

FATHER CARLOS DUPARQUET

JOURNEYS IN CIMBEBASIA

Version and preface by Gastão de Sousa Dias

Edition

MUSEU DE ANGOLA

LUANDA – 1953

*To the missionaries of the Holy Spirit, prosecutors of the
evangelization of the "Barbadinhos" in Angola.*

Presented by

G.S.D

Euntes in mundum universum praedicate evangelium omni creaturae.

S. Mark, Chapt.16, v° 15

“Among the gentlemen with whom we interacted in Huila, and who left us with a grateful impression, due to the affectionate way they welcomed us, are undoubtedly the missionaries, headed by a priest of great merit and intellectual value, Reverend Duparquet, currently Apostolic Vice-Prefect. This man, to whom the establishment of the mission and its prosperous state owes itself greatly to his persistence, whose pieces of work both in the interest of religious propaganda and in the interest of geography, are known in all the publications from the journal of the missions up to the official reports of the geographical societies, whose life has been a constant struggle in the service of religion either in Zanzibar, in Kimberley, in Damara or in Ovambo, or in Huila; this man, we say, surely deserves that God grants him health and prolongs his life for the complete success of the pious and relevant service that he is committed to.”

De Angola à Contra-Costa – Capelo e Ivens – Pag.169, vol.I

Portrait of Father Carlos Duparquet

Journeys in Cimbebasia

PREFACE

The reading of the narrative concerning the journeys of Father Carlos Duparquet in “*Les missions Catholiques*”¹, awakened in me right from the beginning an interest which was always growing, arising vaguely in my mind the idea of translating it into Portuguese. Shortly after I started this task and executed it slowly, with real pleasure, not only because of all the knowledge that it contains but also because his prose, so clear and evocative, had a truly restful effect on me. During the interval of more arduous tasks, when I intended to occupy my spirit without however wearying it, I resorted to the version of such travel chronics, full of life and so varied, that the quill glided almost effortless as they were perhaps also written by his illustrious and talented author. Issues and problems which had previously caught my attention, I would find them there perfectly studied; and many of the doubts that had ~~been~~ accumulated on my spirit I saw them clarified in that luminous exposition, current calamo, the great missionary was unfolding before my eyes. And there were so many points that had been covered which directly concerned us (the missionary, the indigenous policy, the ethnography, the flora and the fauna) that at every moment I lamented that such a vast and abundant treasure of information had not been translated into our language long ago.

I translated it almost literally to keep the original freshness, clarity, flowing and living shape used to design and write it. And the remarkable thing in all these chronicles, sometimes with an interval of years, was to find such an unmistakable mark of personality and at the same time a unity of action so perfect, revealing in the author the highest literary faculties, that it would be a pity to not collect them in a volume, to better highlight his heroic optimism, his faith and his powerful gifts of conviction and proselytism. The quill which wrote the chronicle From *Moçâmedes*² to *Huila* was the same that traced the journey From *Humbe to the Ambuelas*; and in the interval of time between 1866 and 1883 there is no notice of any weakness, breach of enthusiasm, aging of faculties or retardment of pulsations of the great heart which lived and knew how to transmit them with such clarity and poetry that still constitutes a charm for those who read them nowadays.

The description of the crossing of the Moçâmedes desert and of the climbing of the *Serra da Chela* constitutes a picture truly updated on its beauty and colors: “After some hours of walking, we crossed the called *Caldeira do Inferno*, a horrible ravine totally obstructed by large stones, black and calcined, and where the concentrated sun's rays produced an asphyxiating heat. No vegetation can grow there, except for the euphorbia with succulent stems and exactly similar to our *browningia candelaris*.”

¹ Note of the translator (Gastão de Sousa Dias) – The original texts were obligingly provided to me by the renowned ethnologist Rev. Father Carlos Estermann, Vicar General of Chelas.

² In 1985, Moçâmedes changed its name to Namibe

From this tortured trip, he climbs halfway up the mountain, heading to Capangombe; and immediately the nature changes, as to unburden the heart of the traveler from the tortures of thirst and loneliness: "Who does not admire here the goodness of Providence? These deserts without water and vegetation seem, at first sight, to put an insurmountable barrier between the coast and the countryside. But God knew how to provide a wonderful path amid these horrible solitudes. There we always find water, shade and grass for the cattle. The river bed is full of white sand, perfectly solidified, over a width which can be compared to the Seine in Paris. The two banks are trimmed with a row of trees and bushes; then granite mountains rise up on each side, like two vast walls, in a direction nearly perpendicular. Nothing is more picturesque than this road drawn by nature!"

Since then, there is no lack of water that is always available in the apparently dry bed of the river. And as the game is abundant, the lion is present with all its manifestations of bloodthirsty ferocity. Zebras and antelopes, even restless and fugitive, cannot escape its claws.

The herds are equally abundant and, deftly guided by the natives, are going to drink in large numbers to the natural sources.

While approximating Capangombe the land changes. The forest consists of small trees and the land is entirely devoid of herbaceous vegetation. But in the rainy season it is covered with tall grasses which feed abundantly the cattle. The mountain range of Chela takes shape now in front of his eyes. Its ascent can only be made through a wide ravine which leads to the Plateau. In the space of a few hours, we move from the tropical zone into a temperate region and from this one to another, where the climate can remind us of Brittany, and where the streamlets can even be covered by ice."

Climbing the *Portela do Bruco* takes one hour and a half, between rocks, beautiful trees and whispering waterfalls. And when the traveller reaches the step of the *Chão da Chela*, he is taken by a real fascination. "This place is perhaps the most charming I have ever met in my entire life. We enjoy there an admirably salubrious temperature which reminds us of Madeira. It is not as hot as Capangombe or as cold as the heights of the Plateau. The land, watered by abundant rainfalls and a streamlet, produces all the fruits of the warm and temperate countries."

The first farms of settlers begin to appear. And the ascension continues until reaching the edge of the Chela and from there penetrating into the Plateau. Great surprises awaited the missionary who was a passionate botanist. Once again, the climate and the vegetation had changed, the air was cooler and the plants from Europe appeared before his astonished eyes. First it was the cineraria, cultivated in European greenhouses; after, it was the bramble and the buttercup of the meadows! "You cannot conceive, Reverend Father, the pleasure I experienced in seeing again the plants from the homeland, which reminded me of my childhood studies and the happy years of my professorship. I felt myself transported to one of my scientific excursions surrounded by these good students, whose memory always accompanies me."

The enchantment of the scientist does not cease. The lemon balm, the rock-rose from the Cape and the verbena appeared to him as living beings with which he had once lived familiarly and happily. Upon entering the famous valley of Chivinguiro, flanked by mountains, his amazement redoubles when he stumbles upon aloes, oxalidea, amaryllis, and when he sees before his eyes

new farms of settlers, cereal fields, mills, gardens, potato fields and large planting fields of vegetables and greenery from Europe!

And soon, he was in Humpata which was for him a true revelation: “The banks of the streamlets are flanked by laurel trees and other beautiful shrubs, and on both sides, there are green meadows enamelled by flowers with brighter colours. It is truly the terrestrial paradise for botanists. I hope that one day the flora of this region will pay its tribute to our gardens in Europe.”

It did not take long to reach the Nene River, a tributary of the Kunene which has, in the rainy season, an impressive water flow, but, at that time, it could be crossed at a ford. And he finally reaches the fortress of Huila, where the Portuguese Authorities kindly and hospitably welcome him.

In the *embala*³ of Huila, he had the occasion to attend the ceremony of enthronement of a *soba*⁴ by blood that succeeded to Vangué, who had been deported to Luanda. The Portuguese Authority intended to impose, on his substitution, a chief who did not belong to the dynasty. However, the people, keeping a relatively quiet and reserved attitude, despised their new leader; and this one, vexed and feeling the ignominy of his false position, decided to leave this territory, finding refuge in the neighboring lands.

With the dynastic policy of Huila back to its natural lineage, the election of the new legitimate *soba* would take place at *embala*. The *macotas*⁵ who attended in great number, declared choosing D. Antonio, who had royal blood. And immediately, the satisfied *swarms of people* expressed themselves by drinking, eating and dancing loudly. “And this was the most natural thing I saw in this ceremony”, says the missionary with mild irony.

By the observation of the land, Where the fortress was already established dominating a vast region since 1845, Duparquet has the divinatory intuition of the importance that it may have one day for the expansion of Faith: “As this region seems to be the key of the countries of the interior and of the highest importance for the success of the missions which may be established here later, I judged as my duty, Reverend Father, to spend here about fifteen days, both to explore the neighbouring localities and to collect the largest possible number of useful information.”

In these words is germinating the creation of the future Mission of Huila, from where it will radiate throughout the south of Angola a beneficial influence of calm and tranquillity, which will influence a lot the relations between whites and indigenous, and between the latter, towards the lasting peace that we now enjoy.

From the observations made during the short stay in Huila, what resulted, for Father Duparquet, were teachings truly encouraging about the climate of the region, in a certain sense, more equal and more enjoyable than the one in Europe, about their resources both plant and animal, and yet - what was more interesting for him - about the indigenous population of the Plateau and, heading north, until Quilengues, which had about 100,000 souls, not including the people of

³ Hut of an African tribal chief.

⁴ West African tribal chief

⁵ Venerable elders

Kakonda, Bié and Bailundu who, under the generic name of the people of Nano, were living in the mountainous terrain from which descended the Kunene and the Okavango. In the east was the *sobado*⁶ of Quipungo and at west Humpata, Chela and Mandombes up to the sea; and to the south Jau, Hai and Quihita, and after Gambos and Humbe, which was the last Portuguese fort situated at the junction of the Caculuvar with the Kunene; and yet, on the banks of this important river, the *sobados* of Camba, Donguena, Mulondo, Luceque, etc..

A world was opening to him, animating his barely-contained evangelizing aspirations! Aspirations which, however, had no limit because, through the traders, there were news about faraway villages in the regions of Mucusso, in Baixo Cubango, and even Kwanhama and Damara, whose populations the explorer *Bernardino José Brochado* had given him some detailed information. And that infinite multitude was kept in an initial ignorance, so it was urgent to bring them the redeeming word, before it being too late!

As a maritime base of all this strategic action, Duparquet elected the small town of Moçâmedes, “the most beautiful and enjoyable of the entire West African Coast”. Rich in vegetable products, it abounded with sugar cane, cotton, corn, wheat, sweet potatoes and all the vegetables of Europe. The floods of the Bero and Giraul rivers used to leave mud on the soil that, therefore, reached an extraordinary fertility. On the other hand, it had a great bay, rich in fish.

The settlement had 5000 inhabitants; and the streets were already perfectly aligned, with high and beautiful buildings.

So, everything seemed to indicate that “Moçâmedes is the point from where we should, it seems to me, start the establishment of our missions in the South”, adding to all the reasons above and which were already sufficient, the easy connection with Europe and with Congo, whose missionaries could easily go to refortify themselves. The evangelizing action could then overspread into the interior, where another mission should be established in Chela, in Huila, in Humpata “and go from there, if God gives us sufficient resources, up to the basin of the Ngami and to the Ovambo ”.

The door was open – *apertum est ostium* – to a wide action that his creative imagination envisioned cheerfully.

But soon the restrictions imposed by his limited forces and the scarcity of resources available to him sadly hurt him.

And, in a new report directed to the Councils of the Propagation of the Faith now absent from Angola and as the head of the Seminar of Congo which had just been founded in Santarem, he develops his vast plan of action covering the hydrographical basins of the *Kunene* and the *Okavango* and the country of the Ovambo, which constituted a real temptation for his spirit.

However, two worries obscured his enthusiasm: the progress of the Protestantism and the lack of resources that already in Moçâmedes had constituted a real torment for him: “And, at this stage, I can talk based on my own experience because during my stay in this mission, the only

⁶ Kingdom of a *soba*

thing I did was struggle against misery". And these miseries were one of the reasons why he had forced himself to come back to Europe, with his health strongly affected.

So, his words reflect a bitter disconsolation, denouncing a phase of depression which is rarely perceived in his resolute exhortations. "In such conditions, it seems that, in fact, nothing remains for the missionaries but suffering and starving" and on top of that - and this was what hurt him most - without being able in any way to contribute to the conversion of the people to whom they were sent.

...

Failing to implement his projects via Moçâmedes, not only because of the difficulties and incomprehension caused by his status as a foreigner in a time of so many apprehension for our restless life as a colonial nation, but also because of the harsh needs imposed to the missionaries due to a shortage of resources, Fr Duparquet joined Fr Horner in the mission of Zanzibar, and then returned again to West Africa to launch the foundations of the mission of Landana. And nine years later, here he is again, engaged in evangelizing the Betchuana and the Damara. He disembarks in Cape Town by the end of March 1879 and goes to the Transvaal through the railway which, in this town, leads to Matjiesfontein, at the limits of the Karoo desert.

About this journey, we only published an extract of the Bulletin of the Geographical Society of Paris (August and September 1879). But even so, from this summary, the descriptive vividness of his golden quill is highlighted.

First, he goes through the most beautiful and most fertile part of the British colony, reaching the small town of Paarl, "a true pearl enclosed in the green foliage of splendid vineyards and orchards of tasty fruit." It is a privileged region of the southern temperate zone, where the cultures and the environments of the almost European small towns fascinate and delight the eyes. Wellington and Worcester are other hospitable centres, beyond which the desert appears without transition. And this one has to be crossed in carts pulled by mules. "There was the real desert. The arid soil stretches out of sight: not even a single tree, a single habitation appears to broaden the horizon; but the sadness of these vast solitudes is compensated by the sky with an incomparable blue, always lighted by a dazzling light and by a salubrious atmosphere, fresh and vivifying, which gives a vigorous longevity to its rare inhabitants. "

After four days of walking, he reaches the small town of Beaufort, grooved by waterways, with its dam whose waters go, through ditches, enlivening the orchards where almond trees, mulberry trees, fig trees are abundant, and the vineyards of the surroundings

But this is a momentary oasis. The Karoo is only at two steps from here, immense and arid, paradise of the patriarchal Boer whose children, as they reach the age of marriage, detached themselves from the family, in their bullock-wagon, as individual and erring units, in search of pasture for their cattle. This is the only way for them, in a primitive life of fierce and intransigent independence, to escape the British domination who, by taking away from them the slave's servants, had thrown them in an irretrievable ruin.

On the fourth day of travelling, he reaches Vitoria, capital of the district which extends up to the Orange; and shortly after, Hope-Town - *City of Hope*- nearby the confluence of that river with the Vaal.

After seventeen days of journey, he arrives in Kimberley, the city of diamonds, on the 26th of April 1878. Here, he lingers to observe the practices of the extraction of these wonderful stones which, miraculously, gave rise to, in the desert, a city of modern characteristics. "At the beginning, it was no more than a large mining camp, located in a vast plain, arid and covered by sand. But soon, houses of galvanized iron succeeded the tents, aligned streets and a public garden were delineated, temples, schools and theatres rose up as if by magic! "

However, the reverse of the golden capitalist medal showed up soon in all its blackness and ugliness; and social consequences of terrible aspects appeared to darken the agreeable picture: being the majority of the workers Africans, those, fulfilling the orders of their bosses, bought refined weapons with their salaries. And, once armed, uprisings of indigenous tribes burst successively and the annexation of the Transvaal to the British possessions did not take long to occur, since the rebels were crushed by British troops...

In this environment of rebellion, Fr Duparquet found himself, displeased, in the need to return to the Cape, thence to Walvis Bay, trying from the third access point, the penetration into Cimbebasia.

...

On the 25th of July 1879, the *Missions Catholiques* launch the publication of a new report of Father Carlos Duparquet, under the title of *Cimbebasia*.

By decree of 28th April of that year, by the Congregation of the Propaganda, the Apostolic Prefecture was created with the same name, being entrusted to the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, whose boundaries were the Atlantic at west; the Orange at south; the river Haart and the Transvaal Republic at east; and, at north, the Kunene river, the lower watercourse of the Kasai and the Liba river or the western part of the Zambezi. The decree of the Propaganda was approved and confirmed by Leo XIII on the 7th of May 1879.

The prefect of this huge area would delegate a subprefect who would be a resident. The choice for this last responsibility reverted on Father Carlos Duparquet due to his already recognized merits.

The immense territory, whose religious jurisdiction was entrusted to the great missionary, could be considered as covering the Damaraland at northwest; the Namaqualand or the Country of the Great Namaqua at south; the tribes of the Kalahari at east; and the Ovambo and some other tribes at north.

Politically, almost all of it was already under the protectorate of England, whose administration had its headquarters in Walvis-Bay.

The Damaraland, comprised between the Kunene and the Okavango rivers at north and the Country of the Great Namaqua at south, extending at east up to the Lake Ngami and at northeast to the Kalahari desert, was a region mainly pastoral, but with a lack of rain, where the agricultural activities only were successful at the river beds, but where, however, tropical agriculture could not be experimented, due to the limits of extreme temperatures.

The Damara was inhabited by profoundly black people with frizzy hair, belonging to the great Bantu family, sociable and hospitably welcoming Europeans, who had as main centres Otjimbingué and Omaruru. These whites were mostly hunters who, devoting themselves to the hard life of chasing the elephant, the rhinoceros, the ostrich and other animals of the region, had their existence restricted to the great big Boers carts which they used as habitation, adding to them numerous indigenous people and large packs of dogs, trained to bring back the game to the fire range of their owners.

The trade was confined, therefore, to ivory, ostrich feathers and skins, without mentioning the cattle with which they supplied the Cape Colony. The Damara was, therefore, crossed by paths for carts leading to the coast, to the Ovambo, to the Orange and to the Lake Ngami. The British administration was settled in Okahandja, close to the residence of the Kamaharero king.

The Damara people (Hereros), who had occupied the region for nearly one and a half century and were, according to the tradition, from the north, and had first settled on the right bank of the Kunene, which they then crossed, encountering ahead the populations settled on the left bank of this river, who were in those times, the Ovambos at north, the *Ilonqueanos* in the centre and the Namaqua in the south. Having set up in the Kaoko area, they continued later their advancement towards the south, making way through the Ovambo whom they won, taking possession of most of their cattle. The division of the spoils had, however, led to serious misunderstandings and one third of the Herero were detached from the tribe and settled at the west of the Lake Ngami. A large part of the emigrants was confronted, then, with the Hottentots who, invincibly, were repelling ahead.

Things remained like this, until the Hottentots from the Cape, who in order to escape the domain of Europeans and headed/led by the fearsome leader Jager Afrikaner- the lion of Namaqua-, crossed the Orange and devastated the southern part of the Great Namaqualand. After his death, his son Jonquer Afrikaner succeeded as the head of emigration, a fiercer warrior whom the Herero took as an arbitrator of their differences. Afrikaner brought them under subjection and reduced them to a harsh slavery; and establishing his residence in Okahandja, at the heart of the Damara, he extended his raids up to the Kunene. Killed at the apogee of power, in 1863, he was succeeded by his son Christian who, however, was far from having paternal qualities; and, in that year, facing the Herero who had already learned with European traders to make use of firearms, he was entirely defeated and killed in the battle field.

Henceforth the war continued, always under unfavourable conditions for the Hottentots who, in 1870, were forced to recognize the independence of the Herero who, fearing unrest again, went to the Cape Governor, requesting to be placed under the protectorate of England. And shortly after, Hereros and Hottentots took refuge under the British protection.

The territory of the Great Namaqua (Namaqualand) extended from the Lake Ngami up to the Orange River, climbing up the littoral to the Swakop River, and was exclusively inhabited by Hottentots covering three families: the pure Namaqua, the Orlams; and the coloured from Europeans and Hottentots, known as well under the designation of Bastards. The Namaqua tribes had long been converted to Protestantism, first by the Wesleyans and, after, by the Rhenish Missionaries, who kept many stations among them.

There were seven major tribes of the Kalahari: the Griqua, the Bangwaketse, the Baquena, the Bamangwato, the Batwana and the Makololo.

But to get a complete enumeration of the tribes of the Kalahari, one must also consider the Bushmen, scattered as rags of an ancient race, from the Zambezi up to the Orange, being it easy to find them also in small spots in the Kalahari Desert, in the Modenisana and even south of the Okavango. They correspond to one of the most miserable condition of mankind. Without habitations, agriculture or the tiniest rudiment of industry, the Bushmen find themselves mostly enslaved to the neighbouring tribes. They all have an extraordinary power of resistance to hunger and thirst, having this capacity been acquired through the vicissitudes of their erring life devoid of the most insignificant comfort.

In its specification of the races and tribes of Cimbebasia, which he listed from south to north, Father Duparquet left the Ovambo people for the end, situated between the Cunene and Okavango.

The hydrography of this region, constituted by a system anastomosed of water lines, is uniquely interesting because, in certain times of the year, these water lines are fully filled. So, the region is fertile but, in these times, very insalubrious for Europeans.

This is, concerning fertility and population, the most important part of Cimbebasia. Already partly known by Livingstone, Magyar and Cameron, it was very frequented in the *cacimbo* season⁷ by Portuguese and British merchants, who went there to do their business with the gentile.

The Ovambo is a plateau at 1000 meters of altitude, "without rocks and without mountains, whose lands seem to lean, in the north, to the Kunene, and, at east, to the Okavango." Very fertile area covered with vast fields of sorghum and surrounded by forests, it makes a marked contrast with the territories of the Kalahari or with the thorny bushes of the Damaraland. The paths are better, the springs are less spaced and the population is more robust and numerous. The communications with Damaraland are easy, figuring the important town of Omaruru as a depot of trade between the two regions and being established there the major business houses.

The Portuguese traders went to the Ovambo for the supply of cattle for the markets of Luanda and of Gabon, through Huila, Capangombe and Moçâmedes.

The Ovambo had, in those times, about 38 000 inhabitants.

⁷ Cacimbo is the name given, in Angola, to the dry season, the coldest and most humid time of the year. During this period, a thick mist called *Cacimbo* descends on the land, providing this season with its name.

Between the Ovambo and the Lake Ngami, on the banks of the Okavango River, lived a tribe of Bakubas, called Bavikos, whose seat was in Libebe, a privileged station where hunters used to collect huge quantities of ivory and ostrich feathers. Their leader, Anduri, insistently demanded the establishment of missionaries. It was a region of great fertility, this circumstance being, however, displeased by the existence of tsetse flies.

Duparquet notes the presence of Boers, recently established a number of 200 families, at the banks of the Lake Ngami, being thirty at Otjimbindé, 150 at the banks of *the Tuka River*, at the north of the lake, and the remaining at the north of Ghansé.

These people, having left the Transvaal dragged by their structural animadversion against the British authority and having gone through the deadly aridity of the desert, roamed through the centre of Africa in search of a hospitable land which could accept them. This land was temporarily the Kaoko, until they were accepted in Portuguese territory on the Humpata plateau, where they lived peacefully for 50 years, to finally, in 1927, retreat to the Damaraland, under the protectorate of the South African Union.

At north of the Chobe, there were the Barotses, populations who had been subjugated by the warriors of Sebitoane, having afterwards regained their independence during the times of his son Sekeleton.

Beyond the Ovambo, at the headwaters of the Kunene, were yet the people of Nano, who expanded up to the massif of Mossamba, perhaps the culminating point of the Angolan orography, where the great Kwando and Kasai rivers are born, the Kwanza and the Kunene and, finally, the Chobe and the Okavango. They were brave people who, coming down frequently to attack pastoral people, committed against them raids and depredation (the wars of Nano).

The Congregation of the Holy Spirit tried, as we have seen, to establish a first mission on this territory, at the called Serra da Chela, having Moçâmedes as headquarters, from where easy connections with Europe could be maintained. "But the opposition of Portugal against this work was so high that we had to renounce to this venture."⁸

The mission established afterwards in Omaruru, under the protection of the British Government, which ended to include under its protectorate the territories from Kunene to Limpopo, "managed to restore its work under conditions which would ensure its future course."

At this point, the great missionary was mistaken. His companions, facing many difficulties amplified by the tenacious opposition of the German Protestant missions, were forced soon to abandon the mission of Omaruru, having to backtrack to Walvis-Bay and, from there to Humbe, already in Portuguese territory, for then having again new doors opened in the plateau of Huila, where their work would receive definitive consecration⁹.

About this violent opposition from Protestant missionaries, there is clear evidence in the letter of Father Duparquet, published by *Les Missions Catholiques* and dated on 13th of April 1879, in

⁸ See *A dilatação da Fé no Império Português* (The expansion of the Faith in the Portuguese Empire), vol.II, pag.48 and next and *Civilizando Angola and Congo* (Civilizing Angola and Congo), pag. 22, from Father J. Alves Correia.

⁹ See this latter work, [pág.39](#)

response to another one from the superintendent of the Lutheran Rhenish mission, in Damaraland¹⁰, which is a remarkable document due to the excellence of the doctrine there defended and the tight logic of his argumentation.

...

In a letter written from the residence of Quipandeca, a great *soba* of the Kwanyama, on the 6th of September 1879, Duparquet transmits his first impressions about this region, optimistic and enthusiastic as always. "After a one month stay in this wonderful region, this happy impression is being confirmed even more; I already gathered a true volume of notes about the country, but, as you can imagine, it is impossible for me to transcribe such a long work." And his first impressions translate contentment and hope. Received in a palace, he soon would approach the issue of the establishment of a mission in the country, with the *soba* manifesting the best provisions in this regard.

In a more developed story, the missionary treats this trip in the form of a diary. Reading these pages, accompanied by maps of the Damaraland and the Ovambo which go along with it, does not require any clarification. However, there is one point which caught the attention of the missionary and which should also be brought to the reader: it is the alleged connection of the Kunene river with the Etosha pan, at the time of the floods of the river, which, constituting an interesting geographical problem, corresponded also to us, Portuguese, to a serious political problem.

Immediately in the letter that opens this chapter, Father Duparquet affirms: "When the rains come, around the month of February, the waters of the Kunene river increase and then overflow through the country, running into all the *omarambas*¹¹".

And, already in his final report of the trip, more than one reference to this phenomenon can be found, which so vividly caught his attention: "With the flood of the river (Kunene), when the water penetrates the *omarambas* up to the end of the region, legions of waterfowls, etc., appear".

And the idea is repeated insistently: "This region is a land of alluvium. No water line is coming from there, but it receives, on the contrary, every year, the waters of the Kunene, which play here a role analogous to the one of the Nile River in Egypt. "And further: "The aspect of the Kwanyama is much more picturesque than the Ondonga. This one consists only of a vast plain cultivated and surrounded by forests. The *omarambas* are rare. In the Kwanyama, on the contrary, both the Ombandja and the Ocaratia are grooved by a large network of *omarambas* which, with the water from the river, bring, at the same time, fertility. "

The subject is approached again, just before the end of the chapter: "... and we headed this time, not for to the springs of Nahorongo but to the *omaramba* of Icuma, which leaves the Kunene river ,when this one overflows, to form the lake of Etosha, almost in the foothills of the Damara mountains ".

¹⁰ It is incorporated in Chap. II

¹¹ Small valleys which groove the Kwanyama and through which the water flows down slowly during the rainy season.

And finally, refuting the opinion of Petermann who, in his geographical map put the Okavango in connection with the Etosha: "I am sure that it becomes full with the water line of the Icuma, which I perfectly have noticed the direction. Mr. Leen, who knows the region very well, assured me that the *omaramba* of the Icuma crosses the Ongangera and, therefore, must leave the Kunene below the Ombandja ».

Such statements, repeated for years as a settled thing, would be truly disastrous for us¹² because, having been established the possibility of taking the waters of the Kunene to the Damara, aroused among the Germans and, later among the South Africans, the ambition to canalize the waters there, which would fertilize the lands of their arid possession. And such pretension, made in solidarity with the determination of the border, frustrated for many years its fixation, with the inconveniences and even the dangers which are easy to imagine.

Father Duparquet would affirm again (Ch. IV) that "This *omaramba* called Oquipoco is very considerable and comes from the Kunene between the tribe of the Ondonga and the one of the Ovahinga; it crosses the country of the Ombalande, then the Ongangera, the Onkwambi and, finally, is flowing into Etosha ».

However, towards his intelligent and observer spirit, a question arises breaking the wholeness of his conviction: "This plateau is no more than the continuation of the lands of the Ovambo. Thus, the river would seem to us lower than the Ovambo and we would not understand how it can flood the whole country, because, of course, it can never, even in major floods, rise up to the height of the cliffs." And, still fighting in support of the first conviction, he seeks to adduce new arguments in his favour: "But this line of cliffs has interruptions and these rips originate the *omarambas* which bathe the Ovambo.

"The Ovambo is, in fact, lower than the river. Mr. Dufour found an altitude of 3,752 feet in Humbi, 3,750 in Ombandja and 3,500 in Ondonga. There is, therefore, a slope of at least 250 feet between the river and Ondonga. This slope continues up to the lake Etosha, which occupies the deepest depression of the entire region. "

And this idea has been so repeated and hammered in such a manner, that even the serious Elisée Reclus, in his monumental *Nouvelle Geographie Universelle* (vol.XIII, p. 415) echoed it: "A dozen of tribes, established mainly in the margins of the *omarambas* which come down from the Kunene to the Etosha Pan, and all separated from each other by elevations of deserted forest, occupy the Mbo territory».

And it later came to be realized/accomplished in projects of practical implementation, leading to the preparation of the celebrated scheme of Professor Schwarz¹³ from the University of Grahamstown, proposed in his famous book *The Kalahari Thirstland Redemption* for the construction of large dams in the Kunene and the Chobe, in order to achieve the elevation of the level of the Etosha Pan, from where it would overflow into the lake Ngami, connecting to the waters of the Macaricari.

¹² *Boletim da Agência Geral das Colónias, n.º 8* (Bulletin of the General Agency for the Colonies, n.º 8)

¹³ *Carta de Angola* (Map of Angola) – Gastão de Sousa Dias, pag. 185 – *A fronteira de Angola* (The border of Angola).

...

The study of the Okavango River has long been an attraction for geographers. Primarily oriented from north to south, the great river described after an arc in a disposition almost symmetrical to the one of the Kunene. And, as in the lower branch its course sharply marched eastward, it occurred naturally to consider it as an affluent of the Zambezi. This concept was supported as well by the almost absolute ignorance of this lower part of Africa. The Lake Ngami was only discovered by Livingstone in 1849.

The Okavango River is thought to have been discovered by the Swedish traveller Charles John Anderson, author of *The Okavango River*¹⁴ and must have been reached by him around the Cuangar in 1861.

But already before, the explorer Bernardino José Brochado and other Portuguese traders such as Candimba and Gonçalves, must have visited it in its deep penetrations at east. On the map which accompanies the *Memória de Brochado* (1851) (Memory of Brochado) are indicated the itineraries of the traders and commercial agents who, from the Kunene, headed to the Okavango and passed in the Genge or went to the basin of the Lake Ngami, and who were found in these whereabouts by Livingstone. Therefore, the people of the margins of the Okavango were known: Cuangar, Bunja, Sambio, Dirico and Mucusso. One of the most frequented itineraries by the commercial agents was the following: from Camba, on the right margin of the Kunene, they went up to Mulondo, where they crossed the river to meet its affluent Quitanda; they reached the right margin of the Okavango, upstream of the Cuatir river; they crossed to the left margin; they forded the Cuatir; and, heading to the Tamba- Cuatir river, they finally reached the Cuangar, passing again the Okavango to the right margin and following it continuously up to the Mucusso.

The explorer Ladislau Américo Magyar, in a letter of 21st of March 1853 to the Governor of Benguela, informs: "The hydrography of these countries is very insignificant and, excepting the abundant Okavango, which has its source in the mountains of Cabengue, with its voluminous river course from O to SE, partly goes through these dry countries, and in the country of Inderico, joining the Cuito river and, by this way thickening, it delivers its waters to the Riambeje, in the country of the Mococotas, I found no other river worth to be mentioned."

That same year of 1861, Antonio Francisco Nogueira gave news about the valley of the Okavango and established two routes to go from the Humbe to Mucusso: Humbe, Cuamoto, Kwanyama, Cuangar, Bunja, Sambio, Dirico and Mucusso, or Humbe, Camba, Evale, Cafima, Cuangar, etc..¹⁵

When, in 1866, Artur de Paiva built the Fort of *Princesa Amélia* (Princess Amelia) on the left bank of the Okavango, he also established contact with the major river.

¹⁴ He is also the author of *Lake Ngami* (1855).

¹⁵ *Homenagem aos Heroís que precederam Brito Capelo e Roberto Ivens* (Tribute to the Heroes who preceded Brito Capelo and Roberto Ivens)– Manuel Ferreira Ribeiro, pags. 38 and followings.

Serpa Pinto saw, in this way, the problem of the Okavango: "This huge pond (Macaricari) communicates with the Lake Ngami through the Botletle, and its level is the same as the one of that lake, this circumstance giving place to a very remarkable phenomenon. Being the two lakes distant by a few degrees, the heavy rains often fall east and the Macaricari overflows, without the sources that feed the Ngami increasing in volume. Then, the Botletle runs west, from the Macaricari to the Ngami. Other times, the inverse case happens and the Ngami sends its waters to the Macaricari. This is its natural course, being the Ngami fed by a permanent and voluminous river." And then, as a definitive conclusion, he affirms: "The Botletle isn't more than the Okavango, which has an extension they called Ngami."

Capelo and Ivens, on the other hand, in their book *De Angola à Contra-Costa*, say: "The Okavango is, without any doubt, one of the most powerful affluent of the Zambezi, flowing in certain times parts of its waters to the south, as we will explain; and if by chance it kept its average direction, unknown to the geographers, it is because, at the bottom of the course, having to go through extensive plains covered with numerous grasses, wiggles, widens, subdivides, to unite again through such a complicated way, that only with difficulty one can realize it during only one trip. "

Paiva Couceiro in 1890, descends to the lower course of the Okavango, almost always by its left bank, from Massaca up to the islands of Gomar; the missionary of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, Father Ernesto Lecomte, traces the map of the headwaters of the river, which he sends, in 1893, to the Geographical Society of Lisbon¹⁶; and João de Almeida, commanding in 1909 the column of the Baixo-Cubango, completes his rigorous recognition drawing it in detail from Post A to Libebe, at the Luso-German border, giving precise details about the destination of its waters, since then thickened by its affluent Cuito: "the Okavango, releasing its water into the Great Swamp, which take them partly through the Moguecuana (Nile), to the extension of the Kwando, in Bamangwato, and from this to the Zambezi, during heavy rains, or rather during great floods, fills the Ngami until it overflows, flowing the waters to the macaricaris, until the Great Macaricari is filled- a huge depression of land which is 3 up to 5 meters deep and 120 to 150 miles long by 80 to 100 meters wide – through the Botletle channel; and when the floods decrease, as they are at the same level, the waters flow back, flowing back to the Ngami. This phenomenon occurs in many dry rivers and ponds at the banks of the Okavango, on a smaller scale, but quite frequently in the plateaus of Bunja and Sambio».¹⁷

Already previously, Father Carlos Duparquet, in his news about the Okavango (1880), after indicating three itineraries which from the Mission of Omaruru led to Libebe in the Baixo Cubango, providing information about the lower course of the river, then describing its headwaters up to the country of the Amboela, at 16 ° degrees of latitude. His wish would be to be able to start the description by the Lake Ngami; but the information about this was very incomplete, and that's why they could not penetrate the carts because of the tsetse fly which decimated the livestock. In Libebe, the river reached its maximum width and the current was very strong. And the complicated hydrography, which is shown in his *Carte de la Riviere Okavango*, indicated how the waters of the river flowed in to the Great Swamp, which was connected eastward with the enlargement of the Kwando River, which in turn was connected to

¹⁶ *Boletim da S.G.L., 13ª série, n.º 12* (Bulletin of the S.G.L., 13 serie, n.12)

¹⁷ *Sul de Angola* (South of Angola) – João de Almeida, pag. 29

the Macaricari and, in major floods, to the Zambezi; and, to the south, with the lake Ngami. "This swamp is so vast that, up to the top of the trees which surround it, the view cannot reach, towards the north, the opposite bank. From this groundwater flows out the Tuka stream, regarded as the continuation of the Okavango and which flows into the Lake Ngami. As this watercourse is ~~the~~ lower than the Okavango, it must be concluded that the latter is largely lost in the Swamp, which naturally gives rise to the Tamunacle river. But as no one has circumvented it yet, it is not possible to say anything about this matter with surety. "

The description of the river continues, now upstream to Libele, outlining the orography, hydrography and ethnography of the regions that he finds, until he penetrates in the Ovambo limited by the affluent Cuito and covering the country of the Amboela, at the headwaters of the river.

The data provided by Father Duparquet largely coincide with the modern knowledge concerning these regions, except in the part where he emphasizes the connections of the system of the *omaramba* of the Ovambo with the Etosha Pan: "These gathered *omarambas* run to the south and are lost in the big Etosha pan, which consequently occupies the lower part of the region".

However, this one is grooved by an intricate network of water of insignificant current which, depending on the abundance of the rainfall, is moving in two opposite directions.

Elisée Reclus explains masterfully, in his *Nouvelle Geographie Universelle* ¹⁸ this strange hydrographical system, which was for a long time, due to the divergence of information obtained about it, a real mystery for geographers and cartographers. "The ancient lake which filled this region of Africa, between the heights of the Limpopo river and the mountains of the country of the Damara, and before that through the openings of the Zambezi gorges this vast basin would empty itself, has not completely disappeared: remaining sparse lagoons moving, increasing and decreasing in size, depending on the abundance or scarcity of rains and the silt. The large permanence of water in a vast lower sea becomes visible, as it were, not only by the horizontality of the ground, but also by the formation of lacustrine deposits. The whole plain is as though paved by a sort of tuft more or less soft, depending if it is exposed to the air or covered with havoc; everywhere where the soil is excavated, river shells come to the surface, similar to those which can be found today in Zambezi. The bed of the Okavango and of the rivers which come down from the country of the Damara, to branch out on the plain, are bordered by depressions where the water accumulates in temporary ponds, during the rainy season; on the other hand, these waterways divide themselves in distinct branches or dry rivers, the *langten* of the Dutch, through which the flood of liquid mass spreads, but where the stream glides in the opposite direction, to descend again in the higher current during the dry season: there, the movement of the water alternates according to the variations of climate. The Tonké, Tonka or Tiogé, which receives the super abundant flow of the Baixo-Cubango, but which sometimes is completely dry, and whose bed, cut by some rapids, serve as a way for the Bushmen, is flanked by these dry rivers with normal or reversed current. Ordinarily, the Tonké empties itself in the Ngami after the rains; in 1886, it had changed its course and was lost in a vast swamp, whose waters were going through various branches to join, at east and at southeast, the beds of the

¹⁸ Vol. XIII, pag. 636

Chobe and the Zuga. Every traveller who enters these solitudes draws differently the contours of these lacustrine groundwater and the ramifications of its affluent or emissaries. "

...

During his previous trip to the Ovambo, in 1879, Father Duparquet did not manage to reach the Kunene River neither, therefore, communicate with Moçamêdes, to establish, from there, connections with Europe. He will try now to achieve these two aims which are fundamental for his great plans of evangelization. He takes advantage of the company of Mr Erickson, former partner of the explorer Anderson and one of the most important traders of this region, who was leaving for a big hunt in the Kunene and the Okavango.

The departure was settled for the morning of the 14th of June, going also, in the big caravan, Mr Jordan, "a British from the Cape who was negotiating with the Portuguese Government the establishment of the Boers in the Province of Angola and who was responsible for introducing them in the promised land". In Erickson's carriage a boy was travelling as well, Anderson's son, who wished to visit his father's grave, deceased at the banks of the Kunene on the 4th of June 1867.¹⁹

They cross the territory of Cuambi, whose *soba*, Nihombo, they visit in his residence and with whom they agree upon the foundation of a mission on his land.

Crossing *omarombas*, the carriages go forward on a flat and sandy ground, at the tribe of the Ombalando. The hunters, during their excursions through the wilderness, are guided by the marvellous instinct of orientation of the Bushmen who joined them.

They find themselves now in Omatuazia, where Mr Botha comes to meet them, "commander" of the Boers and who was coming back from the Okavango. And progressing evermore, they reach the residence of Iquera, *soba* of Ombandja (Cuamato) who requests the missionary to stay with him, being responsible for the education of his children; and, immediately, the concession of a piece of land for the construction of an habitation is agreed.

Here, they meet Mr. Dufour, traveller sent by the Geographical Society of Paris and who would later be murdered by the gentile of Fendi, at the left bank of Kunene, and who shortly before had serious misunderstandings with the *soba* Quipandeca.

The journey continues through the road of Ondonga, to meet the camp of the hunters where they come across the unpleasant news concerning the presence of a group of Boers who, about three leagues from there, were hunting hippos at the Kunene River. "This last news causes some concerns to Mr Erickson. The previous year, the Boers inflicted, indeed, a terrible punishment to the tribe of the Humbi, provoked by an attack from them. Since this war, the indigenous people live in constant fear of the return of their enemies, whose vengeance, they think, might not have been completely satisfied. However, as the Boers had just arrived to the banks of the river, our arrival coincided with theirs and we camped close to each other. Possibly, the indigenous people would mistake us with their enemies, by seeing us as a military expedition".

¹⁹ The grave of Anderson is located in Angolan territory, a few kilometers west of Namakunde.

Already shortly before, Father Duparquet registered that the Ovambos considered the Boers “as their greatest enemies”. Through the wilderness, the Boers had pioneered by force of arms, fighting the gentile. And, as a preventive measure so they weren’t mistaken with them, our travellers write to the Portuguese of Humbe, to inform them that they had nothing to do with the Boers and that they were there with entirely peaceful intentions and solely for the purpose of hunting.

The Boers, as soon as they found out about the presence of Father Duparquet, sent him the emissaries Mr Prinsloo and Mr Osthuisen who informed him about their works and probations, considering themselves harshly experienced by fevers, reason why they had decided to abandon the Kaoko. “I gave them new information about Huila and I strongly urged them to accept this territory that the Portuguese Government was offering them.”

On the 24th of July, the missionary leaves for Humbe. The next day was the feast of St. James, patron of the Congo Mission. His nostalgic thought is irresistibly going to the banks of the great Zaire, this giant of the African rivers, whose width was unparalleled with the insignificant Kunene.

They do not manage to speak neither with the natives nor with the Portuguese on the other bank, the first ones being visibly alarmed by the proximity of the Boers.

The observation of the cliffs on the left bank, always high and united, give way in the spirit of Duparquet to the first doubts about the possibility of the flowage of water from the Kunene to the south.

The first connections with the *soba* Chahongo are established, resulting in a visit to his residence, where some Portuguese were, with whom Duparquet got into a conversation, not succeeding, however, to tranquilize, his concerns regarding the expedition. The relations, however, settle amicably with mutual visits, with Duparquet gathering the information which was more interesting for him about the possible link with Moçamêdes. The Portuguese, who had just arrived there, were the bearers of a letter from the Governor Ferreira de Almeida to the Boer Bawer, in which the Boers were granted land in Huila for their establishment, under certain conditions. “They were exempted of taxation during a certain number of years, they were allowed to manage by themselves their business; but they should recognize the sovereignty of Portugal and submit to the Portuguese legislation.”

