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VI. *Geographical Notice of the Frontiers of the Burmese and Chinese Empires, with the Copy of a Chinese Map. By JOHN FRANCIS DAVIS, Esq., M.R.A.S.*

Read December 15, 1827.

THE great interest which now attaches to the geography of the Burmese empire and to its relations with the Chinese, seems to call for as much information as can by any means be procured on these subjects from different quarters. In the Chinese library of the East-India Company at Canton is a MS. map, chiefly compiled from the labours of the missionaries; and as its extreme accuracy can be vouched for with respect to those parts of the empire through which Lord Amherst's embassy passed, it is entitled to a degree of credit, which is not hastily to be awarded to Chinese maps in general. An exact copy has been taken from this map of the western part of *Yun-nan* province. Our latest geographical knowledge of the Burmese country is contained in a map recently published at Calcutta, with the permission of the Bengal government; and as that portion which relates to the Chinese frontier was likely to have been obtained from Burmese sources, it may be worth while to compare it with the Chinese map. As far as relates to the names of places, the Chinese character is the only sure guide *within their own territory*. Little accuracy can be expected from, or stress laid on, the names written by one set of strangers, the English, and obtained by them through the mouths, or the writing, of another set of strangers, the Burmese. Notwithstanding this difficulty, however, it will perhaps be found that a considerable degree of correspondence exists between the two maps.

The great river 潞江 *Loo-keang* forms, according to both maps, the boundary of the Chinese empire from lat. 27° to 26° , where it enters *Yun-nan* province, and issuing from it again about lat. 24° , proceeds nearly due south. Serving, during a considerable part of its course, as the boundary

FRONTIERS of the **Burmese and Chinese** **EMPIRES.**

26 N.B. This is a Fac-simile of the Chinese Map in every point, except the Names of Places & the Numeral Figures, which are of course translated from the original Character.

- Foo or City of the 1st Order.
- ▢ Chow 2nd
- Heen 3rd
- Tee-sze or Frontier Station
- K Kiang or Large River.

96° 42' 97° 42' East of London 98° 42' 99° 12' 100° 12'

line of Ava and Siam, it empties itself into the sea below Martaban, after performing a course of more than 660 geographical miles. The map of the Chinese, however, does not extend in any part beyond their own frontier.

In the Chinese map, immediately on the border of *Yun-nan*, and just below 25° lat., we find a place called 盞達 *Tsan-tă*, the *Santa* of the English map. This is distinguished by Du Halde with the title of 府 *Foo*, or city of the first order: while in the MS. map it is merely put down as a 土司 *Too-sze*, and there is no chief city to the westward of 永昌府 *Yung-chang-Foo*. On the outskirts of the Chinese empire, 交界 *Keaou-keae* ("where the frontiers blend,") towards the west, are a number of towns or stations called by them 土司 *Too-sze*, where the original natives of the country are more or less independent, and where there is in fact a kind of divided authority, each party being immediately subject to its own chiefs. This is particularly the case of the *Meaou-tsze* and *Lo-los*. The Chinese map mentions *Tsan-tă*, or *Santa*, as one of these stations, and *not* as a chief town; and Du Halde himself observes of it: "Cette dernière ville, qui confine avec le royaume d'Ava, est proprement une ville de guerre, pour servir de defense à cette frontière:" which description does not correspond with what the Chinese call a *Foo*.

The 檳榔江 *Pin-lang-Keang* of the Chinese map, flowing into the Burmese territory immediately below *Tsan-tă*, is called in our map *Pan-mo-keang*, and represented as united with the Irawadi at *Bhan-mo*, or *Pan-mo*; while the 龍川江 *Lung-chuen-Keang*, a little below to the southward, is named *Shueli Myeet*, and also flows into the Irawadi. The relative position of these two rivers is pretty nearly the same in both maps, but there is considerable disagreement in the position of the towns or stations on their borders; and on this subject it is probable that the Chinese map is best entitled to credit of the two. In the latter, advancing from the frontier inwards, on the *Lung-chuen* river, we see 猛卯 *Meng-maou*, or *Meng-mo*, 龍川 *Lung-chuen*, 南甸 *Nan-tiên*, and 騰越 *Teng-yuě*, the three former marked as *Too-sze*, and the last as a *Chow*, or town of the second order. In the English map, however, the first station is *Lung-chuen* (improperly written *Fou-se*, instead of *Too-sze*); the second *Nan-*

taen (*Nan-tëen*), and the third *Tong-ye-chew* (*Teng-yuě-chow*), constituting the three first stages on the route from Ava towards *Yun-nan* city: and these three stations are placed on the *northern* stream, corresponding with the *Pin-lang-Keang*, instead of that which answers to the *Lung-chuen-Keang* of the Chinese map, to the southward. Now I should think, from the name of the first of these, *Lung-chuen*, that it is properly placed in the MS. map on *Lung-chuen* river, and consequently the two others; and that the route towards *Yun-nan*, in fact, lies on the southern stream instead of the northern. Were this found to be the fact, *Lung-chuen-Keang* would also be the real *Bhan-mo* or *Pan-mo-Keang*. This seems to be confirmed by the Chinese map. Below *Lung-chuen* station towards Ava, we find immediately on the border *Meng-maou*, or as it is pronounced in the south, *Meng-mo*, which I think is very likely to be intended for *Bhan-mo* or *Pan-mo*, called *Bamoo* by Symes, and stated by him to be the chief point of commercial intercourse between the two countries. The spirit of Chinese encroachment might be disposed to include this in their own map, with some violation of its real locality.

