, as this force really is, the matchlockmen alone render it far superior to that of the neighbouring tribes, who have a great dread of fire-arms; they have not even a single matchlock in their possession. The Galla are, however, said to be good horsemen, and frequently manage to surprise the Harrari when least expected: they have never, however, been able to enter the town; indeed, so great is their dread of the matchlockmen, they have never ventured to attack it. They do much mischief by carrying off the crops about harvest time (for the country for miles round is said to be highly cultivated by the Harrari) and by robbing the kafilas, for which it is said the emír retaliates severely by burning and destroying their villages.

In time of peace the Galla, before being permitted to enter the town, have all their arms but their jambir or cresi taken from them, which are lodged with the emír until they depart, and are then restored to them. The same practice prevails at Zeila with regard to the Essah Somauli.

Of the number of the population I could obtain no account; it must, however, be great, as the houses are said to be built very close together. The principal occupation of the people is that of

tilling the soil, which for several miles around is highly cultivated, producing coffee, wheat, jowari, barley, &c.; they also have a variety of fruits and vegetables. The *kaat* (a small plant, the leaves of which are said to possess an intoxicating quality, and of which the Arabs in Yemen, where it is also found, are exceedingly fond) is said to abound in great quantities. The ground is irrigated by artificial means from numerous springs or fountains, as my informant called them.

Coffee is the most important article produced; at least 2000 bales are yearly exported to the sea-coast, to the ports of Berbera and Zeila, and thence to Arabia and India; finally to the European markets, where it is sold as Mocha coffee.

Besides tilling the ground the men have but little occupation; the women, as in other Eastern countries, performing all the household work; there are, however, weavers, blacksmiths, and gold and silver smiths.

The dress of the inhabitants is similar to that of the inhabitants of Shwá, consisting of one long cotton cloth wound round the body and over the left shoulder; it is generally ornamented with a red border. None but hajis, and the emír and his family, with a few of the principal people, are permitted to wear turbans, the rest go bareheaded; all wear sandals, except the women. The emír dresses after the custom of the Arabs; he generally wears silk.

German crowns are current, but not plentiful, trade being generally carried on by barter. There is a small copper coin, called mahaluk, twenty-two of which are equal to a nominal coin called ashufie, forty of which latter are equal to one German crown. The mahaluk resembles the dewanni of Jidda; on the one side is inscribed in Arabic characters *La-illah il Ullah*, and on the reverse the name of the reigning prince.

Harrar may certainly be considered, for that region, a great commercial town. Kafilas are arriving from, or departing to, various quarters at all seasons: the principal are those which trade to Berbera, Zeila, Shorah Chercher, and Arusie: there are also smaller kafilas that trade to Amin, Ugadin, and other parts of the Somaui country.

There are three kafilas that depart yearly for Berbera between the months of October and March, occupying from 30 to 40 days on the road. Camels are used in this journey laden with coffee, jowari, ghee, ostrich feathers, &c.: they have also an article called wurs in Arabia, which was described to me as somewhat like saffron in appearance: it is used by the Arabs as an ointment for cooling the body; it is also mixed with flour and made up into cakes, which are said to be very palatable. They export also to Berbera slaves, both male and female, and large quantities of gum and myrrh.

In return they receive blue and white coarse cloths, Indian piece goods, European prints, silks, silk thread, shawls, red cotton yarn called shumlah, beads, zinc, copper wire, frankincense, and Murgut or Bokhur somúli (?).

The March kafila is the principal one. I was in Berbera in March, 1841, when it arrived: it consisted of about 2000 camels. I was informed subsequently that these did not all belong to Harrar, but that several of the smaller kafilas had joined company on the road.

There are three kafilas to Zeïla yearly; the articles of export and import being much the same as to and from Berbera. In addition, they also export to Zeïlah millet, wheat, beans, &c. &c.

Smaller kafilas trade almost monthly to Shwá, except during the rainy season. In former times a large kafila, called the Ebu, used to travel yearly, consisting of about 600 asses; but since the accession of the present emir the country has been in too unsettled a state to permit such a risk of property. I was given to understand that the kafilas at present go by stealth, as the emir is averse to their passing through the country of the Galla; but, as they generally return successful, nothing is said to them.

While we were residing at Ankóber, about the middle of August, a small party arrived from Harrar, with letters from the emir to Saheli Selasse. It is said these letters were requesting the assistance of his majesty "to keep the road clear." They set off on the 6th of September with the king's answer (which was said to have been favourable), and also with presents from him for the several chieftains on the road. They returned on the 11th, having lost the letters in attempting to cross the Hawásh: the party consisted of about ten men.

The exports from Harrar to Shwá are chiefly coarse blue cloth, red cotton yarns, &c.; in return they receive slaves, mules, horses, &c.

With the Arusie Galla the people of Harrar have also considerable trade. My informant resided there for five months. It is situated 10 days from a kafila, to S.W. of Harrar. Arusie is a large town, or rather encampment of the Galla, whither the several tribes resort, each governed by its own chieftain.