As soon as the letter was delivered to Mr. Jordan, he advised the Boers to immediately send Huila a commission to deal with the Portuguese authorities.²⁰

Usually, the Portuguese traders from Humbe, after the end of the rains, crossed the Kunene and dispersed through the Ovambo, doing their business with the natives and, therefore, had sometimes to subject themselves to great dangers and vexations.

Duparquet visits the houses of the traders of Humbe who, despite their poverty and humility, received him hospitably, having then the opportunity to go down to the Caculovar River, an

²⁰ Confront these statements with the ones from *Angola* (Notes about the colonization of the highlands and the coast of southern Angola), of Albuquerque Felner, volume III, documents 48 and 61.

affluent from the right bank of the Kunene. "At noon, I find myself on the banks of the river, after having received the most gracious welcome by the natives, whose *senzalas*²¹ I crossed alone, which leads me to believe that the concerns of the Portuguese were unfounded."

The hunting of zebras and ostriches continues in the land of the Chavicua, from the Cimbebas' race. Erickson brings together the hunters to decide about the immediate destination of the expedition, fixing the departure to Evare (Evale) for the next day. Duparquet sends his mail to Europe through the intermediary of the trader António José de Almeida - among this post was a letter to the Council for the Propagation of the Faith- and prepares himself for his return to Omaruru.

On the 16th of August, Duparquet enters the land of the *soba* Nihombo, who hospitably welcomes him, expressing his desire to have a mission in his *sobado*. However, the commitments which have already been taken in this direction with Iquera prevent the missionary of making up his mind.

In Ovuzia, the explorer Chapman, who was camped along the *omaramba* of Oquipoco, comes to meet him.

The journey continues to Nohorong and Okaokana, where it is needed to give some rest to the livestock. On the 31st of August, he reaches the springs of Ombika, where Bushmen maintain themselves living abundantly of wild roots. But they already enjoy a certain stability and have herds of goats - the first step to civilization - and firearms which unfortunately is also another sign of civilization...

And finally, during the night of the 15th, the carriage of the missionary was re-entering the mission of Omaruru. During the morning, Duparquet showed up at the church as a surprise, for great rejoicing of the community and said mass.

Good news awaited him on his return. A mail from Europe announced "the news of the happy disposition of the Portuguese Government regarding the mission and its desire that the action of this civilizing action would be extended to the north of the Kunene, to the colony of Moçâmedes». Would his hopes finally turn into reality on that aspect, reaching the evangelization of these beautiful and interesting regions?

Apparently it seemed so; but as the future belongs to God, it was not given to mortals the ability to penetrate its unfathomable mysteries!

...

On the last day of July 1883, a small caravan of missionaries, leaving the Catholic community of Humbe²², went eastward. To cross the Kunene river, it was necessary to unload the Boers cars,

²¹ Accommodation or location where slaves or natives lived.

²² Mission founded in 1882 by Father Duparquet. From there came the missionaries who, in 1884, were sent to found the Mission of the Kwanyama, some of whom were massacred in the following year. Its first director was Father Wunemburger, who doughtily defended it during the rebellion of the Muhumbes (1884-85), having finally to be abandoned. It was restored by Father Bonnefoux in 1909.

which they brought with them, and to move the entire load to the left bank, which was a slow and heavy task that in these kind of bush trips tests the patience and the endurance of the travellers.

Among the three missionaries in the caravan, one excelled by his expression of authority and intelligence, which did not abstract a certain tendency to joke and to take from things and facts a lesson of philosophy and good humour.

He was mainly interested in plants, which he kept finding and carefully observing.

While the work of unloading and crossing the river was being performed, the missionary roamed carefully through the riverbank, observing and meditating, as if a serious problem concerning the large watercourse was captivating his spirit.

The normal bed of the river would measure, there, about 140 meters and its banks were covered with tall reeds (*cala magestis arenaria*) and other grasses, good for feeding cattle.

They were going through a territory, agitated by wars between the indigenous from the Kwanyama and the ones from Evale, and they had to take precautions, especially because of the servants. On the 8th of August, they reached a small construction which they had requested to be prepared previously and where they celebrated mass. There, the *soba* of the region came to meet them and promised to give them guides to go to the Amboelas, where they were heading.

The journey continues again. Everywhere, the missionaries find an excellent welcome. Now, they go towards the Evale to cross the river Cuvelai, which they follow northward on its left bank.

This river also continues to be the subject of careful observation by the studious missionary, whom the reader must have already guessed certainly to be the Father Carlos Duparquet.

He was worried, actually, by a hydrographic problem about which, more than once, he gave inaccurate information and contrary to the truth of the facts... "A mistake which I, following many other writers, had previously made about the annual flooding of the Ovambo».

And now that the truth is presented clearly to his eyes, he felt the duty to proclaim it, which he made with the own wholeness of a true man of science: "The Cuvelai river has its source in the same plateau which divides the basin of the Kunene from the Okavango, at about 15° 8 south latitude. Its source is very close to the one of the Calonga and another river which flows into the Okavango. Its course takes the southwest direction to the Huanda, where it takes the southward direction to the Evale, which it crosses in all its length. At the south end of the Evale, the Cuvelai forms a kind of lagoon, which in any way flows its waters into the Kunene, as erroneously the Portuguese maps indicate: during the rainy season, in the month of February, after having filled the lagoon of the Evale, it sends its excess of water through all the *omarambas* of the Ovambo up to the Etosha lake which is its terminus. "

And the whole truth, passionate and clear, comes out of his mouth in an ardent confession of error, proclaimed with voluptuousness and without subterfuge: "There is in the maps, in fact, a double error to be corrected. In the first place, the lagoon of the Evale, which is no more than the

river Cuvelai, it does not overflow into the Kunene and, secondly, the Kunene is not sending a single drop of water to the Ovambo! "

However, it was useless: the denial would not become known and the initial error - with the invincible prestige of all errors - would triumphantly follow its way, disadvantageously for those who, like us, for our own security, had an urgent need to limit the territory at the southern side.

The pretensions of the Germans to take water from the Cunene south were transmitted to the politicians of the South-African Union, when that one took on the mandate for the Southwest.

And only when, after 45 years, by the effect of the agreements of the Cape, a committee of the waters studied the problem on the spot and South Africans topographers confirmed the impossibility of conducting them to the south, the fatal error became evident, allowing then the fast demarcation of the border.

This error would be public and definitively proclaimed when J. H. Wellington, on April 1938, published in *The South-African Geographical Journal*, an article entitled *The Cunene River and the Etocha Plain*²³, revealing the disconcerting conclusions that, in 1928, the Commission of the waters had arrived and that Father Duparquet had already predicted.

The journey continues along the Cuvelai; which flows embedded between high banks, forming from time to time abundant basins of fish. Two days later, they arrived at the *sobado* of Handa and then from there, they finally headed to the Amboelas.

Our missionary was enchanted with nature. And once again, the botanist overcomes the priest in an ingrained love for all that is life. At the riverbank of the Calonga, his enthusiasm grows: "There, again, I found the beautiful plants which I had already seen in Huila and a few more which I guess are still unknown to botanists. One is a big shrub, perhaps a *Strychnos*, which gives fruits with the size of melons, but not comestible. I noticed as well a shed of scarlet flowers, forming long garlands of more than one meter long. But what impressed me most was an aquatic fern, fully immersed in water and whose roots were strongly attached to the rocks. Its fruitage was similar in everything with the one of the *ophioglossum* and formed a kind of whitish spikes which rose above the water. "

Duparquet was close to completing 53 years. With an invincible moral resistance and an imperturbable optimism, he launches the foundations of the new mission of the Amboelas, in Caquele, on the right bank of the Ocachitanda River, at 15° 8' south latitude and 16° 14' of east longitude, east of Greenwich.

And when, in 1884, the explorers Capelo and Ivens passed in Huila, on their journey in *Angola à Contra-Costa*, they met at the mission the great missionary, whose prestige has reached considerable proportions. The words the two explorers use to refer to him on the narration of their trip and which we transcribed at the beginning of this book, reflect a profound veneration for his virtues and for his work.

²³ In Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa (Bulletin of the Geographical Society of Lisbon), n. 9 and 10, serie 64 (September and October 1946).

But great heartbreaks were awaiting for him during the last years of his stay in the south of Angola: the mission of Caquele, due to the unhealthiness, was transformed into a veritable cemetery for missionaries, having been destroyed shortly after by a large fire and, then, transferred to Cassinga; and the one in Kwanyama, to which he had so much committed for, assaulted by the gentile during the elevation to power of the *soba* Eyulo, was the theatre of a cruel massacre, in which part of the European staff was victimized.

Severely hurt by these facts, the idea that, after all, from his work - Omaruru, Kwanyama, Humbe and Amboelas – nothing more than ruins remained, he feels tired and hit hopelessly in his glorious optimism which had always been his great and true strength. And, handing over the Prefecture into the hands of Father Schaller, he ends up settling anonymously at the missions of Loango, where he would die on the 24th of August 1888.

And so was extinguished, in perfect humility and almost anonymously, one of the noblest figures of the missions of Angola, in many points similar to the Italian Capuchins - walkers of the wilderness and heroes of the faith - which, by his lack of interest, like them, left in the tradition a golden mark of abnegation and self-renunciation.

GASTÃO DE SOUSA DIAS

Hereafter, the "Biographical Notes" referring to Fr Carlos Duparquet are published and for which the Fr Peter Noirtin from the Congregation of the Holy Spirit kindly cooperate, in homage to that great missionary.

Biographical Notes

By

R.º FR Noirtin S. Sb.

Father Carlos Duparquet was born on the 31st of October 1830 in Laigle (Sées) in Normandy. The only son of a wealthy family, he professed at the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, recently restored. Due to his missionary vocation, he was originally appointed to the missions of Dakar and of Gabon. Connoisseur of the Portuguese missionary traditions, his spirit impelled him, however, for larger designs, dreaming of the resurrection of the former Missions of Congo.

When, on the 2nd of October 1866, already prepared with the experience given by a brief sojourn in Dakar and in Gabon, he arrived in Lisbon, he was 36 years old and his heart was excited with a lively passion for evangelization. After fulfilling the necessary administrative and sanitary formalities, the ardent missionary boards the packet *Yorkshire* to Angola. However, a damage found in the machine of the ship forces him to return to Lisbon, where he had the opportunity to get in contact with distinguished personalities, including the Apostolic Nuncio and the Bishop of Angola, D. José Lino, which resulted in being nominated, by commendation (15-X-1866), to be the pastor of Capangombe and of other counties of the District of Moçamêdes, where there would be no pastor.

On the 18th of October, he embarks again, arriving in Luanda after 35 days of travel, where he was welcomed in the best way by the Governor-General, Francisco António Gonçalves Cardoso (1866-1869), who gave him considerable facilities, encouraging him for the performance of his noble mission. It was also a great comfort for him the fact that, upon his arrival at the capital of Angola, he met two colleagues from the Congregation who had preceded him when embarking to this town.

On the 26th, he had sworn in canonical obedience to the Governor of the bishopric: and, departing again, he reached Moçamêdes on the 4th of December, resting there a week before hitting the desert, on the way to Capangombe, located at the foothill of the *Serra da Chela*. On the 17th, he took office at the parish. His passion as a botanist, which manifested itself during his time at the Seminary and when he was a teacher there as well, found in the new environment an easy and large expansion. And in addition to this, he was also spirited with the connections that he established with Mr. Descaïne, director of the *Jardin des Plantes*, of Paris.

In Capangombe, Fr Duparquet is a guest in the house of the experienced inlander Bernardino José Brochado, who provides him with secure information about the regions below and above the Kunene. The colony of Capangombe, despite being from a recent foundation, had quite some farmers (the application for the appointment of the pastor had been signed by 21 people) and its farms, provided with numerous slave servants, were rich in sugar cane, coffee and cotton. Everyone showed the best arrangements for the new pastor, who nonetheless, in his

intimate, remained concerned about the enormous extent of the parish. Soon, his spirit would mould itself to the responsibility of feeling under his hand extensions a thousand times wider.

The first news he sent to the General Superior clearly express his concerns: "There is tremendous work to be done, but there are also considerable distances to surmount, due to the vast space where this population is dispersed. To evangelize, it is indispensable to go successively through all the farms, and, for that purpose, the activity of only one person will not be enough.

But his unsatisfied curiosity to see and to know, and yet the evident purpose of founding a mission, bring him to take the first opportunity to climb the hill and to penetrate into the bright and cool highlands of Huila. And, in the description of this trip, Fr Duparquet proves to be an unequalled painter, writing pages of great descriptive beauty, worthy of appearing in an anthology of French writers. How many of his fellow countrymen, who do not have special knowledge of geography, would have ever heard about the beauty of the interior of Moçâmedes, and would know the name of Father Duparquet?

His ambition was to create a college in Moçamêdes, for which he received, in Lisbon, verbal permission from the bishop of Angola. Moçamêdes had, in fact, all the conditions for the establishment of a foundation of that nature. And for this end, Fr Duparquet called, from the Mission of Gabon, the seminarian Crétin, with whom he intended to share the teaching work. However, man proposes but God disposes. His appointment to be in charge of a Portuguese parish, being a foreigner, caused remarks and strangeness, having been alleged that the bishop had exceeded his functions. And, being the issue put in the Parliament, it was deferred to the Crown Council, where it was dragged on endlessly, creating a truly unsustainable situation for the missionary.

Tired of the travel to Huila and annoyed by these contrarities which were raised towards his work, Fr Duparquet decides to return to Lisbon, entrusting to the seminarian Crétin the incipient establishment, until when in 1867, Fr Poussot came from Luanda, to help to close it provisionally. Fr Duparquet boarded in Moçamêdes in May that year. In Luanda, came to his knowledge by the Governor of the Bishopric, the royal decree of 02.03.1867, whereby foreigner missionaries could not be provided benefits and could only hold provisional parish functions in the absence of the pastor, and, therefore, the letter of commendation should be withdrawn and be replaced by an authorization that the Prelate would find appropriate.

The expectation of establishing the college in Moçamêdes was thus unusable. But, in his mind, a new mirage arose, whose implementation has come to be decisive for the future of the evangelization of Angola: the foundation of the called *Casa do Congo* (House of Congo), which, with the sympathy of both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, would be created in Santarém.

Fr Duparquet arrives in Lisbon on the 26th of June 1867, getting, days after, an audience with the Minister of Marine, Viscount Da Praia Grande. His steps result in an authorization to open the *Casa do Congo* in Santarém (30th of August), which intended to recruit vocations from Portuguese citizens and to nationalize the spiritan work, being the first stone of the future work of evangelization of the Priests of the Holy Spirit and to which FR Carrie, a dedicated collaborator of Duparquet, was appointed as superior.

In order to take part in the annual retreat, Fr Duparquet goes to France (6th of August 1868), returning to Portugal by the end of October. He is now committed in handling the matters of the Congo Mission. The Crown Council, consulted by the Ministry of Marine, decided in favour of the creation of this missionary work. However, Fr Duparquet would be soon transferred to the mission of Zanzibar, where he disembarked, from the freighter *Malta*, on the 22nd of January 1870. Placed in the community of Bagamoyo, his soul bleeds for the situation of the slaves, of which Zanzibar was an active market. From 11th of August until the 22nd of September, he takes part in an expedition into the interior of the continent, established by Father Horner and Father Baur, to explore the kingdom of Onkami, in order to investigate the possibilities of the founding of a missionary establishment.

On the 15th of April 1872, a cyclone destroyed the Mission of Bagamoyo, whose leaders and students had to be accommodated in Zanzibar. At the end of that year, Fr Duparquet falls seriously ill. His return to Europe was imposed and he arrives in Marseille on the 18th of March of the following year, going from there to Paris. The Motherhouse was at that time visited by Sir Bartle Frere, British plenipotentiary who was returning from the East Coast of Africa, where he had gone in an official mission related to the extinction of slavery, and, by happy coincidence, was received during his visit by the Fr Duparquet, glad to receive again the illustrious guest of the Mission of Zanzibar.

After a journey of exploration of Fr Carrie on the banks of the Zaire River in November 1871, the Congo mission was restored and based in Landana. Fr Duparquet leaves Paris in 1873, embarks on the *Soudan* in Liverpool, stopping during the journey in Funchal, in *Costa do Ouro* (Gold Coast), in Lagos, in Boni, in the Old Calabar in Fernando Pó and in Gabon. On the 8th of August, he disembarks in Ponta Negra, going two days later, by carriage, up to Landana, where he was expected by Fr Carrie. Once chosen the site for the mission, they buy, for a low price, a European house which was unoccupied and manage, from the potentate of the land (contract of 19th of September 1873), the assignment of a magnificent land. Thus was established the Mission of St. James of Landana.

Based on his letters from that time, published in the *Boletim da Congregação* (Buletin of the Congregation), it is possible to follow the details of this important work, the first link of a future chain of missions. "We must pray and demand to pray – wrote Fr Duparquet – so that these lands, so beautiful by nature but sterile for heaven until now, could be, for the Holy Church, a fertile and fruitful field".

Completely absorbed in his work as catechist, farmer and architect, Fr Duparquet gave the mission all his effort. Nevertheless, at that time, the local indigenous potentate decided to the withdrawal of the Mission, accusing the images in the chapel of preventing the rainfall and other harm. This intention was, however, abandoned before the decisive and firm attitude of the missionaries. Fr Duparquet thought, however, that by precaution, another place for the Mission should be chosen and, in this sense, he held a trip to Zaire and to Gabon. At the end of 1875, a serious quarrel between the indigenous people and the employees of a commercial house put again the mission in danger, being a general attack to the settlers avoided by the armed intervention of a German mission, which was on an exploration in Congo. It is noted in this epoch the conversion of the son of Matenda, a local potentate, by Fr Duparquet.

On the 23rd of October 1877, severely affected by malarial anaemia, Fr Duparquet abandons Congo, leaving the mission entrusted to Fr Carrie, who later would be the Apostolic Vicar of Loango.

...

By recommendation of Fr Duparquet, the Superior General of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit had requested and obtained from Rome the creation of the Prefecture of Cimbebasia (28th of April 1879). This very strange name, which had disappeared for a long time from the African maps, designated the vast region covered between the Orange and the Kunene rivers. England had just established its protectorate, when Fr Duparquet arrived at Cape Town, aboard of the *Warwick Castle* (29th of March), as Prefect of Cimbebasia, accompanied by the Irish Friar Onofre. At the pier, he was awaited by Monsignor Leonardi, bishop of the Cape, and both from the Governor, Sir Bartle Frere, and from the population, the missionaries received evidence of unequivocal sympathy. The first idea of Fr Duparquet was to settle in Griqualand, where he went on the 9th of April 1878. But the Oblate fathers of Kimberley deterred him in founding the mission in Griqualand because, there, the indigenous people were in a state of almost revolt, rebellion which exploded, in fact, shortly after.

Returning to the Cape, on the 15th of June, he then directed his visits to the various tribes of Cimbebasia, electing Damaraland to settle, since this region is very salubrious and where the protestant action was still low. However, for this purpose, it was necessary to buy a carriage or a boer wagon, a real mobile home, which was the mean of transport used then, throughout South Africa. The imposing vehicle was baptized with the name of *Rafael*, inside which he requested to be installed a small altar. In all these preparations, he was greatly helped by Fr Congan, pastor of the See, and, in gratitude, he offered himself to sing at the Mass on Sundays. "What may cost more to believe is that everyone thought I sang well"...

On the 15th of August, Fr Duparquet, together with Friar Onofre and his car "Rafael", embarks on the *Louis-Alfred*, towards Walvis-Bay, where they arrived six days later.

Amiably received by the Governor, Erskine, who provided them with a small house and kindly presented himself to give them some English lessons, as they struggled in vain to get some cattle for the *Rafael*, offered them the opportunity to go to Omaruru, situated 50 miles northeast of Walvis-Bay, above the river with the same name, in the company of Mr. Palgrave, Commissioner of the British Queen. Omaruru (OKothondye) was an important crossing point of the caravans and a developed commercial centre of the interior. Walking since the 28th of January until the 14th of February 1879, FR Duparquet and Friar Onofre reached the "promised land". Their arrival was welcomed by the Europeans and the natives, including the indigenous potentate, and they settled in a house of adobe which was offered to them. However, for them it was an unpleasant surprise to find out that the Protestants had strongly established themselves in the region for 25 years now! And, thus, only after one month since their arrival, they received a letter from the leader of the Rhinish Mission, Mr. Viehe, protesting against the intrusion of the

catholic priests in that region. Fr Duparquet did not give up. In his terse reply, after paying homage to the cultures of the Lutheran leader, treated in the Herero language, he claimed the rights of his apostolate, caviling the intolerance of that missionary.

Meanwhile, a new missionary arrived at the Catholic Mission of Omaruru, the Fr Hogan. They opened a school and celebrated the first baptisms.

But Fr Duparquet was dreaming of new ventures: the establishment of a new mission in the Kwanyama. On the 3rd of July, he leaves for the north on an exploration trip, taking with him the oxcart driver Francisco da Silva, a black from Landana and former servant of an American. During this journey spent in the company of white hunters, he lives intensively the life of the wilderness, visiting Oloconda (1st of August) and the Kwanyama (on the 19th of the same month), from where he returned to Omaruru on the 29th of December.

On the 24th, a new missionary arrived at the mission, the Fr Griffin, an Irish citizen. The white hunters, dispersed through the bush, had the habit of gathering in Omaruru to celebrate Christmas. And, from them, Fr Duparquet gathers geographical information which he will soon use, especially since the founding of the mission of the Kwanyama is not leaving his mind not even for a second.

In the meantime, it came to his knowledge that a group of Boers travellers, who had abandoned the Transvaal, were camping in Ombahé (Okombahé), a few kilometres north of the mission. He heads there, on the 22nd of March 1880, together with FR Hogan, taking place a meeting between him and the Boer leader who, during this act, was accompanied by the main Dutch immigrants. "I told them – wrote FR Duparquet in the *Bulletin de la Congrégation* (Buletin of the Congregation) of 188 – pags. 809-811 – that my intention was to occupy myself with the evangelization of the Ovambo; but, to start an establishment in this region, there were three essential conditions: the healthiness, the communications facilities with Europe and the security, which could fail in certain cases. Nevertheless, among them, he hoped to find all these advantages gathered." I would feel happy, then, creating in their colony an establishment which could become the centre of the missions of the Ovambo and where they would find for themselves facilities to educate their children."

On the other hand, the Boer commander brought to his knowledge his intention to send to Moçamêdes a commission to request the Portuguese Governor for some land in that district. And, the following day, during a new meeting, they agreed upon their arrangements, being a kind of alliance concluded between the Catholic Mission and the Boer colony.

Meanwhile, in Omaruru, difficulties after difficulties were appearing. The relationships with the indigenous potentate, Katchaheréni, were becoming increasingly troublesome. And, on the occasion of the Synod of Lutherans, in the Pentecost of 1880, further attempts were made in order to instigate the indigenous people against the Catholic Mission.

Taking advantage of a calmer situation, Fr Duparquet directs again his steps to the Ovambo, this time with a firm commitment to go beyond the Kunene and to visit the Portuguese of Humbe, which he managed to do. But while he was launching the foundations of the new establishment, at the mission of Omaruru, the situation deteriorated increasingly, with the poor Fr Hogan

bearing the humiliation and even the mistreatments of Katchaheréni. And the situation worsened when the British, at the outbreak of the revolt of the Zulus, had to abandon Hereros and Hottentots, leaving them delivered to their old hatreds and fights, which made the situation of the Europeans established in the territory really critical. In view of the events, there were only two solutions: either seeking refuge in Griqualand or attempting to guide the religious expansion to the regions of the Kwanyama. On the 19th of October 1880, Fr Duparquet, giving Fr Hogan and his companions the order to withdraw on first alarm, went hurriedly to the Cape, from where he wrote to Lisbon, to the Ministry of Marine, entrusting the letter to the Portuguese Consulate, after which he went to Griqualand. He was in Kimberley, prepared to cross the Vaal River, when the reply from Lisbon came to his hands. He does not have a single moment of hesitation: he comes back to the Cape and, from there, embarks to Lisbon.

But the mission of Omaruru soon had to close its doors. The conflict between the two missions assumed a character more serious day by day. The main trader of the region, Erickson, and the inhabitants of the village themselves decided to abandon it, looking for a safer place. The Fr Hogan gets a terminative intimation to retreat, sent by the indigenous potentate, under the cover of whom Mr Viehe maneuvered relentlessly, threatening the missionaries, preventing their workers to work and forbidding the natives to attend school. As the Fr Hogan did not obey, another letter came from Katchaheréni repeating the intimation, but only when the blacks broke down the door of the Mission and pushed violently the missionaries to the street, Fr Hogan, unable to resist any longer, ceded to the received intimations. Thus, the first work of the Prefecture of Cimbebasia succumbed so violently.

When Fr Duparquet arrived in Lisbon, excited by the news received from there, negotiations were already established by Fr Eigenmann, Superior of the College of Braga, assisted by Fr Maria José Antunes, with the Ministry of the Marine, for the creation of Catholic missions in Portuguese overseas territories. The settlement of Protestantism in Angola, particularly in Bié, had attracted the attention of the Ministry and the Board of Missions, which soon requested the collaboration of the Missionaries of the Holy Spirit. The toughness and practicality of the Norman priest knew how to get the necessary support from the Portuguese government, overcoming hesitations, winning sympathies, indicating satisfactory solutions and demonstrating his exceptional knowledge about African matters.

Meanwhile, the Boers, with whom the Fr Duparquet had established, as we have seen, close links, had been authorized by the Portuguese Government to settle in Humpata; for the passage of their carts, they had opened a road from the Kwanyama to Huila, and this road was now meant to establish continuity with the road ordered to be opened by Portugal, from Huila to Moçamêdes. This important improvement, ensuring definitely the communication with Europe, came to facilitate the implementation of the future plan of evangelization, which was clearly outlined in the spirit of Fr Duparquet, giving priority to the establishment of a central station in the healthy and beautiful region of Huila, from where all the missionary effort of the South would radiate - "Praise God - exclaimed the noble apostle - finally, our negotiations with the Portuguese Government have just been concluded in a happy way. The establishment in Huila is absolutely accepted, without any modification of the proposals submitted. The Honorable Minister approved it definitively." The report of Fr Duparquet had the signature of the Minister of Marine and Overseas, Mr Ernesto de Vilhena, with the only condition that the superior of the

foundation should be a Portuguese citizen. Fr Antunes, assigned to exercise this function, sent the king D. Luís a detailed plea in order to be allowed to open several religious works in the Plateau of Huila (9th of July of 1887), being then the General Governor of Angola authorized to give the necessary land for the establishment of the new mission. On the 28th of this month, FR Antunes was nominated pastor of Huila.

Fr Duparquet exults with joy with the concessions reached: "It was a favour that no other institute had yet obtained in Portugal. It is true that it was not made to the congregation itself because religious congregations are not recognized in Portugal. However, as it can be seen in the text of the first decree, this concession does not have individual character. This is made to the Catholic mission, as a civil and moral person and without limitation of time, which removes all the difficulties about succession and ensures the future within the possible extent. "

On the 5th of October 1881, Fathers Duparquet, Antunes, Wunenburger and three friars embark in Lisbon, destination Huila. Kindly welcomed in Luanda by the General Governor, António Eleutério Dantas e by the Bishop D. José Neto, this one pretended that the components of Mission should settle in Luanda, being responsible for the management of the Seminar in this town. The offer was attractive but they could not accept. Their official destination was Huila and they headed there. And on the 7th of December, eve of the Immaculate Conception, having crossed the desert of Moçamêdes and climbed the *Serra de Chela*, they arrived at their destination.

It does not fit in the limited proportions of this study to describe the work and the progress of the new mission which, on the 28th of December, was visited by the Bishop D. José Neto, who was accompanied by the seminarians of Luanda to establish the seminar in Huila.

But Huila could not make Fr Duparquet to forget the prior project concerning the expansion of the missions in Cimbebasia; and that was the reason why, close to the first houses built in Mucha for the mission, he immediately built as well a small procuracy for the Prefecture and acquired the farm of Munhino.

By the end of October 1882, Fr Duparquet was between life and death, grappling with a serious lung disease, having his companions attributed the healing to the intercession of the Venerable Fr Libermann.

However, the evangelical zeal does not slow down for a single moment in the soul of Fr Duparquet. The first mission to be founded now is the one of Humbe, even if it is out of the limits of Cimbebasia. Important centre of indigenous population, estimated on 800 000 souls, Humbe was garrisoned by Portuguese troops, which was for the mission a considerable advantage concerning its security. With the elements expelled from Omaruru and who were welcomed in Walvis-Bay on the 12nd of September 1881, as well as with the Fathers Hogan and Lynch and the Friar Onofre, Fr Duparquet composed the personnel of the new mission which, in his presence, is inaugurated on the 23rd of June 1882. "The new establishment advantageously substitutes the one in Omaruru – wrote FR Duparquet as a consolation -; and one can say that our expulsion was a happy misfortune."

There were actually reasons to not discourage: the Muhumbe were people of docile nature and the region between Humbe and the Gambos seemed to be one of the most beautiful and rich of the whole of Africa. And immediately the mission created a branch beyond the Kunene, in Ombandja (Cuamato), close to the *soba* Iquera who, for this purpose, granted a piece of land to Fr Hogan and had given shelter to some of the fugitives of Omaruru, at the time of the violent closing of that mission.

From Humbe, Fr Duparquet returns to Huila and there, on the 3rd of May, fifteen boys who were slaves rescued from the interior by the missionaries, received the Holy Communion festively.

Through the explorers Serpa Pinto e Dufour, with whom he was communicating by letters, Fr Duparquet gathered news about the territories of the Amboelas; and, in order to prepare the evangelization of these people, he went there with Fr Campana and Friar Onofre, on the 31st of July. While crossing the area of the Kwanyama, they were well welcomed by the young *soba* Nambadi, who also wished missionaries for his kingdom. From there, he headed to the Evale and to the Handa, reaching the Amboelas by the end of August and coming back to Humbe on the 2nd of October.

The *soba* Nambadi was sending pressing messages complaining about the establishment of a mission on his lands, which effectively was settled there soon, close to the own *embala* of the *soba*, where the Fathers Duparquet and Delpuech as well as the friars Lúcio and Geraldo built six houses and cultivated an old orchard, a gift from the sovereign.

An unpleasant occurrence happened then. The *soba* Nambadi tore a Portuguese flag which was offered by the Governor of Moçamêdes, and Father Duparquet saw himself in the need to justify himself from the unjust accusation of having advised him to do such an act, so contrary to his way of proceeding and that would be all the more surprising as it is certain that, before the Portuguese Government, he had made the commitment of favouring the Portuguese influence, especially by the teaching of the language.

In May 1885, the Fr Ernesto Lecomte arrived Humbe, bound for the mission in the Kwanyama, and who would become, as the continuer of the works of Duparquet, one of the noblest figures of the Evangelization of Angola.

Nambadi passed away, being the Fr Duparquet absent, on the 4th of June, under the suspicion of having been poisoned and having the gentile died in the most deplorable scenes of drunkenness and blood, as it usually happened during the successions of the *sobas*. The mission was disrespected and the Fr Delpuech and the Friar Lúcio were murdered (6-6-85), being their corpses burnt after five days. The Friar Geraldo managed to run away. And thus the first mission in Kwanyama ended in blood.

The Mission of the Amboelas was not graced by better luck or lived less tragic days. On the 20th of August 1884, the personnel for the new mission was leaving from Humbe, in a boer carriage, composed by the Fathers Hogan and Lynch, the Friars Onofre and Rodrigo, arriving at Caquele, on the right bank of the Ocachitanda river, affluent of the Kunene. Shortly after, Fr Hogan came back to Humbe, in the carriage Rafael, in search of food. It was in November, during the rainy season, and, therefore, he found himself retained for ten days on the unhealthy banks of the

Kunene. After a while, not too far away from the mission, the carriage was deeply stuck in the mud; and Fr Hogan had to do the rest of the journey on foot. Affected by fever, he received the Extreme Unction; and, on the 12nd of March, the valiant missionary gave up his soul into the hands of the Creator. Fr Lynch shortly survived him, being the mission handed to the Friars, strongly affected by the climate as well.

Fr Schaller and two Friars ran to assist this afflictive situation and took over the mission, which was by this time the only one of the Prefecture, not to mention the Procuracy of Huila.

To these contrarieties and heartbreaks, was added the serious situation that the mission of Humbe had to face, during the rebellion of the gentile of this region in 1885.

By this time, Fr Duparquet was in Huila, remaining in bed due to illness.

But in November of that year, accompanied by the Friar Onofre, the indefatigable missionary goes to Chela, to wait for three new missionaries in Moçamêdes, among whom was the Fr Bonnefoux who later would succeed with dignity Fr Antunes in the management of the Mission of Huila. After, they embark together for Congo, from where they were supposed to continue to South Africa, not resigning to leave abandoned the southern part of Cimbebasia. There, they waited in vain for the British ship which would take them to the Cape; and, in the meantime, the Superior General addressed them an invitation to go to Europe. But before, they visit the Mission of Congo, which they find progressive and promising; and on the 17th of February 1885, they embark to Lisbon, where they were excellently welcomed by the ecclesiastical authorities, by the Geographical Society and yet by the Minister of Marine.

On the 28th of March, Fr Duparquet found himself again in the Motherhouse in Paris, precisely at the time that the creation of a Vicariate in the French Congo was being arranged. Sent to Rome as an emissary, he collaborated actively in the determination of the territories of the new Vicariate and of the Prefecture of the Portuguese Congo by the Congregation of Propaganda, having, however, the respective decree been cancelled by the animosity of the celebrated Cardinal Lavigerie and the King of the Belgians.

In August 1886, the name of Fr Duparquet is among the 86 priests who were taking part in the annual retreat preached by the Superior General. This would be the last time that he would attend this pious assembly. On the 7th of October, he embarks again in Southampton, with the Fathers Mc Cabe and Nolan as well as with the loyal Friar Onofre and the Friar Vicente, in an attempt to establish a mission in the town of Mafeking (Betchuanaland), where they arrived on the 2nd of December. There was residing the Governor and it was the headquarters of the troops. The first impression was not encouraging; the indigenous, few in number, were already converted to the Protestantism by the Wesleyans. Having left the Mission entrusted to the Irish Priests, his companions, Fr Duparquet returns to Portugal, asking permission to withdraw from the service of the missions and retreats in Braga, heart of the works which with such sacrifice and effort he had founded. He was feeling exhausted. Although by age he was no more than 57 years old, the works and the fatigues of his excited life had won. However, he keeps himself busy with the foundation of an orphanage for boys and novitiate of the Missionaries Brothers of Sintra, established in the farm granted to the Congregation of the Holy Spirit by the pious

Countess of Camaride. In its turn, the noble missionary, who had already sacrificed for the work of evangelization of blacks his entire paternal fortune, divested himself of what was left.

He was entering definitely the stage of resignation of all the honours and possessions. Called to Rome by the Cardinal Jacobini, in November 1887, to cooperate in the delimitations of the Missions in the Portuguese Congo and in the Belgian Congo, he requests dispensation and, invoking health reasons, he resigns from the post of Apostolic Perfect of Cimbebasia, for which he is succeeded by the Fr Schaller, by decree of the 20th of November 1887. In June 1888, Fr Duparquet is again in Bordeaux, where 22 years before, he had initiated the most extraordinary apostolic enterprise ever registered in the annals of the evangelization of the African people. He will embark for the last time; but now, deposed of all the titles and honours, he is doing it as a simple soldier of Faith, aggregated to the Vicariate of Congo.

And, when Monsignor Carrie, now Vicar Apostolic, welcomes affectionately in his arms the tired and old missionary, who hurt by disappointments and exhausted by works, retreats to the beloved Mission of Congo, he could hardly imagine that this pleasure would be for a short period: after eight days of illness and victimized by a peritonitis, caused by a strangulated hernia, Fr Carlos Duparquet, a devoted and heroic missionary, exhaled his last breath, confidently delivering his soul in the hands of God.

I

From Moçamêdes to Huila

(1866)

Congo (Meridional Guinea)

(Missions Catholiques, Tome I – 1868)

Journey of the R. FR Duparquet

Missionary of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in Meridional Guinea

Reverend Fr Schwindenhammer, Superior General of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and Apostolic Prefect of Congo, intended to extend his mission to the Meridional Guinea. He commissioned two members of his congregation, in September 1866, to explore these countries and to study the means by which the missionaries could reach more conducive the place for the foundation of an establishment. While Reverend Fr Poussot was heading to the north, to the sides of the Zaire River or Congo, Reverend Fr Duparquet was going to the South. There is, in fact, from the origins of the Kwanza River up to the Orange River, a vast region which has no less than four hundred leagues from north to south, with a width of approximately three hundred leagues from west to east, and which, up to now, remained mostly closed to the light of faith.

By the means of communication currently existing, to Fr Duparquet only three ways appeared to penetrate into these regions: the one by the Cape of Good Hope, the one by the bay of Walvis-Bay and the one by Moçamêdes. A quick glance on the map is enough to demonstrate the difficulties and nearly impossibilities of the first two ways. From the Cape to the Orange, the distance is enormous and the transports are ruinous: there is only access on the southern part, which is an arid land and almost uninhabited. The way through Walvis offers the same inconvenient than the one through the Cape and only grants access in the territory of the Namaqua and the Damara, very few people. To reach the big centres with population of the lake Ngami, the Ovambo and the Kunene, it is necessary to cross desert regions, deprived of water and food.

The Fr Duparquet chose the way through Moçamêdes, because it was easier, shorter and more secure. The Dutch, the British and the Portuguese divide among themselves the domination of the West African coast, from the Senegambia. There is only one desert which takes three of four days to be crossed in order to reach the large plateau of Southern Africa, where the missionary could find a European climate, water, pastures, food, and what he seeks above all, the numerous tribes to civilize for the Gospel.

We now give the floor to Reverend FrDuparquet in the narrative that he made about his journey for his Superior General.

It was on the 13th of December 1866 that I left Moçamêdes to head to the interior of the country. Some days before, three sobas arrived at Moçamêdes as prisoners, coming from the following regions: Vangé, soba of Huila; Amaribariba, from Quihita; and Binga, from the Gambos²⁴.

²⁴ Portugal left the indigenous populations of its African colonies to govern themselves based on their traditions; but it keeps the sobas under its dependence, as vassals subject to the sovereign authority.

The soldiers who had accompanied them were coming back to their respective forts. It was for me an excellent occasion that the Providence was giving to me because it is dangerous to cross the desert without sufficient escort, both because of the wild Mondombes, whom massacre isolated travelers, and because of the large number of lions which infest these mountains.

Our caravan was composed of about seventy people: my supplies and my luggage were carried by twelve bearers that the Governor of Moçamêdes had the kindness to put at my disposal. As for me, I was riding an ox-horse, which I had acquired for the purpose of this trip. The first day of journey was short. On the following day, on the 14th of December, at dawn, the whole caravan started on its way and soon was dispersed in a long stretch. The soldiers, barefooted or shod with simple sandals, having nothing else to carry but their small luggage, were marching with a free and fast pace; but the poor bearers were left far behind, far apart from each other. We moved, at the beginning, through the bank of the Bero River; but very soon we started to climb the mountains which separate this torrent from the Giraúl River. After some hours of journey, we crossed the called *Caldeira do Inferno* (cauldron of hell), a horrible ravine obstructed by large stones, black and calcined, where the concentrated rays of the sun produce a suffocating heat. No vegetation can grow there, except the euphorbia with succulent stems and quite similar to our *candelabrum cactus*. Finally, we reached the Giraúl River, whose course we had to follow up to the mountains of Capangombe. There are two paths to arrive there: one which is called the *Caminho da Grande Pedra* (the path of the Great Stone), so called due to a huge rock located in the middle of the desert and excavated and shaped like a basin. During the rainy season, when it is impossible to travel through the banks of the torrents, this basin fills up with water and for a long time the caravans can drink from there; but during the dry season, when the reservoir is empty, it is necessary to walk for two days without finding a drop of water and the traveller prefers, although it is longer, the path through the bed of the Giraúl. This is the second path to reach Capangombe. Who would not admire here the good will of the Providence? These deserts without water and vegetation seem, at first glance, to be an impassable barrier between the coast and upcountry. But God provided a wonderful path in the midst of these horrible solitudes. There, water, shade and grazing for the cattle can always be found. The river bed is full of white sand, thoroughly hardened, a width that can be compared to the Seine, in Paris. A row of trees and bushes adorn its two banks; then, like two huge walls, mountains of granite rise up on each side, in a direction nearly perpendicular. Nothing is more picturesque than this road traced by nature!...

But what matters more for the traveller than all the effects of perspectives, is the water which can be found from stage to stage in the sand of the river. It is enough to dig with the hand a depth of a few decimetres to have, immediately, water in abundance, fresh and clear. This is the path, dear Reverend FR, which crosses the desert of Moçamêdes towards Capangombe; and when one has a good riding and a good escort at one's disposal, this trip can be done safely and without fatigue.

Here we are, so, marching on the bed of the Giraúl. Around noon, we arrived at a place called *Pedra do Rei* (Stone of the King). Since there was water there, we stopped to have lunch. In the afternoon, we reached Vissaba and, taking advantage of the freshness, we continue the journey during a part of the night. At ten o'clock, we stopped, lit a fire and, then, each one stretched out on the sand and fell fast asleep. After a few hours, everybody began to march again, on the 15th

of December. This phase went on for a while until we found water; and only at ten o'clock in the morning we arrived at Ginja, where there it was in abundance. There, our people had a great banquet: a lion, which preceded us, had sliced a magnificent zebra and had left a large portion; the blacks caught hold of these bloody pieces, satisfied themselves and grilled the remaining for the next days. Ginja is a pleasurable place and overshadowed by large trees, which produce a pod for which the oxen are eager. We spent the rest of the day under these beautiful shades and with the breeze of the afternoon, we headed to Maiomo, a place provided with water and shade as the preceding one. There, we only slept a few hours. By midnight of the 17th of December, the starting signal was given to climb the *cacimba* before daybreak. *Cacimba* is the name given to a mountain range where a spring or a well can be found; the travellers used to travel across this mountain range to cut across the way, avoiding thus the windings of the river. The path is a little shorter but much more unpleasant. For three years, there is has been no rain in this region and not a single stem of grass is left. However, these mountains are covered by bushes which produce beautiful foliage during the rainy season, as our trees in Europe when spring is coming. Then, the leaves began to appear everywhere but the vegetation was weak and withered. Moreover, the plants of these places are already endowed with a temperament suitable to the dryness of the climate; there is some which grow on the rocks deprived from humus and without humidity, and which can stand the heat of the burning sun for many years.

But what is not less surprising than the temper of these trees is the temper of the savages who inhabit these horrible mountains.

