
Review: History of Madagascar

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Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Apr., 1905), pp. 449-450

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1776156>

Accessed: 09-05-2016 07:41 UTC

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and translated in the Hakluyt Society's version of the 'Chronicle of Guinea.' The third is derived from the same source, but in a less simple manner. It is not a full copy, but a much shortened form. The 97 chapters of the Paris text are here reduced to 61; chapters 5-7, 28, 49-50, 66, and 97 are wholly omitted; whole groups of other chapters are rolled into one—thus 37-48, 51-9, 68-9, 72-4, together amount to four only in Valentin Fernandez' recension. The copyist was apparently in a desperate hurry to finish his work, and makes short work of many of the reflections with which Azurara loads his chronicle, though adding a couple of allusions to the voyages of Cadamosto (see folios 215, recto, 260, verso, of the Fernandez manuscript). As to the great Paris manuscript, Dr. Mees seems inclined to believe the tradition of Fr. Luiz de Souza, according to which the Infant D. Henry presented this copy to the King of Naples in 1457. He also suggests that the 'Chronicle of Guinea' in this form was used by Las Casas in his 'Historia de las Indias.' From a note on fol. 161, recto, it is clear that the manuscript in question remained in Spain as late as 1702; Luiz de Souza appears to have seen it at Valencia many years earlier (see 'Historia de S. Domingos,' p. 332, edition of 1623).

Dr. Mees concludes with an interesting comparison of certain passages of Azurara's *Guinea* with corresponding parts of Barros and Pacheco Pereira's *Esmeraldo*. The parallel between the last-named and the narrative of Gomes Eannes in the matter of the first rounding of Cape Bojador is very striking, especially as Pereira nowhere acknowledges any obligation to Prince Henry's panegyrist (cf. 'Esmeraldo de situ Orbis,' p. 39, edition of 1892; 'Chronica de Guiné,' p. 57, edition of 1841). Barros, on the contrary, frankly acknowledges that Azurara's *Guinea* is the chief source of his narrative for the events of Prince Henry's life, though for Madeira he also employs certain records in the possession of the heirs of João Gonsalvez Zarco, the principal leader in the Portuguese discovery of that island. It is not, therefore, surprising to find that he makes some use of nearly every part of Azurara's African chronicle, only passing entirely over the matter of some 23 chapters out of 97 (viz. chs. 1-3, 6-7, 24-5, 28, 49-50, 61-2, 70, 78, 84-5, 89-92, 95-7).

C. R. B.

HISTORY OF MADAGASCAR.

'Collection des Ouvrages anciens concernant Madagascar.' Vols. i. and ii. Paris: Comité de Madagascar. 1903-4. Pp. 527, 559.

This valuable series of *Fontes* for the history of the great African island, under the general direction of the veteran Alfred Grandidier and three colleagues, opens with a volume containing all those passages relating to Madagascar which are to be found in French, English, Dutch, German, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, and Latin works between 1500 and 1613. The second volume continues the 'ouvrages ou extraits d'ouvrages relatifs à Madagascar,' from 1613 to 1640. Thus far, we have over a thousand pages of material for the history of the "Island of the Moon," and the whole undertaking is to comprise four times as much—ten volumes in all, with an average of from 450 to 550 pages, furnishing a complete collection of description and reference, in all languages, and by men of every nation, down to 1800. The material printed appears to include every passage of importance necessary to illustrate European dealings with Madagascar, together with the history and manners of the native races from the end of the fifteenth to the end of the eighteenth century. Sufficient explanation and emendation is furnished for the thorough understanding of the texts. Unpublished manuscript sources have been consulted, early maps have been abundantly reproduced; and everything has been done to "erect," in the editors' words, "a monument not less valuable than the

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sculpture of Barrias," unveiled at Tananarivo in 1901. Alfred and Guillaume Grandidier have given in these volumes a fresh and striking proof of French interest in the great insular possession which has been a subject of intermittent national ambition at least since the days of Richelieu, and whose acquisition in our own time is a proof of the persistency and success with which France has worked towards some at least of her "traditional aspirations."

In one point I should like to express a certain dissent from M. Alfred Grandidier. He denies that Marco Polo has any knowledge of Madagascar or any intention of referring to that country; he therefore excludes Polo from his collection of sources, and makes the Portuguese Covilham the first to name Madagascar to Europeans—"Contrairement à l'opinion generale, le pays que Marco Polo a nommé tantôt Madagascar tantôt Mogelasio . . . n'est certainement pas l'île à laquelle nous donnons aujourd'hui ce nom . . . Polo n'ayant pas eu connaissance de l'île que nous nommons Madagascar . . . Première mention de Madagascar en Europe par Pierre de Covilham, en 1489" (pp. ix., x., 1). I do not question that in Messer Marco's sketch of *Madeigascar* there is an evident mixture of genuine and spurious particulars, the latter perhaps referring to the region of Makdashau, Mogdicho, or Magadoxo, and other Arab colonies of the Somali coast; but I think there is a good deal more to be said. First, the *name* is undoubtedly in Polo. Thus in the oldest text, that of the Paris manuscript (1116 Fr., in the Bibliothèque National, printed by the Paris Geographical Society in 1824), I cannot find any *Mogelasio*, nothing but *Madeigascar* (see *Recueil de Voyages*, etc., tome i., 1824, pp. 232-4). In M. Pauthier's text, the next in importance, it is always *Madeigascar* (Pauthier, 1865, pp. 676-9). In the primitive Latin, printed by the Paris Geographical Society in the same volume with the fundamental French text, it is *Madagastar* or *Madagascar* (*Recueil*, etc., as above, p. 469); in Ramusio, it is *Magastar* (R., II., 57 F.—58 B., edition of 1583). Where is the authority for *Mogelasio* in the 'Livre des Diversités' of the Old Venetian? And why should the form of *Madagascar*, in any case, be considered a corruption of *Mogdicho*? Why should it not rather be a word meaning "Land of the Malagash," as M. G. Ferrand has suggested ('Les Musulmans à Madagascar.' Paris, 1893)?

And secondly, as to the thing; *Madeigascar* is truly described by Marco Polo as one of the greatest and noblest of islands, is placed by him with fair accuracy "about a thousand miles" south of *Scotra*, or *Socotra*, and is estimated without extravagant error as about 4000 miles in circuit. His Madagascar fauna is mostly absurd, and his statement that the people as a whole "adored Maomet" sounds at first little better; yet undeniable evidence has been found of Arab colonization at various points of the coast, especially in the extreme north-west and at several places on the eastern seaboard. Even the boars' teeth of Polo's narrative, which, according to the Italian traveller, were carried to Kublai Khan as curiosities, and which weighed more than 14 lbs. a piece, though possibly to be identified with hippopotamus ivory from the mainland, derive some support from the ancient name of *Nossi-Dambo*, or "wild-boar island," now long fallen into disuse.

Lastly, as to Marco's language about the currents which here set southward with such force that no one, if he passed beyond Madagascar, could return against them (*Recueil*, p. 233), can we say that this suits the Somali coast and Magadoxo so well as the Mozambique channel and Cape Corrientes? From the latter "runs southward along the coast the permanent Lagullas current, and Polo's statement requires but little correction" (Yule-Cordier, 'Marco Polo,' ii., 415).

C. R. B.