Between Arusie and Harrar, and at 3 days' journey from the former, flows the river Wábi, which is said to be as large as the Hawásh; its course runs to the S.E., through the country of the Somauli, towards the sea-coast.

Mr. Krapf kindly furnished me with the following information relative to this river, which he obtained from a native of Gurague, who says that there is a district called Wahbi, between his native village Ariuella and Dauro, where a river rises which has the name of the district. This river flows to the eastward through

the Galla tribe of Maroko; and then on the side of the Arusie Galla, another river, called Korke from the name of the district, also rises in the country of the Koortab near the lake Suai: this river, joined with another called Koka, falls into the Bohaia, with which the Wábi joins on the eastern side of Arusie. The farther course of the river is unknown, but it is certain that it does not join the Hawásh.

The articles of export to Arusie are beads, copper wire, blue and white cotton cloths, &c., for which they receive cattle principally, also kurabi and wurs.

Chercher is situated in the Galla country, 6 days' journey to S.E. of Ankóber, and days' journey from Harrar. The articles both of export and import are the same as Arusie.

The Harrari are rigid Mahomedans, paying strict attention to the fasts and ceremonies enjoined by that religion. There are said to be many mosques within the town, forty-four of which are the abode of oulieh (saints?), the chief of whom is called Alkadir. They are supposed to be the invisible defenders, not only of the town, but also to accompany the people in their expeditions against the Galla.

Were one to doubt their existence, the reply immediately is "How could we so long not only have *withstood*, but triumphed over the numerous forces of the Galla, had we not been assisted by the oulieh!"

Although the language of the Harrari bears an affinity to the Amharic, yet it is said they use the Arabic character in their writings. This, indeed, is not unlikely, as it is a common custom for the Mahomedans of Shwá to write the Amharic language in that character.

The climate is said to be similar to that of the Shwá, but not quite so cold.

There are no duties on exports, and even on imports the duty is but trifling, for one ass-load of cloth the duty is one tobe or dress, such as is generally worn by the people, consisting of about 30 cubits of white cotton cloth, which is generally one cubit wide. Three widths of 10 cubits thus form a dress.

For slaves they pay a duty of one frazil, or 28 pounds weight of zinc, which at Harrar is considered equivalent to two German crowns. I could not ascertain the number of slaves imported yearly, but it is no doubt considerable.

While at Ankóber I had an opportunity of confirming the account given above of the route from Shwá to Harrar, and thence to Zeila; for I met there with one Mahomed Said, of the tribe of the Myerteyn Somauli, who inhabit the coast to the eastward of Berbera. This man travelled from Zeila to Harrar, just after the hot season, on the coast. The following are the names

of the mahalla or halting-places: — Tacushah, Dohowanah, Wunabilli, Kurbutti, Dahbelli, Dahinanah, Elungirah, Elan, Jiggigir, Dullanulli, Amarah, Kuti, Artu, Jild Essah, Ballow Harrar.

The two last halting-places are in the country of the Nuli Galla, the former that of the Essah Somáli. At this season he found water at each halting-place. A messenger could perform this journey, he informed me, in six or seven days. He quitted Harrar on the first day of last Ramadan (28th October, 1840), and arrived at Kuldás on the 15th. The following are the names of the halting-places:—Jild Essah, Ursu, Sahballow, Errur, Mulu, Dunharka, Billun, banks of the Hawash, Oakbelie, Jahibulla, Asuka, Kuldás—in all twelve halting-places. A messenger on a mule could perform this journey in 8 days. As this was after the rains in the interior, they had no want of water, but found it plentifully at each halting-place.

It would appear from this statement that a messenger from the frontier village Kuldás could reach Zeila by way of Harrar in 15 days, and by a direct route through the country of the Somauli probably in 12 or 13 days.

A kafila could perform the journey in 27 days; but it is a common custom to halt at certain places for a few days to dispose of their merchandize to the Bedawi. It must be borne in mind, that on this route there is no ascending 1400 or 1500 feet above the sea to descend 600 feet below its level; or, in a word, there is no Bahr-asal: indeed, through the greater part of the route, I was informed, guns could be transported on their carriages.

Experience has shown that implicit reliance cannot be placed on information gained merely from native traders. I am inclined, however, to place much reliance on the information given me by Romeat Ullah. His route from Harrar to Kuldás is confirmed not only by Mahomed Saïd, but also by the arrival of the messengers from the emír to Saheli Selasse. And as Romeat Ullah has offered to accompany me after the Ramadan, I do not think he would run the risk of being exposed by giving wrong information.

The foregoing account is from notes made at various times. I find, on referring to my journal of November, 1840, that from information obtained at Zeilah—"Harrar is said to be situated to the S.W. of this port, a journey of 15 or 20 days for a kafila, or a 7 days' journey for a messenger. The kafilas, however, loiter on the road, and frequently dispose of their goods to the Essah, who are said to be scattered about the country. Harrar is said to be a large town surrounded by a wall; the inhabitants have no guns, but plenty of matchlocks." So that my informant's account of this part of the route also may be said to be confirmed.