The region, indeed, had then seemed to me uninhabitable. But what was my surprise when, arriving to the spring or *cacimba*, I saw flocking numerous herds of sheep and oxen, led by Mondombes! The Mondombes are nomadic people and pastoralists, who inhabit all the territories situated between the sea and the mountains of Chela. Most of them feed themselves only with milk and wild fruits. Their weapons are arrows and spears. As clothing, they just use two pieces of leather attached to the girdle. I admired the art with which they know how to guide herds. As the spring was too narrow, and to avoid muddying the water, the oxen were drinking two by two and the sheeps six by six, but without putting their paws in the basin of the spring. After drinking, they moved aside, waiting for their companions which continued to detach themselves with the same order until all of them had drank. I spend almost half a day close to this *cacimba*; and the herds did not stop arriving until it was completely empty.

The lion had also eaten a zebra there and the natives brought us the leftovers.

Around four o'clock, we restarted the march and soon we met again the Giraúl, whose banks were garnished with superb vegetation. Unfortunately for me, to avoid the sinuosity of the river, the blacks cut through the bush taking small shortcuts where, mounted on my ox, I was permanently stopped by branches. But these small mishaps were largely compensated by the majesty of the spectacle that was offered to my eyes: we were surrounded everywhere by high mountains and the peaks of Pumangola raised in front of us. The night surprised us in these canyons. It was ten o'clock when we arrived at Humutuatu, where we stayed only for a few hours because of the high quantity of lions which made this place unsafe. The places where water can be found are, indeed, the most dangerous ones. The zebras, the antelopes and other animals come here to quench their thirst during the night and the lions set up an ambush nearby to catch them while passing by. At midnight, we left and on the 17th (?) of December, we headed

to Uquitivi de Baixo, where we slept until dawn. It was our last stage: only half a day journey was necessary for us to reach Capangombe and quickly the landscape began to change, as well as the vegetation. In Uquitivi de Baixo, the ground was already much more forested and it did not take long until we entered the forests of Capangombe.

When I talk about forests, we must not imagine the shadow forests of Gabon, impenetrable to the rays of sun, and not even our beautiful and shady forests of Europe. Here, the trees have a small shape and their branches are not too shady. The soil is today completely stripped of herbaceous vegetation, because of a drought and an invasion of locusts, two combined plagues which, for three years, are devastating the region; but, during the rainy season, it is covered by high grasses which supply permanently the herds with abundant pastures. What is especially the wealth of the region, are the numerous streamlets which come down from Chela, a great mountain range carved vertically as a wall, on the summit of which there is a kind of a table or horizontal line with about twelve leagues in length.

These mountains are like the edge of a vast plateau, whose ramifications extend far inland and origin the major rivers of Meridional Guinea, such as the Kwanza, the tributaries of the Zaire, the Okavango e the Kunene. It has been only four years ago since the Portuguese and the Brazilian settlers flocked to Capangombe to surrender to the culture of coffee, sugar and cane sugar, tropical productions that grow well there, but not yet with the strength of the vegetation that lies in other regions . All these explorations are today on the way to great prosperity, thanks mainly to the low price of the slaves.

The colonists settled mainly in the valleys along the streamlets and chased away from these places the Mondombes, who took refuge with their herds on the inaccessible heights of the mountains from where they threaten their security. Capangombe was one of the first places which caught my attention to fix there a first establishment and so it took me around a dozen of days to explore the region and to get an exact idea about it.

Capangombe connects with the upper plateau by a wide ravine, which gives way to a beautiful stream. This natural way, the only one through which the caravans from the interior head into the coast, is one of the most picturesque and beautiful existing places. Within hours, we move from the tropical zone into a temperate region, and from this one to one that, by its climate, can remind of Britain, and where the rivers even cover up with ice.

It was on the day after Christmas that I tried to climb the Chela on foot, to head to the *sobado* of Huila, located in the coldest region of the plateau.

PICTURE

The fortress of Capangombe

I started by climbing the Bruco, on the lower level of the mountain. The vegetation is still the same as on the plain, but much more vigorous. During half an hour, we go up, between rocks, on a narrow path covered with beautiful trees and crossed constantly by the stream, which creates in it innumerable waterfalls and basins. We reach then a small plateau which could have around half a league in length and only a few hundred meters wide. It is the *Chão da Chela*. This place is perhaps the most charming I found in all my life. There we can enjoy a temperature admirably wholesome which reminds of Madeira. It is not as hot as Capangombe and not as cold as the heights of the plateau. The soil, watered by abundant rains and by a stream,

produces all the fruits of the warm and the tempered countries. A Brazilian colonist, Mr. Inácio de Aguiar, settled in that place, where he owns now a wealthy farm, which now has no less than seventy people. After eating some food at the home of this excellent settler, I continued my journey and I prepared myself to climb to the top or the Chela itself. There, the most pleasant and varied surprises that a botanist can experience were waiting for me.

The climate and the vegetation changed suddenly, the air became increasingly alive and fresh, the trees of our northern countries came to my amazed eyes. First it was the cineraria, so grown in greenhouses in Europe; afterwards, the bramble, the yellow buttercups of our meadows, elegant ferns and, on the rocks of the streamlets, the verdant fascicles growth of roots of the liverworts. You cannot conceive, my Reverend Father, the pleasure I experienced in seeing again the plants of the homeland, which reminded me of my childhood studies and of the so happy years as a teacher. I thought myself transported to one of my scientific excursions, surrounded by these good students, whose memory always accompanies me.

After a few moments granted by these homesickness, I continued the ascension of the Chela. The vegetation was constantly changing until, finally, I reached the summit of the mountain and I found a forest composed almost exclusively of a charming bush with silvery leaves called *Senecio Argrophyllum*; at the entrance of the plateau I found the lemongrass, the heathers of the Cape and the verbenas. The aloe, the oxalidae and the amaryllis were represented there as well in large numbers. Afterwards, started the plains covered by artemisias and by other aromatic plants, and soon we entered the valley of Chivinguro. A European colonist had established a farm in that place and I imagined myself almost in Europe. The Giraúl River, dry in its underside, watered here beautiful meadows, carpeted with thin and thick grass. Vast fields of cereals stretched on all sides and numerous mills were fairly enough to grind the grain harvested on the farm. I wanted to visit in detail the whole farm: the vegetable-garden, especially, stimulated my interest; potatoes, peas, beans and all the vegetables from Europe grow there admirably. The climate is very favourable for the breeding of cattle; not to mention the horses and the oxen, the merino sheep imported from Europe grow there perfectly. I spent the night in this farm and, on the morning of the next day, on the 27th of December, I began to march to Huila. I can't describe, my Rev. Priest, the beauty of the valley which I followed up to the lagoon of Hintiti. The banks of the streamlet are flanked by laurels and other beautiful shrubs, and on both sides, green meadows enamelled with flowers of the most vivid colours. It is truly the terrestrial paradise of botanists. I hope that one day the flora of this region will pay its tribute to our gardens in Europe. The large number of *Liliaceae* has particularly attracted my attention; I saw meadows covered by gladiolus red and purple, hyacinths with a stunning vermilion, Beauties from Malabar, *ornithogalum*, etc. Everything about the vegetation of the streamlets reminds of the rivulets in and there can be found *lemnaceaes*, *typhas*, flaxes, rushes, water lilies with pink flowers and potamogetons. The banks are adorned with willows, epilobos and large common knotgrasses with silvery leaves.

I was walking so in constant admiration, which made me forget the fatigues of the way, when, among these beautiful pictures of nature, I arrived at Hintiti, a small settlement of Humpata. Despite the severe cold of the winter, the inhabitants of the region have only as clothing two pieces of leather attached to the girdle, as the Mondombes. Their houses have the shape of a

beehive. They cultivate the land and live as well from the milk of their herds. Their main agricultural products are corn, sorghum, beans and potatoes.

From Hintiti, there are only vast plains covered by grass and shrubs, some of which give excellent fruits, among other a custard tree which produces at the surface of the soil a fruit with the size and nearly with the same taste as the soursop.

After leaving the *sobado* of Humpata, we find the Caculovar²⁵, which in Humbe, flows into the Kunene River. I could cross it with the water only up to the knees, but during the rainy season, it has a considerable volume and can only be crossed by swimming. I was now just a league and a half away from Huila. Finally, I arrived at the fortress, where I was very well received by the Portuguese authorities. Here I must pay my tribute of gratitude to this government, from which, everywhere and always, I received the most thoughtful and generous support.

The whole region was, by that time, agitated by major political occurrences. As I already told you, Vangé, the *soba* of Huila, was sent to Luanda as a prisoner and the Portuguese had put in his place another *soba*, but this one had not been elected by the people and was not the nearest heir of the *soba* in exile, so the population, without rebelling openly, left him alone and didn't show him the slightest sympathy. The poor *soba* experienced so much heartache with this attitude that, in order to avoid this ignominy, he decided to abandon the crown and the kingdom. One night, he absconded, and the next day there was news that he had taken refuge in neighbouring kingdom. So, it was necessary to hold a new election and Mosula, the nearest relative of the unfortunate Vangé was unanimously proclaimed. Upon assuming the leadership of the kingdom, he took the name of Mr António and his wife the name of Mrs Beatriz. I attended the installation of the settlement of the *soba* in the *libata grande* or *embala*, its capital. All the local personalities or the heads of the settlements were there. The *soba* was seated in a chair used as a throne covered with a few pieces of cloth. His wives formed a circle behind him and the oldest local personalities were squatting in front of, which seemed a Senate. Each of these elders stood up successively and delivered a harangue in honour of the new leader. Afterwards, they drank, danced to the African drum, sang and that was what I saw in this ceremony that was most natural.

Since this region seems to me to be the key of the landlocked countries and of a major importance for the success of the missions which could be established here, I judged to be my duty, my Reverend Father, to stay here for about fifteen days, both to explore the surrounding localities and to collect the largest possible number of useful information. I'm reserving for later to send you a little study on these populations, limiting myself for now to give you some notes on the climate of Huila, its productions, the neighboring peoples and the means of communication with the interior.

Climate - It is perfectly salubrious, better than the one in Moçamêdes and superior to any other point of West Africa and perhaps in all of Africa, excepting the country of the Galas. The temperature varies between 8° and 28° above zero, excepting certain nights between May and June when it goes down to ice.

²⁵ Note of the translator (Gastão de Sousa Dias) – it is certainly a error of information; going from Humpata to Huila, he could not have crossed the Caculovar, but instead the Nene river, its tributary.

It is, in a certain sense, more similar and more agreeable than the one in Europe; the thermometer usually maintains between 18° and 20° centigrade. It is less cold than there during the winter and less hot during the summer.

Productions - The rains are abundant and the region is covered with watercourses, which makes the pastures extremely fertile; and that's why the cattle constitute the whole wealth of the inhabitants. Unfortunately, a terrible disease which lasts since a few years ago had destroyed a quantity of it. Before this epidemic, it was not unusual to see natives who possessed four or five thousand heads of cattle, which is now only counted by hundreds.

There are among the oxen of this region two very interesting varieties: one is devoid of horns and the other possess them, but not welded to the bones of the skull, being simply attached to the skin and pending on each side of the head.

Most vegetables of Europe develop very well in this climate. I saw peach trees with dimensions and vigour far superior to our peach trees in Europe. Some apple trees planted there seem to do well. It is unfortunate that the trials of acclimatization there are completely abandoned. Concerning the plants from the Mediterranean region, they easily support the frost. And so, the orange tree, the lemon tree, the pomegranate tree, the carob tree and the fig tree grow perfectly well there.

Yet the same doesn't happen with the tropical plants. Some of them, such as the cotton, the guava tree and the passion fruit face the cold winter with impunity; other like the sugar cane and the banana plant burn along the soil, being condemned to have perpetually new sprouts which never reach a perfect development. The cereals and vegetables of Europe develop very well there; and the region has, furthermore, excellent indigenous fruits which could maybe prosper in the southern countries of Europe. This land, as you can see, my Reverend Father, has many elements of prosperity; but, despite all the efforts of the Portuguese Government who has already spent considerable sums here, the colonization has made little progress. The ones who have to be to blame for that are, I believe, the settlers, mostly people without initiative and without activity who just vegetate miserably instead of imitating the example given to them by the beautiful exploration of Chivinguiro.

Neighboring populations - The people about whom I managed to collect information are numerous and I will only mention here the main ones. There are, starting in Huila and going to the north, the Quilengues, who are not less than one hundred thousand inhabitants and are governed by seven *sobas*; afterwards, Caconda, Bié, Bailundo and other regions designated by the generic name of Nano. It is in Nano where the springs of the Kunene and the Okavango are. To the east lies the kingdom of Quipungo, at the west the Humpata, the Chela and the Mondombes up to the sea. In the south, going down the Calculovar, are first the Jau, the Hai and the Quihita, afterwards the Gambos and finally the Humbe, at the junction of the Kunene with the Calculovar. Close to Humbe, the Kunene, even during the dry season, is sufficiently considerable to be navigated by canoe; during the rainy season, it overflows to such a distance that the sight barely reaches the opposite bank. It is very rich in fish, but infested with a large number of crocodiles. The population of this kingdom is about a thousand inhabitants and is of an affable and hospitable nature.

On the banks of the Kunene, there are numerous populations such as the Kamba, the Donguena, the Mulondo, the Luceque, etc.

Going north, we approach the Cubango or the Kavango of Dr. Anderson in such a way that only a distance of two days separates the two rivers. I don't know if Anderson thought that he made a discovery when he found this river, but the Portuguese already knew about it for a long time and their traders are dealing there up to the Mucusso, a famous settlement located on its banks. It is probable that it is going to flow in one of the tributaries of the lake Ngami; what is certain is that it is heading to the east and offers, in consequence, in one or another case, an easy way up to the basin of the Lake Ngami. On the other hand, the country of the Ovambos, so coveted by Protestant ministers, is located a few days from Humbe. Only the Kwanyama separates the two kingdoms. I collected these details with Mr Brochado, who lived in the Kwanyama for four years and where he saw every day Ovambos arriving there. Furthermore: based on Mr. Hahn in the preface of his Herero grammar, it seems that the Damara were arriving up to Moçamêdes because, he says, they were going up to Mabaca, land of the Portuguese. Now, this name was nothing else than the indigenous name for Moçamêdes.

It is easy to see, due to all that I just have exposed, my Reverend Father, that Moçamêdes is the real point from where we have, it seems to me, to start the establishment of our missions in the south. Moçamêdes is a place with an exceptional salubrity, having regular communications with Europe, food resources in abundance and giving us an easy access to the interior of Africa, to the more numerous and more interesting populations of the mission, populations which are living in areas as salubrious as in Europe and which seems to offer to the missionaries well-founded hopes.

Moreover, Moçamêdes shows another advantage, which should be taken into consideration. This town, with its steamboats, is located only few days from Congo, country generally unhealthy and where it is feared that the health of missionaries would quickly be ruined. Instead of going, at great expense, to Europe to recover their health, they could come here. On the other hand, a seminary would be well established in this town, which could serve both missions. These are all the reasons which lead me to be well-disposed toward the launch of the foundation of a new mission in Moçamêdes; afterwards, another could be established in the other side of the desert, either in Chela or in Huila, or in Humpata, and from there, if God would give us the necessary means, up to the basin of Ngami and to the Ovambos.

As you see, one can say concerning this work what S. Paul once said about another mission: "*Apertum est ostium*". The door is open. Concerning myself, alone here, I can't do anything more than to wait patiently for the moment when you will send me new workers, with the necessary means to start this great work.

I beg you that you deign to recommend this poor mission to the prayers of our houses of novitiate and especially to Our Lady of Victory because, having been the Sacred Heart of Mary inspiring this work, it is still he who can make it grow and prosper. *Opus tuum hoc, O Maria vivifica illud.*

Duparquet

Missionary of the Holy Spirit of the Sacred Heart of Mary

Congo (Meridional Guinea)

The Rev. Fr Duparquet, already known by our readers due to his travel to Meridional Guinea, is currently entrusted with the direction of the Seminar of Congo, which the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary just founded in Santarém (Portugal). We extracted, from a report that this religious addressed to the Councils of the Propagation of Faith, the following passages, where the current situation and the needs of the Mission of Congo are exposed.

Because this mission includes, says Rev. Fr Duparquet, an immense territory, as its two extreme points, the Zaire river and the Orange river are at a distance of 600 leagues from each other, the prefect apostolic saw himself in the need, to make its administration easier, to divide it into two districts: the one of the north, which includes Angola and the Congo itself, and the one of the south, which includes southern regions up to the Orange.

Since the first year of the foundation (1866), five missionaries were intended for this dual mission, three for the district of the north and two for the south. Rev. Fr Poussot, appointed by the S. C. of Propaganda, first prefect apostolic, was entrusted with the northern part and he thought he should undertake, first, the exploration of the country, in order to choose the most advantageous point for the residence of the missionaries. It was with this purpose that he visited the coast and ascended the Zaire River up to where it was possible. His choice was for the Ambriz, a town located in the centre of the maritime provinces of Congo and which offers the advantage of having regular communications with Europe. This mission was founded three years ago and already the works of the Gospel workers begin to show results. The divine offices are increasingly frequented, the affluence to the sacraments is accentuated little by little, a school was just opened and some adult baptisms encourage the zeal of the missionaries. But my intention is not to tell you about this part of the mission, leaving this care to my confreres; I confine myself to the part which is especially entrusted to me.

Reaching the mission at the end of 1866, I did, following the example of Father Poussot and with the same purpose, a long and arduous excursion through the interior of the country. I will not enter here into the details of this travel, of which I published a brief report in the first series of the *Missions Catholiques*.

I will only note that, it seems to me, all these regions offer excellent guaranties for the success of the mission. The climate is, there, salubrious and, in the highlands of the interior, it reminds, due to the mildness of its temperature, the most privileged regions of Europe.

The great Kunene River and its numerous tributaries are like the arteries of this vast plateau. Then there is the Cubango, or Okavango, which puts in communication the Zambezi and the Lake Ngami. On the left bank of the Kunene, after having crossed the kingdom of the Kwanyama, we enter the land of the Ovambo, coveted by the Protestantism for a long time, as the most important point of this part of Africa. The tribes who inhabit the basins of these rivers are, in general, docile and laborious. All are dedicated to cattle breeding and to the cultivation of

the land. A mission in this country would have, therefore, great elements of success and it would be truly deplorable that the Protestantism, which had already preceded us in Walvis Bay, would also appear in the Ovambo and take possession of it. We started an establishment in Moçamêdes, the only point of the coast where we could settle with advantage and which has regular communications with Europe. Our intention is to establish there a school, which later on, if God would inspire vocations among the indigenous people, would be used as a seminar for the two districts of the prefecture. In addition to the management of the school, where children from all the surrounding tribes would be welcomed, the missionaries would even take care of the poor slaves, so sadly neglected under the religious point of view, and, as well, of the evangelization of the tribes who surround the colony, the Troques and the Mondombes. When the personnel and the resources would allow it, other establishments could be created in the highlands of the interior. But for all of that, resources that we don't have will be needed.

The allowance given by the Work of the Propagation of the Faith strictly grants to the missionaries what is needed to provide for their sustainability, not allowing them to undertake any serious work. They cannot build a habitation or a chapel; they cannot found an establishment for the education of children, nor have extraordinary expenses, such as travels or treatment of diseases. And on this point, I can speak based on my own experience because, during my permanence in this mission, the only thing I did was fight against poverty. I saw myself obliged to endure deprivations in food, which is the reason why my health was being ruined and forced me, at least in part, to return to Europe. I had with me a young slave who was between ten and eleven years old, whom I had the consolation of baptizing; but he only was able to provide me small services, so that almost all the materials tasks were done by me, absorbing a considerable part of my time.

In similar conditions, it seems that, in fact, nothing is left for the missionaries but suffering and dying of starvation. This is, undoubtedly, our fate and it is in praising God, for the part he assigned us, that it is grateful to repeat these words of Holy Scripture: "*Hoereditas mea super mel et favum*". But it would be desirable that our lives could be helpful to others as well and that we could seek to manage the conversion of the people for whom we are sent.

II

A travel to the District of Diamonds

with

A letter to the Protestant minister, Mr Viehe

(1878)

A travel to the District of Diamonds

Based on the letters to Abbot Durand

(Extract of the *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* – August and September 1879)

Not having been able to carry out his project via the Kunene, Fr Duparquet joined Fr Horner at the mission in Zanzibar, going back to the west coast to establish the mission of Landana, in Loango. Finally, after nine years of waiting, the occasion to make two further attempts for the evangelization of the Betchuana and the Damara tribes was presented.

Having arrived on the 29th of March 1878 in Cape Town, after nineteen days of journey, Fr Duparquet started again his journey on the 9th of April, heading to the Transvaal. The British had already built a railway from the Cape to Matjesfontein, a town located at the border of the Karoo desert. But the traveller has to obtain supplies of everything before leaving. He needs to buy a carriage, mules or, even better, oxen, supplies and all the other equipment necessary for a long journey across the desert. When everything is ready, he embarks his equipage in a wagon and the steam will take him to the point where it will be necessary for him to replace it with his coupling.

During the first day of the journey, the most fertile territory of the British colony is crossed. There, along the railway, there are numerous towns; there's Paarl, a real pearl, set in verdant foliage of rich vineyards and orchards of delicious fruit; there's Wellington; then, to the north, there's Ceres, town of great renown, hidden among its immense wheat fields; and, finally, there's Worcester, the border town of the Karoo. This town has a population of 4500 inhabitants. Its streets, very straight, are real avenues overshadowed by a double row of oaks and eucalyptus trees, and refreshed by streams of clear waters. They are all fenced by hedges, rosebushes and quince trees, which enclose gardens at the bottom of which beautiful well-arranged houses are hidden under the foliage. It is based in the middle of a vast basin, surrounded by mountains and grooved by waterways and streams, which fertilize its rich cereal cultures. A good hotel exists there.

At the end of the plain of Worcester, we enter the Karoo. Then, the region changes its appearance, the temperature cools down, now the soil and the vegetation are not the same anymore. The railway crosses a high mountain, sometimes through long tunnels, sometimes over escarpments which border frightful precipices, describing curves and triumphing over ramps which reach extreme limits, imposed to the engineers by science. The flanks of these mountains, calcined and rarely watered by rain, are carpeted by fat plants of every form and colour. They are the homeland for aloe, euphorbia, stapelias, ficoides, *crassulaceae*, among which shine the beautiful *liliaceae*. The trajectory of the mountain takes all morning and, at two o'clock, the train stops at Matjesfontein.

Beyond this station it is necessary to travel by carriage. At this place, all the coupling is put on the ground; and on the second day, during the afternoon, Fr Duparquet carried by his twelve mules, starts crossing the desert. Around midnight, it was necessary to cross the Buffalo River, whose waters were slightly thickened by the rain. It was crossed without great difficulty and, on

the opposite bank, a stop was made to rest for the rest of the night, under a temperature of at least 0 degrees Celsius.

The real desert was there. The arid soil extends out of sight; not a single tree, nor a single house appears to brighten the horizon; but the sadness of these vast solitudes are compensated by a sky of an incomparable blue, always illuminated by a dazzling light and a healthy atmosphere, fresh and invigorative, giving a vigorous longevity to its rare inhabitants.

And yet, the desert is not without its vegetable beauties. After the first winter rains, the bulbs and the roots dormant in the soil arise and it does not take long until the plain is covered by an immense carpet of ficoides, *crassulaceae* with vivid and various colours and mesembryanthemum with white, yellow, violet and purple flowers. So was the state of the Karoo when our traveller crossed it.

After four days of journey, he arrived at the town of Beaufort West, which rises in a basin of the northern mountains. It's the residence of the African missions of Lyon, where the missionaries gave him the most cordial welcome and renewed his provisions.

Beaufort is a town of 4000 souls. It has a lot of protestant temples, among which there is one exclusively reserved for the coloured people. This town is similar to Worcester and its gardens are irrigated through channels. In this region, where the water is rare, they store it in large reservoirs called *dam*. All the towns, all the farms have their own dam. The construction of these reservoirs was imitated from those used in Spain and as well from the Arabs and the Orientals.

To build a dam, a valley with the shape of a basin has to be chosen, which is closed by the means of a dike very thick. The waters from the rain are stored up there, to be then distributed in all directions, according to the needs of the cultures and the animals. The excessive water flows off through the edges.

In the vegetable gardens of the towns of austral Africa, the vegetables and the fruit trees from Europe grow. The vineyards grow there nicely; the almond tree, the mulberry tree and especially the fig tree reach large dimensions. In Beaufort, only vegetable gardens can be cultivated; the bigger cultures are impossible. The Karoo is too arid and can only be used for the breeding of a small number of animals because it does not produce grass, which is the main food for cattle. In the part of the desert called Great Karoo, which we just crossed, not a single drop of water falls throughout the summer; only some rains sprinkle during the winter. The pastures found there are only composed of fat grasses; but in the Little Karoo, between Beaufort and the Orange River, where the rains are more abundant during the winter, the soil is covered with a large number of aromatic mixtures, much are sought-after by sheep.

PICTURE

Traveling through the desert

The soil of this territory is too poor to be able to provide for a numerous population; so the farms are very rare and spaced from about 8 to 10 kilometres. Each property possesses 10 to 20 000 acres of land. It is there that the Boer (*bour*) lives with his family and his Hottentots servants. The Boer boy is initiated very early in the pastoral life. When he marries, his father gives him a carriage (*bulloch wagon*) and some herds, and he starts his way led by a coupling of oxen, condemned to roam the desert until he finds suitable pastures. The excess of population in this region forces, every year, a large number of Boers to go to the Kalahari. And so, they wander for two, three and even four years, amid those deserts without knowing where to settle. They progress in short journeys, well installed in their big carriages, giving grazing to their oxen and, eventually, getting used to the quiet and frugal life of the nomadic status, which frees them from heavy servitudes and contributions for the Colony. In the past year, it is estimated that there were, on the banks of the Orange and in the vicinity of Lake Ngami, about three hundred carriages which left the Transvaal five years ago!

Two journeys through the mountains lead to Western Victoria. This town is similar to the previous, but it is a little less crowded. It is the capital of a district which extends to the north up to the Orange. Around 1868, the dam of Western Victoria broke and the city was partly destroyed, with many victims.

When we leave Victoria, we follow a beautiful cart road, seeded with farms, which goes through the desert and, after five days of travelling, we arrive at Hope-Town (Town of Hope), located 200 leagues from the Cape.

Hope-Town is within a certain distance from the Orange, near the confluence of this river with the Vaal. In this place/Here, the Orange is as large as the Seine in Paris; its banks, which rise almost vertically, are garnished only with a few weeping trees; they do not offer, so, the charming spectacle described in the reports of some travellers. The depth of its bed does not allow its waters to be used to irrigate the surrounding plains: therefore, these are as arid as the other parts of the desert. The river is crossed by means of large barges pulled by iron cables from one bank to another, and which can carry two carriages once. The herds embark on it under the path of a ram, trained in this manoeuvre. This animal marches at the head of the herd and all the others docilely follow him.

A few leagues from the northern bank of the Orange, the banks of the Modder are reached, from which Fr Duparquet marks a beautiful homestead where he saw a flock of about thirty domesticated ostriches. The farmers of Southern Africa consecrate themselves to the breeding of these big birds, which give them important profits. The ostriches are enclosed in a small valley closed by a thick hedge; and there they feed themselves with leaves, grasses and insects, which they greedily swallow.

It is necessary to ford the Modder, when the level of the water allows it, and, at some distance, the towns of Bultfontein and Dutoitspan are located, which are like the neighbourhoods outside the capital of the province.

The movement of travellers, the number of carriages, calashes and horsemen shows the proximity of a large city. And, indeed, after two kilometres, we reach Kimberley.

On the 26th of April 1878, after seventeen days of journey, Fr Duparquet entered the town and arrived at the mission of the Oblate Fathers of Mary, in charge of this mission, who gave him the most pleasant welcome.

Kimberley owes its existence to the discovery of diamond mines on which it was built. At the beginning, it was nothing more than a camp of miners, located in the middle of an immense plain, arid and covered with sand. But soon the houses of galvanized iron succeeded the tents; aligned streets were traced as well as a public garden; temples, schools and theatres arose as if by magic.

And today, Kimberley and the territory of the Griqua form a colony distinct from the others, designated by the name of the territory of the Diamonds; but current events suggest that it will be soon incorporated into the Cape Colony. Its primitive name was *Griqua-land-west* or land of the Griqua from the West.

Kimberley is equipped with all the facilities that characterize the major European cities, such as a literary society, a library and three newspapers. It has a population of 20 000 souls. It forms a small Catholic parish, dependent on the apostolic vicariate of Natal. It is placed beside a diamond mine, unique in the world for its fertility, discovered a few years ago; it is its richness and its wonder.

Imagine a huge trench of 4 surface acres, per 100 feet deep, dug in the rock. The bottom is divided into square plots or claims; each claim had, at the beginning, an extension of 100 square meters, but soon there was a need to divide them and their plots were sold for fabulous prices, although some do not have more than 6 square meters.

These claims reach different depths, according to the activity of its different owners. Some form shafts and others pyramids or polyhedrons of unequal height, which transform the mine into a kind of immense hive.

In the groundwork, we see a mass of labourers working with a feverish activity. Each owner explores himself his claim, but to give access to it, it was established around the mine a certain number of small suspended railways, whose wagons rolling over cables of iron, are driven by a steam engine or by horses.

The worker breaks the rock into fragments, carries it into a handcart, whose content are immediately emptied into a cart and transported to the home of the digger or owner of the claim. Upon exiting the mine, the ore has the colour of slate and is very hard. But, exposed on a platform to the heat of the sun and watered, the blocks quickly disintegrate, crumbling into dust.

Then the digger deposits this dust in a large vessel surrounded by a circular tube and similar to cider presses, and, afterwards, throws waters on it.

PICTURE

The mines of Kimberley

A horizontal wheel, equipped with cogs, is stirring continuously this solution; the water, carried from the soil, flows through the tube and the minerals sink to the bottom of the vessel. Shortly after, the liquid parts are drained through an opening on the side and the ore is collected. Now, the main operation starts, which is the cleaning or sifting of the diamonds. For this purpose, three sieves contained in a square box are used. The thinnest is the one which is located beneath. The digger deposits the ore into the top sieve and waters it abundantly. The stones are dragged, according to their size, to one of the three sieves, which lets all the mud and water escape.

Afterwards, the last operation takes place, the selection of the diamonds. The three varieties of minerals are thrown on a table that only the digger can approach. This one, armed with a wooden knife, does the selection of the stones, putting the diamonds in the mouth, and the garnets and other fine stones in a flask.

When the selection is finished, the digger goes immediately to sell the diamonds for cash to the agents established in Kimberley, who send them to Europe.

It is estimated at 300 million francs the value of the diamonds shipped from Kimberley to England, since the discovery of this mine until the middle of 1878. However, it seems endless because its production has not decreased.

The discovery of these diamond mines modified deeply the political condition of Southern Africa. When the Zulu war is over, it is very likely that this region will become an immense confederation or a British colony, depending on the British crown, as the Canadian domain.

The results of this discovery did not take long in to be felt. The first was the creation of a large city and the road construction linking African states among themselves and with Cape Town. The second was revealed with the occupation of the *Free State* (Free State of Orange) by the British troops and when the natives were armed with European rifles. As most of the miners were Africans, obeying the orders of their chiefs, they bought with their salaries improved weapons. And once armed, the natives revolted. The tribe who first revolted was the Bapedis, who live in the northern Transvaal; afterwards, it was the Cafres, then the Griquas from the East and the Griquas from the West; and, finally, the Betchuanas. The result was the annexation of the Transvaal to the British possessions and the territory of these tribes, because the rebels were crushed by the British troops.

But it remains a need to punish Sekhukhune, king of the Bapedis, and Cetywayo, king of the Zulu. These two chiefs were the instigators of the riots and they have just understood what is gained by wanting to fight Great Britain.

So, in early 1878, England took possession of the territory of Cimbebasia, which extends between the Kunene, northwards, and the Orange, southwards, having already founded there an important establishment in Walvis-Bay (Bay of the whales). Now that the Zulus have just been crushed, nothing opposes to the organization of a great Anglo-African empire, much safer and much more solid than the Indies empire.

Delayed by the revolt of the tribes, Fr Duparquet did not see it prudent to venture in to their territories. He came back to the Cape and decided to try the realization of his project in Damara,

along the coast of Cimbebasia. At the beginning of September that is now ending, he went to settle in the new maritime town of Walvis-Bay, in the coasts of Damara, where he waits for the opportunity to penetrate the interior of the territory. Here is, then, the beginning of a new mission.

Correspondence

Cimbebasia (Southern Africa)

It came to our attention a letter from Rev. Fr Duparquet, addressed to M. Viehe, superintendent of the Rhinish Lutheran mission, in Damaraland. It is a response to the protest of the Minister against the establishment of the Catholic mission. We reproduced this document which belongs to the history of the nascent mission of Cimbebasia, for which we recently called the attention of our readers. The letter of the Rev. Fr Duparquet is dated 13rd of April 1879, from Omaruru.

Dear Sir – I received yesterday, by post from Walvis-Bay, a letter which you gave me the honour of having it addressed to me, on behalf of all your missionaries, dated on the 23rd of March, and which I hasten to acknowledge the receipt.

This letter intended to protest against the arrival of Catholic missionaries that the Holy See has just sent to this region and to claim, exclusively for the benefit of the religious confession which you represent, the interdiction of the Catholic worship here. On the other hand, you request me to get this document to the attention of my superiors of the highest category.

I will, as your wish, dear Lord, present these claims to the Superior General of our Society, who may then, if he sees it as convenient, forward it to Our Eminence the Cardinal prefect of the Holy Propaganda in Rome, who sent us here. However, allow me to make you note that, up to now, it has not been the custom of the Roman Curia nor of the various Protestant confessions, to consult each other about their projects and missions. Both parties had always reserved, concerning this point of view, the most complete independence of action. Neither the Catholic Church nor any Protestant Society ever accepted, up to today, any reciprocal intervention concerning the establishment or the direction of their respective missions; and this is a state of things which, according to all one can foresee, will be perpetuated for a long time, not to say forever.

As for what specifically regards me, dear sir, I occupy a very insignificant position within the Catholic hierarchy to be able to answer the serious questions that you treat in your letter. You claim, indeed, the interdiction of the Catholic worship in this region; and this interdiction, you came to claim exactly to those that the Holy See sent precisely to provide the spiritual needs of the Catholics in this country. Far from abandoning the post entrusted to them, they should, on the contrary, fully implement their mission, whatever the cost. So, it is completely impossible for me to respond to the main matter of your letter. Only Rome is entitled to attend this issue. However, allow me to predict the response that might be given to you by the Holy See. My personal conviction is that it will be negative; because I have never found in the ecclesiastical history a single example which can authorize the claim that you are presenting now. Such a concession seems to me absolutely impossible.

You do not ignore, indeed, the fact that an important part of the European colony of Damaraland always belonged and still belongs to the Catholic religion. Presently, Sir, these Irish Catholics love the faith of their parents and claim the consolation of having, like them, a temple where they can fulfil their religious duties; they wish that a Catholic priest blesses their children when they enter life, and later, a Christian education; they desire for themselves the assistance of the priest, especially in their last moments. The Roman Church cannot therefore refuse them such spiritual aid, which they have the right to demand, and it is in vain that you ask to be refused to these poor Catholics the free exercise of their worship and the supreme consolation of their religion, and this only in the interest of your personal tranquillity. The Church cannot sacrifice for you the salvation of these souls and even if it would be to save only one, Rome, in such circumstances, would only have a word to answer to you: *Non possumus*.

You add, moreover, that if the Catholic Church does not renounce to the exercise of its worship in this region, it will represent something not honourable. It is for me, indeed, difficult to understand, dear Sir, which dishonour may be for the Catholic Church to send missionaries to this country. What it is doing here is not the same as what the Protestant Societies are doing today as well and what they always did in the past? And it may be said that, in general, everywhere where the Protestantism is established, while they were establishing themselves, they found the field already occupied by the Catholicism. The history is here to prove that the Catholicism preceded the Protestantism in Germany, in France, in England, in Norway, in Switzerland and in Ireland; and history proves as well that the Protestantism snatched from the Catholicism, with violence, not only the spiritual fields belonging to it for so many centuries, but their temporal goods as well. When your missionaries approached, for the first time, China, India, Oceania, America, Abyssinia, Congo, etc., the Catholic missions were already there. So, do you have the right to reproach us for what you have always done and still continue to do today?

I am surprised, I confess, dear Sir, to find in you such feelings of religious intolerance, this same intolerance that you so exaggeratedly accuse the Catholic Church to have. It seems to me – should I make you notice it? – that these feelings are not really in harmony with the freedom of conscience and the freedom of worship that the Protestantism has ever so proudly claimed, because what you finally are requesting is that, in this part of Africa, the Lutheran religion should be the only one to be tolerated. Not only the Catholic Church, but also none of the branches of Protestant worship, would consent that such a concession should be made to you.

This exclusion of all worships, beyond the one which you profess, is moreover, dear sir, in opposition with the regulations of the Colony, under the protectorate of which is this religion. The religious intolerance, which you claim in your favour, cannot ever be approved by the government to whom here, you and me, we owe respect and obedience.

Now, a few words concerning the reasons which you allege to claim the interdiction of the Catholic worship.

The first is, you say, that you have deeply studied the Herero literature and the second is that you had acquired an enormous influence on the natives, advantages from which you fear to lose the results with our arrival.

Concerning your literary works, dear Sir, we do not have the slightest pretension to contest their merits or benefits. It seems to me that our arrival do not oppose in anything for you to continue these studies and that you can take advantage for your cause of the immense advantage over us which gives you the acquired knowledge of the language. If one day we manage to compose as well works in indigenous language, they will not cause any damage to yours. The more the literary works multiply, the more the language will be perfected and its study become easier, an advantage that your missionaries will enjoy as much as our own.

Concerning the great influence which you insist in making me feel and this spirit of Christianity which would have already penetrated deeply in the soul of this nation/population and conquered the country for the Christian religion, allow me, dear Sir, not to share completely, in this point, your personal convictions. The events which just occurred before our eyes lead me to believe that there is still more work to accomplish than what you judge, so that these populations can be truly civilized and Christians. Have we not seen these latter days, the tribe on whom more particularly you have exercised your influence, decapitating in cold blood, in a general massacre, a crowd of harmless foreigners who, confidently, were living in their territories, without a voice in this tribe having been raised against such attack? Ah! My dear Sir, it is very difficult to recognize in such events the divine blessing, this great influence that you like to attribute to the works of your missionaries! You can believe this: the civilization of this people is still a work far away from being completed and even our efforts brought together with yours will not be in excess to reach this goal.

Finally, concerning the advice you gave to me to choose another place as a field for our apostolic works, it will be enough to tell you that this choice was not left to our discretion; we go to the post which our obedience orders to us and we stay there against all the difficulties and trials which can be reserved for us... *usque ad effusionem sanguinis*. If we succumb, others will soon replace us. We seek, as a reward of our works, only the consciousness of duty. The rest is in the hands of God. The sufferings and the crosses were always the reward coveted by the Catholic missionary and I hope to God that He will give us the certainty and the feelings of the first apostles, about whom it is written: *Ibant gaudentes quoniam digni sunt pro nomine Jesu contumeliam pati*.

You finish your letter, dear Sir, recalling a passage from St. Paul, in which the great apostle says that he had always endeavour to preach the Gospel in places where no one had yet announced the Word of God. But with this, S. Paul never intended in any way to criticize the ones who proceeded in a different way because he himself did not consider to have to always follow this line of conduct; having already announced the Gospel in Damascus, he announced it later on in Rome, where the apostles and the disciples of Our Lord had already preceded him. This is the observation that the wise Menochius makes judiciously, which sums up the feeling of other theologians in the following lines: *Intelligi Paulum ut plurimum iis gentibus praedicasse, quibus Evangelium nondum anuntiatum fuerat, nam alioqui Damasci praedicavit ubi jam erant aliqui fideles at Romanas hac epistolâ insistuit et postea etiam praesens docuit, ubi multi erant in Christo credentes*. We think, so, that by announcing here the Word of God, we are not, in any way, in opposition with the doctrine of the great apostle, and it is by asking God, through His intercession, to bless the trials which seem to be awaiting us, that I manifest to you, dear Sir, my deepest respect.

This letter, translated into English by R. Fr Hogan, was delivered to Mr. Viehe, on his return from Walvis-Bay. Mr. Viehe, answered, in his turn, in a long letter in which he rejected the accusations of intolerance and acknowledged, finally, that the Catholic missionaries had the duty and the right to provide to the needs of the Catholics of this region.

Les Missions Catholiques – Tome XI, 1879 – page 521

III

Cimbebasia (1879)

I) Damaraland

II) Namaqualand

III) Tribes from the Kalahari

IV) Ovambo - several tribes

(Les Missions Catholiques – Tome XI – 1879)

Cimbabasia

(Southern Africa)

By decree of 28th of April 1879, approved on the following 7th of May, by His Holiness Leo XIII, the Holy Congregation for Propaganda set up an Apostolic Prefecture in the Southern Africa, generally designed by the name of Cimbebasia, and entrusted it to the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The R. Fr Schwindenhammer, Superior General of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, was entrusted by the Holy See of the superior direction of this new mission, under the title of apostolic prefect and he himself appointed the Rev. Fr Carlos Duparquet as Apostolic Vice-Prefect.

Decree

The Holy Congregation for Propaganda had considered useful, for the propagation of faith in the regions of Southern Africa, the erection there of a new apostolic prefecture, the Exc. and Rev. Priests of this Holy Council decided, by unanimous vote, at the meeting held to entrust it to the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

And concerning the borders of this prefecture, the Exc. and Rev. Priests had determined that they should be fixed as follows: at the west, the Atlantic Ocean; at the South, the Orange River; at the east, the Haart river and the Transvaal Republic, which belongs to the apostolic vicarage of Natal; and at the north, the Kunene river, the lower course of the Kasai River and the Liba river or the western part of the Zambezi.

Next, in order to be able to better provide for the administration and government of this prefecture, the Exc. and Rev. Priests decreed that the superior general of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary should be the Prefect of the above mentioned region and should exercise his jurisdiction there through an apostolic vice-prefect, resident in that place, a position for which he chose, for the present, Fr Carlos Duparquet.

Having this been the decision of the Holy Congregation submitted by the R. Fr D. João Baptista Agnozzi to our Holy Father, the Pope Leo XIII, in an audience on the 7th of May 1879, His Holiness deigned to approve it and to confirm it, and ordered the dispatch of this decree.

Signed in Rome, at the Palace of the Holy Congregation for Propaganda, on the 3rd of July 1879.

Place of the seal

João, Card. Siméoni, Pref.

J. B. Agnozzi, Secretary

MAP

Map of Cimbebasia

Geographical Notes

Cimbebasia (West Africa)

The notes which follow were sent to us by R. Fr Carlos Duparquet, from the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Apostolic Vice-Prefect of the mission of Cimbebasia, recently created.

This mission, which up to now, was part of the apostolic vicarage of the Two-Guineas, had just been detached by the Holy See to form a new ecclesiastical jurisdiction, comprising all the territory which composed its southern part, from the lower course of the Kasai river up to the Orange river.