With respect to the route laid down in the English map, from *Bhan-mo* through *Yung-chang-Foo* and *Ta-le-Foo*, towards *Yun-nan* city, it is not likely that the natives of Ava are frequently allowed to enter so far into the Chinese territory. This is more probably the track of the merchants and emissaries of the latter, in their commercial speculations towards the frontier. Symes states, that the Chinese envoys, whom he found at *Amerapura*, were, as far he could ascertain, merely a provincial deputation, and not imperial ambassadors from Peking. This indeed is most likely, being in unison with the general maxims of Chinese foreign policy. They say, "attach no value to what is foreign, and strangers will resort to you."

It is deserving of notice, that *Mancheegee* is mentioned by Symes as the Burmese name for *Yun-nan*; and that *Mangee* is the name given by Marco Polo to the southern part of China. The northern he calls Cathay.

The country which forms the western part of *Yun-nan* province is allowed to be mountainous, wild, and thinly peopled; and I understand from Père L'Amiot, who has resided more than thirty years at Peking, that it is considered by the Chinese as unhealthy. It was his fortune to fall in with a Tartar officer who had served in the army sent against the Burmese empire in 1767, and stated by Symes to have amounted to fifty thousand men, of which army very few individuals escaped back to their own country. The

total failure of this great enterprize was attributed by the said Tartar officer to the unhealthiness of the climate : but when a due allowance has been made for the influence of national feeling and Chinese want of candour, a considerable portion of their disasters may be referred to the prowess of the invaded enemy.

The stream, called in the MS. map 漫路河 *Man-loo-Ho*, seems to be the commencement of the great river of Siam, which reaches the sea at Bangkok.

The 九龍江 *Keu-lung-Keang*, or river of the nine dragons, which after collecting a number of tributary streams in *Yun-nan* province, traverses an immense expanse, and finally empties itself into the sea at the southern extremity of Cambodia, does not yield to the *Yang-tsze-Keang* itself in the length of its course, and may be classed among the principal rivers of our globe.

Père L'Amiot, at my particular request, obligingly supplied me with some detached notes relating to *Yun-nan* province ; and I have his permission to subjoin a selection from them :

“ La province de *Yun-nan* est régie par un *Tsung-too*, ou viceroy, qui gouverne aussi la province de *Kwei-chow*. Il y a de plus, un gouverneur particulier, appelé *Seun-foo*.....Terres cultivées du peuple 83,603 *tsing* ;* fermes du gouvernement 9,288 *tsing* ; terres d'étrangers non réputés Chinois, 824 *tuon* : j'ignore en quoi consiste cette portion de terre ; *tuon* est une expression générale, indéterminée dans l'usage ordinaire, mais déterminée pour le lieu même.....Cette province n'a été soumise aux Chinois que dans les derniers tems, après la résistance la plus opiniâtre, et des efforts prodigieux. L'intempérie du climat si funeste aux Chinois, la difficulté de pénétrer dans ces affreuses montagnes, et peut-être aussi le caractère des habitans ont produit une lutte longue et terrible. On cite le nom et les hauts faits de ceux qui ont le plus contribué à surmonter ces obstacles. On en voit qui s'appliquent à soulager le peuple, le formant à la doctrine, mœurs, usages, et arts des Chinois ; perfectionnant l'agriculture, reformant les mœurs, dont le débordement étoit affreux.....Les troubles continuent sous les premiers règnes de la dynastie actuelle, et sont fortement comprimés ; depuis un certain temps on y voit les lois en vigueur, et la paix

* Nine hundred *mow*, or Chinese acres, constitute a *tsing*.

solidement établie.....La resistance que les naturels opposent à la domination Chinoise est toujours appelée revolte, parceque tous les peuples sont de plein droit soumis au fils de ciel, père et mère de l'univers.....La ville de *Pou-eul* (*Poo-urh-Foo*, see map), a quatre lee de circuit. La population n'est pas connue, parcequ'elle est composée en partie des naturels du pays. La montagne nommée *Pou-eul* est renommée pour une espèce de thé, qui est portée à Peking, et offerte à l'Empereur en boules, ou en tablettes qui sont des extraits de ce même thé : à Peking on le procure facilement.....Le district de *Yung-tchang-fou* (*Yung-chang-Foo* in the map) renferme une ville et district du 2^e ordre, une du 3^e ordre, et quelques petits districts séparés, qui paroissent habités par les naturels du pays. Il est souvent parlé des combats terribles que les naturels ont soutenus contre les Chinois ; il leur reste encore des lieux de refuge que les Chinois respectent.On tire des rivières de l'ambre, du corail, des perles. Ces rivières sont en grande nombre : une d'elles (probably meaning the *Loo-Keang*) communique avec la mer au midi.....Les mandarinats de quelques districts sont héréditaires parmi les habitans du pays.....On parle de diverses peuples situées à la distance de 20 et 30 journées sud-ouest de *Yun-nan-Foo*. On dit que c'est l'ancienne patrie des naturels de *Yun-nan*. Ils reconnoissent l'empereur ; lui payent une redevance annuelle ; leur chef est choisi parmi les descendans d'une même famille. Ils ont une mine d'orDéjà sous les *Han* les Chinois avoient des colonies dans la province de *Yun-nan*, mais ils n'en ont été paisibles possesseurs que dans ces derniers temps.....il est parlé parfois de faits et de monumens anciens ; mais ils ne se rattachent pas à l'histoire : ce sont probablement des traditions populaires.....Quant aux naturels, on voit que ce sont diverses peuplades de différentes races. Ils sont peu connus, peut-être ne sont-ils pas sans intérêt. Pendant bien des siècles ils se sont vigoureusement défendu contre les Chinois. Peut-être sont ils encore en force, quoiqu'ils ne se battent plus, ou rarement.....On sait que le *Yun-nan* est très-riche en mines ; et que le gouvernement en tire grand partie."