Its coastal borders are determined by the passage of this latter river and of the Kunene River. Further north, they are mixed up with the ones of the Portuguese Colony of Angola, in the direction of the Nano Mountains, and follow, afterwards, the right bank of the Kasai and of the Lotembua, up to Dilolo. At East, they continue along the Liba River, up to the passage of the Chobe, on the Zambezi, and head finally, from the lake Macaricari, through the eastern border of the Betchuana, to the Vaal River and to the Orange.

This territory comprises: 1st, in the northwest, the Damaraland; 2nd, in the south, the Namaqualand or country of the Great Namaqua; 3rd, in the east, the tribes of the Kalahari; 4th, in the north, the Ovambo and some other tribes.

England has just extended its protectorate to almost the totality of this vast region, and established the headquarters of its colonial administration in Walvis Bay, excellent harbour located half way of the coast, in Damaraland.

It was in this central part that the residence of the chief of the catholic mission was established. Located between the Desert of the Kalahari in the south and the great Valley of the Cubango (Okavango) in the north, this part of the territory participates on the salubrity of one and on the fertility of the other one. All the roads of these two regions end up there, which greatly facilitates the means of communication with the most distant places of the mission. The ethnographic details that follow will serve to give an exact idea about the various tribes which compose this mission.

I

Damaraland

Damaraland is located northwest of the great Desert of the Kalahari, between the valley of Okavango and Kunene, in the north, and the country of the Great Namaqua, in the south. At east, it extends up to the vicinity of the Lake Ngami. It is a region covered by mountains and well-known for the excellence of its pastures. Therefore, the Damara are essentially a pastoral population. All its wealth consists in cattle. It is estimated in about 40,000 the number of cattle belonging to the Cama Herero king; and another chief called Cavingava has at least 10.000.

It is still a problem to know whether the rains are abundant enough to compensate the agricultural works, without resorting to irrigation. The only experienced cultures, up to now, have

been done in the dry river beds, which always keep, during the dry season, some humidity. There, the natives and the Europeans cultivate, having good results, wheat and corn, as well as all the vegetables and the fruit trees from Europe. As for the culture of tropical plants, this seems to be impossible because of the cold, which in the winter is quite harsh in these high mountains. It is not rare, indeed, to see frozen water and the thermometer has already been seen descend to 8° degrees centigrade below zero.

The Damara have very dark skin and frizzled hair. They evidently belong to the large ethnological family of the Blacks from Congo and Angola, whose language has a great affinity with their own. They are affable and hospitable and welcome perfectly the Europeans, who live among them with a total security for their goods and their persons.

These Europeans, who already introduced a half civilization in Damaraland, are spread throughout the region but have their main commercial centres in Otjimbingué and in Omaruru. Most of them are intrepid hunters who devote themselves to the pursuit of elephants, giraffes, rhinos, ostriches and the various wildlives which abound in this region. The marvellous salubrity of the climate allows them to live this laborious life with impunity, full of privations and fatigues. Indeed, during successive years, they have only their wagon for housing and, for food, most of the times, what they hunt. Each of them is accompanied by a large entourage of indigenous people and by a pack of dogs, intended to gather the pieces of hunt and to put them within the reach of the hunter. Thus persecuted, the elephants are ordinarily chased to large swamps, where they cannot move easily, and slaughtered in prodigious quantities and without any danger. The trade of the region is reduced, of course, to ivory, ostrich feathers, leather and skins of wild animals. To this, a quite considerable export of cattle, sent to the Cape Colony, can be added. The communications with the neighbouring regions are very easy. Multiple paths, great for carts, had been built in Damaraland. The first goes from Walvis Bay to Otjimbingué, through the desert of the coast; another one heads to the Ovambo; a third one to the Orange, through the Great Namaqua; and two other ones to the lake Ngami, one along the desert border and the other one through the *omaramba* Omatako. The British administrator, as well as king Kamaharero, is living in Okahandja.

The nation of the Damara is divided in different tribes, each one of them having their particular chief, but all the chiefs recognize the sovereignty or hegemony of the main chief Kamaharero.

Nowadays, all of the tribes are under the British protectorate, and under the superior direction of a special commissioner of the Queen. But, for a better explanation of this great event in the political administration of the country, it is useful to trace back to the historical facts that gave rise to it.

PICTURE

lonker Afrikaner

The Damara, so called by the Europeans for a reason unknown, called Daman or Camacha Daman by the Namaqua, but who call themselves Hereros, have been occupying this region only for a century and a half or two centuries. It is a widespread tradition that they came from the north and settled, as an entrance, on the right bank of the Kunene River. All the geographical maps of this time locate, in this region, a nation of Mataman, whose king is called by the name of the Great Mataman. Evidently, this nation is identical to the one of the Daman or Hereros. The junction of the prefix *ma* and the change of the *d* into *t* are entirely in accordance with the characteristics of the Herero language.

After crossing the Kunene, they found the entire region, between this river and the Orange, occupied by three different nations: the Ovambos in the north; the Ilonqueanos in the centre and the Namaqua in the south. Then, they established themselves between the Ovambos and the ocean, in a coastal region called Kaoko, and, there, they lived for a certain number of years. Later, they took the determination to carry on their emigration to the south; but a part of them refused to leave Kaoko and stayed there until the last years. As for the bulk of its constituents, they followed the direction to the south; and, during this recession, they fought the Ovambos, stealing most of their livestock and taking possession of the eastern part of their territory. But when it came to sharing the spoils, great disputes arose between the winners and about one third of Hereros separated from the others and settled west of the Lake Ngami, taking the name of *Ovambandero*. Reaching a little more or less the 21° degrees of latitude, the rest of the emigrants met with the Namaqua Hottentots or Aunib and repelled them to the south.

To the west of these Namaqua, was a black nation called Ilonqueanos, which seem to be the aborigines of the region. These Ilonqueanos, then, ran away to the mountaintop, where they still live under the name of Ghu Daman or Berg Damara. The Aunib retreated to the Namacuas Geicus, who, in turn, retreated to the south and the east to give way to the Hereros. These ones and the *Ovambandero* felt, then, satisfied with the region which they had conquered and settled there definitely with their herds.

Such was the situation in the beginning of this century, when unexpected events came to change the fate of the Damara.

By this time, a group of Hottentots from the Cape, decided to escape the domain of the Europeans, and having as chief a famous bandit, native from Tulbagh, called Jager Afrikaner, they crossed the Orange and subjugated and devastated the entire southern part of the Great Namaqualand.

This old Afrikaner, called the lion of Namaqua, was converted to Protestantism by Mr. Moffat, father-in-law of Livingstone, made penance and died regretful of his crimes, leaving the power to his son, Jonker Afrikaner, who would become more famous than his father. Jonker Afrikaner possessed horses and European weapons, which were giving him a great superiority over the indigenous people. The Geicus, beaten by the Hereros, came to him to claim their rights. On the other hand, the Herero were divided among themselves and one of the tribes appealed as well to Afrikaner against the rival tribes. Afrikaner did not wait to be supplicated; he ran to help, he subjugated the Hereros, reducing all of them to slavery, and he established his residence in Okahandja, right in the centre of Damaraland. From there, he did not take long to extend his power up to the Kunene River, because, after the death of the Obampo king, called Nangoro, having one of the pretenders to the throne requested the support of Afrikaner, he sacked this entire region. He died while coming back from this expedition, in 1863, at the apogee of his power and expressing repentance for his sins.

He left the power to his older son, Christian, the third Afrikaner; but this one did not have the ability and the fate of his father. It had been already more than twenty years that the Herero were enslaved and, during that time, they had learned, with the winners and the European hunters, to use firearms and had themselves supplied of them. So, having been temerarily

attacked by Christian in Omocoro, on the 24th of June 1863, they defeated him completely, leaving him dead on the battle field.

With him the power of the Afrikaner ended. His brother, Jan Jonker, the 4th of the Afrikaner, while succeeding him, did not manage to avenge the power of Namaqua. The war still continued for seven years, always at the expense of the latter, who ended losing all their wealth in it, all their herds and were, at the end, obliged to sign, on the 23rd of December 1870, the treaty of Okahandja, which ensured to the Herero independence and freedom.

Meanwhile, the Namaqua, humiliated and crushed, had not, however, renounced to the hope of recovering the lost position. And the Herero, who feared new wars, especially fearing the loss of their herds, immensely multiplied and dispersed throughout the extent of the country, had the idea to address the Governor of the Cape, to refrain from a further effusion of blood.

“We implore the British Government – King Kamaharero wrote in 1872 - to guarantee us the means to govern our poor country and to extend a protective hand to our people, telling us what to do to save our land, since the Namaqua do not want to leave us in peace.

We therefore request to the excellent British Governor the kindness to intervene so that peace can be maintained between us and the Namaqua, and to be established the reign of justice and law, because our country has a great need of it, and presently the things came to such a point that if the government does not intervene, it seems that we march towards a war of extermination against each other. And that is why we implore the government to not reject our solicitation, but on the contrary, to have mercy on us and to attend our supplication.”

This petition was sent in 1872 and as the situation did not improve, His Ex. Sir Henry Bertle Frere, governor of the Cape, appointed in 1876 a commission to visit the region, to listen to the wishes of the populations and to prepare the protectorate so earnestly requested. Mr. Palgrave, who as a hunter, had lived for many years among these tribes, was appointed at the head of this mission. He gathered all the Herero and *Ovambandero* chiefs in Okahandja, the Orlams or Afrikaners in Rehoboth and the Namaqua chiefs in Berseba. The final result of these national assemblies was the unanimous request for the British Protectorate which, a short time after, was granted by the Queen. That's how a vast region of a salubrious climate, with a coastline of about 300 leagues, was placed under the British flag. It is expected that this great event will prepare a new and better future for this country, so abandoned until now. The Catholic missionaries, mostly just have to bless the inauguration of a government, whose first concern was to grant them the most benevolent and generous protection.

On the territory of the Herero are also the wreckage of the nation of the Ilonqueanos or Berg-Damara, who mainly inhabit the mountains of the north and the west. Though belonging to the black race, these tribes speak Namaqua and Hottentot. They seem to have extended, primitively, their domain to the Orange, where they were repelled to the north by the Namaqua, which reduced them to slavery and imposed their language. These poor tribes still live, in the face of the Herero, a kind of servitude. It is natural that the British protectorate will improve their situation.

The population of Damaraland rises up to 117,150 inhabitants, divided as follows:

Hereros	84,000
Honcuanos	30,000
Bushmen	3,000
Europeans	150
Total..... 117,150	

On the other hand, here are the statistics of the population of the Herero tribes of Damaraland, based on the official report of Mr Palgrave:

Name of the tribes, designated by the names of the kings	Number of villages	Population
Tribe of Kamaharero	76	23.000
“ “ Therava	14	20.500
“ “ Cambatembé	72	15.000
“ “ Camareti	Poorly known	7.000
“ “ Candjye	12	2.500
“ “ Coocoorie	Unknown	2.000
“ “ Salomon Omungunda	Unknown	1.000
Tribes under the authority of Aponda	63	13.000
Total	237	84.000
.....		

Calculated the population of the villages of Camareti, Coocoorie and Omungunda at 500 souls, we have for the 10.000 inhabitants which constitute these tribes, 20 settlements, which amounts to 257 villages, with a population of 84,000 inhabitants.

Unfortunately, it was already 30 years ago that the Rhenish Protestant missionaries entered there and founded nine stations; Okahandja, Ocotondé, Otjikango, Barmen, Otjimbingue, Otjithvatu, Otjiteba, Omboru, Otjiovandjupa and Ocambahé; and they wrote in the Herero language many notable literatures under the linguistic point of view.

Two missions - Otjimbingwe and Barmen – were founded before 1870; the other have a recent foundation. Here is what Palgrave says about these two main Protestant missions: “Otjimbingwe has the most beautiful house and the most beautiful church of the country. There is a workshop of blacksmiths and of cart’s carpenters attached to the house. Besides the church, the Rhenish mission has a very well assembled school and an excellent college for the formation of indigenous boys as schoolmasters. The current population is from four hundred up to six hundred inhabitants, of whom 350 were baptized. There are a hundred of those who attend

mass on Sundays and, a service intended for pagans is held in another compartment and is also frequented a lot.”

“The neighboring village, Otjikango or Barmen, is located at 50 leagues; and the way to get there is done through a very undulating region covered with thick bushes. As Otjimbingwe, it is a station for the Rhenish mission. In the garden of the missionaries, I had the opportunity to see, side by side with the date palms, apples and pears, grapes, pomegranates, mulberries and figs. The population of Barmen is more or less the same as Otjimbingwe, but, since there are less Christians, there are also fewer houses. Except for the church and the mission, and maybe two more houses, all I saw were huts.”

From here, one can deduce that the Protestants are far from having conquered the territory for Protestantism. In Otjimbingwe, they did not baptize more than 300 to 600 indigenous; and in Barmen, their second important post, even less, in other words, maybe about 200. In the other seven posts, recently created, not even 100 baptisms per village can be counted. They have, therefore, a thousand followers among the Damara, for a population of 84.000 inhabitants; and, from approximately 250 villages, they occupy only 8. The Catholicism can therefore expect to achieve a great place, if not the greatest, in the conversion of these people.

II

Namaqualand or the country of the Great Namaqua

The territory of the Great Namaqua extends from Lake Ngami to the Orange River, going up the Swakop River, at the Coast. It is exclusively inhabited by three families of the Hottentots race.

1st - The family of the pure Namaqua or former inhabitants of the region. It has also a dozen of tribes and, among them it is easy to recognize the ones which were visited in the last century by the famous traveler Levaillant. Therefore, the Camino and the Caminocua are today governed by William Christian; the Koraqwa or the Caracicoi or Coracoi, by Simon Copper; the Cabobicua or the Habobés by Karl Namib; the Geicauas or Geicus by Bernabé.

The most septentrional of these tribes are the Topnaars, who live in the vicinity of Walvis Bay and Sandwich Harbour; they have the name of Nara Hottentots, from the name of the fruit which is their main alimentation and which can only be found in this coast. The thorny shrub that produces it belongs to the *cucurbitaceae* family and grows on top of the sand dunes. As it never rains in this region, the immense root of this shrub plunges to a depth of a hundred meters, looking for some freshness in the

PICTURE

Damara woman

deep layers of sand. A single plant can produce about 400 fruits per year, the size of melons. The pulp is excellent and is, as well as the seeds, a good aliment which can be preserved for a long time. Who will not admire, in light of this, the goodness of the Divine Providence, which knew how to ensure the poor inhabitants of these regions a so precious resource and give fertility to the sterile and drifting sands of the coastline?

2.° - Another family of the Hottentots is designated by the name of Oorlams, who emigrated from the Cape in the beginning of the century. It has five small tribes, of which the most notable is the Eicha-ais, governed by the Afrikaners, who currently have their residence in Windhoek. Next are the IKhowsin, whose chief, Moses Witbooi, resides in Gibeon; the Amas, governed by David Christian, having as residence Bethanie; the Khauas or Coijas, of Jakous Isaac, in Berseba or Bersabe; and, on the northern edge of the desert, Andreas Lambert, with the Gobabis.

These Oorlams, wreckage of the former Cape Hottentot tribes, brought with them the religion and civilization of this colony. They are all Protestants and the Afrikaners themselves, who shed so much blood and covered the entire region with ruins, died repenting and begging for the mercy of God for their many crimes.

3.° - The third family is the one of the coloured, descendant from the crossing of European and Hottentots, and who, like them, emigrated from the Cape Colony.

These Hottentots, mulattos or bastards, as they are generally called, founded in Namaqualand five small colonies, one of which in Selem, near the Swacop River, another one in Rehoboth, the third in Grootfontein and the other two in the Kalahari Desert.

These coloured form a skilled and civilized population, and had to overcome huge obstacles to ensure their subsistence among these arid solitudes. The ones in the desert had to dig wells of 80 feet, in order to find the necessary water for them and for their herds. However, they love this region, preferring their current situation to the one they had in the Colony.

It has already been a long time since these Namaqua tribes were converted to Protestantism, first by the Wesleyan and afterwards by the Rhenish missionaries. This latter society maintains there a large number of stations, of which the main are: Nisbetsbath, Bethanie, Bersabe, Grootfontein, Rehoboth, Gobabis, Bokberg, Schepmansdorf and Windhoek, this last one being the residence of the Afrikaners' family. It does not remain, therefore, great hope of success for a Catholic mission among these populations already conquered by Protestantism.

Here is, based on the report submitted by Palgrave to the Parliament of the Cape, the exact statistics of the different tribes of the Great Namaqualand, with the name of their chiefs and the number of their populations:

Name of the tribe	Name of the chiefs	Number of the population
(Namaqua of pure race)		
1- Geicus or Geicana	Bernabé	2,500
2- Topnaars	Frederico	750
3- Caroas	Tseib	300

4- Cogeis, khoes or Coceis	Unknown	100
5- Ogeis	No chief	800
6- Cau-Goas or Zwartboois	Abraham Zwartboois	1,000
7- Habobes or Cabobicuas	Karl Nanib	1,800
8- Caraceicois	Simon Coppez	800
9- Gaminus or Caminos or Bondleswaarts	William Christian	2,000
10- Gunungu	Unknown	200
(Oorlams Namaqua)		
11- Eicha-ais or Afrikaners	Jan Jonker Afrikaner, in the north, and Kodje Africanir, in the south	800
12- IKhowsin	Moses Witbooi	2,500
13- Amas	David Christian	2,000
14- Khauas or Coijas	Jakobus Isaac	700
15- Gobabis	Unknown	600
Total		16,850

It has to be noted that various tribes herein indicated are included in Damaraland, namely: the Topnaars, who reside in the bay of Walvis; the Cau-Goas, governed by Abraham Zwartbooi, who reside in Bokberg, and the Gobabis, governed by Andreas Lambert, between Damara and the lake Ngami.

All these Namaqua speak Hottentot, a very difficult language. Their country can only be reached through Walvis Bay.

III

Tribes of the Kalahari

The eastern part of the Kalahari Desert, from the Lake Ngami up to the Vaal River, is inhabited by the Bakalahari, belonging to the great nation of the Bechuana. They were thus designated by the name of the Kalahari Desert, to distinguish them from Eastern Bechuana, now forming the State of Basutoland, attached to the Cape Colony in 1868.

They are divided into seven major tribes, which are, from south to north, since the small country of the Griqua to the Zambezi: the Griqua, the Bachapin, the Bangwaketse, the Bakwena, the Bamanguato, the Batawana and the Makololo.

I - *Griqua* - Preceding the numerous Bechuana tribes in the right bank of the Orange River, is, firstly, the tribe of the Griqua. The Griqua are coloured born in Cape Colony, from the union of Dutch with Hottentots. Originally, they had the name of Dutch bastards which they later changed to Griqua, the name of a certain Cricua, from whom the majority of them were descendants.

Their country is limited, in the south, by the Orange River, which separates it from the Cape Colony; at east, by the Ki – Gariep or old Gariep, which separates it from the Orange Republic; in the north, by the territory of the Betchuana, at west by the endless steppes of the Kalahari. They played a certain role in the history of the neighboring colonies, but they are now reduced to 300. After their revolt against the British Government, to whom they had declared themselves as vassals after 1871, they ended up, in the beginning of this year, completely crushed. Their main village is Griquatown and their religion is the Protestantism, which they profess since the beginning of the century.

II - *Bachapin* - After the Griqua, between the desert and the Haart River, at the banks of three rivers which nearby are getting lost in the sands of the Kalahari, we find the small tribe of the Bachapin. These ones inhabit the first territory in the north of the Orange, susceptible to be cultivated in years of abundant rain. Their population is estimated at 3.000 inhabitants, almost all Protestants. The two current leaders are called Gasiboné and Mancoroané. It was among them, in Kuruman, that the London Missionary Society has established its establishments in Southern Africa.

Mr. Moffat, father-in-law of the famous Livingstone, resided in this station for fifty years (1821-1870). There, he established typography, from where a large number of works in the bechuana language were produced/came out, among others, a complete translation of the Bible, done by Mr Moffat himself.

A Catholic mission, among this small protestant population, would not find many/great elements of success. The two chiefs Gasiboné and Mancoroané, are currently seriously committed to the revolt of their Griqua neighbors and friends. It is likely that this line of conduct from them, within a short time, could lead to the annexation of their small territory to the British Crown.

III- *Bangwaketse*- At the division of the waters of this part of the African continent, between the Molopo River which is lost in the Kalahari, and the Notuani River, which flows into the Limpopo, at the Transvaal border, lays the small tribe of the Bangwaketse, which only has 4.000 inhabitants. Its main settlement is Canjé. It has already been a long time since the London Missionary Society had founded there a station, but without great results. The king is called Hasutsivé. Among the Bangwaketse, a population of other Bechuana can be found, belonging to the tribe of the Barolong and whose chief is Montsia. This population is estimated at 4,500 souls and is in the same religious conditions as the previous one.

IV - *Bakwena* or *Bakoena* – They are another small tribe, at the headwaters of the Notuani River, within the limits of the Transvaal. They are only about 500 inhabitants, since they were sacked by the Boers of the Transvaal. They do not offer any interest besides having been the residence of the famous Livingstone, who converted and christened their chief Secheli. Despite the praise that Livingstone gives him for his work, it seems certain that he became again half pagan and the efforts of the Protestantism were, in this aspect, fruitless. The two known villages are Lépélolé and Liteiana.

V - *Bamanguato* - This tribe is today, with the Batawana, the most numerous and considerable among the Bechuana. In the beginning of this century, they formed a single tribe, which disbanded during the reign of Matipi and originated two kingdoms.

King Matapi had two sons, the elder one called Camé and the younger one called Tované, among whom some misunderstanding arose. The old king, as a part of his vassals, declared himself on the side of Tované and gave him all his riches. Accompanied by his favourite son, he settled at the banks of the lake Ngami, with a part of his tribe, which took the name of Batawana. The rest of the nation remained faithful to Camé. The successors of these two kings - Tované and Camé - had both a fatal destiny. Moremi, son of Tované, was defeated and killed by Sebituane, the founder of the empire of the Macololo; Cari, son of Camé, was killed during the war against the Machona.

Lechulatebé succeeded his father Moremi, while Cari was replaced on the throne by his son Secomi.

The two kings, Lechulatebé and Secomi, acquired a certain celebrity due to their relations with the latest travellers and especially with the famous Livingstone, who devoted to them numerous pages in his travel narratives. Both, after long reigns, went down to the grave not long ago and were replaced, Lechulatebé by his son Moremi, the second of this name; and Secomi, first by his brother Matcheno and, afterwards, by his son Cama, currently reigning. Moremi is a young prince who is twenty-five years old, who has good fame and who has been able to harmonize the Europeans' friendship in this region.

The land of the Bamanguato is limited to the east by the Transvaal State, and by the kingdom of the Matabele, with whom it sustained long wars during the reign of Mosilicatse who governed these ones; to the north, it extends beyond Botletle and the Chots or salt lakes, which receive during the rainy season the waters of this river; on the side of the desert, it does not have limits, having the Bamanguato reduced their poor inhabitants, called Balala, to slavery. The capital is Chochong and has about 15.000 inhabitants. The population of the villages of the tribe is evaluated in²⁶ by the travellers. The current king of Chochong, Cama²⁷, was educated by Protestant missionaries, to whom the king Secomi, his father, had entrusted him. This young king professes Protestantism since his childhood and had, in the past, to sustain, because of his attachment to this religion, long wars against his father and against some of his own subjects. In the end, he emerged victorious and his father, after having abdicated, had to withdraw into exile. Cama has as a counsellor the Protestant minister who was his preceptor, Mr Mackensie, who uses his influence to promote the spread of the Protestantism in the kingdom. However, the vast majority of the population is still pagan and the foundation of a Catholic mission in the north of the principality could have some future. This is the most advanced point where the Protestantism was established on this side. From Chochong to the lake Ngami and to the Zambezi, all the populations are still pagan.

VI- *Batawana* – The tribe of the Batawana lives on the banks of lake Ngami, at the end of the Kalahari Desert. As we have already seen, the Batawana are a detachment of the Bamanguato and are governed by the king Moremi. This region has a great commercial importance. It is the meeting point of all the traders and hunters from the neighbouring territories, who come from the Cape, either following the edge of the desert and going through Chochong, or disembarking at

²⁶ This number is deleted in the original.

²⁷ He was the king of the Bamangwato when Serpa Pinto passed through Chochong.

the bay of Walvis, where they are led by a line of small ships, which are going every month from the Cape to Walvis Bay. This is currently the travellers' favourite way.

All these Bechuana tribes, called Bakalahari as well, have the same language, the same form of government and the same traditions, and can also handle the agricultural and pastoral life. They represent, without counting the Baieie, a population of about 200,000 souls.

VII - *Makololo or Mokolo* - This last tribe of the Bechuana who, twenty years ago, had a great splendor, should be considered only as a historical remembrance, although its name still continues to appear in all the maps. It was, indeed, completely annihilated over the last recent years. It owed its origin to a chief called Sebitoane who, after having gathered around him a large number of warriors of his nation, came to settle near the Notuani River, at the current borders of the Transvaal. Expelled from this region by Mozilicatse, he immigrated with all his Bechuana from the north of the lake Ngami to the banks of the Chobe River, where he established his capital called Linyanti. The terror he inspired was so great that many of the neighbouring populations submitted to him without any resistance, among others, the tribe of the Barotse, whose king Santuro fled without daring to battle with him. And so, Sebitoane soon reigned over a vast territory, stretching north to Libonta, close to the Zambezi. But his son Sequeleton, who succeeded him, did not manage to maintain this empire. A large number of Bechuana, unaccustomed to this humid and sickly climate, died of fevers. On the other hand, the subjugated tribes revolted; and the rest of the Bechuana, trying to return to their native land, were treacherously massacred at the lake Ngami, by the king of the Bechuanas, Lechulatebe, a mortal enemy of the Makololo who had filled him with vexations during their prosperity. And so ended, miserably, an empire that was, for a time, predominant in this part of Southern Africa.

The population of the west bank of the Zambezi might be estimated at 200,000 inhabitants, who, with the other five Bechuana tribes, would represent a figure of 500,000, from the Dilolo Lake to the Orange River, including the Baieies of the lake Ngami.

Concerning the climate and the productions of the country of the Bechuanas, it varies considerably from latitudes. From the Orange up to the Chobe River, it is generally a healthy land, but dry, not too fertile and unable to sustain a large population. In the rainy years, the sorghum develops easily, but in dry years, the inhabitants do not have other resources besides milk and wild roots which can be found abundantly in the desert. From the Chobe up to the Dilolo Lake, it is, on the contrary, a region almost entirely flooded during part of the year and, in consequence, unhealthy and febrile, but with wonderful vegetation and with a great fertility.

In 1860, the London Missionary Society, ceding to the instances of Livingstone, sent to Linyanti, capital of the Makololo, Mr. Helmore and Mr. Price as missionaries. These should, as the plan previously established with Livingstone, move themselves, together with the king Sequeleton and the inhabitants of Linyanti, to the mountains, which were more salubrious. But this change could not be carried out as quickly as it would be wished. When, a few months later, Mr Mackenzie arrived at the lake Ngami, he learned through Mr Price about the death of Mr. and Mrs. Helmore and of Mrs. Price, as well as many children, who had been victimized by fevers. No other mission has been installed again in these parts. On this side, it is at the lake Ngami that the region of the fevers start, which, to the west, it only starts more above.

VIII - *Bushmen* - The enumeration of the tribes of the Kalahari would be incomplete if a few words would not be said about a singular race called Bushmen, scattered here and there among all the other tribes, from the Zambezi up to the Orange. They are in the solitudes of the Kalahari, in the desert of Madenisana and at the south of the Kavango, and they seem to be linked to the Hottentot race. They do not cultivate the land nor raise cattle. They live solely from the product of the hunting and of the harvesting of wild fruits and roots. When they don't have water, they quench their thirst with the juice of melons or with the roots of the *leruscu* or of other similar vegetables. They also know, by the means of a cane, to aspirate, in a liquid stage, the humidity of the sand, which gave them the name of *those who suck water*. They do not have any kind of housing and they simply sleep in caves or behind vegetable tufts. Most of them are slaves of the neighbouring tribes, to whom they are obliged to deliver the skins from their hunting. There are some who seem to live solitarily and without fixed landing. They have an amazing ability to endure hunger and can endure fasts for many days, without looking uncomfortable because of it.

It is obviously one of the most unfortunate races of mankind and who, however, does not seem to refuse all the hope of success for the work of the missionaries. There are, in the vicinity of Damara, many tribes of Bushmen who seem to be willing to accept the Gospel. Mr. Palgrave has just visited one of their villages, at a place called *Longue-Vallée*, close to Lake Ngami, and he thinks that a mission established there would succeed perfectly.

Concerning the Kalahari Desert itself, the main habitat of these Bushmen, is far from being, as we could imagine, totally sterile. The rains are only totally missing on the coastline; in the interior of the desert, there are vast extensions covered with pastures and forests, where an innumerable amount of wildlife pullulates. But the nature of the soil is sandy and the rainwater, which cannot be retained at the surface, immediately flows off into the deep layers of the ground, without generating fountains or watercourses. The crossing of this desert is still considered, up to now, impossible for Europeans. To go from one side to the other, it is necessary to bypass it, either by the banks of the Orange River, or by the banks of the Botletle River and the lake Ngami. However, there is hope to find, with time, propitious places for the opening of artesian wells, allowing men to use this vast area, endowed with abundant vegetation and with a salubrious climate.

PICTURE

Bushman type

IV

Ovambo and several tribes

In the north of the Kalahari Desert and beyond Damaraland, begins a vast plain that stretches from the Nano mountains to the western bank of the Zambezi. It corresponds to the prolongation to the north of the great plain of the Kalahari, with the difference that the dryness and the aridity of the southern region are here replaced by an extremely wet climate, which turns the superior area into a region almost flooded and sulcated with numerous watercourses. The slope of this

plain is generally so little pronounced that even the waters of a river can flow in many different directions, just as the natives refer to regarding the Kunene and the Kavango rivers, which would have a common origin, and of which one of them flows into the Atlantic Ocean while the other flows into lake Ngami. The same thing happens at the top of the valley concerning Lake Dilolo, whose waters flow to north and to south. The same phenomenon is even reproduced with the Botletle. Therefore, the hydrographic system of this valley forms like an immense network of watercourses, anastomosing themselves with each other and producing at certain times of the year, a temporary flood, analogous in its effects to the ones in Egypt. It is evident that a soil enriched in such a way by abundant rains should be of a great fertility, but also extremely unhealthy for Europeans. Therefore, the traders and hunters of the Damara do not dare to settle here permanently. The Ovambo, however, is habitable during all the seasons, but the lake and the Kavango are only habitable for six months a year, during the winter or dry season. The hunters take advantage of this epoch to penetrate the valley, returning to settle in the desert during the rainy season. This is the system that the missionaries should also adopt. However, to the west, the Nano Mountains and the Ovambo will offer them to the good sanitary conditions for permanent establishments.

This part of the mission, although it is the most important concerning fertility and population figures, was still only imperfectly explored. Livingstone traveled throughout all its eastern part; the travellers Magyar and Cameron crossed it in the north and the British and the Portuguese merchants inhabit the neighbouring regions of the desert and Angola. It is likely that the Portuguese exploration, which currently directs its work in this direction, will fill this geographic gap.

This valley is inhabited by five major people, who are the Ovambos at southeast, the Bakubas in the centre, the Balobales in the north, the Barotses in the east and, finally, the tribes known under the generic name of Nanos, in the mountains which dominate the valley in the west and which separate it from Angola.

I – *Ovambo* – The first region of the plain which is located at north, after leaving Damara, is the one that the Europeans designated by the generic name of Ovambo. It is a united plateau, which rises to 1000 meters above sea level, without rocks and without mountains, and whose lands seem to lean in the north to the Kunene and in the east to the Kavango. This plain which extends from 14° to 18° of longitude of Greenwich, is inhabited by twelve distinct tribes and governed by hereditary potentates, excepting the one from Orundu, whose government has a republican structure. All these tribes speak the same language, a language as sweet and harmonious as the Damara, and which has a great affinity with the Bonda and the Congo.

Europeans designate the whole country by the name Ovampo or Ovambo, the name of the first tribe discovered in 1852 by Mr. Galton and Mr. Anderson, and which had, at that time, Nangoro as king, whose residence was in Ondonga.

This region of the Ovambo has a prodigious fertility and is covered with immense fields of sorghum, surrounded by magnificent forests. For the travellers who leave Kalahari or the thorny forests of Damara, Ovambo emerges as a true Elysium. A good road, with springs from distance to distance, makes the communication easy between Damara and Ovambo with the help of wagons. There are only five days of journey between the last Damara village and the first

Ovambo habitations. The intermediate space is occupied by the Bushmen. Omaruru is, in Damara, the main depot of trade between the two regions and it is there that the European houses had established the centre of their business operations. It is also in the Ovambo that the Portuguese traders come to provide themselves of oxen, which they guide to Moçamêdes through Huila and Capangombe, to be transported from there to S. Paulo in Luanda and then to Gabon, where they constitute the only food resource for the Europeans.

From the Ovambo, it is easy to establish communication with Capangombe and Moçamêdes, and, therefore, with the rest of the coast. On the other hand, since Ovambo is proximate to the ocean, at the height of 19° latitude, all the settlers from Damaraland are strongly committed in looking for a seaport at the coast, which could put them in an immediate connection with Ovambo, whose access would be, then, easier.

About six years ago, a society of Finnish missionaries sent several of its members to the Ovambo: to Ondonga, which is the capital; to Kwambi, to Kwanyama and to Ngandjera. But they were unsuccessful and all missionaries are currently gathered in Ondonga, which also failed to make a great number of followers. It can be said that the result of their work is summed up to the impression of three works in the language of the region.

According to an official report addressed to the Cape Parliament, the Ovambo population is estimated at 98,000 inhabitants, distributed, as follows, in its 11 tribes:

Avare	2,500
Kafima	1,500
Kwanyama	1,500
Ombarandu	4,000
Great Ombandja	}
Little Ombandja	
Orundu Comutuvé	4,000
Ocarute	6,000
Kwambi	5,000
Ngandjera	10,000
Ovambo	20,000
<hr/>	
<i>Total</i>	98,000

II – Bakuba - Between Ovambo and Lake Ngami, on the banks of Kavango, there is an independent tribe of Bakubas called Baviko or Ovampucos, currently ruled by King Anduri, whose residence is in Libebe, near Kavango. Mr. Palgrave locates this settlement at 19° of south latitude and at 21° 40' of east longitude of Greenwich. To get there, going from Damara, it is necessary to cross the omaramba Chechongo, a muddy and unhealthy stream, and then, to do afterwards three more days of travel. Libebe is a prime region for hunters, who collect a large amount of ivory. Anduri lives in excellent relations and asks insistently for the arrival of missionaries to his kingdom. "Missionaries are going to any part of the neighbouring regions", he repeats with frequency; "why are they not coming to me?" These details are given by Mr. Van Zyl, a Dutch farmer who is has been living for five years near lake Ngami, in Gansé. There, he founded a magnificent farm, where he has no less than 800 oxen, which give him a great

income. But his biggest profits come from hunting. Over those five years, he has killed 800 elephants and he has just brought to the Cape ivory and ostrich feathers worth 250.000 francs. He lived for a long time in Libebe, which is his favourite place as a hunting ground.

The Kavango River is also designated by the name of Tuca²⁸ and Tiogé, and communicates, in the words of the natives, not only with the Kunene but with the Chobe as well, which, in this case, would make it possible to do the journey, navigating the Kunene, up to the passage of the Congo (Zaire).

This region is of great fertility and is beautifully cultivated. Around the village of Libebe, all the forests were cut down and this whole space is covered with plantations, filled with numerous varieties of beans and cucurbitaceae. The king's house is on an island in the middle of the river. Unfortunately, the region of the tsetse fly begins here and the wagons only dare to approach the village with great precautions. The traders think, therefore, to be able to do it, to replace the oxen for mules, on which the bite of these terrible insects do not have any effect.

The Bakuba from the lower side of the river were subordinated by Bechuana and are, under the authority of the chief Moremi, an active and numerous population.

They inhabit especially the whole network of watercourses located at the north of the lake Ngami. Their habitations are always built close to the water or on islands. They are skilled fishermen and very proficient in the hippopotamus hunting, which they harpoon as if they were whales. They also build ditches at the banks of the rivers to catch the wild animals which go there to drink. To these means of subsistence they add the culture of the sorghum and collect, in the watercourses, roots and lotus seeds.

Two hundred Dutch families just established a colony at the lake Ngami: there are thirty in Otjimbinde, one hundred and fifty at the Tuka River, north of the lake, and still others at the north of Gansé. This region is very wholesome, but cultures are difficult because of the droughts. Therefore, they haven't made a decision about staying in this place. They would prefer to settle in Damaraland, but the Damara wish to conserve their land and as they are under the British protectorate, the Dutch have lost all hopes in this area. Now, they seek to obtain the territory called Reserve, situated between the Damara and the sea. A small British warship is exploring the coastline, hopeful to find a port north of Walvis Bay. If they manage to find it, it is possible that the Dutch colony will settle there but, of course, under the government of England. The region is called Kaoko. If they do not manage anything in this region, they intend to head to the Portuguese territory, on the side of Moçâmêdes.

III – Boers of the Kavango-In the vicinity of the Bakuba, south of Libebe and on the west of lake Ngami, a colony of Boers or Dutch farmers settled there, about five years ago, coming from the Transvaal. They have about 200 wagons. These Dutch arrived here without the slightest experience of tropical countries and settled, unwisely, on the banks of the river. Sixty-six succumbed soon, affected by fevers, and the others hastened to retreat into the desert, where they recovered their health. They live today from the hunting product and their herds, waiting for the commissioner of their British Majesty to assign them a territory where they could settle

²⁸ Note of the translator Gastão de Sousa Dias – It is possibly the Tonké or Tonka of Reclus, referred in the preface.

permanently, with the consent of the natives. Maybe they will stay on the banks of the Kavango or transfer to the coast then, to the region of Kaoko, from where the Damara withdrawn recently.

IV- Barotse and Balobale - The main tribes at the east of the plain are the Barotse and the Balobale, north of the Chobe. These tribes are only known from the reports of some travellers, describing the region as very fertile and populous. These Barotse had been, about fifty years ago, conquered by Sebitoane, head of the Makololo; but having the empire of the Makololo, by the death of his son Sekeleton, been crushed completely, all the Barotse regained their independence. The population of this part of the mission is estimated in 300,000 souls.

V - Nano - Beyond the Ovambo, around the headwaters of the Kunene, the great mountain range prolongs, which forms the highlands of the Damara. These mountains extend up to a very high massif called Mossamba, which seems to be the culminating point of Angola and from where the courses of six major rivers come down: the Kwango and the Kasai, tributaries of the Zaire; the Kwanza and the Kunene, bathing the Portuguese colony; and finally, the Chobe and the Kavango, in the eastern side. This mountain range is inhabited by the tribe of the Nano and several other tribes devoted to a pastoral life, which sometimes goes down to the Portuguese colony and commit great depredations. In these mountains there are high plateaus, in good sanitary conditions and covered with forests and pastures.

It was in this region that the mission, now redeployed in Damaraland, after an interruption of twelve years, had tried a first experience in 1866. This establishment had been initiated on one of these mountains, called Chela, and the missionaries had hoped to, in this area, to establish their means of communication with Europe, via the Portuguese colony of Mocamêdes; but the opposition of Portugal to this work was so great that they had to renounce this enterprise. Today, thanks to the protection of the British government, which has just established its protectorate from Kunene to Limpopo, the mission has nothing to fear concerning its stability and can resume its work in conditions which obviously ensure its future.

V Summary

It would be difficult to calculate accurately the population of these mountains, as well as the population of the centre of the valley, but it seems that one can, without fear of a big mistake, evaluate their numbers at 400,000, which represents, for the whole of the mission, the number of 1:248,000, which can be divided in the following manner, among its 3 zones:

1 st – Damaraland		118,000
.....	
2 nd – Kalahari	{	Namaqua
20,000 170,000	
	{	Bechuana
	 150,000
3 rd – Vale	{	Ovambo
.....	 98,000
		Bakuba of the lake Ngami
	 162,000
		Barotsese Balobale
	 300,000

Nano e Central Vale.. 400,000

Total 1.248,000

This is the overview of all of the diverse populations which make up the new and humble mission of Cimbebasia. Even if it cannot rival with many others, neither by the celebrity of its places nor by the number of an important population, it is not less worthy of the interests of the Catholics, who take to heart to love and glorify their Divine Master throughout all the tribes of the world. The benefit of Redemption, in the designs of the Divine Providence, belongs to all the tribes on the earth, both the largest and the smallest. God, no one can doubt Him, also put His merciful eyes on these abandoned people. Who knows if these solitudes will not one day be called to have their pious thebaidas as the ones of the ancient Egypt, according to these words of the Holy Spirit: *Campi tui replebuntur ubertate. Oinguescent speciosa deserti?*

IV

Travel to the Ovambo

(1879)

(Les Missions Catholiques – Tome – 1880)

Cimbebasia

(West Africa)

Rev. Fr Duparquet from the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Apostolic Vice-Prefect of the mission of Cimbebasia, wrote from the residence of Quinpandeca, in the Kwanyama kingdom (17° lat. south, 16° long. east of Greenwich), on the 6th of September 1879:

I have already told you that Ovambo had far exceeded my hopes. After a long month stay in this remarkable region, this happy impression confirmed itself even more; I have already gathered a large volume of notes about the country, but as you can imagine, it is impossible for me to transcribe such a long work. I will limit it, for now, to give you a fast outline of my exploration from Olokonda up to the Kwanyama, residence of the chief Quipandeca.

It was on Tuesday, on the 12th of August, that I left Olokonda, in my wagon, in the company of Mr. Carlson, trader in the Ovambo, who was heading to the court of King Quipandeca. I must tell you now, for better comprehension of these geographic regions, that the various tribes are never immediately contiguous to each other. They are always surrounded by a forest which separates them, an uninhabited forest, although its soil is as fertile as the rest, and of such an extent, that it takes ordinarily two or three days to drive across them. After four and a half hours of marching, we left the last settlement of Ondonga and we entered the forest, having spent the entire day of the 16th to cross it. As we were at the end of winter, the trees were completely stripped of their flowers and the landscape had the appearance of our forests of Europe during autumn. The soil, in the clearings and even under the trees, was covered with excellent dry grass, which offered a good feed for our cattle. On Thursday, at six o'clock, we found the first settlement of Kwanyama and, around a quarter past seven we arrived close to a large lake, surrounded by numerous granges, where we received the best welcome from the chief of the locality.

We spent most of the day at his house, heading afterwards, in the afternoon, to the settlement of princess Chinona, sister of the king and governor of the district of Octudu. We had to stay at her house, to inform the king of our arrival on his lands and to wait for his orders before heading to his residence.

The path, from the village of Oquivera up to the one of Chinona, is traced in the middle of a plain, to which, here, they give the name of *Omaramba*. All of Kwanyama is covered by a tangle of meadows, which give to the region the appearance of a network, whose tissue is represented by the *omarambas*, and from which the fields, the granges and the forests constitute the intermediate spaces.

During most of the year, these meadows keep dry and are covered by magnificent grass. They become, then, excellent roads to travel the country by cart because the Ovambo is a region absolutely flat, without any hill or a single rock. When the rains come, by the month of February, the waters of the Kunene River rise and overflow the country, flowing into all the *omarambas*. Clear and limpid, they progress slowly and in a manner, as it were, imperceptible, dragging with them an infinite multitude of fish. Legions of geese and ducks accompany this migration of fish and leave their eggs on the plains, where the indigenous make an abundant harvest of them.

But the birds and the fish are not the only products offered to the region by the beneficent current: a prodigious number of frogs, the size of chickens, also begin to pullulate everywhere. The indigenous and especially the children chase them with arrows and make ample provisions of them. When the waters withdraw, they leave real fishponds full of fishes and the prairies become rich in pastures for the feeding of the cattle herds. These are so numerous that it's from them that the name of the region comes, as Kwanyama means, in the indigenous language, the place of the meat.

The resources from the vegetable kingdom are not less abundant. The country is, indeed, a huge grange, covered with cereals, beans, pumpkins and with giant trees. It is impossible to give you an idea of the prodigious quantity of fruits produced by these trees. Their branches cover sometimes spaces of 40 m. of diameter, so four trees manage to cover the surface of one hectare. With one of these fruits, the *mohongo*, a great drink can be made, very similar to cider.

The riches of the region could be further increased by the inclusion of many tropical plants such as the banana plant, the cassava, the yam, the sweet potato, the orange tree, the date palm, the guava tree, the mango tree, etc. etc., which would all grow here very well, as evidenced in the experiments tried in Humbe by Portuguese traders on the other side of the river. Later, I will give you further details; but what I have just reported is enough to make you see that this region is one of the most fertile in the world, and, therefore, food resources are very cheap here. An ox costs between 20 to 25 francs; a goat 2 francs and 50 cents; a chicken 0.10 cents; concerning cereals and beans, the enough quantity to feed a person for a day is five cents. The Indigenous also produce, with cereals, a great beer, very healthy, very fresh and very nutritious. To summarize, I would not do it better than adopting the expression of the first travelers who visited the Ovambo and compared it to a terrestrial paradise.

After this short digression about the beauty and the fertility of the country, I return to the historical part of my travel.

As I told you, it was on Thursday, on the 14th of August, that we reached the residence of princess Chinona. She welcomed us very well and, in the morning, she sent an emissary to the king, his brother, to inform him of our visit and to know the day we could head to his lands. On Saturday, messengers of the king announced that we could leave after three nights of waiting. Great parties, which were happening at the court, were restraining him from seeing us sooner.

In consequence of this information, on the afternoon of Monday the 18th, we started our way, accompanied by the people of the king, and, the next morning, we arrived at the residence of Quipandeca, who told us to get installed in one of his granges, close to the palace, sending us immediately supplies in abundance and a numerous staff to serve us.

I must tell you that the king is almost invisible to foreigners. Being these Portuguese or British. The Portuguese, coming from the west, are staying northwest from the Palace, in the house of an indigenous named Ilipondjua; the British, coming from the south, settle south and are not even allowed to communicate freely with each other, with police to supervise them. There are traders who spend entire months without being able to obtain an audience with the king and even leave without seeing him.

MAP

Map of Damara

It was about six days since we had arrived and every day the prince sent us gifts, without me, offering him anything from my side. Finally, on Monday the 25th of August, the day after the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Mary, he sent me a big can of beer, with the following message, brought by his messenger: "I have sent you gifts every day, Mr Carlson already sent me his gift as well, why haven't you sent me yours as well?". I immediately sent the following answer to the king: "That I had also brought a gift, even if I had not come with the intention to trade in the country but only for a visit; but I would like to offer it to him personally, so all he had to do was indicate the day and the time that he could grant me an audience."

Shortly after, around four o'clock in the afternoon, the messenger came to announce that the king was ready to receive me. I dressed hurriedly to go to the palace with Mr Carlson and his interpreter. The palace is vast, but with a primitive architecture. We would have ended up lost in the labyrinths of its corridor, if we did not have a guide. I estimate that it would take about half an hour to do a complete tour of it. After some time waiting in an outdoor patio, we were introduced in the chambers of the prince. He was dressed as a European and received us in a very affectionate way. He ordered me to sit at his right, in the same seat as him (a tree trunk) and the conversation began immediately. He asked my name many times, trying to repeat it, ending up by employing the name *tati* (priest) when he was speaking to me. After talking about insignificant things, we addressed the big question of the establishment of a Catholic mission in the country. Mr. Carlson explained that I was a missionary and that I was wondering if it would be pleasant for him to have me in his kingdom. "Are you serious or are you joking, replied the king, when you ask me this question?" - I am very serious, I answered him, and my desire is, actually to settle among you - "Oh! With good grace, he said, and my unique fear is that the Father will go away and not come again. All the other tribes have missionaries and why wouldn't they settle also in mine, which is the most important one? Father, come back and I will give you an excellent property. "

Then I asked him for his protection for our future establishment, which he immediately promised me. I told him I would return to Omaruru to put my business in order, but I would hasten to return, once the rainy season would be over. Finally the gifts were given. Mine consisted of a beautiful double-barrelled gun, for hunting elephants, with the value of 250 Frs. The king, who is a great appreciator of guns of which he has a collection of about 1.500 of all species, was very pleased with my gift.

Before taking leave from the king, I told him that I would not want, in any way, to be a drag on him on my return and, therefore, I would buy the supplies that I would need. "It is useless to talk about these things, he said, everything will be arranged." And since then, his willingness towards me was never denied.

As you see, all the doors of the Ovambo, this wonder of Africa, are opening before us. Among all the kings the welcome will also be cordial. The Ovambo, therefore, offers great elements of success for a mission.

Travel in Cimbebasia

(1879)

Diary of the Rev. Fr Duparquet from the Congregation of the Holy Spirit and of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Apostolic Vice-Prefect of the mission of Cimbebasia.

The Catholic Missions had published²⁹ already an abbreviated narrative of the travel made last year by the Rev. Fr Duparquet in the Ovambo and in the Kwanyama, in order to look for a favourable place for the establishment of a new mission in these regions, completely deprived, up to now, of any religious assistance.

During his excursions, this indefatigable and capable missionary could collect, about the population, the climate, the fauna and the flora of these regions, still not well known in Europe, information whose reading will certainly be of interest. He joined a map to it drafted by him, with the help of the French explorer Mr. Dufour, whom he met on his return to Omaruru. This geographical information will be much more precious as it is certain that the maps of the region published up to today contain very few indications.

I

From Walvis Bay to Omaruru

28th of January - *Walvis-Bay* - It was on Tuesday the 28th of January 1879, at noon, that I left Walvis Bay in the company of the Friar Onofre, in a wagon that Mr Palgrave, Commissioner of Her Majesty the Queen of England, had the kindness to get me. This car was driven by 14 vigorous oxen; and the personnel to lead them was composed of three Indigenous, one bastard Hottentot, his son and a Berg Damara.

This first day of journey was the hardest for our poor oxen. Walvis Bay is, indeed, surrounded by sand dunes and arid plains which must be crossed before reaching the first stopping place on the banks of Swakop.

As in this route neither grass nor water can be found, it is necessary to reach the course of the river as quickly as possible, to avoid seeing the cattle dying of starvation and fatigue. It ordinarily takes 21 hours to complete this journey; but, as we had rested a bit during the night, we only arrived here after noon on the 29th of January.

29th of January - *Usop Swakop* - During the night, we met, in the Nariep desert, the wagon of prince William Cama herero, presumptive heir of the Crown of Damara and son of the current

²⁹ Les Missions Catholiques of 7th of May 1880, page 218

king. He was heading to the Cape to visit this capital and take care of businesses related to the protectorate of England over his country.

The carts station in Usop is not exactly at the riverbank; we still spend about half an hour to get there. The road, one of the most picturesque, is a kind of gorge or canyon between huge rocks, which must offer, it seems to me, a great interest for geologists. I collected, randomly, a number of samples which went to enrich the museum of the Marist Brothers of the Cape. While we do not reach the river, the vegetation is not abundant, but it is far from being negligible under the botanical point of view. There, I found shrubs from the family of the terebinth, the parkinsónias, the cotyledon, the woody geranium and a large number of other remarkable plants due to the vividness of its colors.

Concerning the bed of the river by itself, which is embedded between two mountains of granite, it is a real forest of ana trees and ebony. The flora of the rocks is limited almost exclusively to giant euphorbia, cactus leaves and very high aloes, whose trunks, straight and white as snow, are similar, from afar, to marble columns. On the top of the plateau, the *Welwitschia mirabilis* can be found and the sand dunes are covered by naras and tamarinds. Although the water does not always come up to the surface of the bed of the Swakop, the current is there permanently and one just needed to dig a bit to find it everywhere and in abundance. In certain points it can even be seen. Preserved in that way, by the sand, from the heat of the sun, it keeps all its freshness and limpidity during the longest droughts. The same happens with all the watercourses of this region. Only during the rainy season the water flows in abundance; during the rest of the year, the course of the rivers is, so to say, underground, and is done slowly and by infiltration. All the rivers are, therefore, immense reservoirs of water, stagnant in large deposits of granite, in an extension that sometimes reaches sometimes hundreds of leagues, as it happens with the Omaruru and the Swakop. The sand that fills them preserves them from a too excessive rapid evaporation and from the putrefaction which would result from exposure to the sunshine. On the other hand, the beds of these rivers are utilized to create magnificent cultivations, where the wheat and the vegetables from Europe develop in the best way possible, having a need, therefore, to be harvested before the beginning of the rains because, otherwise, the impetuous current would drag enclosures, vegetable gardens and harvests to the sea. What the river does not manage, however, to carry with itself are the magnificent ana trees which cover it with their shade. This tree, which belongs to the family of the mimosas, is of first magnitude and it produces pods which are similar to the siliqua of the locust-tree and are an excellent food for the oxen, being almost their only alimentation while travelling from the interior to the bay. But, a little bit further down and not far away from the sea, the river forms a vast lagoon full of reeds, which are a feed of good quality, especially for horses, unable to endure during summer the climate of the interior.

The rains, very rare in this area of the coastline, sometimes fall with a few years of interval, and that is what explains its poverty in the vegetable kingdom. But, to compensate, it is gifted with one of the best climates of the world. It is a perpetual spring. It has neither the coastal fogs nor the frosts and the heats of the Central Damara. One can perfectly live there outdoors, without housing or-tree planting. An Englishman, a bit eccentric, indeed, made, a few years ago, this experience. He settled in the midst of a neighbouring plain, only with a table and a mattress for furniture, and had, for a long time, this kind of life without prejudicing his health. I think there will

not be many countries as favoured to allow, with impunity, these habits of primitive times. And it is like that, as matter of fact, that the Bushmen and other tribes live, which I shall have the occasion to tell you later.

Since the oxen were very tired, we stayed three days in Usop; and, despite its aridity, to me, this place did not fail to have its charm. I guess that the ancient solitarian of Thebaid would have coveted this beautiful sky, these picturesque rocks and these peaceful regions.

31st of January – On the 31st of January, we started again our way through the Nariép desert and, around midnight, we arrived at a place called Davip, having sent the oxen to the Swakop River, not far away from this locality. Two more treks brought us, on the following day, one to Riet or Caniço and the other one to Salem, settlements located at the bed of the same river.

Salem is the first settlement which can be found while going to the interior. It is there, as well, that the area of the rains starts. The vegetation is here less scrubby and is even sufficiently abundant to be able to provide some pasture. This settlement is inhabited by Bastard Hottentots who had left the Cape Colony. This race can be found along the entire Swakop River. A date palm, planted once, by a Protestant missionary was full of fruits.

3rd of February - Salem, Deepdale - On Monday the 3rd of February, we left Salem and, after two or three hours of travelling, we reached Deepdale. Deepdale or deep valley owes its name to its location in the middle of the Swakop River, stuck in that place, in a gorge of extremely high rocks. During the four days that we spent there, I tried in vain to reach the top of the plateau. At the end of ascension of three hours, I had to go down again without reaching it. The trees of Deepdale are not as beautiful as the ones in Salem, which I attribute to a permanent destruction of them by the settlers to increase their vegetable gardens. In compensation, magnificent fields replaced the forest. The wheat harvest was over; but the cultivated plains were covered by melons from Europe and kafir melons, watermelons, pumpkins and sweet sorghum, which the colonists sold us for very cheap prices. I filled my cart with them and, throughout the rest of the journey, we pleased ourselves with these delicious fruits which grow here almost without being cultivated.

The family of my guide was there, Saul Samson, and, during our stay in the locality, these good people were relentless in taking care of us, providing us with plenty of meat, milk and fruits. There may be about eighty people in this settlement. They are, partly, Berg Damara. These indigenous people are very poor and live almost exclusively on roots and wild fruits. One of them brought us a large basket of small yellow berries of *Grewia flava*. They taste very sugary, but are almost entirely devoid of pulp. Samson's wife also prepared me coffee with seeds of ana tree, a drink which seemed to taste quite nice to me.

7th of February - On Friday the 7th of February, we continued our journey, reaching, through the riverbed, another small colony called Horibis.

This grange belongs to a Bastard, quite clever and hardworking, Matthieu Mortle. He has been living in this place for about ten years, with his old mother who is, they say, a centenarian, and with his children and grandchildren. He owns vast fields of wheat and numerous herds of cows and merino sheep. This family of Griqua originally lived in Griqualand, at the confluence of the

Vaal and the Orange. Then, he emigrated to Phillippolis, in the Free State (Orange Free State) and, from there he crossed the entire northern Cape Colony and the entire Great Namaqualand, to settle on the banks of the Swakop. But this region seems to not be too fertile and a trip that our host did last year to the mountains of the Kaoko, aroused in him a strong desire to undertake this new pilgrimage with his entire family.

8th of February - On Saturday the 8th February, three hours of marching brought us, through the riverbed, to a place called Dor Serafir. There, we also found a family of Griqua and a large number of Berg Damara, with herds of goats.

It was our last stage in the bed of the Swakop. We still needed Four days of journey through the mountains to reach Omaruru, the end of our trip.

9th of February - On Sunday the 9th of February, we left Dor Serafir and travelled the whole night through a region which is a real heap of granitic rocks. The next day, the 10th, we were in Abbabis, from where we sent the oxen to the springs of Uvip, about two leagues away. All you could see were mountains everywhere. The ground was covered with grass and shrubs, but I did not notice the presence of any large trees.

10th of February - By noon, a storm exploded and the rain cooled down the atmosphere. White ants were pullulating everywhere and some were brought to me as a real delicacy. I ate them alive and actually I found in them a delicate flavour, recalling, but better, our hazelnuts. These ants occupy an important place among the food substances of the region.

11th of February - On the 11th, we arrived in the morning to a place where I found erithremes again and, at night, to Karibib, over the Harocab River, tributary of the Khan, one of the tributaries of the Swakop.

Karibib is a large village of Hottentots. Its round huts are built around beautiful springs dug in limestone. The entire population of the village is dressed in a European way and offers the appearance of a civilized life. Two other paths from Walvis Bay meet in Karibib, one starting from Hicamcop, following the left bank of the Khan, and another one from Nonodas and contouring the left bank of the same river. They are shorter than the one that follows the bed of the Swakop, but they have the major inconvenience of being deprived of water during part of the year, which requires, at that time, a very fast crossing and forced marches for those who do not want to expose themselves to watching the cattle die of starvation.

This village is under the jurisdiction of the Hottentot chief Abraham Zwartbooi, whose residence is in Bockberg. The whole population is Protestant.

Karibib is famous for the excellence of its pastures, reason why the Europeans of Omaruru send all their cattle here.

That same evening, we left Karibib and, after passing through vast plains covered with grasses; we arrived the next day at E tiro, first station of the Herero.

12th of February – I even came to find there, in the bed of a river, magnificent ana trees, but evidently the region had risen imperceptibly, because the frost had burnt all its new branches.

There is in this place a very remarkable geological curiosity: a belt of rocks, accumulated on top of each other, offering the appearance of cyclopean walls, with an entrance which is similar to the gate of a fortified city. At a first glance, one would be tempted to take these huge walls for an artificial work, if one could admit that the natives would never have conceived a work of this nature.

13th of February - On the 13th of February, we left Etiro and, on the next morning, we finally arrived at Omaruru, after a journey of 18 days, but which, strictly speaking, can be accomplished in 7, when taking the way of Nonodas.

14th of February – Omaruru is the residence of the prince Catchaherani, who governs one of the biggest tribes of Damaras. This is the major centre of population in the whole region. This locality owes its importance to a powerful Swedish house which almost monopolizes the trade in the country. It was founded by a courageous partner of the traveller Anderson, Axel Erickson, who, by his work and intelligence, knew how to reach the position that he enjoys today. Mr Erickson is, indeed, the highest personality in this region. The Indigenous people call him *Caruapa*, which means “white man par excellence”; and his influence is supreme among all tribes. I had the good fortune of having been specially recommended to him and his protection has never failed to me. The services he rendered me so far are incalculable. And so, the Catholic mission will always be happy to put his name among its benefactors.

Existing for only about ten years, Omaruru will be called, I think, to play the role of the commercial centre the whole Damara. It is here that come, to renew all the stocks, all the hunters of the lake Ngami, the Okavango, the Kunene, the Kaoko and a bi-monthly liner of carts, between the Bay and Omaruru, establishes regular connections with the Cape. The imported products are especially gunpowder, lead and firearms; the exports consist in ivory, ostrich feathers and cattle. The latter is driven to the Colony by land, through the Great Namaqualand.

Omaruru owes its importance not only to the trade, but also to its privileged position on the bank of a beautiful river and in the middle of a vast plain completely surrounded by high mountains.

It is certain that this plain, like the rest of the Damara, is very rocky and very dry in order to be exploited for cultivation, but it is excellent for cattle. Not only, in effect, the grasses there are of first quality; but the shrubs and the trees offer a rich feed for goats and sheep. When the rainy season comes, the whole country becomes a huge meadow enamelled by flowers. Even The rocks are covered with greenery.

There are a large number of plants which produce food bulbs, such as the inchi, the oxalis, the bruchus and several other *cucurbitaceae* plants. Another plant, the land caltrop, covers the ground with a stunning carpet of yellow flowers and offers excellent pasture for animals; at the same time, its seeds and even its flowers are eaten greedily by pigeons and the Guinea fowls. It is to these grains, as well as to the inchi, I think, that the prodigious amount of guinea fowls which are found in this region should be attributed. A hunter can, in a single day, fill up a cart with them.

Add these gifts of nature to a climate wonderfully pleasant and healthy; and you can judge whether the former geographers, who classified this region with the epithets as sandy, arid and

inhabitable, wrote about it knowingly. The bad reputation created to this country, and therefore the little interest that it is attached to it in Europe, is a process that needs a serious revision. I hope it will not take too long to shed light on this matter. By this time, Mr. Dufour, one of the distinguished members of the Geographical Society of Paris, is exploring the region as a hunter and as a geographer. I have no doubt that the report of his journey will be able to correct many errors. But let us detain for now in Omaruru; within a few weeks, we will visit our good Ovambo chiefs, who may not be as well-known as those from Damara.

II

From Omaruru to Otjovalundu

3rd of July - Epako – It was on the 3rd of July that I left Omaruru. My wagon only took 12 harnessed oxen, but all, fortunately, were already accustomed to long journeys; they had just returned from the Okavango River.

Our first stop was set for Epako. We took five and a half hours to get to this location. It is a very picturesque place, along a high mountain. Very high peaks can be admired from all sides.

A tributary of the Omaruru has its origin in a short distance, and it provides plenty of water to this locality. There a small Herero chief resides called Cainde. It is one of the major indigenous army officers. His people gave us the best welcome, presenting us with dairy products. As my men had numerous acquaintances in the settlement, I had to linger for two days there.

5th of July - Chona or Oquiona - Saturday, the 5th of July, three hours of march brought us to Chona through a very bumpy path, traced in the middle of the mountains and in a forest of acacias. In the bush, guinea fowls were pullulating and the oxcart driver killed some of them, which served to vary the everyday dishes of our kitchen. In Chona, there is water in abundance in the river bed. There, I could admire magnificent omborombongas, gigantic trees from the family of the combretaceae, which the Herero venerate as their ancestors, surely because this tree grows in the country from where they had emigrated centuries ago. Numerous herds came to drink to the open wells in the riverbed; but despite this large affluence of indigenous people, I did not manage to find any settlement nearby. This fact gave me the explanation for a difficulty which was entering my spirit in view of the reports of travellers who had written about this region.

While reading Anderson, Barnés and Chapman, it had always surprised me not to find in their works the name of any town and not even of any important settlement. It seemed that the country was uninhabited. This deduction seemed false to me, but the truth is that in Damara, there are really no towns but only some villages. The populations are, indeed, essentially pastoral people, being the agriculture impossible in this region, either by the stony nature of the soil or the dryness of climate.

PICTURE

Bushman Camp

Because of these geological conditions and climate, the populations do not have a fixed residence. On the other hand, the alimentation of the Herero consist solely of milk products, this forces them to almost have a nomadic life, following the cattle closely until finding pastures and springs. During the rainy season, they consume forage which grows in places devoid of springs. So, they quench the thirst of their herds in *vleis* or reservoirs formed in the concavities of the rocks. During the dry season, however, they have necessarily to approach the streams and the riverbeds. The lands are indivisible and the territorial property does not exist: however, each tribe occupies a particular territory.

The geographical maps of the Damara cannot therefore be filled with names of towns. Instead, the streams and watercourses appear, around which are grouped forcibly the populations. The springs have the advantage of offering very stable positions and easy to recognize. It is along them, in addition, that all the roads in the country are coming to. In Chona, the path from the Ovambo bifurcates, to after unite again in Otyovalundu. Each of these two routes have their advantages: the one from the west has abundant springs, but it is very stony; the one from the east is excellent, but in the dry season, has only two sources, at nineteen hours of march between each other, which forces the cattle to endure an entire day without drinking.

Because my oxcart driver misled the small herd of sheep intended to be our food during the trip, we had to spend the whole Sunday in Chona. Finally, at night, the sheep were found and, on Monday, 7th of July, we went to Chuvapa. The way was identical to the previous days, through forests of acacia.

7th of July - Chuvapa – We arrived after noon at Chuvapa. There is water in abundance in the well of the Omborombonga. Here, my oxcart driver loses again, first an ox, and, once again, the sheep. We need to linger for two days to be able to find the animals. So, predicting that with such careless personnel, many troubles during the trip were expecting me, I decided to wait for Mr. Gonning's wagon, a hunter who was heading also in the direction of the Ovambo. And so, I had to wait here for two days for his arrival. I consecrated this rest to the study of the flora of the place, and particularly, to the food roots which are mainly the alimentation of the Bushmen and of the Berg Damara. The various bulbous plants I had found, up to now, in this region were nine in number, namely: inchis, the bruchu or mashua, the quimaca, the ona, the omigui, the omonguidé, an oxalis and an *iridaceae*, of which I ignore the specific names.

The inchi is a *cyperaceae* which produces, at the end of each of the roots, a bulb the size of a small cherry. It is eaten roasted on ashes; the region provides such an amount, that it could almost be enough to feed all the people, in the fertile years. These bulbs are also sought by the guinea fowls and the partridges.

The mashua or water root, called as well bruchu by the Bechuana, is a woody and vivacious plant, from the family of the *apocynacea*. Although this shrub is very small, having no more than two decimetres, at least that was the size of the feet that I uprooted, it produces a tuber the size of the head of a man. It has more or less the flavor of our radishes, but without being spicy. This plant grows in the most arid places, even in the midst of the rocks; it was necessary for us to use an iron lever to be able to uproot it. This root, while it quenches the thirst, provides a good food,

and the Bushmen, when they cross the deserts without taking provisions, only have this gift of Providence to survive. The Europeans eat it as well with pleasure. It deserves to be cultivated.

The quimaca is a climbing *cucurbitaceae*. The fruit, the size of a cherry, is green and red with white spots. The roots are elongated and look like the yams from China. We put one on fire and, when we removed it, it looked carbonized. However, it maintained itself aqueous and as if it was raw. This plant is also vivacious and its culture would be easy.

I did not manage to see the caulis of the ona, but only its roots; the ones I found were very long and, after being boiled, they had a taste which recalled the one of the salsify. Unfortunately, they are so fibrous that all we can do is to suck them.

I only saw a tuber of omigui. It was huge, equalling in dimensions, the larger pumpkins. The pulp is white with pink, but very unsavoury. It is the largest tuber I know.

The omonguidé is a middle-sized tree, from which the indigenous people look for the roots, either to make soup, after having dried and crushed them, or to make coffee, after having roasted them. I suppose that this is the motlapi of the Bechuana.

The oxalis, which I mention here, grows in the mountains and gives beautiful purple flowers. Its leaves are also purple underneath. It produces a tuber with the shape of a club, with the size of a small carrot. It has a very delicate flavour and can be eaten cooked or raw.

The last bulb is about the size and shape of our saffron bulbs. The flower is blue and very beautiful. This little bulb has a very pleasant taste. It must belong to the *iridaceae* or to a neighboring family.

In these regions there are also many other food plants such as purslanes, amaranths, nightshade, which grow in all the other tropical countries and other particular vegetables of this soil, such as the desert melons. But I did not have the occasion to study them properly and, moreover, I decided to treat only matters regarding this locality.

It was very cold, at night, while we were in Chupava; the water, in the morning, was frozen. However, this temperature reduction did not seem to bother in any way the small Herero shepherds, whose clothing, which did not have more width than a hand, could not in any way preserve them from the inclemency of the cold. They live like that, without houses and without clothing, in a region where the temperature sometimes drops to 8 degrees below zero. It is evident that they endure the changes of cold and heat more easily than the Europeans.

Finally, on the 12th of July, Mr. Goning's wagon arrived: we left Chupava and, after a march of about six hours, we halted, at the beginning of the night, at one league from Ozongombo.

13th of July - Ozongombo - In Ozongombo, there are two very deep wells in the bed of a watercourse. We had arrived quite early, but the multitude of herds which was waiting to drink was so big that we had to wait until the afternoon to be able to give water to our cattle.

During the day, we were visited by Bongué-honha, head of the district. He was dripping with fat and wearing a lot of leather belts from which were suspended some animal skins. He gave us an excellent welcome and gave the necessary orders to guarantee us the use of the wells.

Pallah-fontein or Ombakaha - Leaving Onzongombo at 8 pm, we had to march the whole night and the whole next day, to get only on the next day to Pallah-fontein, where there was one of the closest wells. Halfway, we were near the former source of the Chicango but, as the Damara had resolved to dig it up to a great depth, they reached a permeable geological layer and the water disappeared forever.

In Pallah-fontein, which the natives also call Ombakaha, there are numerous wells in the bed of a river, which passes north of the Brandberg Mountain and flows into the sea with the name of Ukab, at about 21° of latitude.

In this place, we found a Boer with his family. He was called Dutoit and belonged to a migration of farmers from the Transvaal who had just settled in the mountains of the Kaoko, on the south bank of the Kunene, between the Ovambo and the sea. Later, I will tell you about this new Republic which has been born and whose pilgrimage of five years would provide subject for an epopee. A large number of its components died of thirst while crossing the Kalahari Desert; others succumbed to fevers at the banks of the Limpopo, the lake Ngami and the Kavango. They had to make way through the hostile populations of the Ovambo and the Damara, and ended up reaching, finally, after untold sufferings and privations, the end of their odyssey. This small colony is full of French names. Its first commander was a Laurent Duplessis. They are descendants of the first Huguenots who left France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Who could imagine that, after two centuries, it would be possible to come to find these families on the banks of Kunene, at the border of the Ovambo!

Mr Gonning had convoked many of his hunters for a meeting in Pallah-Fontein, and two or three came to him there. Among them was also a descendant of the French Huguenots called Gabriel. These hunters don't have a fixed place. They build a shelter with some tree branches and this is enough for them in this privileged climate. As a new coupling of oxen was expected to take Mr. Dutoit to Omaruru, we had to spend a whole day in Pallah-Fontein. The hunters took advantage of it to chase the ostriches, managing to catch one. The hunt of ostriches simply consists in tiring them to make them fall from tiredness. They can only be hunted with good results in the dry season, because, when it's cold, it's difficult to lead them to complete exhaustion. This beautiful bird is the greatest wealth of the region. Both meat and eggs are a great food and the feathers are very popular article of commerce. Furthermore, ostriches multiply easily in the domestic state and cost nothing concerning feeding. Devouring all kind of vegetables and grains, and even the leaves of trees and thorny shrubs, they can live in the most arid regions, where all the existence of animals would seem impossible; one could even say that these are their favourite places. That's why they seek the Kalahari Desert and the abrupt coasts of the coastline. It is unfortunate, however, that these birds constitute, in the domestic state, a permanent danger to the lives of their owners; the foot is armed with a terrible nail, capable of causing death with a single kick. Not too long ago, an ostrich of the King Combondi killed seven people of his tribe. Those who have them, take them every day to pasture with their herds of goats. However, when they are young, they are very docile and completely harmless.

17th of July - Outjo - On the 17th of July, we left for Outjo, a beautiful spring in the mountains with the same name. This village is inhabited by Berg Damara, who rushed to meet our carts. As we just had gone through three years of drought, bulbs and roots had become rare in the mountains and these poor people were suffering horribly from hunger. They had a dreadful thinness. The

huts of their settlement were constituted only by some branches of trees, which could barely protect them, either from the rain or the cold. As it was strongly frosting, they came close to the fire in such a way, during the night that they were full of burns. There were children who were starving to death and whose parents would have given them to me willingly; but I was poor as well and I did not have a way to sustain them. I felt such pity for not being able to adopt them! I even had to send away one young boy who was 12 years old and who was insisting to accompany me. The only thing I could do was to give them a small portion of rice and they offered me from their side, Arabic gum with a sugary taste, which seemed to me superior to the one from Senegal. I do not know, however, whether it would be possible to obtain sufficient quantities to constitute a trade branch.

On the 21st of July, we left Outjo to head to Chomongundi. After leaving Outjo, we enter the region of the banhima, a remarkable tree which changes the appearance of the country and is in abundance everywhere, up to the 15° degree of south of latitude. The mountains of Outjo are its south limit on the Damaraland side. The thorns constitute the characteristic sign of the flora of this region. All the plants, so to speak, are protected by them as well as the seeds of most of them, such as the tribulus and of the gaff plant (cat's claw?). It is Providence's particular care the conservation of the shrubs in this region, because, as they are all of excellent pasture, the animals would destroy the vegetation if it was not protected this way.

From the region of the banhima, the amount of thorny acacias is decreasing gradually; the *combretaceae* and the *papilionaceae* replace them largely until the Ovambo is reached, where the flora is completely different. On the way, we met a bushman with a letter. It was addressed to Mr Gonning by Mr Carlson and Mr Keanny, who were waiting impatiently for him in their carriage in Chovalundu. They did not have any more European supplies and found themselves reduced to sorghum, which did not seem to be very pleasant for them.

Tuesday, 22nd of July - Chomongundi - We arrived very early at Chomongundi, an excellent source in the limestone. These lands appear to have a submarine origin, because the rocks have traces of marine animals, which pierced them. This region is inhabited by the Bushmen and the Berg Damara. Always the same vegetation. Banhima and ebony in abundance.

Wednesday, 23rd of July- Chovalundu - In the morning, we arrived at Chovalundu, finding there not only Mr. Carlson and Mr. Keanny but also another hunter, who was heading to Oquitambi. In Chovalundu, begins the path from Namotanga to the Kaoko, joining here the west way of the Ovambo, coming from Chona. It's a beautiful place. There, in the middle of the forest, there are magnificent springs in basins of limestone. We met in this place a large number of Bushmen and Berg Damara. The latter, enfeebled by hunger, were in a hideous slimness. As the hunters had killed an ox, these poor people came to ask us for its blood and even the rotting vegetables from the rumen of the animal were profitable for them! They squeezed out the juice of these plants already half-digested and made a soup with it which they said was excellent.

In Chovalundu, Mr. Gonning set up a small tent and left there his wife and his children, while he headed to the other hunters to bring them cereals from the Ovambo, intended for the feeding of their horses. Therefore, this lady was left alone, with her children and some servants, in the deep forest, for many weeks, which clearly shows the complete security enjoyed by Europeans in these regions.

III

From Ombika to Oloconga

25th of July - Ombika - After ten hours of journey, we reached Ombika, where there are also beautiful springs in limestone. There, we met Bushmen. Ombika belongs to the king Combondé and so marks the political boundary between the Damara and the Ovambo. At the same latitude, at east, are the source and the mountains of Otavi, which contain mines rich in copper. Otavi is disputed by King Combondé and the Herero.

26th of July - Okaukuejo- We left again the next afternoon, and, after three and a half hours of march, we reached Okaukuejo. The rocky mountains and the limestone terrain of the Damara end there. By leaving Okaukuejo, we enter a vast plain, which forms the Ovambo and extends, I believe, up to the Zambezi. This plain is an alluvial terrain and seems to occupy the bed of an ancient sea, now dry, as in many places, when digging the soil, we find saltwater.

In Okaukuejo, there is plenty of water, but this forms a kind of swamp, more or less muddy. The Bars, who live in these places, dug wells, where a drink of mediocre quality can be found. It is a place much frequented by hunters. As there are, in its border, immense plains, which stretch up to the Ovambo, a multitude of animals come here to drink in the dry season and can be killed easily. There, three paths meet, the one of Onganguera and Ondonga by Caocama, another one to Ondonga through the Etosha Lake and Icuma and, finally, the one of Otavi. To go to Ondonga during the dry season, the path of Caocama is used; but in the rainy season, the favourite is the one of Icuma because it's shorter.

26th of July - We leave Okaukuejo around two o'clock in the afternoon and we enter the plain. We notice, individually or in groups, several aloes. We travelled almost the whole night and, the next day in the morning, we arrive at Caocama, after having gone through a large vlei, dry by this time, but full of salty water in the rainy season. Only some saltworts³⁰ grow in this brackish ground.

27th of July – Caocama – In Caocama, we found good wells dug in limestone and, throughout the year, they provide plenty of water for travellers. All around and out of sight, magnificent pastures extend.

³⁰ Note of the translator Gastão de Sousa Dias - Plants of the salsola genus, which grow mainly seaside, and from which is extracted the soda.

MAP

Map of the Kwanyama and Ovambo

There are also shrubs and banhimas which provide wood at one's discretion but, as every year the indigenous people set fire to the grass, the trees can only grow with great difficulty. It is, I believe, to these constantly renewed fires that should be largely attributed the absence of trees in these vast plains. They are, however, full of elephants, giraffes, ostriches and antelopes, which provide livelihoods for hunters and their entourages. In Caocama, there is a village of Cimbebas, also called Kaoko Damara or, also, poor Damara. They have as unique wealth a

small herd of goats. One of our dogs had killed a jackal and there was also, close to the well, the corpse of an old hyena with its guts visible. The Cimbebas took them and made a great feast with them. They are from the same race than the Herero, they speak the same language and use the same clothing. But, as they were reduced to extreme indigence by the wars promoted against them whether by the Ovambo or the Hottentots or yet still by the Herero themselves, they live nowadays a very precarious existence in the mountains of the Kaoko, where only a part of the tribe still maintains itself. Almost all the others crossed the Kunene and live on the other bank.

28th of July - We left the Caocama at one o'clock in the afternoon, and by the sunset, we reached a very deep well called the Bushmen well, because it was opened by them. A bit later, Mr. Carlson chased, riding, a huge herd of antelopes, of which he killed three. As these animals were killed a league away from the carts, we had to abandon them and follow our way during a large part of the night.

29th of July - Nohorongo – In the morning, we reached Nohorongo, another station for hunters and an excellent stop for the carts. There are, also, beautiful wells there dug in a very soft sandstone, splendid trees and grass in abundance. This region would be suitable for cultures. I found there beautiful corn-cobs or *permisetum syphoidum*, whose seed had been spread by chance in the soil. Uncultivated, these spikes had reached a magnificent development. It is clear that we are approaching the fertile fields of the Ovambo.

We left Nohorongo at two o'clock in the afternoon, with the idea in mind to reach Olokonda in the morning of the next day. It is a long march of nineteen hours through a sandy path, but we all were in a hurry to get to this settlement and so it was impossible to delay the march for another day.

The trees disappeared again and the view is getting lost to the sides of the horizon, as over an ocean. By midnight, we found a vlei, where we gave water to the oxen.

31st of July - Olokonda - Finally, in the morning, the palm trees of the Ovambo appeared far away and, at noon, we saw the first habitations. Immediately, we were surrounded by a crowd of Indigenous people, who hastened to give drink to our cattle in their wells. After a few hours of rest, we started to march through the numerous cultivations, which cover the country. Everywhere, fruit trees and cultivated fields are offered to our eyes. This region is like an immense orchard, interspersed with vegetable gardens and pastures. There are no cores of inhabitants grouped in villages; each has its own isolated property, with its wells, nurseries and vegetables gardens. All these farms are considerable and form sometimes something like a village, because there the whole family lives with their slaves and their servants. The landscape is not comparable to anything that I have seen, up to now, in Africa. The trees, the houses, the inhabitants, the soil by itself, everything is new to me. The numerous palm trees, which appear everywhere, give it a semi-equatorial aspect, while the fruit trees, especially when they are stripped of leaves during the winter, remember the orchards of Normandy. After about two hours of marching, we reached Olokonda, where the residence of the king, the Russian mission and the British trading post are located. The houses of the Europeans are very comfortable; they are built with sun-dried blocks and covered with thatched roof, like our European farms. These habitations protect perfectly from the heat of the day and from the cold of the night. And so, the

health of Europeans is perfectly maintained, in spite of some fevers caused by the flood during the rainy season.

1st of August – Early in the morning, I went to the house of the king of Oloconda, Combondé to pay him my homage and to inform him about the purpose of my travel. The house of the king is only five minutes from the trading post. As all the houses of the Ovambo, it has the form of labyrinth and is composed by a number of small courtyards and division, to which we come through corridors, showing the most capricious sinuosities. After having gone like this through several divisions, we entered the reception room. Mr. Skoglung, head of the Russian mission, accompanied me as an interpreter; the gentlemen from the trading post were also with us, in order to deliver a letter to the prince and gifts sent from Omaruru by Mr. Erickson. The king did not keep us waiting too long. He is a superb good-looking man; his features and his physiognomy only have, as African, the colour. He was dressed traditionally, with a wide leather belt, from which was hanging suspended, on the front, a small triangular apron, carved from the paunch of a giraffe. He received me very well and gave me permission to immediately establish a Catholic mission in his territory. He told me to choose the most suitable place for me, adding that I could consider it as granted since that moment. I offered him a beautiful raffle, which gave him great satisfaction because he is an amateur of European weapons: he has a large collection of them, even of the most advanced ones. The gentlemen who accompanied me presented him, in their turn, with a breed dog and machinery for filling cartridges, sent by Mr Erickson. Finally they brought us a vessel of excellent beer, which they distributed to us in artistically carved wooden cups. They took it out of the vessel by means of a spoon made from a calabash. This beer was served to us by a lady from the court, whose clothing was even more simplified than the one of the king. It consisted of a belt of pearls, whose rows formed a kind of curtain in the front, but which, behind, were united in a tress, falling in the back. She was counterbalancing this poor clothing, with a profusion of olive oil or fresh butter flowing abundantly through the body. In all the indigenous tribes of the Ovambo, the indigenous people use identical clothing, but the men simply wear, in the back, a kind of small tail, whose bizarre shape varies depending on the villages and it seems to be a distinctive sign. Concerning the hairstyle of women, it is very complicated and varies undoubtedly with fashion. Many of them make, with palm fibre, artificial hair, whose long plaits go down along the back. They hang on these plaits small pieces of wood, which produce, when they walk, a certain noise. It is for them the highest degree of coquetry, because even here, as everywhere, there is a coquetry; the women sell up to the last grain of cereal to be able to buy beads. When we finished drinking the beer, the king took leave of us and so ended my first visit. However, its result had entirely corresponded to my desires.

I used the following days to study the language, the customs and the habits of the region, as well as its cultures and food resources, essential point for the works of the mission.

The indigenous people take their alimentation partly from their herds and partly from agriculture.

The cattle are abundant: oxen, goats and pigs, with a black colour and with a very small size. The sheep are rare and seem to not be doing well. Dogs are also sought by the Ovambo as being a delicacy. Concerning poultry, they only have chicken of a very small race; but there is no doubt that the other domestic poultry, and especially the ducks, could be grown here perfectly. To these various products can be added the fishing and the pisciculture, which play a very important role in their alimentation. The Indigenous people do not only catch a lot of fish at the

time of the periodical flood, when the river covers the whole Ovambo with its waters, but also keep and create many lagoons and wells. These fish, which are mainly catfish or sheatfish, reach enormous proportions. Their meat is fat, similar to the eel. During the dry season, the fish are buried in the mud and stay there for long months until the return of the rains. The frogs are also an important food item; they hibernate in the dry soil throughout the winter and appear suddenly after the first rains. They are very good to eat and reach to the size of pigeons. With the flooding of the river, when the water penetrates the *omarambas* until the boundaries of the region, legions of waterfowl emerge, such as ducks, geese and cranes; the natives kill them in large quantities, collecting also their eggs in the plain.

Concerning the fishponds where they keep the fish, there are two species of them. Some are real tanks or fishponds themselves; they fill up in the rainy season, but dry ordinarily during the dry season, either by evaporation or because the water is used to give drink to the herds. The natives have a large number of these reservoirs, which they often surround with hedges for the conservation of the water and of the fish. They are always dug in *omarambas* and often surrounded by secular trees. The others are real wells often dug to great depths, where the water gathers by infiltration because, through the whole Ovambo, groundwater tables stretch out. Even if they want to empty them, these wells fill up again by themselves; but their level is lowering at the same time of the groundwater table. When they are completely dry, the natives dig them more and more, often reaching considerable depths; and that way, they always have plenty of water. However, sometimes they reach lower layers, where the soil is salty and, then, the water is no longer drinkable.

Among the Ovambo cultures, there are, firstly, two grasses, of which one is the *sorghum* or *durra* millet and the other one is the Senegalese millet. The natives eat the sorghum, simply cooked or then reduced to flour. The corn is always in flour. The inhabitants produce, with these cereals, an excellent beer as refreshing as the one from Europe.

After the grasses figure the cultures of beans, which is practiced on a large scale, as well as pumpkins and kafir melons. The fruit trees are in the number of seven and produce an incalculable amount of food substances: those would be, if necessary, enough to sustain a portion of the population, as it actually happens with the poor people.

We distinguished, first, the palm tree called omondonga. This palm has leaves like a fan, such as the *ronier* from Senegal, and gives long bunches of purple fruits, each one of the size of an orange. The pulp is very nutritious and tastes like sweet bread. The Europeans boil it in milk and obtain this way a sort of chocolate. As for the almond contained in the bark, it is so hard that it can only be broken with an axe. It is white and can substitute ivory, coming from this the name of vegetable ivory as it is known. The Indigenous people also eat the farinaceous part of the trunk and the new leaves or saplings, as it is practiced in the colonies with the terminal buds of some palm trees.

Then, one of the most beautiful trees which can be found and which is growing preferably at the margins of the *omarambas*, is the *oguané*. Similar to our oaks in Europe, its foliage is, however, more dense and impenetrable to the sunbeams. The fruit looks like a small plum, with three or four seeds instead of one stone. These fruits are eaten very ripe or are dried to preserve

them. For five months in the year, from June to December, they provide to the indigenous people a succulent and very healthy food.

The *ozombé* is also a large tree, which is very similar to our elms. It is covered with a quantity of small fruits, with the shape and the size of peppers, which are called *omiché*. They are very sweet and can be eaten fresh or by making cakes with them, which are, then, dried as with the dates. These cakes taste like honey and are kept for a long time.

The *mohongo* is a huge tree from the family of the *espondiaceae*. Its foliage is very beautiful, passing alternately from purple to a mild and fresh green. Its branches cover a space of 40 up to 50 meters of diameter. It produces, every year, a lot of very good fruits, which are used primarily to make a kind of intoxicating wine, which the natives appreciate very much, but which seems to be unhealthy for Europeans. This wine is made from the pulp of the fruit. The stone also contains an excellent comestible and oleaginous nut. The Europeans call it the beer tree.

The *mocuio* is a huge fig tree, also covering a space of 40 meters in diameter. It has a quantity of small figs, yellow and red, which serve as food for men and animals. They are far, however, from matching our figs in Europe, concerning quality, although I found some very sweet. I think they could be improved by culture, but as the natives do not plant these trees, the bad varieties are multiplying indefinitely.

The *moquete* has the same size of our walnuts; its wood from the trunk is very soft, the bark is of a bright and coppery yellow and the leaves are similar to the horse chestnut, but bigger. Its fruit has the appearance of a pear and has a huge stone. The pulp is eaten and also the almond, which is oleaginous.

The *mahoni* is a strychnos which, by its size, by the thickness and the color of its fruits, reminds our orange trees, reason why the name of Wild Orange is given to it by Europeans. There are three species. Two of them give delicious fruits, sugary and acidulated, which could rival with the best I know. The third specie, called *eponaca*, is less delicate and has a taste which recalls the cinnamon and apple.

As in the Ovambo there is never frost, I have no doubt that a large number of tropical products can be cultivated here with good results.

This region is an alluvial terrain. No water-line starts here, receiving, on the contrary, every year, the waters of the Kunene, which play here an analogous role to the Nile in Egypt. Its fertility seems, so, inexhaustible and will increase with time. The deeper the soil is dug, the richer it turns in fertilizing substances; so, when the Europeans open a well, they take care of taking the last layer, bringing it to their vegetable gardens, in order to fertilize them. It is, I believe, to the thickness of this vegetable mould that the vigor of the fruit trees should be attributed. The cotton grows everywhere, spontaneously, but the natives do not use it for anything.

Concerning the climate, it is perfectly salubrious throughout most of the year; but, in the rainy season, one is exposed to intermittent attacks of fever which, however, easily back away from the action of quinine salts.

IV

From Olokonda to Quipandeca

12th of August – Departure of Olokonda - Having spent a dozen of days in Olokonda, I decided to continue my exploration to the Kwanyama, the largest tribe in the Ovambo. Mr. Carlson was heading there to take care of its business. I could not find a better opportunity to do it and we departed on the 12th, spending three days crossing the forest that separates the two tribes, which is composed mainly of magnificent banhimas. Here and there, we also found large fruit trees which all grow spontaneously, having not been imported from elsewhere.

14th of August - Oquivera - On the 14th of August, in the morning we reached the first village of the Kwanyama called Oquivera, the name of its chief. There we found wells with excellent water and beautiful properties around the vlei, dry by this time. Among the trees of the locality, I noticed a *moringa*, unknown, I believe, to botanists. Its height is equal to our biggest walnut and the foliage is also more or less similar. From a distance, the fruits have the appearance of the ones from the baobab. In the maturation phase, the five parts which compose its silicula curve back and drop the winged seeds from which the natives extract oil very much appreciated by them to anoint the body.

We only spent a few hours at the residence of Oquivera and we continued our way to the residence of princess Chinona, sister of the king, who was governing this district. To get there, we followed an *omaramba* covered with tall grasses and having the appearance of a meadow. Its banks were full of granges and farms. The apparition of our two carts strongly aroused the curiosity of the natives and soon we were followed by a procession of Ovambos, who accompanied us for a long time.

The aspect of the Kwanyama is much more picturesque than the one of Ondonga. This latter one is only composed by a vast plain cultivated and surrounded by forests. The *omarambas* here are very rare. In the Kwanyama, on the contrary, both the Ombandja and the Ocarutia are grooved by a large network of *omarambas* which, with the water of the river, brings, at the same time, fecundity. These waters are clear, limpid and progress slowly on the grass, bringing with them an incommensurable quantity of fish. This flood fertilizes the prairies without destroying the grass, but seems to prejudice the growth of the trees. The *omarambas* are similar, therefore, to clearings in the forest, giving to the region the appearance of an endless park. Concerning the cultivations and the orchards, they are interspersed with forests, what does not happen in Ondonga. As the fruit trees are very abundant in the Kwanyama, the whole country has the appearance of a forest, while Ondonga looks like a cultivated plain. The Kwanyama is of an extreme fertility, being the goods very cheap. An ox cost us 15 shelling, a chicken 0.10 cents and the quantity of sorghum needed to feed everyday a man 0.05 cents. I did, therefore, ample provisions for my people in the lands of Chinona.

Chinona was very kind to us, during the long stop that we made there. Indeed, any traveler who arrives through this path from Ondonga, has to wait in this place for an authorization from the king to head to his residence. We had to wait for four days and the princess often invited us to

drink beer in one of her properties. There was even one day when she offered us dinner. There were no plates and no napkins; Chinona's husband took a chicken boiled in butter, cut into slices or pieces with his hands and was going to put a piece of it on my knees when, luckily, I quickly interposed my handkerchief between the cassock and the delicious delicacy. A lady from the house, on the other hand, was rolling in her hands a kind of porridge, from which she was making cakes that she presented to me, with great insistence, to eat. But I lacked the courage for this titbit and I restricted myself to the chicken, with the resolution to be more reserved, in future, concerning the acceptance of indigenous dinners.

The beer was not, unfortunately, the only drink that the princess used; she bought, not too long time ago, a barrel of sugarcane rum from the Portuguese and was drinking it with a rapidity that put her, sometimes, in a state of drunkenness not too appropriate to her sex and position.

18th of August - Departure for Quipandeca - Finally, on the 18th of August, after having received authorization from the king and several of his men to accompany us, we headed to his residence. The road continued to be carved in an *omaramba* and the country was of a great beauty. As we did not want to arrive in the middle of the night, we slept halfway and arrived in the morning to the royal residence.

19th of August - Quipandeca – The house of Quipandeca does not have less than half a league of circuit and, there, the free entry is forbidden either to his subjects or to foreigners. These latter are British or Portuguese. The king granted to each of these two classes of traders a distinct quarter, in which they have to keep themselves isolated, without seeking to communicate with a different nationality. This measure seems to us a bit despotical, but there is no other choice to everybody than to submit to him, under penalty of being exposed to a great displeasure. Indeed, having Quipandeca once surprised some Portuguese beside a British wagon, he chased them with arrows and they had to find in the speed of escape their salvation.

The Portuguese order liquor from Moçâmedes, which is carried by porters in elongated barrels and with a very portable format. Their houses are in Humbe, on the northern bank of the Kunene, and they take about two days of journey to get here. In exchange, they receive either cattle or slaves, but the king takes immediately hold of the liquor, for which the payment sometimes waits for long time. Concerning the British, they only sell for cash. They bring rifles, gunpowder, lead, cartridges and horses; and, in exchange, they receive cattle, ivory and ostrich feathers. The king does not trade directly, but through the intermediary of the court dignitaries. He claims for himself the monopoly on the whole commerce and always puts guards around the carts to prevent illegal transactions. However, the traders know how to bribe the sentinels, who are far from being incorruptible and who keep a prudent silence about the illegal commerce going on during the night. As a result of these various customs, the king, immediately after our arrival, appointed the place of our residence, which was very close to the palace, and afterwards a numerous staff, whether to serve us or to watch the business and, finally, he provided us with goods in abundance.

On Sunday, the 24th, the feast of the Sacred Heart of Mary, I was fortunate to celebrate Mass on the front of my wagon, under the shade of a large tree. It was the first time that the august sacrifice was celebrated in this region. The indigenous attended it with deep respect. Finally, on the 25th of August, I managed to get an audience with the king. Every day, he had sent us gifts

and I still had given nothing to him in exchange. That same day, he sent me a large vessel of beer, but at the same time, the messenger gave me these words, on behalf of the prince: "I have sent you many gifts and Mr. Carlson also sent me already his ones; why have you not yet sent anything?". Immediately I ask to be told to him that I had brought him a beautiful rifle to hunt elephants, but it was my desire to offer it to him personally. When the king would be willing to receive me, I added, I would rush to go greet him. And what I predicted happened. Two hours later, the messenger returned, announcing that I and Mr. Carlson were expected by the king. I dressed properly and headed quickly to the palace. After having gone through several courtyards and passed through the labyrinth of corridors in use in the Ovambo, they brought us to a waiting room contiguous to the royal chambers. Ten minutes later, we were brought to His Majesty. Quipandeca was in the bottom of a patio, on a tree trunk which he was using as a seat and told me to sit beside him. All the other people stood on their knees in front of him. He was dressed like a European and he seemed to me still young; however, he was already king when Galton, about thirty years ago, arrived in the country, so he should be around fifty years old. He received us very kindly, enquiring with interest about the place where there were the Boers or the Dutch farmers, from whom he seemed to have a great terror. We tranquillized him, telling him that they were established seaside, 14 days of journey away from his residence, and that, in turn, he had nothing to fear concerning the security of the kingdom. Then, I broached the subject of the establishment of a Catholic mission in his country and asked him if he it would be pleasant for him if I would come to settle in the Kwanyama. His surprise regarding my proposal was so great that he hesitated in taking it seriously. But, before my repeated propositions, he told me immediately that he would be very happy, that he would give me a good terrain and that I could count on his protection. I told him, then, that he had been, about twelve years ago, in the Portuguese territory north of the Kunene and that there I met several individuals that he himself would remember, among others Mr. Brochado, the first European who had visited this tribe and Mr. Mata, governor of Moçamêdes. The king told me he remembered both very well, but that he had been informed not too long time ago about the death of the latter. I asked, afterwards, if there were some Portuguese in his kingdom and I requested his permission to put me in connection with them and to entrust them with some letters to Europe. He answered that everybody was gone. We gave him the different gifts, which he received with pleasure and, after offering us a vessel of beer, he took leave of us.

We had already left the palace and were heading to our cart, when the king sent one of his officers to ask us if we liked fish. Given our affirmative answer, he immediately sent us two beautiful siluriformes, one of them still alive. Then, as a sign of satisfaction for our visit, and, no doubt, for the gifts received, the dances and songs started, which lasted into the night. On my side, I was not less pleased with the results of the visit because I had achieved the main goal of my travel, which was the authorization for the establishment of a Catholic mission in this tribe.

I did not have, in fact, to wait but a few days for this audience, of which I should congratulate myself because the king likes to appear invisible. He often obliges the traders to wait for weeks to admit them to his presence and sometimes he does not even grant them such favor.

It is customary throughout the Ovambo that the presumptive prince heir of the crown is always designated in life of his predecessor, not only to enable him to start, in proper advance, the

initiation in the science of governance, but also to avoid any competition at the time of death of the reigning sovereign.

The presumptive prince heir of the crown of the Kwanyama is currently a boy named Nambadi, inhabiting at day of journey of Quipandeca. The king fears him as a dangerous pretender and does not allow him to deal easily with Europeans. And, therefore, the poor prince was in a need of cartridges and other ammunition. Mr. Carlson got them for him, but everything had to be done at night and hidden from the king.

As we could not have easy access to Quipandeca and as he always was acting slowly in his business operations, we had to wait until the 30th of October to be able to leave his residence.

I took advantage of this time to study the country and to collect all the information that was possible about the surrounding tribes. I also made a herbarium with all the herbal plants which I found flowering in this season. I will not talk, for now, about the flora of the region which, by this time, I only could examine very imperfectly, but it will read with interest, I believe, the few ethnographic notions which I managed to collect.

V

From Quipandeca to Omaruru

The name Ovambo is used to designate, in Europe, a group of tribes which live in the southern margin of the Kunene, from the 15° degree of South of latitude up to the mountains of the Kaoko.

This designation and this delimitation seem to me arbitrary and do coincide very little with the geographical data of the region.

The name Ovambo is completely unknown to the indigenous people, who do not have any word to express the group of their tribes. They call each one by a particular name and only the Herero use the words Ovambo and Ambo to differentiate certain tribes.

Concerning the limits of this region, the Europeans restrict them to the eleven tribes comprised in the territory above mentioned, but it cannot be understood why they should not extend to the ones who inhabit the left bank of the Cubango (Okavango) to Libebe, since they evidently belong to the same race, speak a similar dialect, have the same uses and are considered by the Herero as part of the Ovambo race. It seems to me, therefore, that since this designation of Ovambo was adopted anyway, it should not only be applied to the populations who occupy the left bank of the Kavango, but also to the ones on the right bank of the Kunene, who were discovered this year.

All these tribes are living totally isolated from each other by forests which surround each one of them, separating them from their neighbors. Permanently in war with each other, they seek by all means to steal each other's herds. For this purpose, bands of robbers cross the forest, hiding

near the first properties of the neighboring tribe. When the night comes, they quietly approximate the enclosure where the cattle are, pulling out the poles which form it and taking the cattle with full speed. If the owner wakes up during the feat and notices the theft, he runs after the attackers who ordinarily, in a occasion like that, leave the prey, running away; sometimes, however, they resist and join combat, if they feel strong enough to finish it advantageously. But this latter case occurs rarely because, with the first shots, the alarm is given in all the neighboring properties and all combine their efforts against the common enemy.

As for the dialects of the region, they differ more or less from each other, but still they all belong to a common language. This one has a lot of affinity with the Damara and the natives of the two countries understand each other perfectly.

These dialects also have a great resemblance to the *fiot* or Congo language. The main tribes, gathered by geographers under the name of Ovambo, are in the number of eleven.

1st - The *Ondonga* - also called Ovambo by the Herero, is the first one when coming from Damara and the one occupying a more southern position. The Englishman Galton was the first European who penetrated there and so the British influence became predominant here. When the trip of Galton was done, Ondonga was being ruled by King Nangoro. His brother Chipanza succeeded him; after Chipanza, Chicongo; and this latter, Combodé, currently reigning. Chicongo called for assistance against Chipanza the famous Hottentot chief Jonker Afrikaner, who devastated a part of the Ovambo.

Combodé is very good to the Europeans and wants to introduce civilization among his subjects. It was among him that settled, about eighty years ago, the four Russian missions of the region. The British trade post is also here, the only one in the Ovambo.

The population is about 15,000 souls and the king has about 2,000 rifles. It is, after the Kwanyama, the most powerful state in the Ovambo.

Combodé claims, for the southern border of his kingdom, the springs of Ombika and Otavi, but the latter, occupied by the Bushmen, is claimed by the Herero.

2nd - The Kwambi. This state is located northwest of the first and has a population estimated, by some people, of about 5,000 and, by others, of 10,000 souls. Its current king is Nihombo, who wishes to have close, as his neighbor, a station of missionaries.

3rd - The *Ongangera* are located west of the Kwambi and are ruled by King Hiombo. This tribe has lost much of its influence in these last times, after it was sacked by Jonker Afrikaner and Chicongo. However, its population is still of 10,000 inhabitants. In addition to the cereals grown by the other tribes, the Ongangera have also the *underground vundzia*, a kind of bean which grows underground.

4th - The *Kwaludi*, called Qualude by the Portuguese and Ocarutia by the British, is located northwest of Ongangera and does not account more than 6,000 inhabitants. This tribe has Chicongo as king and is west of all the others. It is at a short distance from the Kaoko mountains, where a colony of Boers have just settled, of which I have already talked about.

5th and 6th - *The two Ombanjda* (the bigger and the smaller). These tribes, neighboring each other, are situated on both banks of an *omaramba*, not far from the Kunene, more or less ahead of Humbe and north of Kwambi. The soba of the bigger Ombandja is called Icara and the one of the smaller Ombandja is Otquirura. The population of the two tribes may rise up to 15.000 souls. As they do not have their own land for hunting the elephants, they may not, in consequence, do more than cattle trade.

7th and 8th - Between the Kwambi, the Ongangera and the Ombandjas inhabit the two tribes of the Ombalandos, one of which, the most southern, is called Orim of Comutvé or men of the trees. This designation is due to the habit of the natives to climb the trees to defend themselves in times of war. This tribe recently adopted a republican system. Having their last king exhausted the patience of the population by his despotism, he was crushed by his own vassals under the roof of his residence; and, since then, they decided to govern themselves by themselves. These two tribes are very poor; they are often attacked by others, defending themselves valiantly and they have known, up to now, how to preserve their independence. The current chief of the Ombalando is Ovahila.

9th - The *Kwanyama or Oquanyama*, which means the land of meat, is the biggest and the most powerful state of Ovambo. It extends, from the east of Ombandja, up to the Kavango river, but the neighboring region of this river, called Okimboro,³¹ is only inhabited by Bushmen, hunters of king Quipandeca, being the cattle also sent there to graze.

The population cannot be estimated at less than 60,000 souls. The soil is of a prodigious fertility and could feed a nation far more populous because only a small part is cultivated. Quipandeca is much feared by all his neighbors and even by his own vassals, over which he exercises a discretionary power.

10th - The *Okafima or Kafima* is a small tribe of the northeast the Kwanyama. To protect themselves from the invasions of Quipandeca, they live grouped in a kind of fortress, where they defend themselves however they can from their powerful enemy. The name of the current king is Naringua and its population is estimated in 1,500 souls.

11th - The *Hali, Evale, Avare or Var*, as the Portuguese call them, are the most septentrional state of the Ovambo. Their king is Namingua. The population is about 2,500 souls. The British travelers did not surpass, up to now, this tribe with their carts, at least in this direction, because a Catholic Irish, Mr. Harrisson, ascended the Kavango River last year, beyond 15° south latitude.

Handa – It should be necessary to add yet, for the enumeration to be complete, Handa, a very small state, northeast of Kafima, and, then, the various tribes which inhabit the left bank of the Kavango, such as the one of King Basi, Queen Capongo and King Nangana, tribes frequented by hunters since a while. It would be necessary, finally, to add to them all the small settlements located on the south bank of the Kunene, from the one of King Ororé up to the Ombandja. One of them is named Hinga; but the others are still too unknown to be able to make their description.

³¹ Chimporo

The lands of the Ovambo are also inhabited by a large number of Bushmen; they are called by Okwangala by the natives and Mucuancala by the Portuguese. Concerning the Nhemba³², shown in Petermann's map, according to the indications of the Portuguese, I was unable to get any information about them. This tribe is entirely unknown either by the indigenous or by the hunters who run continuously the territory where the celebrated geographer locate them. If it still takes a long time to find them, I think it will be more convenient to omit them in the new maps.

Such are the main information I could get about the Ovambo. As we come to the end of October and the rainy season was about to start, we hastened our departure. King Quipandeca was, on this occasion, very kind to me. He sent his prime minister to present me compliments and to remind me the promise to return quickly to establish a mission close to him. He added that a person of the court would reside with the missionaries, to ensure their safety and to keep away from their way all kind of nuisances and embarrassments. His daughter also came to give us farewell and several warriors were ordered to accompany us to the border.

30th of October - Finally, on the 30th of October, in the morning, we held our departure. We saw again Chinona, the settlement of Oquivera and, five days later, on the 4th of November, we were back to Olokonda, where I met a trader who was preparing to go to the Kwanyama.

I had already a fairly approximate idea about the Ovambo and its inhabitants; the purpose of my travel was reached and my desire was to return immediately to Omaruru. But the year had been very dry, many springs were empty and the pastures were not too abundant, so it is necessary to wait for the rainy season.

These rains only came by the end of November; but, by forcing me to extend my stay there, they had allowed me to have the satisfaction of seeing the Ovambo in all its splendor, with the trees covered with flowers and the meadows green again.

At the same occasion, the frogs left their lurking-hole and our table often figured dishes of these huge amphibians, whose flesh is as delicate as those of their European congeners. Here, in view of the size of the animal, it is totally eaten and not just the inferior limbs as in France. To prepare them, the natives hold them by the loin, make a longitudinal incision from the mouth to the thighs and extirpate them like that, with extreme rapidity. Even without skin and intestines, these animals can still swim, which shows an extraordinary degree of vitality.

Their quantity is so extraordinary that the indigenous people do not eat them all while they are fresh. That's why they dry them and can keep them for a long time. The boys are very skilled in fishing or, rather, in the frog hunting, which they pierce with their arrows and collect in big quantities, with this ongoing massacre not seeming to decrease their number in the region.

As the rains were falling in abundance and the grass began to grow, ensuring sufficient food for our cattle, we left Olokonda on the 2nd of December and headed this time not to the headwaters of the Nohorongo, but to the *omoramba* of Icuma, which leaves the Kunene river when this one

³² Note of the translator Gastão de Sousa Dias – Nhembas - Artur de Paiva gives informations about the Nhembas (pags.44 and 45 of the volume of the work of Artur de Paiva, ed. of the Agência Geral das Colónias, 1938), who, in the sketch of the same work concerning the Kavango expedition in the 1885, are located east of Luceque, in Alto-Cunene.

overflows, to form the lake Etosha, almost at the foot of the mountains of the Damara. When we reached it, on the 5th of December, its current was still very weak and the water entirely salty. On the next day, we reached Itiro, where we found again the same water line, which was not only salty but also red like blood. Thick layers of salt were garnishing its banks. This salt was of a dazzling whiteness and was producing the effect of snow, during winter, on the banks of our rivers.

As the rains were only at the beginning, there was not too much water in the streamlet; but its bed was deep and the banks spaced from each other, which could make us guess about a considerable current in the rainy season. In this time, the water is fresh and has fish. It is in these places that the Bushmen from the neighborhoods come to hunt the springboks, hunting which consists in chasing the prey through the nearby plains, forcing them to jump into the river; and then, it is easy to kill them in large quantity.

At the beginning of the night, we arrived at the sources of Catumari, in a very picturesque place, where beautiful birds were pullulating, called *Khoran*, with the size of our partridges.

On the 6th, we left Catumari and, during the night, we contoured the lake Etosha, which was still completely dry, as it only has water during the rains. The lake is not used as a reservoir by the Kavango River, as states Petermann in his map. It does not have any kind of communication with this river and the *omaramba* which extends to the east, through Onondova, does not go up to the Kavango River, although it almost reaches the *omaramba* Chechongo. I am sure that it fills up by the water line of the Icuma, of which I observed carefully the direction. Mr. Leen, who knows this region very well, ensured me that the *omaramba* of Icuma crosses the Ongangera and, in consequence, must leave the Kunene below the Ombandja.

On the 7th, during the morning, we arrived at the springs of Okondeka, where we spent the day. Only one trek was missing for us to take again, in OKaukuejo, our first path. There, we met hunters who were heading as well to Damara and, along the way, various traders, including Mr. Videberg in Otymongundi, who had just visited the new colony of Boers in Kaoko. He gave us good news about them; they had already built granges, houses and considered the climate salubrious.

On the 2nd of December, we were finally back to Omaruru.

V

The Kavango River

(1880)

(Les Missions Catholiques – Tome XII, 1880)

Kavango River

One of the main rivers of the region, which is the new mission of Cimbebasia, is the Kavango (Okavango). Since it is traced in a very inaccurate way in the maps that we have in Europe and even in the latest maps of Petermann, it would perhaps not be useless to give some clarification about its course. The region crossed by the Kavango is, moreover, perfectly known to the hunters of the country who, in the last year, went up its course to a large extent, having come very close to its sources. Taking advantage of the goodwill and the patience of all those poor hunters, I traced the course of the river, following day by day and tribe by tribe its different stages on both banks of the river. If these notes do not have the precise accuracy of astronomical observations, their errors should be minor and will not affect the ethnography or the general direction of this great watercourse.

To go, by cart, from Omaruru to Kavango, there are three main paths. One which follows the *omaramba* Omatako and leads to Libebe; the second starts in Fontein-field in Okamabuti, crosses the *omaramba* Ovambo and ends in Ombongo, in the lands of the Ovakwangari; finally, the third leaves from the Ovambo and reaches the river in the region of Osquimporo or Oquimboro³³.

I will not indicate here the details of these routes, immediately transporting me to Libebe and, from there I shall glance at the lower course of the river, then going up the river up to the Amboela, at the height of 16 ° degree of latitude.

I would like to start my description at the lake Ngami, instead of starting only from Libebe; but the informations from Libebe to the lake are very few and incomplete because of a terrible enemy which does not allow the wagons to penetrate the intermediate region, which is the tsetse fly. It is in Libebe that they effectively are, on the west, the first traces of this plague; and so, travellers heading to the lake avoid following closely its banks, in fear of losing their livestock. This part of the river is known only due to the journey of Mr. Green, who went up by pirogue, and thanks to the incomplete descriptions given by some travellers. Here is a summary of what I could gather.

In Libebe, the river presents itself at its maximum width and with a very rapid current. At a day trip downstream, there are cataracts called *nona*, being then necessary six more days by wagon to get to the *omaramba* Chadom, where the river then seems to disappear into an immense swamp full of reeds. This swamp is so vast that, by climbing to the top of the trees which surround it, the eye cannot reach, at north, the opposite bank. From this groundwater comes the Tuka River, considered as a continuation of the Kavango, and which goes into the lake Ngami. As this watercourse is lower than the Kavango's, it must be concluded that the latter is lost largely in the swamp, which naturally originates the Tamunacle River. But, since nobody has still bypassed it, it is not possible to say anything about this matter with surety. We go back, therefore, to Libebe.

Libebe is not the name of this locality, but the one of the last chief who ruled the tribe of the Ovambukushu and had his capital there. The current potentate is called Andara and is very

³³ Chimporo

favourable to the Europeans. The Ovambukushu tribe, to which the Portuguese call Mucusso or Ducusso, is designated by that name in the report of Mr Brochado and in the letter of Marquis da Bandeira (Sá da Bandeira). The Portuguese from Angola have been considerably trading there for a long time.

Among all the villages or, better said, all the settlements of the Kavango, the most famous is Mucusso or Libebe. The chief of this tribe has, it is said, full powers over the rain of the sky, which he can order to fall or to stop at his will, and, therefore gifts are sent to him from distant places such as the Ovambo and the Pântano -Chapo, over the Botletle, in order to obtain from him fertility for their lands. The *soba* Andara lives in an island in the middle of the river, but the rest of the population is installed on the northern bank.

At the north of Libebe is the land of Amanbundi, inhabited by the Bushmen-Magogoro and, beyond the Magogoro, to the northeast, is the tribe of the Aviko or Baviko, whose region, somewhat high, is watered by two small streams, the Luéké and the Lemono, tributaries of the Kavango. As this region of the Baviko seems to be the continuation of the highlands of the Amboella, I suppose it is likely that these lands separate the Zambezi basin from the Kavango basin. I consider any communication between the Chobe with the Kavango impossible, except, perhaps, through the swamp where the Tamunacle exits or through the Tamunacle itself. Going further to the north of the Kavango, all the hunters find these plateaux which rise imperceptibly and by means of successive undulations, so that the region does not seem mountainous. Livingstone made an identical observation regarding the Tabacheu plateau, northeast of Victoria Falls. It is very likely that both parts of the valley of the Zambezi belong to the same geological formation.

The British geographers confuse the Baviko with the tribe of the Ovambukushu, from Libebe, which is certainly a mistake. Mr Van Zil, who visited this tribe, told me that the indigenous people had a very light colour and long hair, but one of his sons, who accompanied him, do not confirm these observations, as he says that their skin is dark and the hair is elongated by artificial means.

It is possible that the Baviko are the Diriko of Mr Brochado and of the Portuguese map; but they should not be located on the bank of the river, as indicated by Mr Brochado, whose work, moreover, is of a precious interest and done with a remarkable accuracy concerning a large number of its information. I found, indeed, on the banks of the river, all the tribes he indicates and in the same order in which he classified them. It is evident that he has the merit of being the first to have known the people of the Ovambo and of the Kavango, even though Mr Galton and Mr Anderson had gathered all the honours for this. What Mr Brochado says about the Cuito River has been also confirmed by the latest explorations. It flows into the Kavango, at four days west of Libebe, in other words, at about 20 leagues, and it is as large as or larger than the Kavango. Mr Wila, another hunter who visited the river last year, during the month of March, assured me that, after their junction, the two rivers formed a large water course, with 3 miles of width on the occasion of the great floods. At the confluence, there is an island occupied by the tribe of the Ossambio, with its *soba* Nangana. The *soba* previously lived farther west, on the northern bank of the river; but having treacherously murdered the American captain Thomas, he feared the revenge of the European and sought refuge on this island, which is protected by the

river. The Ossambio is the first tribe of the Ovambo race which is found when going up the current; they inhabit the northern bank up

Map of the Kavango River

to the Amboella, at north; the Ovambo are in the centre and the Baiéié or Makuba, in the eastern part, on both sides of the Lake Ngami.

After the Ossambio at the two short journeys, comes the Ovambanguedo; they have two chiefs, Canieti and Bamangando. At four journeys, further west, are the Ovabunja, ruled by Queen Capongo, who is in excellent relationships with Europeans. Further west is the tribe of the Ovakwangari or Ovabuengué (both names are given to them), with their chief Mpachi or Bassi, as the Europeans call him. It was in this place that Anderson discovered the Kavango, coming from the south, but, as I already said, the Portuguese have known this country for a long time and gave it, in their maps, the name of Kwangar. The last dependent village on Mpachi, at west, is Omuchira.

This *soba* Mpachi murdered, two years ago, a whole band of Damara hunters, as well as their chief called Snuck, brother of Catchaerené, king of Omaruru. This Snuck was hunting for the Swedish house Erickson, the most powerful of Damaraland. From this arose terrible reprisals from Catchaerené, who had ordered the beheading of all the Ovambos of his kingdom. The Europeans also took the side of the Damara, not regarding the murder of the Ovambos, carried out secretly and without their knowledge, but about the punishment of Mpachi, blocked by the hunters of that district. His village is heavily fortified, in the Ovambo way, but the Europeans will end up conquering them.

The vassals of Mpachi are, indeed, tired of this relentless war and are starting to abandon their king who, they say, had already ran away, to the inland, on the banks of the Cuito. The defeat of Mpachi will give an easy access to the valley on this side.

After Mpachi begin the numerous tribes of the Amboella, so named by the Portuguese, but whose real name is Ombuero. These natives recognize the suzerainty of a head chief who resides in the upper part of the river, but whom the hunters have not visited yet.

The first Amboella tribes, which can be found when leaving the territory of Mpachi, are the ones of the kings Carora and Caraheicei. We travel, then, during six days through a drenched land, where numerous streams come out, and we arrive, afterwards, to the residence of king Omururu, about 16° of latitude. There, start the big undulations of the land, which increase more and more, forming true plateaux, perfectly drained and where numerous streams of clear and fast waters are drained. All the hunters consider this country salubrious. The farmers of the Transvaal found here a tree of the protea family, which is called, in the Cape, the sugar tree and which is only found in healthy places. Here, begins the culture of the cassava, which the indigenous combine with the culture of cereals and potatoes. Near Omururu starts a wide *omaramba* called *omaramba* Ochimporo or Oquiporo, which crosses the Ovambo kingdom of Kafima and gets lost in the *omarambas* of the Kunene, in the Kwanyama, establishing, at least in the rainy season, a communication between the two rivers. These *omarambas* gathered, run south and will disappear in the large pan of Etosha, which occupies, in consequence, the lower part of the region. When the Etosha pan is filled, which does not happen every year, it flows east to the *omaramba* Ovambo, which is very long, and sometimes to the *omaramba* Chechongo, which communicates with the Kavango. That is why the waters of the Kavango, which exit in Omaruru, may enter there again, after a long circuit, by the *omarambas* of the Ovambo and the

Chechongo, a bit north of their junction with the Cuito. But this only happens accidentally and in very rainy years.

There is still very little news about the north of the region, which belongs to king Omaruru; this one has his residence at the passage of a beautiful river. Further up, lies yet another river, afterwards some rapids, and, finally, we arrive at a bifurcation formed by two tributaries of the Kavango, both more or less with the same width, but more reduced, which indicates the approach of the origins of the river.

Map of the *Baixo Cubango* (Lower Kavango)

The Kunene River³⁴

(1880)

(¹) (*Les Missions Catholiques* —Tome XIII, 1880

The Kunene River

³⁴ This chapter was published in Lyon, in 1881 (Imprimerie Moujin - Rusaud) under the title *Voyage en Cimbebasie, journal du R. P. Duparquet, de la Congrégation du Saint-Esprit et du Saint Coeur de Marie, vice-préfet apostolique de la Cimbebasie* (Travel in Cimbebasia, journal of Rev. Fr Duparquet from the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Apostolic Vice-Prefect of Cimbebasia).

Journey in Cimbebasia

(Diary of the Rev. Fr Duparquet from the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Apostolic Vice-Prefect of Cimbebasia).

When I returned from my last trip to Ovambo, I had promised to send you a report of this second voyage of exploration, which brought me this time to the banks of the Kunene.³⁵ Up to now, multiple occupations prevented me from doing so, but now that the flooding of the Vaal River retains me on the edges of our mission, I take advantage of these days of rest to send you my diary.

As you have seen in my previous report, published in the *Catholic Missions* (1880), my exploration of 1879, although successful, was not as complete as I wanted.

I could only visit, at that time, the two great tribes of eastern Ovambo and I could not even reach the Kunene or establish regular relations with the neighbouring colony of Moçamêdes, all issues of great importance and which would be better to resolve before forming any establishment in the country. Our pecuniary resources do not allow us to multiply, as it would be our desire, the stations of the mission; it is therefore necessarily to choose and limit ourselves to the most advantageous points.

An excellent occasion, the journey of Mr Erickson, contributed then to continue this exploration. Mr Erickson, former companion of the famous traveller, Anderson, is today the richest and most influential dealer of the region.

Combining, as Mr Anderson, a great passion for hunting to a no less pronounced taste for ornithology, he conceived the project to carry out, this year, a great hunt with all his staff, on the banks of the Kunene and of the Kavango. He intended not only to chase ostriches and elephants, but also to complete his collection of birds from the Ovambo, undoubtedly one of the finest, if not the most beautiful, of those which were gathered in this region. I could not find, then, a better opportunity and I asked to accompany him, at least up to the Kunene. He was very pleased, because I could serve him as an interpreter for the Portuguese language. Our departure was fixed for the 14th of June. It is a very convenient time to travel in this country, because it is the beginning of the dry season; and, without the fear of malarial fevers, plenty of water and pasture, necessary for the feeding of cattle and horses of the expedition, can still be found everywhere.

To avoid congestion, Mr Erickson sent forward a large part of his staff, with the order to wait at the borders of Ovambo. From my side, I tried to hurry up with my little preparations: I ordered to tighten the iron straps of the wheels of my wagon and I gathered enough supplies for four months. I was lucky to find good staff. My oxcart driver, Isaac Timbo, Zulu by birth, could read and write and spoke four languages easily : English, Dutch , Damara and Hottentot; he also had a delicacy of manners and a courtesy, which made socializing with him very pleasant; he was,

³⁵ The natives call this river Omonlonga Kunene, “the big water”, or simply, for abbreviation, Omonene or Kunene, “the great”, which the French turn into Kunene.

moreover, considered the best oxcart driver of the country. Inani, my guide, was an Ovambo who we had baptized not too long ago, and who, through his knowledge of two languages, Ovambo and Damara, could also be very useful. And finally, my cattle keeper, a Berg Damara or Hôkoin called Lindor, who understood perfectly the language of the Bushmen. To these three servants, who are needed for every wagon, I had still the need to add a fourth, for the hunting; Willem, a Hottentot, servant of Timbo and a skilful hunter, belonged to the mission to supply us with game; to this one I only gave food.

Monday, 14th of June - The first members of the expedition had already taken the lead. The last three carts also left Omaruru on the morning of the 14th of June. One of these wagons was mine; the second was occupied by Mr Jordan, an Englishman from the Cape, who had negotiated with the Portuguese government the establishment of the Boers in the Province of Angola and who wished to introduce them into the promised land himself; the last cart was the one of Mr Erickson, who was carrying the young Anderson, son of the famous traveller of this name who was killed near the banks of the Kunene, seven years ago. It was Mr Erickson himself who had assisted him during his last moments and had buried him by the roadside leading from the Kwanyama to Kwambi. He was the only one who knew the place of this lonely grave; and, while initiating the boy to the life of a hunter, he wanted to give him the consolation of being able to pray at the grave of his illustrious father.

As Mr Erickson was eager to join his hunters, we made the journey from Omaruru to Nohorongo, at the border of Kwambi, very quickly, reaching the latter place on the morning of the 26th of June, after traveling for only twelve days. Fortunately, we found everywhere grass and water in abundance because, otherwise, our poor oxen could hardly have resisted to such a fatigue. Throughout the way, sometimes in one place sometimes in another, we would find hunters; we found the last ones in Nohorongo, which made our expedition almost complete. Only a few hunters from the Kavango River had not yet arrived.

Having already, last year, traced this itinerary from Omaruru to Nohorongo, I will not now give details about this journey, a little hasty, preferring to add, on my return, some clarification which could offer some interest.

Saturday, 26th of June - Since the oxen are a bit tired, we give them two days of rest in Nohorongo, where there are good wells and excellent pastures. During the stay of the hunters in this location, four lions attacked the horses, which had moved away a bit. Seeking to reach their salvation with the speed of their legs, these steeds arrived in great gallop near the wagons, followed closely by their terrible aggressors. Good fortune for the hunters, who immediately run out to the lions. They kill one; and the other three did not reappear. They also killed two giraffes; and for the first time, I ate marrow of this beautiful quadruped, a reputable dish among the hunters as one of the most delicate.

Monday, 28th of June - It has been precisely fifteen days since we left Omaruru; this morning, we took the path of Kwambi and we had lunch on the banks of a vlei, completely surrounded by bauhinias, a very common tree in southern Africa. Around three o'clock in the afternoon, we started the march again and travelled until the night. The place where we stopped is a vast plain of white sand, covered by grass. It was not the tender and tasty grass of Damara, but the harsh

and acidic grasses of the Ovambo, according to the expression of the farmers. We slept in this place.

Map of the Ovambo

Tuesday, the 29th - After two and a half hours of journey, we reached Uvuzia, the first location of Kwambi. The soil remains with white sand and trees are represented only by stunted acacias. What gives importance to this place is its position on the first *omaramba*³⁶ which lies on this side on the way to Kwambi. This *omaramba*, called Oquipoco, is very considerable and leaves the Kunene between the tribe of the Ondonga and of the Ovahinga; it crosses the land of the Ombalando, then the Ongangera, the Kwambi and is flowing into the lake of Etosha.

In Uvuzia, the Indigenous people opened, in the bed of the *omaramba*, a large number of wells to give drink to the cattle during the dry season. These wells or tanks stay, then, filled up with water until the level of the soil and as if they were lost in the *omaramba*, which is not dry yet. They are full of fish and covered by aquatic grasses, for which the horses are avid. The hunters killed a large number of gemsboks and springboks, as well as a big bird called *Pau* or *Otis kori*. Consequently, we have meat in abundance. Therefore, all hunters are satisfied; and, at night, around a big campfire, most of them gather to perform a concert, especially enhanced by Mr Jordan, who has a beautiful voice.

Wednesday, the 30th - Mr Erickson does not think it is prudent to reach *ex abrupto* the court of the king of Kwambi with such a number of carts. The king could think that it could be an attack and, so, take up arms. Therefore, Mr Erickson left immediately in the morning, giving orders to the other carts to follow only in the afternoon. I left early in the evening with the last wagons. We followed, for three hours, the great *omaramba*, stopping to sleep in a place where it is impossible to find firewood, as it is only an immense plain, out of sight, totally covered by grass. Our Bushmen bring us insect nests to light the fire with it, but this combustible produces an unbearable smoke and we put it aside, replacing it with grass stems, which are enough to do our cooking.

Thursday, 1st of July - The hunters kill, in this place, a large number of animals: springboks, gemsboks and wildebeests. There are, all around, vleis full of limpid and clear water, covered by wild ducks. The banks are enamelled by *marsileaceae*s and beautiful pyrolas of yellow flowers. We left at about one o'clock in the afternoon, but soon we were forced to stop, to give time to our Bushmen and Berg Damara, who went to collect the slaughtered animals, to join us. The vultures had already eaten some. At sunset, we started again our journey and travelled into the night. As it was very dark, we penetrated into an *omaramba*, which we did not notice, and, while getting out of it, we got lost in the way, in the darkness. Not knowing where we were anymore, we stopped at this place and spent the rest of the night there.

July, the 2nd - The day of the Visitation - Early in the morning, at daybreak, we realized that we were only a bit away from the first settlements of Kwambi. Shortly after, two Indigenous people came to us to warn us that Mr Erickson and the other hunters had already arrived and that the king allowed us to go to his residence.

Around eleven o'clock, after lunch, we started driving and it did not take long for us to reach the first settlements. The Indigenous people run fast to us in order to sell us sorghum and beans, asking in exchange for pieces of meat and beads. The dressing of the men and women is similar

³⁶ It is called *omaramba*, in the indigenous language, the canals of natural water courses, more or less considerable in extent and width.

to the one used in Ondonga: for the women, a belt of beads, and, for the men, a leather belt, much narrower than the one of the men of Ondonga, but more often wrapped around the body; from this belt is suspended a small leather apron, common to all the tribes; in the back, they also use a small tail, but a bit different from the one used in Ondonga. This whole population is very cheerful and affable. After having walked like this for three hours through the settlement, we finally arrived to the residence of the king.

The first nine wagons, which had preceded us, were already in line, under beautiful palm trees. I had just stepped off the wagon, when Mr Erickson hurried to tell me that he was very unhappy with King Nihombo. "He is, he said, a fool, a despot, a man totally conscientious of his authority". It seems that yesterday, having first given orders for the wagons to settle in one place, he then sent them to another, and made them finally return to the primitive place. And Mr Erickson was very angry with the wagons being settled at a certain place, and ordered them in royal fantasies. He dissuades me, with strong arguments, to establish a station (mission) close to such a king: I would be, in his opinion, a toy for his caprices and nothing could be built in a stable way. It was decided that I would visit him immediately because Mr Erickson does not want to extend his stay in this tribe.

It was enough for me to notify Nihombo to receive immediately an invitation to go to the palace.

This residence is, as all the habitations of the Ovambo chiefs, a labyrinth of small corridors, formed by very straight tree trunks, inserted deeply into the soil and juxtaposed to each other, in order to form concentric and extremely reinforced lines. A single door, very narrow and well protected, gives access to a whole system of fortifications, which could only be taken with grenades or artillery cannons. Simple shotguns or even all the indigenous crafts, such as spears, arrows, etc. would not have any efficacy against these palisades.

Mr Erickson accompanied me. Nihombo did not tell us to get in, receiving us at the door, as he does with everyone. He was surrounded by a numerous staff and there were guards watching at the door of the palace. The king was dressed in a European way, but his wardrobe seemed very poor because all he had for clothing was a pair of trousers, suspenders, a jacket and sandals.

After the first greetings, I immediately addressed the matter of the establishment of missionaries in his kingdom, telling him that I had known that he wanted to have them close to him.

- Who told you that? He replied immediately.

- It was, I told him, Mr Skoglund, superior of the missionaries of Ondonga.

- It is true, continued the king, I requested them from Mr Tolonen, predecessor of Mr Skoglund; but Combonde had forbidden them to enter here.

Nihombo then added that he would like to have someone with whom he could trade ivory and ostrich feathers. I answered him that, personally, I could not do such a trade, but the establishment of a mission would not fail to attract traders; and that, moreover, for my own nourishment, I would have to buy many things. He did not make any decision at that moment and postponed the answer for the next day; then, he added that it was cold, which seemed to indicate that he desired to leave.

As it is always usual to offer a present when visiting Ovambo chiefs, I presented him a beautiful shotgun, asking him to accept it. Nihombo seemed very embarrassed and then objected that, since it was perhaps my intention to obtain his permission to settle there the projected station, he could not receive anything with this condition. I told him that this was completely independent of the matter that we had treated. And then, he accepted it and we left after drinking the beer which he ordered to be served.

While we were leaving, Mr Erickson told me that the king's words were evidently an indication of the refusal that he had not the courage to pronounce openly. During his visit, on the eve, he had probed him already about the matter and Nihombo replied that for such a serious question he had to consult the elders of the tribe. In consequence, I'm expecting a refusal. May everything be done in God's holy will!

Saturday, 3rd of July – Early in the morning, the king sends me as a present two calves. Mr Erickson made me notice that they were not fat enough to kill and that if we added them to our cattle, they could transmit the lung disease³⁷, common in Ovambo. It was therefore necessary to refuse the gift, but in order to not hurt the king's feelings, I told him that, being alone, it was impossible for me to eat two calves and that a simple goat with a few bags of beans would be so much more pleasant. The king did not seem to be offended and called me immediately to his residence with Mr Erickson. Beer was brought to us, which we drank while waiting for Nihombo. He did not take long to appear; I went to meet him, shook his hand and we sat down. Then, Mr Erickson told him:

- You called for us; here we are.
- When, asked me the king, do you intend to build your house? I am ready to indicate you the place which I intend for the mission.
- Nihombo, I told him, I have not yet thought about the construction of the house, since you did not give me permission to live here.
- Since I am giving you a land, he answered, I grant you, therefore, at the same time the right to establish here a station of missionaries.

Mr Erickson who, as I said, was strongly unwilling against the king, advised me insistently not to accept this offer. I feel extremely embarrassed; I did not want to neither displease Erickson nor reject the offer which had just been made to me. I take myself out of this difficult position a bit in the Normans way, without rejecting it but without making any compromise as well.

I appreciate the favour you have just granted me, I told the king, but I have to leave with the expedition which goes to the Kunene river; within some days, I will be back alone and you may, then, indicate the land which is intended for me.

After this, more beer was served again and we left.

While coming back, I found, near my wagon, a beautiful herd of goats and an emissary of the king who told me to choose the one which would suit me. Then, they brought me a huge quantity of beans. I filled a bag and my servants also took advantage to make their provision. As it was said that an epidemic was raging in the region, we hasten to leave Kwambi and the departure

³⁷ Caõnha?

was fixed for one o'clock in the afternoon. Taking advantage of the few hours I had left, I am going to visit the palace of Nihuma, the predecessor of Nihombo. This king Nihuma was the first to welcome the Europeans, whom he liked to attract to his territory, but they did not always have reasons to congratulate themselves for that reason. Mr Palgrave, who met Nihuma, assured me that this one had, one day, boasted about having ordered the murder of a Portuguese and of having stolen him. Near him some Finnish missionaries had settled who had endeavoured to inculcate in him the dogma of the resurrection of the dead. Having a brother of his died, he requested the missionaries and told them:

- You always taught me that, in your religion, men shall resurrect after death. Here is my brother, who died three days ago; if what you have been preaching is true, give his life back to him.

Great was the embarrassment of the poor missionaries who tried, but in vain, to make him understand that this resurrection would only happen at the end of the world. The king did not listen to them and told them that either they would resurrect the dead or they would be forced to leave. There was no other alternative. And they had to leave the station, which was never re-established.

On my return, I had the occasion to see their small house built with adobes, of which there were only a few walls left. It consisted of two small rooms, built on a quite high artificial terrace, in order to preserve from the humidity of soil. It is enough, indeed, to dig to a depth of a few feet to find, everywhere, water in abundance. The soil appears to consist of a kind of white sand, but which, nevertheless, makes excellent sun-dried bricks. These bricks, used in the houses of the Finnish, seem as hard as the bricks baked in the oven.

King Nihuma had very unique tastes and greatly appreciated the European constructions. His palace was built with bricks. It was surrounded by an extensive wall, also built with brick and flanked by rounded towers, in the way of the constructions of the Middle Age. It was a kind of feudal castle. Its ruins are still well preserved and produce a certain effect. Within this enclosure, he had ordered to build a beautiful tank, where he was keeping a wide variety of aquatic birds. Today only the tank remains; but Mr Erickson told me that he had seen, still in those times, the bird collection of the king. It is likely to have been the missionaries who suggested the idea of these unique constructions to him. Nihombo has adopted again the old system, which I see preferable from the strategy point of view. Indeed, the palisades of the Ovambos are much more difficult to destroy than the brick walls. All around the palace and the garden, numerous tanks were open, whose edges are surrounded by reeds. Everywhere in the sub-soil, an inexhaustible ground water can be found, which makes the region fertile. The palm trees, especially, develop admirably, as well as the *ozombé*³⁸ and other fruit trees; I did not find there, however, the *oguané*. There is also a lack of forest trees, which were undoubtedly destroyed to make way for cultures, so it is necessary to go far to find wood to burn.

At one o'clock in the afternoon, we started our journey, following a beautiful and large *omaramba*, garnished on both sides by farms and fields. The appearance of the country is

³⁸ Beautiful fruit trees, typical of the region, and of which Rev. Fr Duparquet had already given the description in his previous report.

similar to the Ondonga. After three hours of marching, we reached a place called Nimézia, completely covered with beautiful lakes, shaded by large trees.

These numerous wells have been dug, evidently, in the *omaramba* to quench the thirst of the herds during the dry season. They are very numerous and have the most varied and picturesque forms, such as the ones that we choose for our British gardens. It is obvious that each garden of the surroundings has, there, its own private well. I did not see if they had fish, but the surface of the water was covered with magnificent blue lotus flowers. I noticed that the Indigenous people were uprooting them to collect the tubercles, which are comestible. A number of Ovambos followed us and many of them were ordered by the king to accompany us to Ombandja. Despite the horrid impression that the poor Nihombo had produced on this expedition, it does not seem to me that he deserves the bad reputation that he has. He was frightened with the arrival of so many hunters and so many wagons and, for me, I have no doubt that this dread was the cause for the foolishness he did, ordering twice to change the place of the wagons. It could be that, seeing Mr Erickson irritated with the first order to move, he intended to amend the error by sending them back to the first position. Anyway, he is not accused of having harmed anyone or of having mistreated any European. His appearance is not pleasing or distinctive as his neighbour Combondé; but, in reality, he seemed to be a simple and prudent man, with whom it would be easy to reach an agreement. His vassals give, actually, the impression of trembling in his presence and they seem to fear him; but fear is often, in these lands, the best mean for chiefs to be able to govern their subjects.

Sunday, 4th of July - This morning, the young Anderson went with Mr Erickson to visit the grave of his father, who died on this day, 17 years ago, on the 14th of July 14, 1863. The famous traveller had reached, on the 13th of June, the Kunene, most likely at the north of Humbe. For four days, he waited in vain for the indigenous people to transport him, by canoe, to the opposite bank. Then, he left again for the Kwanyama, which he left a few days later, already very sick, heading to Kwambi. On the 2nd of July, realizing that his last hour was close, he prepared himself to die and made Mr Erickson read to him, again and again, the appropriate psalms to his situation. But he only came to die two days later,³⁹ at the end of a painful agony. Having no other instrument than a "machete", Mr Erickson managed to dig a grave, where he laid the mortal remains of the intrepid traveller. Mr Anderson was only forty-two years old when he succumbed like that, victim of his zeal for geographical discoveries. He left several and priceless works about this part of Africa: the *Lake Ngami*, the *Kavango River*, travel notes and an erudite book about ornithology, his favourite study.

Monday, 5th of July - By nine o'clock, we left Nimézia, always following the *omaramba*. The country becomes increasingly wavier and it does not take us too long to be in the middle of a magnificent forest. After four and a half hours of journey, we arrive to a place where, to reach the opposite bank, it is necessary to cross the *omaramba*. This one is verdant like a meadow, but is still not completely dry. It has perhaps no more than a foot of water; however there is the concern that the carts remain buried in the sandy soil, which would be a considerable mishap. It is necessary, therefore, to take special precautions in order to avoid such inconvenience and we decide, in conference, to have lunch here, giving time for cattle to rest.

³⁹ Note of the translator, Gastão de Sousa Dias: there is mistake concerning the dates, as Anderson died on the 4th of July 1867.

After lunch, we prepare to cross the *omaramba*; the lighter wagons start first and, although they bury themselves up to the wheels hubs, fortunately they manage to reach the opposite bank. Then come the others, being a second coupling added to the heaviest ones. There is only mine left, which is very large and causes some apprehension, but Mr Erickson sent me his 14 oxen, which, with my own, form a coupling of 28 oxen. They run trot and reach the other side without stopping for a single instant. One hour and a half later, we reach Orendieno, where the hunt for real should start.

Tuesday, 6th of July- Orendieno is one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen in Ovambo. The *omaramba* here is extremely broad and covered by fertile prairies; in the centre, it has numerous lakes dug centuries ago by natives, whose high embankments are shaded by palms and other large trees. These reservoirs are frequented by wild ducks and geese, which feed themselves with molluscs and aquatic plants; the leeches also abound here. All round, there are large forests where, here and there, secular fruit trees are found, indicating that this region had been inhabited before. The soil is now sometimes black, sometimes reddish, but it appears to be equally fertile everywhere. I was surprised to see such a beautiful place deserted and unoccupied; and I asked the reason for that. They told me that this place is called *Orendieno*, which means "the well of disgrace", and it belonged to the tribe of the Ombalando, by whom these vast reservoirs were dug. Chased away by neighbouring tribes, the Ombalando do not allow, however, that another tribe invades their territory. When a breeder intends to settle there its flocks, they immediately run through the forest, kill the new occupants, steal their cattle and, by this mean, they take away from any other colonists the desire to come to settle here.

Wednesday (?), 6th of July – Early in the morning, the hunters run in all directions, in pursuit of ostriches. As Mr Anderson is still not trained in this hunt, he was in charge of killing wild ducks to supply our table and he brought us, in fact, dozens of them. As for me, I am going to explore the forests around; I found a big baobab, the first I have seen in this region of the Ovambo, then some "*capparis albicans*" and gigantic *moringas*, with oily seeds. There is wood for construction in inexhaustible quantity. This place, in the centre of the Ovambo, would be perfect for a farm and it would be easy to get it from the Ombalando.

These Ombalando, to whom they call also Onrondo-miti or the men of the trees, owe this surname, as it was told to me, to their habit of combating from the top of the baobab trees, from where they shoot arrows against their enemies. These people seem to correspond to the Quimbandis of Mr Brochado, even if I did not manage to find this name among the natives. It is wrong to consider the Ombalando and the Onrondo-miti as two distinct tribes. All this population constitutes only a single tribe, which has a republican form. They are rich and powerful; but, finding themselves surrounded, on all sides, by other people and without access to the river or the paths to Damara, so far they have not been very much visited by traders and have few firearms, which put them in a position of inferiority concerning the neighbouring tribes. That's why they make them a bitter war, but without being able to exterminate them; the Ombalando, in their turn, strive to give tit for tat. It was a tactic adopted among the other tribes of this region to deviate dealers, giving them the most terrible descriptions of the alleged ferocity of the Ombalando. However, the Europeans ended up by penetrating there recently and found a docile and harmless population, who welcomed them perfectly. They even sent an embassy to the

Boers of the Kaoko, with oxen and three hundred bags of wheat, in exchange for some ammunition for hunting.

During the afternoon, a large embassy from the king of the *Ombanja* arrived. This prince, who heard about the journey of Mr Erickson, sent them to say that he can enter his lands.

The envoys say that the river is located only at a day and a half journey by wagon from the *Ombanja*, that the way is very good and that there are many ostriches in the path between the river and the tribe. And this determines Mr Erickson to fix the departure for the next day.

At night, the hunters come back with a huge amount of game: ostriches, giraffes, hartebeests and springboks. We do not know what to do with such an amount of meat. All the Bushmen, the Berg Damara and the Ovambo accompanying us now have it in abundance. It is distributed to all sides. The most appetizing pieces are reserved for our table. These tasty pieces are well known to the hunters: giraffe tongue, ostrich wings, hartebeest sirloin, etc. Mr Anderson continues to supply us with ducks.

One of the hunters, Mr Bawer, went away, in the west direction, and reached the settlements of the Ombalando. He says that their country is superb, with large clearings in the forests, all strewn with palm trees. The Ombalando were busy catching fish in an *omaramba*. Since there was not any kind of path, he got lost and only arrived at the camp while the night was far advanced. In general, these hunters have an extraordinary ability to guide themselves in the middle of the forests. They can, therefore, take a whole day riding through the woods and return, at night, to their wagon, without mistaking the direction. At this point, however, nothing equals the Bushmen. A hunter told me that after having gone, for two days, through the forest in pursuit of elephants, suddenly, in the middle of the night, he told his Bushmen: "Let us return to the camp." Immediately, without any hesitation, in the midst of thick darkness, these latter guided the march and led him, in a straight line and without detours, to his cart, which he had left two days ago!

Thursday, 7th of July - Shortly after the return of Mr Bawer, while we were all still around the campfires, they suddenly announced the arrival of a stranger on horseback. It was Mr Runcie, a young hunter, who was arriving from the Kavango, where he had been with Mr Erickson's brother. He had headed first to Namutoni, close to the lake Etosha, and found, there, Mr Botha, who was coming to meet us. They came together up to Kwambi, where the oxen of Mr Botha had to stop, exhausted with fatigue. As for him, he had taken the lead, on horseback, to bring this news to Mr Erickson.

Friday, 8th of July - We left this morning, at seven o'clock, and, after three hours of marching, always following the *omaramba*, we arrived at a place called Omatuzia, where water in abundance can still be found. It is the beginning of Ondja. We decided to stay there for a few days. Two ostriches and a wild boar were killed.

Picture of a Bushman woman

At nine o'clock of the evening, Mr Botha returned from the Kavango, with his wagon. He spent only thirteen days to make this trip. He gives us news of Mr Dufour, who he met while he was going to Namutoni. Mr Dufour was heading, for the second time, to the Ovambo. On his first trip, he had managed to reach the domains of Princess Chinona, who had given him a good welcome; but the *omarambas* were so full that it was necessary to travel continuously in the water. The humidity had swollen the wheels of the wagon in such a way that one of its iron straps ended up breaking due to the effect of the dilatation of the wood. Under these conditions, it became impossible to continue the journey and he had to come back to Omaruru with his people, exhausted by fevers. He returned through Otjizondjupa, Otavi, Otjicolo and met Mr Botha in Namutoni. They had separated there, one going to Ovambo and the other one to Kavango.

This afternoon, an unfortunate incident occurred. Two hunters, a European and a Hottentot, had left alone in the eastern direction, which is, to the sides of Kwanyarna. Having entered a bit into the forest, they found themselves, suddenly, in the presence of a hundred of Ovambo boys, who seemed to be hunting ostriches and any opportunity of pillage. The hunters descended from the horses and went to meet them, telling them that they belonged to Caruapa (name given by the natives to Mr Erickson). But the Ovambos were saying that this was not true and that they were evidently Boers, people whom they considered as their worst enemies; and, saying that, they grabbed the shotgun of the white and were ready to do the same to the Hottentot. But this one, jumped onto his horse, pointing the shotgun at them, and forced them to run away, without being able, however, to recover the other shotgun.

Returning to the camp at full speed, the two hunters told their adventure and, knowing about such a *gaucherie*, the general indignation was great. Leaving a shotgun in the hands of Indigenous people in such circumstances was hurting deeply the pride of the hunters; and they immediately decided to go in pursuit of the attackers to recover the weapon, whatever the cost. But who were these attackers? Ombalando, Kwambi or Ombandja? Here is what was difficult to conjecture.

The envoys of the king of Ombandja said that the robbers did not belong to their tribe. They fled in the direction of the Kwanyarna and my suspicions were directed to that side because, when in the previous year I was with king Quipandeca, I had seen a good number of these expeditions leaving, from different points, to practice extortion and theft.

Anyway, within moments, Mr Erickson, accompanied by a dozen of horsemen, went with full speed in the pursuit of the evildoers, very determined to recover the shotgun and to severely punish the band, in case they would refuse to deliver it.

At the camp, in fear of any attack or betrayal during the darkness of the night, all the carts were gathered to make the defence easier; and we were willing to mount guard, each one of us in turn.

At night, Mr Erickson returned but failed to catch the thieves, despite having extended for twenty miles their persecution. The darkness prevented him from going further, but he left his Ovambo servant, Ita, with two Ombandja and two Kwambi, to follow, at daybreak, the tracks of the robbers to their tribe. Two Kwambi, who were accompanying the caravan, afraid of what could result from such a serious event left with a hurry to warn king Nihombo.

Saturday, 9th of July - We left Omatazia this morning, at seven o'clock, and after three and a half hours of journey, we reached the first village of Ombandja, where there was water in abundance. We had lunch there and we started again at two o'clock in the afternoon, always following the same *omaramba*. Its banks are decorated with gardens and fields; everywhere, there are forests of fruit trees, as in the Kwanyama. After three hours of journey, we stopped near a farm.

Before nightfall, we still had time to visit the fields. There are *cafre* melons in such large quantities that they gathered them, here and there, in piles. These melons are huge and have a stiff and yellowish pulp and can be kept for a long time. They boil them in a bit of water, thereby obtaining a kind of compote, a little sugary and very pleasant. I wanted to buy one of these fruits, but the envoy of the king of Ombandja told me that they were so common and in such a great abundance that I could take some, without this being seen as impolite. However, I insisted on giving for them, to the owner of the field, a portion of tobacco.

Sunday, 10th of July - We left at seven o'clock in the morning, always following the *omaramba*, surrounded by numerous fields, increasing more and more. And finally, we arrived in front of a large fence, doubly fortified by a moat filled with water and by high palisades, flanked here and there, by a sort of towers, for the protection of its defenders. We were in front of the residence of king Iquera.

The wagons stopped at the door, in the middle of the *omaramba*, and soon we were surrounded by a large number of people and the women of the king came to offer us big bags of beans as a present.

At this moment came Ita, the Ovambo servant, interpreter of Mr Erickson. He states that he tracked the robbers up to the Kwanyama, but he did not have the courage neither to penetrate alone in the village nor to claim the shotgun. So, Mr Erickson swears that either king Quipandeca restored the shotgun or he would declare war on him.

However, Iquera calls us to the palace. I immediately go to him in the company of Mr Erickson and I tell him that, today, I only come to pay my respects to him, allowing me to talk to him later and with more space.

This good king could be between 45 and 50 years of age, and has a frank, open and youthful face. We felt quickly at ease in his presence. He has also a benevolent and affectionate way towards his vassals, who are far from trembling in his presence as it happens with the ones of Nihombo and Quipandeca. The oil mixed with red ink, drips with such abundance by the body of His Majesty, that it becomes impossible to shake his hand and, to safeguard our vestment, we

must go with precaution. But the good king understands this perfectly and when we are approaching, it is he himself who warns us about the risk, showing his hands. All personnel of the palace also drip with fat; it is evidently a day of great ceremony. Beer is served to us in abundance and then we go again through the accustomed labyrinth of corridors in order to return to our wagons. Large jars of beer follow us, which, with the ostrich meat, gives us an excellent lunch.

Picture of an Indigenous Christian

Soon Iquera came, with his five children, to pay us a visit. Mr. Erickson presents him with a beautiful horse and a golden copper necklace; and Mr. Van Zyl offers him some bracelets. Mr. Erickson then begins to stuff birds and the king sits beside him, showing him, then, the desire to have a missionary near him. He would like me to stay to instruct his children, even offering to pay me for such a good service. Mr. Erickson calls me and exposes to me the pretension of the king. I reply that it would be a great honor for me, but that I do not desire any other reward for my work than to be useful to him; I add that I might teach his children a European language, either English or Portuguese, which would facilitate their relations with the European colonies. The king told me that he would prefer the first language, as he has a more favorable opinion about the British than about the Portuguese. He even requests me to stay immediately, giving up my trip to the Kunene River. I tell him that this is impossible this year because I am not in conditions to immediately build a house, but that I will be back with a carpenter, as soon as possible. I add that, for now, I have to go up the river to explore it with Mr. Erickson, but, on the way back, I will stay some time with him to settle on the place of the house.

Iquera said that it would take us just one day to reach the river, giving us, afterwards, a multitude of explanations about the places where game could be found. This monarch is surely the best and kindest king of all of those I met in Africa.

Monday, 11th of July - In the morning, I head to the king's residence to offer him my presents. They are very modest and consist of a box of gunpowder, two bars of lead, two boxes of casings, four pounds of beads and some pieces of tobacco. Iquera received me with great cordiality and served me some beer. Meanwhile, Mr Erickson and Mr Jordan arrived, having come to invite the king for a horse race. We all leave the palace to attend this amusement, after which the king offered me an ox as a gift. However, I refuse, telling him that a goat and a pig are enough for my table. He insists again with me to settle among his tribe; I answer him that it is my intention to go only up to the river and then to come back again. But he is concerned that I would not come back.

- My heart, he says to me, is with you and it's with ardent desire that I would like you to stay to enjoy my dispositions and of my people. I will give you the land you desire to choose in my kingdom and, then, you will go back to Omaruru, returning then to build wherever it pleases you the best.

Nothing can make him give up his desire to keep me here. And I truly do not know how I can continue my journey until the river.

Tuesday, 13th of July - This morning, I go for a walk and I walk around the palace. It is very well fortified and contains, inside, vast gardens and reservoirs of water filled with fish. Then, I explore the surroundings in search of a favorable place for the Mission.

Mr Erickson took to heart to recover the stolen shotgun and departs for the Kwanyama in order to complain to Quipandeca. His partners are supposed to go tomorrow morning for hunting not far from the river. As for me, I'll be alone with the king, occupied with the choice of a place until the return of Mr Erickson.

Tuesday (?), 14th of July - Unfortunate setbacks. A horse died during the night, close to my wagon. I was very upset, because the corpse would bother me for a few days. But soon I found myself delivered from this concern because, with the arrival of the indigenous people, these ones in combination with our Bushmen and Berg Damara, the horse was devoured up to the last piece. It was difficult for me to save some bits for our dogs.

Iquera came to visit me and I asked him, then, a place which caught my attention yesterday. It is located twenty minutes away from here, with a good terrain, beautiful trees and a beautiful pond. The king made me note immediately that this place does not suit me, as the pond dries up completely during the summer and that, being the soil clayey and impermeable, it is impossible to open any well there. He orders, afterwards, to bring my wagon along, close to his house, and gives me a wide stable to guard the cattle and provides me the use of his gardens to walk around and to pray my breviary.

Thursday, 15th of July – Today, I made large excursions in all directions, in search of a favorable place. Finally, I found a very beautiful terrain, close to a large pond, very deep and inexhaustible, shaded by large secular trees. The scenery is lovely. Very close, there is a forest with reddish and fertile soil, high enough above the *omaramba*, to stay protected from the floods; this plot is just 20 minutes from the Royal Palace.

In the afternoon, three emissaries of the king of Kwambi arrive, announcing that Nihombo discovered the thief of the shotgun: he belongs to the Kwanyama and is called Nacuahongo. I write immediately to Mr Erickson, sending him this information.

Friday, 16th of July – I continue my explorations for the choice of a terrain. The king sends me beer and meat, and spends almost all day close my wagon.

Saturday, 17th of July - I take advantage of the geographical knowledge of the king and of the indigenous people to get some information. They call *Oindéle* to the Portuguese, *Ovimburu* to the British and *Mbaca* to Moçâmedes; Ondongona is really a tribe of Cimbebasia who speaks the damara language; the Evare tribe is not far, but it is far from equalling to the Ombandja or the Ochico. The King talks to me about the Ochico tribe as well, but I am unable to determine where it is located.

I announce to the king that I am finally resolved concerning the choice of the place and I request him the land surrounding the large springs of Ovars; he grants it to me immediately, expressing, however, his regret of seeing me settling across the *omaramba*. "When the omaramba is full of water, he says, how can we visit each other?'

I reassure him by saying that the *omaramba* is not too deep and that it is my intention to build a pavement which would link the mission to his habitation. I make him notice also that his habitation is in the direction of the wind of the *omaramba*, which can turn it unhealthy, while, on the opposite bank, I will not be exposed to the wind coming from any swampy point. And Iquera cedes to my reasons.

Monday, 19th of July - This morning, I will take possession of the land that the king granted me and I start cleaning it. Iquera sent me three men to help me in this work. I associate to them Inani and three Berg Damara, who I took for my services, and we manage to break a good portion of it during the morning; but in the afternoon, when I want to get back to work, Inani declares that it is against the usages of the country, where work is only done during the morning.

Tuesday, 20th of July - In the afternoon, Mr. Erickson arrives with two other wagons: one with his brother Alberto, coming from the Kavango River, and the other one with Mr Dufour.

As for the famous rifle, he had received it immediately at his entrance in the Kwanyama. Quipandeca, indeed, having heard about his arrival, had rushed to send someone to meet him in order to give back the stolen object, but, without his decision, the rifle would have never been returned because Quipandeca had already purchased from Mr Dufour the necessary cartridges to use it.

These gentlemen had taken twenty hours to arrive, in a straight line, from the residence of Quipandeca to Ombandja, having left in their right, and in consequence to the north of their way, the kingdom of *Ombandja Pequena* (Little Ombandja).

I was very pleased to see again this poor Mr Dufour, who had arranged to meet me at the bank of the Kunene and who had just suffered some great annoyances with king Quipandeca.

This potentate, firstly, gave him a good welcome; then, he proposed to do some business but he only had cattle to sell and this did not at all suit Mr Dufour, who only wanted ivory or ostrich feathers. Quipandeca pretended having none of these items and, then, Mr. Dufour told him that he would not buy a single head of cattle. In view of this, the king told him that, if it were so, then he had nothing more to do there and should leave their territory. "I did not come here to negotiate, replied Mr. Dufour, but to visit the country and I only will leave it when I please and not in such an expeditiously way." Quipandeca, then, forbade him the use of water and fire, and ordered his men to go to the wagon to extinguish the fire and to throw away all the water in barrels. Then, they took away the oxen and horses from him. And therefore, the staff, frightened, ran away, leaving Mr. Dufour alone in his wagon. Even so, he decided to stand it and declared that the king would better manage to make him die in that place than to force him to leave. He lived like that, abandoned, for three days, in the most precarious way, until the news of the next arrival of many wagons, of which there was information of being on their way, came suddenly to change his situation and the king became more treatable. When Mr. Erickson arrived, he had already returned the horses to him and all of his staff, and had reconciled with him. Mr. Dufour, then, decided to join the expedition and that's why I could see him again in Ombandja.

He told me he had visited, in Damara, the famous fountain in Oshikoto, which is an authentic prodigy. It is situated on the limestone mountains, near Otavi. It is enormous and has an

immeasurable depth. It is full of fish and always keeps the same level. It is probable that it extends in the underground and through the limestone rocks up to enormous distances. He had also visited the copper mines of Otavi, which are of an extraordinary wealth.

Wednesday, 21st of July - Mr. Dufour calculated the height of Ombandja above the sea level, having found 3,850 feet, which indicates that Ombandja is one of the highest points of the Ovambo. He also came to visit the place of the mission and, with his compass he gave me the exact orientation with a view of the placement of future constructions.

At half past one in the afternoon, we started our way in order to join the hunters at their camp, not far from the river, close to the Ondongona tribe. We travelled for three and a half hours and we stopped in the middle of the plantations, where we spent the night.

Thursday, 22nd of July - Early in the morning, we restarted our march, taking the path of Ondonga and abandoning it, afterwards, to head to the camp of the hunters, in Omuparara, where we arrived after four hours of journey. Omuparara is a beautiful clearing in the middle of forests, with water in abundance. This place still depends on Ombandja.

The hunters had killed five ostriches, two giraffes, hartebeests, etc. They went up to the Kunene, which is very close by and whose banks are not flooded. Humbe, in the northeast, is not too far away as well. And a group of Boers is camping three leagues from here, on the banks of the river, hunting hippopotamus.

This latest news causes Mr Erickson some concerns. Last year, the Boers inflicted, indeed, a terrible punishment to the Humbe tribe, caused by an attack from them. Since this war, the natives are living in constant fear of the return of their enemies, whose vengeance, they think, maybe not be completely satisfied. However, as the Boers had just arrived at the river banks, our arrival coincided with theirs and we camped close to each other. Possibly, the natives would confuse us with their enemies, taking us for a military expedition.

And from here many complications and difficulties were feared upon. We decided, therefore, to write a letter to the Portuguese of Humbe to tell them that we had nothing in common with the Boers, and that we were only coming to hunt with absolute peaceful intentions, intending to go on the following day to the banks of the river, where we would be very happy to receive their visit. Dimozito, son of the king of Ombandja, was in charge of getting the letter to its destination.

As all the material and the personnel of the expedition were gathered, at this time, in Omuparara, its inventory was made, which gave the following numbers: Europeans, 17; Indigenous people, 89; wagons, 11; carts, 3; two-wheeled vehicles, 3 ; horses, 52; oxen for traction, 216; oxen/horses, 9; dairy cows, 20; goats, 40; dogs, 19.

Friday, 23rd of July - As soon as the Boers had known about my arrival at Omuparara, they hastened to send me two emissaries, Mr Prinsloo and Mr Osthuisen, to visit me. And these two venerable old men are the ones who give me news about the emigrants. They had come very close to the fevers during the last rainy season, having resolved to abandon the Kaoko. I provided them with new information about Huila and I strongly urged them to accept this territory, which the Portuguese government offers them.

They came from Otavi, in the Kaoko (which should not be confused with the Otavi in Damara, where the copper mines are), crossing the Vahinga tribe. They are more or less between Vahinga and Humbe, localities about twelve hours of distance from each other. The courier in charge of bringing the letter to the Portuguese returned, in that afternoon, with it. He was frightened with the charge and did not dare to cross the river.

Saturday, 24th of July - We left very early to Humbe. As in the previous days, we were forced to open a way through the forest. Each wagon has to provide, for that work, a man with an ax. The workers walk forward, with the guides, and cut the trees with such rapidity that our wagons rarely have to stop. We head northeast, crossing alternately woodlands and *omarambas*. After eight hours of journey, we arrive, in the afternoon, at Quilavi, on the banks of the Kunene. We install our carts on the top of a cliff cut perpendicularly over the river bank, which is at our feet. This cliff can be about 20 meters high and the river a hundred meters wide. A large number of crocodiles can be seen in the water and, starting from this same night, the poor amphibians are going to have a very troubled existence. The moment they put their nose out of the water, immediately they become the target of the hunters, who send them a bullet to their head. The wounded animal first lashes the water violently with its tail and, then, disappears into the river to die there shortly.

On the opposite bank, some Indigenous people appear. Dimozito calls them; but it is impossible to make them come closer because they are obviously scared.

Sunday, 25th of July - Feast of St. James. - Today is the great feast of the patron of the Congo mission, which starts on the opposite bank of the river. But my thought flies farther, up to the banks of that Zaire River, which I always recall wistfully. What a difference between the Kunene, which at its best will be able to match the Seine, and this giant of the rivers of Africa, with a width which the eye cannot reach and with a virtually immeasurable depth.

There, I find my confreres, around large waterfalls, waiting for the happy moment given to them of reaching Stanley-Pool and the beautiful valley of the Casai (Kasai), where they will start again the interrupted work of the Capuchin priests, their admirable precursors. What a future awaits this river of Congo, while this poor Kunene will never come to see, without any doubt, in its silent banks, anything more than a few ornithologists who will come here to increase their collections of aquatic birds.

During the day, it was impossible to communicate with the natives. Not a single Portuguese also appears. Mr. Anderson and The Young Vanzyl put their horses into the river, crossing it by swimming, but as soon as they put their feet on the opposite bank, all the natives run away, with a manifest horror. Judging imprudent to go further inland, our companions cross again the Kunene. Meanwhile, Dimozito heads to the king's residence with our letter. Finally, late afternoon, already at the beginning of the night, the king sends us a big embassy. This one is the bearer of our letter, telling us that his chief cannot read and, therefore, he cannot understand it. He says that he will have great satisfaction in receiving us, if we are only coming for hunting and not to kill him. These natives of Humbe clearly have an affinity with the Cimbebas. They have the same features, use the same clothes and our Herero understand them very well.

Monday, 26th of July - Mr Dufour departs to go visit the Boers, but he met them on the way, as they were already heading to Quilavi and returns with them. A wild boar and a variety of aquatic birds were killed. I visit the banks of the river; its waters are limpid and run extremely slowly over a sandy bed. The left bank is totally limited by cliffs. The river sometimes bathes the foothill of these cliffs, sometimes leaves, between its bed and the hills, a more or less extensive prairie. In the rainy season, this one is completely flooded by the river, which can become half a league wide. After the retreat of the waters, the plains are crossed by lateral derivations of the Kunene, where the indigenous collect a considerable amount of fish, especially catfish.

These channels are shaded by beautiful *eugenias* whose roots emerge from the water. In some places, they form lakes with the banks garnished by large reeds, which provide a home for the hippos.

A multitude of aquatic plants furnishes these plains and the soil is strewn with shells of snails and bivalve mollusks. Everywhere, there are numerous crocodiles, but they seem to not go too far away from the river.

On the plateau which crowns the cliffs, there are superb trees, among which dominate the baobab, the *sterculia*, the cherry tree. This plateau is no more than a continuation of the lands of the Ovambo. Therefore, the river would seem lower to us than the Ovambo and we could not understand how it can flood the whole country because, of course, it can never, even in the biggest floods, rise to the height of the cliffs. But this line of cliffs has interruptions and these rips give rise to the *omarambas* which bathe the Ovambo. The Ovambo is, therefore, lower than the river. Mr Dufour found 3,752 feet of altitude in Humbe; 3,750 in Ombandja and 3,500 in Ondonga. There is, therefore, an inclination of, at least, 250 feet, between the river and Ondonga. This slope continues to the Etosha Lake, which occupies the largest depression of the entire region. Beyond it, towards the south, begin the mountains of the Damara with an elevation of approximately 4,000 feet.

At night, king Chahongo sends to Mr. Erickson a beautiful ox as a present, with the most pleasant message: if we want to hunt, he is willing to show us the most favorable places and if we wish to go to Moçâmedes, he will give us guides and an escort to Ongambuê (Gambos). We decided that the next day twelve whites would go riding to his residence to visit him.

Tuesday, 27th of July - So, this morning, we left by horse, in a number of twelve, for the residence of Chahongo. As I am not a good horseman, a very gentle horse was given to me and two servants to accompany me. One of them, Chapopi, who should serve as an interpreter, is galloping by my side; the other one, on foot, leads my courser by the bridle, in the most difficult places. We head first to the ford to cross the river, but as the water was over our head, it was necessary to cross it by swimming, mounted on the horses. My companions, therefore, undress part of their clothing, take off the saddles of horses and throw themselves into the river, transposing it without difficulty. As for me, I cross it more prosaically in a good pirogue, with the saddles and the vestments. Again, we start our march, with the hunters on horseback in the front, in two lines, the loaded guns carried on the arm, with an appearance somewhat military, but the populations welcome us in a good way and do not seem to be frightened. After half an hour, we reach the residence of the king. Chahongo is sitting under a large tree, surrounded by an immense kneeling crowd. From far, only heads can be seen. Only the king is dressed,

exhibiting a sort of crown; a short cotton skirt with a jacket completes his dressing. Only he is seated on a stool artfully sculpted and, close to him are four Portuguese standing.

We came up to a hundred meters from His Majesty, dismounted of the horses and four of us were assigned to take part in the interview: Mr Erickson, Mr Jordan, Mr Dufour and myself. I was wearing my religious habit; this novelty was exciting, obviously, the curiosity of the natives.

At our approach, the king stood up and welcomed us with satisfaction. Mr. Erickson explained to him immediately the goal of our trip to his tribe. He wanted to hunt and to enter into business relations with him. Chahongo said that he was well aware of the importance for him to promote trade. He understood perfectly that the relations with the British had turned other potentates of the Ovambo more powerful than him. He wanted, therefore, to enter in negotiations with them and to see them negotiating with the tribe.

After this answer, Mr. Erickson offered him a beautiful rifle, to which I joined, in my turn, a modest gift, with which he seemed satisfied. Then, we withdraw. In our honor, big pots of beer had been prepared, to which we paid the due honor. We were offered, as well, numerous baskets of beans. Beer and beans are used in Ovambo as presents and are always received with pleasure by the Europeans. They are, of course, small gifts, but the only thing that these poor Indigenous people can offer and are always given willingly, for this reason we must forgive them for not giving a better thing.

I approached the four Portuguese and we initiated conversation. They apologized for not having paid a visit to us, but the king would not have allowed them and had refused to hand over the letter which was addressed to them. We invited them to accompany us to the camp: immediately, they mounted on their oxen, crossed the river and came to spend the afternoon and the evening with us.

These good Portuguese do not really understand the nature and the purpose of our expedition. Sometimes they confuse us with the Boers, sometimes they think that this is an British expedition, which comes to conquer the country. Moreover, their geographical knowledge seems very incomplete, which increases the confusion of their ideas. They imagine that the Portuguese Colony extends up to Cape Town, which, they say, was given by King Joao VI, as a present, to the British. It was difficult for me to clarify them about this point, not being able, anyway, to quiet them absolutely about the events.

Wednesday, the 28th of July - Our Portuguese came back to their houses in the morning, but not without some concerns. They fear that the Indigenous people could have committed some disrespects during their absence and could accuse them of having attracted to the region many dangerous strangers.

We also start our way up the river again and to change our camp close to the Portuguese.

We travel about five hours, sometimes by the crest of the cliffs, sometimes through the plains bordering the river. Everywhere, in the forest, it is necessary to open the way with an ax.

In the evening, we stop in a ford very close to the royal palace, where a path of Ombandja ends.

Thursday, 29th of July - We depart again, very early, and we climb again the plateau. The edges of the valley offer lovely sceneries. Sometimes, the rocks of the cliff form amphitheatres covered by trees and descend gently to the river. The plateau seems wholesome and free of miasma. Finally, at the beginning of the afternoon, we stop at a place called Ololika, where there is an excellent ford, not far away from the habitations of the Portuguese. This place should be the end of my trip. From here, a part of the expedition will head up to Moçâmedes, while the other one will continue the hunt. Ololika is located a bit northwest of Iquera, about fourteen miles from Quilevi and at thirty miles from Omuparara. We are at approximately four hundred miles of Omaruru.

Friday, 30th of July - Early in the morning, I go to examine the ford, but this one can only be crossed by pirogue. I believe that, indeed, there are only three or four months in the year when you can cross the river by cart, from September to January. I find Portuguese there who come to visit us. They spend the day at camp and give us a lot of information about Moçâmedes. It takes eight days to go from Humbe to Huila and fifteen days from Huila to Moçâmedes, but the carriers ordinarily take fifteen days to make this journey. They spend four days from Huila to Ongambuê, four days from Ongambuê to Hai and two days from Hai to Huila. They always follow the Kakulovar River.

The Portuguese from Humbe do not have wagons; all the transports from here to Moçâmedes are made by carriers. These ones charge 2,500 "*reis fortes*" (former Portuguese currency which is about 12 Frs. and 77c.) to transport about 30 kilos (60 pounds) from Moçâmedes to the Kunene.

From Moçâmedes to Capangombe, there is a good road for carts. In this locality, cotton, coffee and sugar cane are cultivated a lot. With the latter product, liquor is manufactured, very popular among the Indigenous people.

The only trade between Humbe and Moçâmedes consists of cattle and some ivory. The importation of slaves is actually banned in the Portuguese Colony; no slave can now be sold in Moçâmedes. The Portuguese of Humbe still buy some in the neighboring tribes, but cede them to the Indigenous people of Humbe, in exchange of cattle. They buy each slave for a barrel of liquor (about 60 Frs.) and resell them for three heads of cattle to the Indigenous people of Humbe.

These Portuguese are, mostly, poor and work for two dealers of Moçâmedes, Mr Narciso and Mr Bastos, to whom they send the cattle in exchange of goods and provisions sent by them.

There is another shorter path to go to Moçâmedes through a neighboring tribe called Chavicua, from the race of Cimbeba. From there, it would be easy to reach Porto Alexandre, even with wagons, but these Chavicua refuse to allow the Portuguese to go through their territory.

The Portuguese had brought with them a letter from Mr Ferreira de Almeida, governor of Moçâmedes, for the Boers. It was addressed to Mr. Bawer, a Boer of our expedition, who had participated, last year, in the war against the Humbe and whom the Portuguese soon recognized, as well as Mr Botha, whose servant was devoured by a crocodile while crossing the river, holding the tail of a horse. They asked me to deliver the letter to Mr. Bawer, which I did.

We opened it immediately to know its contents. In this letter, the Portuguese governor was granting the territory of Huila to the Boers, to settle there. He was exempting them of taxation for a certain number of years, he was allowing them to run their businesses by themselves; but they should recognize the suzerainty of Portugal and to submit themselves to the Portuguese legislation. The letter was then sent to Mr Jordan, who made it reach the hands of the Boers, recommending them to send immediately a commission to Huila, in order to finalize this deal. The Portuguese of Humbe, meanwhile, received another message: they were ordered to help the Boers when they reached the river and to guide them to Huila. The Portuguese government took charge of compensating them for the expenses coming out of this trip.

Mr D'Almeida, a coloured boy, originally from Kakonda, told us that there are many elephants between Humbe and Ongambué, in the tribe of the Chavica. A part of the expedition was designated to go to explore this region with Mr Almeida, requesting for this, permission to the king who immediately granted it. In that same night, Mr Bawer, Mr Bussel and Mr Almeida left for this expedition.

Saturday, 31st of July - Mr Severino, one of the Portuguese of Humbe, comes to visit us early in the morning. He brings presents from his poultry, some dozens of eggs and half of a piglet. He spends the whole day with us. He is waiting, at any time, for three hundred carriers from Moçâmedes. The Portuguese of Humbe are in a number of fourteen, all employed in trade. They complain a lot about being at the mercy of the Indigenous people, who often insult and steal from them. They live in a kind of slavery, but they support all of these miseries to be able to continue their business. There are not rich, but they make a living. Only one of them, Mr Celorico⁴⁰ had acquired certain assets: he is the great capitalist of the place. When the dry season comes, all these traders cross the river and spread among the various tribes of the Ovambo, bringing liquor, rifles and beads. They have also many complaints about these small kinglets, which make them endure all kind of indignities and annoyances; but, in the end, and despite some losses, they manage to make some profits. Within a few years, the only trade of Ovambo will be cattle, and, as the British of the Cape cannot take advantage of it due to the difficulties of its transport, it is evident that the monopoly of trade is reserved for the Portuguese of Moçâmedes. These ones send the cattle to the entire west coast, up to Gabon, which from there receives all their supplies of fresh goods.

In the afternoon, Mr. Dufour, who had gone to Humbe last night, came back and announces the arrival of the first carriers with the whole caravan.

There were perturbations in Ongambué: the *soba* of this region killed a complete family of Portuguese. They say that this massacre took place by mistake. It is a very unfortunate fact.

Mr Dufour calculates the latitude of the place. Our camp in Ololika is at 16° 50'; the residence of the king is located at west, on the other side, but at the same latitude, which is due to the southwest direction of the river. Iquera (Great Ombandja) is at 17° 8'. There is, therefore, from here to Iquera, in a straight line, twenty British miles or seven French leagues. It is a day and half by cart or five hours of march.

⁴⁰ Nickname of the trader António José de Almeida.

Sunday, 1st of August - King Chahongo sent us beer, but was very angry with the importance which, he says, the Portuguese are assuming concerning the expedition: - Was it because of me or because of them that you came here? - He had prohibited Mr Almeida to cross the river at the ford of Hunda; he forbids it now, and peremptorily, to the Portuguese who visit us. He had known that the poor Severino came here yesterday; he called him and forbade him to return to the camp. He wants to indicate us himself the good places for hunting, which he knows better than the Portuguese. - If they know the places where the elephants are - he says ironically - why do they not take their horses and their wagons, and go hunt them? - Well, he knows very well that the Portuguese have neither one nor the other.

Monday, 2nd of August - Mr Dufour and Mr Anderson depart for the kingdom of Evare. Chahongo sends word to Mr. Erickson that he is waiting to talk to him.

As the Portuguese are forbidden to return to the left bank, I take the occasion to go to see the king and ask him permission to go and visit them. When I arrived at the river bank, about fifteen oxen were crossing it by swimming, with an Indigenous man behind them and who was pushing them to the opposite bank; it seems that the oxen are used to crossing the river like that. Three are for Mr Erickson and the remaining twelve are intended to Iquera. I see with pleasure that this good king Iquera is in excellent relations with his neighbors, both the Humbe and the Kwambi. It is only against the tribe of the Oncuacua that he keeps some resentment. He accuses them of the intention of stealing cattle from him and he wanted Mr Erickson to get in war against them, but he declined his proposal with the greatest prudence.

Chahongo immediately grants us permission to visit the Portuguese and designates a guide to take me to them. At my great surprise, I recognize this guide, Quesongo, the same one who had taken me, last year, to the residence of Quipandeca and had been entrusted of my mail to Moçâmedes.

Immediately, I depart with three Ovambos, Inani, Condoro and Chicongo. The latter is a young teacher, educated by the Finnish missionaries of Ondonga. He is accompanying the expedition as a Chacopi teacher, to whom he is teaching to read. This man seems to me endowed with a great character, but, unfortunately, he is Lutheran. It is infinitely regrettable that the Protestantism has preceded the Catholic missionaries in this region.

After four hours of journey, we reached the house of Mr Freitas. Four Portuguese had just arrived from Moçâmedes, accompanied by carriers. They opened up the boxes and offered me liquor and figs from Algarve. From the house of Mr Freitas, I went to the house of Mr. Severino, where I spent the night. This good gentleman gave supper to my people and prepared an excellent bed for me.

Tuesday, 3rd of August - Early in the morning, I went successively to the houses of Mr Almeida, Mr Andrade and Mr Hispanhola. The Almeida brothers have a beautiful farm, with a large numbers of cows, donkeys, goats and pigs. They also have a magnificent poultry, full of Cochín chickens, among which are raised several ducks and other aquatic birds of the river. These ones are perfectly domesticated.

Mr Hispanhola inhabits the ruins of a kind of fortress, which was built by the Portuguese when they occupied the region. These ruins are situated at an angle formed by the Kakulovar and Kunene rivers. Here lived, as they informed me, Mr Mata, but the garrison was on the right bank of the Kakulovar, as it is indicated in the Portuguese maps. I go down to the Kakulovar, where the water is whitish and muddy. This water course seems insignificant and, yet, it comes from the heights of Huila. Various Portuguese are living on the other side of this small river. I also wanted to visit them, but I realize that all these Portuguese are visibly scared and embarrassed to see me well in the middle of the Indigenous people. They fear something nasty from their side, just as it happened last year with the Boers. Seeing the unrest of these poor people, I decided to return to the camp. At the time of my departure, they gave me a lot of presents, offering me the most beautiful examples of their poultry and Mr Almeida lends me a great donkey to carry me up to the river. Some say that they had met me in Moçâmedes, times ago, and one remembers to have accompanied me from the fortress of Capangombe to the house of Mr Brochado.

At noon, I am at the banks of the river, after having received the most benevolent reception from the natives, whose quarters I crossed alone, which leads me to believe that the apprehensions of Portuguese have a lack of foundation. The region on this side the river is, in everything, like the rest of the Ovambo; there are the same cultures, the same vegetation, the same houses and the same customs. The baobab trees are very abundant and seem to form, sometimes, real forests. The American cotton grows wonderfully here; I saw magnificent peduncles around the fields. I think the culture of tropical plants could be tried, already, in these regions, but so far not the slightest experience has been made in this sense; not even orange or lemon trees can be found, which would certainly grow well here.

The river, on this bank, is not barred by cliffs as it is on the opposite bank; so, it spreads away, forcing the Portuguese to establish at a considerable distance to be protected from the floods. And the result is that, during the dry season, they only have the water from the Kakulovar to drink, which is detestable. The left bank with its high plateau would be much healthier.

Wednesday, 4th of August – In the afternoon, Mr Bawer, Mr Bussel and Mr Almeida arrived from the country of the Chavicua. The latter not being used to the fatigues of hunting, seems to be exhausted and comes with a fever. They killed two ostriches, five zebras and various other animals, for the great satisfaction of the Indigenous people who had feasted with them.

This tribe of the Chavicua is from the race of the Cimbeba. They have a lot of cattle and cultivate the land. There are no *omarambas* in this northern side of the river, but the lands, even though they are flat, are rising imperceptibly. The hunters find, in this remote tribe, people from Ondonga busy with the hunting of ostriches. The Chavicua, very peaceful and affable, do not seem to deserve the bad reputation created by the Portuguese of Humbe. However, it is very difficult to study them well in such a short visit.

Mr Dufour also returned from his trip to the Evare, but without having reached this tribe. He found the forest very dense and stopped beside Mr Vanzyl's wagon, who had just killed two giraffes. This latter had come up to the residence of Quilula, *soba* of the *Ombandja Pequena* (Little Ombandja), who received him well. This *Ombandja Pequena* is only two or three hours

away from the river. In this place, the Kunene is not margined by cliffs, but it is said that they reappear further.

In the evening, Mr Erickson gathered all the hunters to decide what direction should the expedition take. Mr Bawer and Mr Bussel declare that there are neither sufficient elephants nor ostriches in the northern bank of the river to keep all the people actively busy. The hunters put major objections to Mr Erickson's trip to Moçâmedes; they say that they will lose precious time waiting for his return, that the hunting season will end without an acceptable result, that all the elephants must have gone to between the Kunene and the Kavango, and that it is where they should head immediately, without wasting more time around Humbe. All these considerations impress Mr Erickson who, in consequence of this, renounces his trip to Moçâmedes and announces, for the following day, the departure of the expedition to the Evare.

Thursday, 5th of August – As I have to separate from the expedition here, to resume the path of Damara, I make my preparations for departure and I send my mail to Europe through Mr Almeida, who will see to sending it to Moçâmedes. It contains a letter for the Council for the Propagation of Faith. Mr Erickson asks me to take two boxes with stuffed birds and one with ostrich feathers to Omaruru for him, and then he adds to my coupling two large oxen, meaning I now have a total of 17. Mr. Dufour takes the lead; he gives me his farewells and departs in that same night.

Friday, 6th of August – The carts start their way early in the morning, but not all take the same path. One is sent to Mr Botha, commander of the Boer of Kaoko; a second heads to the tribe of Ondonga and Vahinga; the others take the path of Evare and I leave the expedition at seven o'clock in the morning, to return to the residence of the *soba* Iquera.

I cannot take the path of Omuparara, which we had followed to get here. It would be necessary, indeed, to make a big journey. So, I decide to go directly from Ololika to Iquera; it will give me some work, but it will be useful to me later as well as to the other missionaries.

King Iquera sent me a guide, who shall bring me to his residence. This guide meets several of his friends from *Ombandja Pequena* and one of them tells me that he knows the best direction to be taken, and he is in charge of the indication of the new path.

We go ahead slowly, alternately crossing *omarambas* and forests, through which it is necessary to open way with an ax. The night comes and we have not reached the first settlement. The Ombandjas accompanying us are loaded with meat which was given to them by the hunters; for me, I still have a zebra thigh; so, we stop at the edge of the forest, we prepare a good meal and we spend the night there.

Saturday, 7th of August – At about ten o'clock in the morning, we arrive at a small settlement of *Ombandja Pequena* called Lando, which is the residence of my second guide. I suspect that he had led us far to the east just to make us pass through his habitation, which vexes me strongly. Indeed, if king Quilula comes to know that I go through his territory so incognito, he may get angry or I may, at least, have to give him a gift, a ceremony which becomes expensive when repeated many times. I show my dissatisfaction to the guide and I choose another one. My new guide does not take long to drive the wagon to a wide *omaramba*, which immediately is indicated

to me as being the one which will lead us to Iquera and which extends up to Kwambi. We are clearly on a good path. In the afternoon, we reach the first settlement of *Ombandja Grande* and we spend the night there.

Sunday, 8th of August - After three hours of journey through the *omaramba*, we reach Iquera. On the way, we come by Dimozito's farm, his son, who hastens to come to the wagon. He tells us that the path which we are following is the shortest, but that there are many others which also lead to the river. We could, indeed, get there on the same day; but in order to avoid tiring the oxen, the best is to go to sleep in Lando, reaching the Kunene the next day in the morning.

Monday, 9th of August - I continued the cleaning and the weeding of the land for the mission so that, on my return, the chopped down trees are already dry and can be easily burned. I trace a great avenue from the place of the future constructions up to the beautiful springs of Ovare. The king asks me so insistently for one of my big Portuguese chickens that I have no other choice but to give it to him. These chickens provide me a great quantity of eggs. Every time the cart stops, the cage doors are open for them and they walk around without going too far, without getting lost and, above all, without ever daring to lay the eggs out of the cage; upon departure, they take their place again in the wagon. Thus, we have fresh eggs throughout the trip, which is a precious commodity. Many hunters use the system of installing them in a large leather bag, suspended underneath the car.

Tuesday, 10th of August - This morning, I just finished the necessary cleanings for the installation of the first constructions and the *soba* promised to watch over it, in order to ensure that no one establishes himself in that land during my absence. Before my departure for the river, I entrusted him with the custody of a number of objects which were unnecessarily obstructing my cart. He gave back everything to me, without having lost or misplaced anything. Large amounts of sorghum and beans are brought to me, of which I make a good provision for Omaruru and, at night, I am going to say goodbye to the *soba*, and announce to him my departure for tomorrow morning.

In fact, the sun increases its intensity from day to day and the springs are drying up; the return will become, day by day, more painful and difficult. I do not want, like last year, to see myself forced to wait for the rainy season.

Friday, we arrive at Orendieno and Sunday morning at the well of Nimezia, where we spend the day.

Monday, 16th of August – In the afternoon, we arrive on the lands of king Nihombo, who installs me close to his habitation and hands me over a letter from Mr Chapman, son of the famous traveller with the same name. Mr Chapman is close to the Ongangera tribe, hunting ostriches. He had heard about my arrival at Kwambi and shows desire in meeting me. I set this meeting for Thursday the 19th of August, near the springs of Uvuzia.

Tuesday, 17th of August - Nihombo manifests a huge commitment in my foundation of a mission on his land. He had already prepared the necessary wood for the constructions and shows it to me, gathered at his palace. I had to tell him that I was already committed with Iquera, his neighbor but, nevertheless, I would try to make some missionaries come to establish themselves

close to him, demanding, however, the greatest freedom to move from one tribe to another, as desired. I ask him, then, for a land in a high and salubrious place and he indicates one to me, close by, which seems to gather the necessary conditions. After this, I announced to the king my departure for this afternoon, telling him that I have a meeting with Mr Chapman and cannot spend more time with him. He complains that I am giving so little time to him after having spent nearly two weeks with Iquera, making me promise that I will return. He insists that a person of his court, called Camania, will accompany me to Omaruru and stay there with me until my return, and I am obliged to give him this satisfaction. This Camania is of Herero origin, but has been for a long time under the service of Nihombo, having travelled through all the tribes of the Ovambo, from south to north of the Kunene. I collect from him a large number of geographic information. At night, we are going to sleep in Oquihoro, the last village on the way to Uvuzia. The king sends us there a calf and a large portion of salt, as a farewell gift.

Wednesday, the 18th and Thursday, the 19th of August - On Thursday in the morning, when I was already close to Uvuzia, I see Mr Chapman coming, on horseback, followed by a servant. He only received my letter in the evening and hastened to answer it. He is camping at 4 hours away from here, along the *omaramba* Oquipoco and, a few days before, he had been in Tamantzu, along Ongangera at the same *omaramba*. In these places, there is plenty of water throughout the year and the sources are full of fish. We continue the journey together and soon we find, in Uvuzia, two Europeans who were hunting birds in the *omaramba*. They were Mr Leon and Mr Carlson, dealers from Olukonda who, last year, had offered me a very kind hospitality.

These gentlemen are on a recreation tour through the Ovambo. We have lunch together and, then, Mr Leon and Mr Carlson head towards the camp of Mr. Chapman. This one offers me a large provision of giraffe meat, dried in the sun.

Saturday, 28th of August – It has been approximately ten days since I left Uvuzia, giving some rest to my oxen, both in Nohorongu and in Okaokana, where pastures are excellent. Okaukuejo, where I arrived today is known to be very healthy.

Monday, 31st of August – I am at the springs of Ombika, where the Berg Damara and the Bushmen are living. The chief of the Bushmen is called Cobosip and is always living here or in Okaukuejo. He is a vassal of the king of Kwambi and also uses the Ovambo name of Iombo. I go to visit his village, where I find charming, strong and fat children, without being able to understand which kind of feeding system they have, because the Bushmen do not have any kind of cultures; and, concerning cattle, they only have a few goats. They live exclusively on wild roots and game, which they manage to catch with traps or shooting with their rifles. The son of Cobosip just killed a giraffe, which means a big party for the whole tribe. They bring the whole meat to the chief, who sells me a portion and gives me, additionally and as a present, the innards, highly esteemed by them and of which I also had appreciated the delicate flavor.

Tuesday, 1st of September - Last night, a bushman brought me, from the forest, some big tubercles, called *obu* in the Bushman language and *otivi* in the Damara language. They were of different shapes: round, long and forked, but the bushman says that they all belong to the same type of plant. I had them grilled in the oven and ate them with pleasure. The main residences of the Bushmen, in this region, are in Otavi and Naidaus. The name is *sap* in the singular, *san* in the plural and *sakhoin* to designate the race in general.

The indigenous name of the Berg Damara is *Hokoin* and the one for the Hottentots is *Namakoin* and *Naman*; the one of the Cimbeba, in the Hottentot language, is *Kumaka Daman* or *Daman* sheperds. Each tribe of Bushmen has, as well, its particular name. We find, along the Kavango river, the Khum, the Haikum, those of Ombika, and afterwards the Masarua the Mukwangala, etc. All these Bushmen are starting to be well supplied with rifles and, soon, they will be able to make themselves be respected by the neighboring tribes. Unfortunately, they also use them to destroy each other. The vital resistance of this race is an almost inexplicable thing. The Bushmen were, obviously, the first aboriginals of Southern Africa, but had to retreat in face of all successive emigrations of the Hokuins, the Hottentots and the Cimbebas, tribes who did not cease to make them a fierce war, without being able, however, to destroy them. They occupy all the deserts of Southern Africa, where it seems that no other human being could find means of subsistence. One could say that these places are preferred by the Bushmen, who endure there without herds or cultures. The Bushmen are obviously a superior race to the Hokhoins race.

8th of September – After crossing Chivacundo, where there are two small settlements, one of the Berg Damara and another of the Bushmen - Chimongundi and Outjo – we arrive finally at Pallafontein, where the first Damara can be met. The good king Ombondyuhó immediately hurried to visit me. When I had passed there, he gave me, as a present, a goat so docile and domesticated that we did not have the courage to kill it. It followed my wagon up to the Kunene and returned again with us. It never walked away from the cart and had the function of being a guide for the goats which we were buying. When the day had been very tiring and it had not managed to get enough food, it would go up to the cart, at night, and hit me with its paw on my knees, asking for a ration of sorghum or beans. When we return to the Ovambo, I count on still bringing it with me.

As I feared the trip from Pallafontein to Ozongombo, nineteen hours without a drop of water, I decided to take another path, a little longer but where we would find water in abundance.

Ombondyuhó immediately offered me his nephew, Caveriua, to serve me as a guide. It was even decided that he would accompany me to Omaruru, in order to get news about the war which had just broke out between the Hottentots and the Damara.

We took, therefore, the new way of Ocaquero and, on the evening of the 15th, we arrived at Omaruru, with a big entourage, which had been increasing from the Ovambo to the Damara. I did not want to disturb the community and stayed in my wagon. Great were the surprise and the joy of the good Priests when they saw me entering the chapel, in the morning, for the prayer. I said Mass in thanksgiving and then, Father Hogan handed me the mail from Europe, which brought me the news of the happy disposition of the Portuguese Government concerning the mission and their desire that the civilizing action of this mission should extend towards the north of the Kunene, to the colony of Moçamedes. Let's hope that my expectations may finally be realized also on this side, managing the evangelization of these beautiful and interesting regions, which seem to be willing to receive the word of God.

After having made the transcription of these parts from my diary, I still wish to give some news about the final results of the expedition, which gave me so benevolent aid. After we separated in Ololika, it followed the river banks for two days and after two more days through the forest, it arrived at the Evare tribe. From there, it continued towards the north for six days, crossing a

heavily forested region, inhabited by Bushmen, perhaps the Nhembas, indicated on the maps. It found itself, then, not far from the Amboella, in a populated district of elephants, but wooded and swampy in such a way that hunting became very difficult. Mr Erickson then resolved to return with his staff to Omaruru. As for Mr Dufour, he persisted in staying in this region with Mr Vanzyl and another Boer; but major obstacles overcame later. After a certain time, not far away from the Kavango, Mr Vanzyl had a misunderstanding with one of his Hottentot servants and this miserable one, to revenge himself, went in the darkness of night to the cart of his boss, shooting him with his shotgun, at close range. The unfortunate old man, who still lived for about an hour, died in the arms of Mr Dufour, asking him to transmit his final farewell to his wife and his children.

The other hunter then decided to return to Damara and urged Mr Dufour to follow his example. But this one, who did not want to give up on the explorations, stayed alone in this isolated region, having as companions only the Bushmen whom he took to his service. We hope that God will not fail him in such a critical and difficult situation. He has, with him, some good horses and I think that, if necessary, he may reach Huila and Moçâmedes, without too much difficulty. The region where he should be now is still

Map of the Trekken Boers

completely unexplored and, there, he will be able to collect many numerous and interesting geographical notions.⁴¹

As for the Boers, as the newspapers already had announced, they are now all settled in the beautiful and healthy plateau of Huila.

At the end of this report of my trip, it might not be useless to summarize briefly and at the same time to complete, under certain points, the geographical teachings which these two successive explorations allowed me to collect about this region of the Ovambo and other adjacent countries. It is what I am going to do, casting a quick glance over each of the Ovambo tribes, as well as on those which are neighbouring them.⁴²

These tribes are in the number of sixteen, being five at west, six in the centre and five at east.

i - Tribes from the West

⁴¹ The brave obstinacy of the young and wise explorer, would, unfortunately, be fatal for him. Shortly after the departure of his companions, Mr Dufour was murdered by the Ovambo. His papers had been collected by Mr Erikson; but neither his body nor his clothes could ever be found.

Note of the translator Gastão de Sousa Dias – On page 20 of Vol. I of the work Artur de Paiva (Edição da Agência Geral das Colónias, 1938 – Edition of the General Agency for the colonies, 1938), it says: "Named in 1885 to command effectives who should be incorporated in the expedition to Kakonda, he fights in Fendi, on the left bank of the Kunene river, and defeats the gentile who had robbed and murdered the French explorer Dufour, withdrawing after the expedition having occupied Luceque. For his action, he was praised by the General Government of Angola and awarded with the Medal of Military Value".

⁴² To accompany this interesting study, it is necessary to follow the letter which we had published in our number at the end of the 7th of October. (Letter from Ovambo, pag. 122).

The five tribes from the West are:

1 - *Ongangera* - This tribe occupies the southwest of Ovambo. It was once very powerful and its pastures were stretching, it is said, to Okimboro. It was the Ongangera who dug the deposits of water of Nohorongu and Oacuana. But they have become very weak and impoverished by the Hottentot chief Jonker Afrikaner, who joined the king Chicongo of Ondonga to pillage them. The current king is called Jambo.

2 - *Ucualuzi* (the *Ocarute*, for the British) - The land of the Ucualuzi is bathed by the *omaramba* Oquipoco. It is wooded and very fertile. The current king is called Chicongo.

3 - *Ucualuazi* - This tribe is only known since our last exploration. It belongs to the Ovambo race and is not important. Its government has a republican form.

4 - *Ondombozoro* - The same happens with this tribe as with the preceding one: only recently it became known to the Europeans. It is also a republic of the Ovambo race.

5 - The *Vahinga* are of the cimbebasia or Vachimba race and inhabit the southern bank of the Kunene River. They are farmers and, at the same time, do agriculture as the Ovambos. There is no other tribe between them and the mountains of the Kaoko. One of its most important people is Eroré, who always had been very benevolent to the Europeans. However he is not actually a king as it was presumed; he only has a great influence.

II - Tribes from the Centre

1 - *Kwambi* - The Kwambi is, today, one of the richest and most powerful tribes of the Ovambo, though their territory is quite restricted. As the Ondonga, this tribe does not have forests and has the appearance of a large orchard. The current king is Nihombo.

2 - *Ombandja Grande* (*Big Ombandja*) - This tribe also has the name of Kwamato. Its territory is crossed by numerous *omarambas*, covered with forests and very fertile. The population seems to be considerable. The king began to be called Iquera after his coronation; before it, he was called Eninga. The tribe does not really extend up to the southern bank of the Kunene River; the king of Humbe, called Chahongo, is the holder, in this place, of both sides of the river, although he only has a habitation on the left bank.

3 - *Ombalando* or *Orondo miti* - The Ombalando and the Miti-Orondo were wrongly considered as two distinct tribes. Both names denote a single and same tribe. The Ombalando are situated between Ongangera, Ucualuzi, Kwambi and *Ombandja Grande*. Consequently they cannot have a long enough territory for the hunting of elephants and ostriches; and for this reason, they are not visited very much by traders. The other tribes are fighting them constantly, without being able, however, to obtain great advantages over them. A bad reputation had been created to them until not too long ago, which they are far from deserving. They are as harmless as the other Ovambo and welcome well the Europeans, seeking to attract them to their land.

4. *Oncuancua* - This small tribe is located between Ombalando, Ondongona and *Ombandja Grande*. It is a republic and the indigenous people are from the Ovambo race. King Iquera

wanted us to start a war with them, accusing them of stealing his cattle; but we declined, prudently, such a proposal. This tribe is still not known to the Europeans.

5. *Ondongona* - This tribe of Cimbeba is a neighbor of the Vahinga, from whom it is separated only by the *omaramba* Oquipoco. It is the only one, with the Vahinga, who, in the Ovambo, is established on the left bank of the river; all the others are living at a certain distance from it, inland. On the right bank, on the contrary, the populations prefer to settle on the bank of the Kunene. These Ondongona form a small republic; another part of the tribe is established on the northern bank.

6 – *Ombanja Pequena* (Little Ombandja) - The kingdom of Ombanja Pequena is situated between the *Ombandja Grande* and the Kwanyama. The current king is Quilula. His territory seems to extend up to the river, being one of the smallest states of the Ovambo.

III - Tribes from the East

1 - *Ondonga* – It was the first tribe to be visited by the British, having turned into the trade centre of the Ovambo. A house from the Cape has a trading post there and there are four stations of Lutheran missionaries from Finland established there, one in Olokonda, residence of King Combondé, two in Omolonga and the fourth in Omondonga, where the residence of the former king, Chicongo, was. It is, after the Kwanyama, the most important tribe of the Ovambo. Its territory extends far, to the south, up to the copper mines of Otavi, of which it claims the possession, which is, however, contested by the Damara. The population can be estimated in 15,000 souls.

2 - *Kwanyama* – It is the biggest and most populous of all the tribes. Its territory extends from the Kunene River to the Kavango River and its total population can be estimated at 60,000 souls. Its king, Quipandeca, plays a despotic power over his own vassals and subjects the neighbouring tribes, the Evare and the Kafima, to constant annoyances.

The Kwanyama, sulcated by numerous *omarambas*, is of a great fertility. The presumptive heir of the crown is called Nambadi and is living at the north, not far from the Evare. This young prince shows great friendship to the Europeans and has civilized manners, but he is feared by Quipandeca, who he makes sure of keeping away and prevents, as much as he can, the traders of selling European weapons to him. In all the Ovambo tribes there is, so, a presumptive heir to the crown, who should succeed the king by hereditary right and who, frequently, makes the reigning potentate leave this world prematurely, in order to quickly reach the power. This heir is never the king's son, but the son of one of his sisters.

3 - *Evare* - The Evare is located north of the Kwanyama, not far from the bank of the Kunene. The country is flooded by the *omarambas* and the vegetation is luxuriant. It has a lake with a lot

of fish and full of hippos. This tribe is located only four days of cart from Ololika. Its current king is called Ombinga.

4 - *Ehanda* - At two days by cart, northeast of the Evare, is the small tribe of Ehanda, whose young king is called Ongumi. On his territory, there is a rich mine of iron, from which all the Ovambo is provided with iron.

5 - *Kafima* - This tribe, at four days east of the Kwanyama, suffers greatly from the depredations of these ones. And, due to that, the whole population gathered in a kind of fortress, surrounded by deep ditches and solid palisades, which makes its defense easier. The king is called Nehuzi. This region is not very frequented by the Europeans.

This is the list of the sixteen tribes south of the Kunene; fourteen of them are from the Ovambo race and only two belong to the Cimbeba, namely the Vahinga and the Ondongona.

Tribes from the right bank of the Kunene

As for the tribes from the right bank, those who are towards the west, or in other words, between the Humbi and the Ocean, are evidently Cimbeba⁴³. Among these last ones, I only met four, which are: the Ondongona, the Aolé, the Chavikwa and the Cuanancuari. The latter live in the mountains, approximately one day from the Hinga.

As for the tribes farther east, the Humbe, the Ecamba, the Mulondo and the Luceque, it would be impossible for me to precise exactly if they should be linked to the Ovambo or to the Cimbeba. The Ovambo want them to form with them a single race; but their language and their clothing have a great affinity with the Cimbeba. They are perhaps a product of the mixture of the two races, the Ovambo and the cimbebasica.

The other Ovambo tribes known, at north, are: the Ongambue (Gambos, for the Portuguese), the Quihita, the Hai, the Chipungo and the Chilengue.

I did not indicate, in the map, the different paths of the Ovambo, which lead from a tribe to another one, and which are nowadays too numerous. It would be enough to say that they are all linked to each other by excellent paths, travelled incessantly by the carts of the European and of the Indigenous people, because these latter are starting to appreciate the use of the carts. There is also a good path along the southern bank of the river, from the Vahinga to the Evare, and from the Evare to the Amboella, of six days to the north. Finally, the Boers opened also one from the Humbe to Huila, so it is nowadays easy to go by cart from Walvis Bay to the Portuguese Colony.

Omarambas

⁴³ It was due to the name of these tribes that it was called Cimbebasia to the entire region which extends from the Kunene to the Ovambo.

It was also not possible for me to trace, in the map, all the omarambas or natural canals of the Kunene River; its network is too complicated and I had, therefore, to confine myself to the indication of the main arteries. There are a lot of ramifications, whose exploitation would require an excessively long work. For example, from Ombandja Grande to Omuparara and Quilari, we cross or follow several of them; from Quilari to Ololika we do not find any since the river, on this side, is edged by high cliffs, which the waters cannot overcome; but from Ololika to Lando, in Ombandja Pequena, we cross three; and when we were in Orendieno, the hunters, who scattered everywhere, found them in all directions, in such a way that it can be said that this omaramba network covers the entire surface of the region. However, the passages where the water comes out of the river bed are not very frequent. From Ondongona to Ololika, not a single passage for the exit of the waters can be found. Between Ondongona and Vahinga, flows the large omaramba Quipoco which ramifies afterwards, waters the whole remaining Ovambo and comes after, between Kwambi and Uvuzia, to meet the omaramba Ovare. This latter leaves the Kunene at northeast of Ololika, bathes both Ombandjas, a part of the territory of the Ombalando, the Kwambi, joins the Quipoco, passes in Uvuzia and, from there, heads through Ecuma to the lake of Etosha, common receptacle of all the omarambas.

The Kaoko

For the description of the southern bank of the Kunene River to be complete, I must also say a few words about the region lying between the Ovambo and the sea, described as the Kaoko. Its limits, at east, are formed by the mountains which surround the plains of the Ovambo and starts, on this side, the rugged and rocky region which extends to the coast. The line of demarcation with the Ovambo could start from the river to the falls and pass through Ombombo, Chomahahé, Omahama, Ocamania and Chitembe. The Brandberg mountain can be regarded as its southern boundary.

With the exception of the coast, which is occupied by the Hottentots, the entire Kaoko is inhabited by Cimbeba, called Kaoko Damara in his region.

Formerly, they were very numerous and the population could be estimated at eighty thousand souls, but for fifty years, the Hottentots and the Herero, despite being also Cimbeba, have devastated this region in such a way that a large part of the population emigrated, either to the north of the Kunene or to the Damara, where they have today Camareti as king, whose residence is not far from the mount Chovonjupa. Only a few people of the ancient population stays in the Kaoko, but so impoverished that their condition is equal to the Bushmen and the Berg Damara. However, I have heard that between Otavi and the Kunene, there are still some rich Cimbeba tribes.

The Kaoko is very rough and covered with mountains and cliffs. The springs are abundant and the pastures excellent. This region is, from this point of view, considered superior to the Damara.

Three years ago, it was fully explored by the Europeans, who travelled it all the way up to the coast, without being able, yet, to find there a single port.

Some hunters even climbed to the Kunene, by cart, but always found it impassable for vehicles. The northern bank is, indeed, steep and rocky, and the southern bank is bordered by sand dunes, which is impossible to cross by cart. There is still to add that, in surroundings of the sea, the perpetual absence of rainfall does not allow to find enough food for the cattle. This region has, therefore, absolutely no future from the point of view of the European colonization.

The main watercourses which can be found in the Kaoko are: 1 - On the left bank of the Kunene, an important water line which runs between the mountains and flows into the Kunene, close to its passage; 2 - The Munutum river; 3 - The Nadas river; 4 - The Segomip river; 5- The Komip river; 6 - The kuarasip river; and 7 - The Okobarip river.

None of these rivers have a permanent course, at least on the surface; but, generally, water can be found by digging in their bed. Near the passage, the water is always plentiful, forming ordinarily a kind of a lagoon covered with reeds.

To the side of the springs, in the mountains, there are only insignificant streams which tumble from rock to rock and form, in some places, beautiful basins.

In the entire coastline, the Naras are abundant, up to half a day towards the inland. Last year, this region was inhabited by those emigrant Boers, who later went up to Huila and are there established.

Here are the few clarifications which I could collect during this long journey; I believe that the enumeration of the Ovambo tribes is complete, and that these pages will be sufficient to give you an idea about this interesting region.

VII

From Humbe to the Amboella
(1883)

Journey from Humbe to the Amboella

(1883)

(Travel diary of Father Duparquet)

It was on the 31st of July, 1883, that we left the Community of Humbe to go to the country of the Amboella. Three priests, Fr Hogan, Fr Campana and I, Brother Onofre and a dozen of Indigenous workers employed for the service of our two carts, composed the small caravan. The waters of the Kunene River still had remained deep, being impossible to cross it. So, we had to unload the carts and to transport them, piece by piece and with the help of pirogues, to the opposite bank. The locality where we were was called Mahonda and belonged to the kingdom of *Ombandja Pequena*.

I took advantage of our delay in Mahonda to explore freely the banks of the Kunene. During the rainy season, it should not have less than half a league of extension; when the waters maintain on its bed, it can measure about 140 meters of width. The whole vast space is then covered with large reeds (*cala magestis arenaria*) and other grasses which are an excellent feeding, in the dry season, for cattle.

On the 2nd of August, our final departure happened and we followed during the whole day the river bank, which is edged with magnificent trees.

The soba was, then, at the war against the Evale, but Sihepo, his father, received us kindly. I had already ordered a Portuguese to build a modest habitation, which would serve us as a step point in our journeys to the Amboella. The construction was not yet fully completed and we all laid hands on the work to complete this humble construction. Wednesday, the 8th of August, we launched our small chapel, celebrating there the holy sacrifice in honour of the glorious S. Michael, patron of this station, and soon after, we headed to the residence of the *soba* who, having already arrived from the war, had called us. After a few minutes of waiting, the young *soba* showed up. He was dressed in a European way and had affable and distinct manners. I told him that, for now, we were heading to the country of the Amboella, but that we would come back after the rainy season.

He promised us guides to accompany us to Pompala (Mapala Yacola-Casinga). We only spent three days at the residence of the *soba* and on Saturday, the 11th of August, after having received numerous gifts, we started our journey with the guides that he had given to us. Three hours later, we reached a large water ground, called Ponsolo, where, from many leagues around, a huge quantity of cattle came to drink. In the afternoon, after three hours of travel, we went to sleep next to a well, called Pochimbolonguela.

Because of the war between the Kwanyama and the Evale, I was concerned about the guides Namadi had given us, fearing that they could be killed by the Evale, their enemies. As I did not want to expose to any danger the life of these poor boys, I sent forward Fr Hogan with a first car to address the question to the *soba* of the Evale. The country was ruled by the old *soba* Nambinga (Mbinga), who was living alone at the bottom of his palace and whose main occupation was to bring rain to the Evale and to the other neighbouring regions. The administration was, in fact, in the hands of Cavaongélua and Hilelua, sons of two sisters of the *soba*, Dalimoe and Nanfico. The fierce war to Namadi was made by these two princes. Both were friends of Fr Hogan, who had met them in Humbe in a time when they were in exile and they gave us an excellent welcome. One was ruling the right bank of the Kuvelai River and the other one the left bank, where we were. Fr Hogan went on horseback to the residence of Cavaongélua, where he found four Boer carts which had just arrived there, after having crossed the entire western Zambezi valley, from the Barotzes to the Kwando River.

I sent some gifts to Nambinga, which, in turn, sent me a beautiful ox. Then, we went to Handa, following the left bank of the Kuvelai.

As the name of this river, still unknown in Europe, is destined to reappear often in the reports of the missionaries, I think it is useful to make here a short description of it and take advantage of the occasion to correct an error which I previously made myself, as well as many others (writers), regarding the annual floods of the Ovambo.

The Kuvelai River has its source in the same plateau which divides the basin of the Kunene from the one of the Kavango, at about 8° 15' south of latitude. Its source is located very close to the one of the Kalonga and of another river, which flows into the Kavango. Its course has a southwest direction to the Handa, where it takes a southerly direction to the Evale, which it crosses throughout its length. At the south end of the Evale, the Kuvelai forms a sort of lagoon, which does not flow at all its waters into the Kunene, as the Portuguese maps are erroneously indicating; in the rainy season, in the month of February, after having filled the lagoon of the Evale, the Kuvelai sends its surplus waters through all the *omarambas* of the Ovambo, to the Etosha lake which is its terminus.

There is, therefore, in the maps, a double error to be corrected. Firstly, the lagoon of the Evale, which is no more than the Kuvelai River, does not overflow into the Kunene; secondly, the Kunene does not send a single drop of water to the Ovambo. This is absolutely right. As this question, since the times of Mr Dufour, had been strongly agitated among the Europeans of the region, they followed step by step the left bank of the river, from Okahinga to the height of the Evale and they found it always bordered, sometimes by high cliffs, sometimes by high enough lands that would not allow any flow towards the Ovambo.

I must add that, as the soil was always descending, from the Kunene to Etosha, the rainwaters of the region also provide their quota to the *omarambas*. It is so that, at the residence of King Namadi, the *omaramba* of the locality is full from the month of January to May, and runs at a certain speed to the south; whereas, in the words of all the Indigenous people, the waters of the Kuvelai only arrive there in February. The course of this river has something analogous to the one of the Kavango, its eastern neighbour, which does not manage to reach beaches of the sea and gets lost in the high plateau of Central Africa, partly in the immense swamps below the Ovambucuchu, partly at the lake Ngami and partly in the swamp of Chapo and, finally, in Makarikari.

After two days of journey through the populations of the Evale, we continued our way along the Kuvelai River, during the whole day of the 14th. On the 15th, at noon, we arrived at a small mountain,

Map of the journey of Fr Duparquet from Humbe to the Amboella

called Omupa by the native, but to which the missionaries always called *Monte Assunção* (*Assumption Mount*), because it had been discovered on the day of this great feast.

From the Evale, the Kuvelai River flows into a deeply immovable bed and which, from distance to distance, forms beautiful basins filled with fish. The one existing at the foothill of the *Monte Assunção*, looked like, by its dimensions, a large tank. At east, there was a chain of mountains, with rich mines of iron from which the whole Ovambo is supplied. Nearby, there is a small tribe of Bushmen, who rushed to get acquainted with us, and since then, were serving us as guides and couriers.

Two days later, on the 17th, always following the course of the river, we arrived at the kingdom of Handa, where we were very well received by the *soba* Ovahila and his people. The region was once much more flourishing than it is today. But, either because of the civil wars or the incursions of the Ovambandja and of the Kwanyama, a considerable part of the population has spread to the surrounding tribes. The settlements which nowadays compose the kingdom are mostly built on a beautiful hill overlooking the river. The vegetation is almost equal to the one of the Ovambo. However, to the sides of the border, the baobab trees begin to disappear and we will not find them again.

We gave some presents to Ovahila, who, in his turn, gave us an ox. On the 18th, we started our way to the Amboella with a guide that the *soba* had given us and who was called Quicanamene. He is the son of the former chief of Hanha and we only have to praise this wonderful young man, who became one of our best friends.

On the 19th, we crossed the Kuvelai River, to not see it anymore, and on the 20th, at noon, we came to a valley full of beautiful springs (*Sendié*) and, at that time, enamelled with blue iris, which led us to give this place the name of *Lily Fontein*. I was marching at a certain distance from the carts when the natives, who were close to me, made me notice a big whirlwind of dust, around the springs. It was a large herd of animals which was coming there to drink and to rest for a while.

This valley of lilies forms the boundary between the kingdom of Hanha and the country of the Amboella, and its vegetation is completely different from the one of the Ovambo. The baobab, the persimmons, the oleander, the ramnus and the beer tree completely disappeared, to give

place to the *nocheira* (*chrysobalaum parinari*) and the acacias, which occupy the upper part of these high plateaux.

Tuesday, the 21st, after having crossed a large forest and the Paquitone River, we arrived at the Camene River, which at this time was not flowing anymore but where large deposits full of excellent water could still be found, here and there. The two rivers are flowing into the Okachitanda.

On the evening of the same day, we went to sleep on the banks of the Kalonga River, which is also flowing into the Okachitanda. The Kalonga, in this place, is very close to the Okachitanda, in a way that, on the next day, the 22nd of Wednesday, we arrived early at its banks, which we followed for some time until we reached the first settlement. The banks of this water course are of a great beauty and completely shaded by willows and spiced palm trees, which give a great charm to the landscape. There, I found the beautiful plants again which I already had seen in Huila and a few more which, I think, are still unknown to botanists. One is a large shrub, perhaps a *strychnos*, which gives fruits with the size of melons, but not comestible. I also noticed a *cobretum* with scarlet flowers, forming long wreaths of over a meter long. But what impressed me the most was an aquatic fern, fully immersed in water and whose roots were strongly attached to the rocks. Its fructification was very similar to the one of the *ophioglossum* and formed a sort of whitish spikes, which rise above the water. The leaves were extremely divided, just as the majority of the ones from the ferns.

We stopped for lunch at the first settlement, which is occupied by colonists coming from Hanha. Very high mountains are rising all around. We were at the south end of the mountain range called Quivela, by the Portuguese travellers Capelo and Ivens, and which divides the basin of the Kunene from the one of the Kavango.

After we had rested a bit, we continued the journey along the river and around half past twelve, we arrived at the residence of Prince Gongga, where the cart passed the river.

(Fr. Duparquet describes his visit to Tchimpolo, main chief of the region of Cassinga, and to Tchamba. He comes back afterwards to Gongga, to establish a mission there.)

This region - writes Fr. Duparquet - was explored by us and poor Mr Dufour. The mission of the Amboella is located at 15° 8 ' of south latitude and at 16° 14' of east longitude of Greenwich, at the altitude of 1,350 meters above sea level, on the right bank of the Okachitanda, which flows into the Kunene, between the kingdoms of Kamba and Mulondo, a little south of Quiteve.

There is, at the east of the mission, a colony coming from Handa and governed by a chief called Muene Cavi (Mwene Kauvi), who is from the same race of the Muhumbe.

Alongside the Kuvelai River, but to the east, another river called Cavundo (Kawundu) also flows to Kafima, which floods Kafima as the Kuvelai floods the Evale and the rest of the Ovambo.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ (Note from the translator Gastão de Sousa Dias – As it is impossible to have the complete original of this chapter, only excerpts are published, kindly provided by Rev. Fr Carlos Estermann).

Picture

Mission of Cassinga