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Entry Nr. 386 Badsoroso

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Aaron Spencer Fogleman and Robert Hanserd (eds.), *Five Hundred African Voices: A Catalog of Published Accounts by Africans Enslaved in the Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1586-1936* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2022).

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Name(s) of African providing account: **Bādsóróso = Richard Laudman**
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Source: Account printed on p. 7 of S. W. Koelle, *Polyglotta Africana*. London: Church Missionary House, Salisbury Square, Fleet Street, 1854.

Comments:

Koelle's remarks (p. 7) –

“Gungonima is about one and a-half day's journey from Girewara, the Bagbalar capital, and half a day from the large River Mora, which is not fordable even in the dry season. The Mora flows from Dagbana and Gulrenze, and goes down to Var and Nyiporonze. Bagbalenze is situated north-west of Gurenze, where a different language is spoken, and of Koama, with a language closely allied; west of Bakionze, where the same language is spoken, and east of which lies Nyambima where people speak like the Guresa; east of Badurrze, where a different language is spoken; north of Marrunia, pl. Basurrnina, where a cognate language is spoken; south of Var (sing. Vantina), with a different language. On his way to the sea Laudman passed through Kananze, with the same language; Kandsar, with a language like that of Gurenze; Yaruwa, with a Gebeze, and Dahome, all of which have likewise different languages.”

Text of Account:

p. 7

“Bagbalan, pl. Bagbalenze, which latter form is also used for the country.*-- From Badsoroso, or Richard Laudman, now in the barracks at Freetown; who, being the only representative of his tribe in Sierra Leone, was kindly permitted to come to me by the favour of Major O'Connor. He was born in the town Gungonima, where he was brought up, married three wives, and had a child of about five years of age when he was kidnapped at the instigation of his brother-in-law, and

sold to various owners, till at the end two years be reached the sea. He has been in Sierra Leone for two years and eight months.”

* Referring to the language Badsoroso spoke.

(See facsimiles below.)

2. Bāgbālar, *pl.* Bāgbālenze, which latter form is also used for the country.—From Bādşōrōso, or Richard Laudman, now in the barracks at Freetown; who, being the only representative of his tribe in Sierra Leone, was kindly permitted to come to me by the favour of Major O'Connor. He was born in the town Gūngōnīma, where he was brought up, married three wives, and had a child of about five years of age when he was kidnapped at the instigation of his brother-in-law, and sold to various owners, till at the end of two years he reached the sea. He has been in Sierra Leone for two years and eight months.

Remarks.—Gūngōnīma is about one and a-half day's journey from Girewāra, the Bāgbālar capital, and half a day from the large River Mōra, which is not fordable even in the dry season. The Mōra flows from Dagbāna and Gūrēnze, and goes down to Vār and Nyīpōrōnze. Bāgbālenze is situate north-west of Gūrēnze, where a different language is spoken, and of Kóama, with a language closely allied; west of Bākiōnze, where the same language is spoken, and east of which lies Nyambīma where people speak like the Gūrēşa; east of Bādūrze, where a different language is spoken; north of Marunīa, *pl.* Bāsurnīna, where a cognate language is spoken; south of Vār (*sing.* Vantīna), with a different language. On his way to the sea Laudman passed through Kānārze, with the same language; Kāndsar, with a language like that of Gūrēnze; Yārūwa, with a different language; Kūmbur, Dşalugbāra, Kōkurīnzi, Gbēze, and Dahōme, all which countries have likewise different languages.

chief town of the Kándšáre district, where he was kidnapped five years ago.

Remarks.—Gúrúntén, or the country of the Gúrèša, is situate west of Tori and Wólawóla, north-west of Kúmbura, a Muhammadan country east of Bágbálar, which is itself east of Yúlug or Yúleza, and one month's journey from Gúrma. Most of the people go naked in Gúrúntén, the women slightly covering themselves with twigs. The country contains the following districts, besides Kándšáre: Símbása, Sándjén, Dínér, Sínéša, Kábúsa, Nyándéu, Kalása, Wíasa, Wíar, Bakéša. There is a river in the country called Mýre, or Mýya, i.e. "great water," on which canoes are used, and which can be crossed on foot in certain places in the dry season. The same river reaches Yárúba and Kúbar. The neighbouring tribes, speaking different languages, are: Yárúba, Tor, Wólawóla, Báyár, Zargwéda, i.e. Háusa, Kambámána, i.e. Phúla. The Kámbor, or in pl. Kámbéza (i.e. "musketees," from kámbodó, "musket, gun"—"Ašántes come to war with the Gúrèša").

4. Gúrma.—From 'Adjína, or John Wilhelm, born in Bángu, and brought up at Dítáru, another Gúrma town, where he lived till about his twenty-fourth year. Three years after his being kidnapped, he was sold to the Spaniards in Ašánte. He has been in Sierra Leone six years, with four countrymen, who, however, are old, and have forgotten much of their native language.

Remarks.—Bángu is six days' journey from Sokotu. Gúrma is west of Háusa, from which it is separated by the Kóára, east of Móási. Also near Sansáui, Yándi, Sálega, Phóláni (i.e. Phúla), Bárba, Kotakóli.

B. Second Group—

1. Légba.—From Dárba, or James Macauley, of Kissy, born in the town Kúmdé, where he had three wives, and his first child was about seven years old before he was kidnapped and brought to Sierra Leone, where he has now been five years, with only two countrymen.

Remarks.—The same language is also spoken in Kóure, Séka, Sámüre, Teš. Légba is west of Kumérida, and Láma east of Dšélausa. Also near Fúndóde, Bídšóde, Séradera, Bárba, Sépádó, Bóro, Sáméra.

2. Káure.—From Sem, or Peter Kóndo, of Gloucester, born in the village Wúram, where he was brought up, and was probably upwards of thirty years old when he was kidnapped in the Básiare country, where he had gone to buy Guinea-corn. He was at once carried to the sea, and has now been in Sierra Leone more than thirty years, with now seven countrymen remaining.

Remarks.—Wúram is about an hour's journey from Láma, the Káure capital, and near the three mountains (i.e. púro), 'Edó, Kálungbařu, and Kúmdé. The Básiare country is two days' journey from Káure, and has a different language. Káure is situate west of Légba, east of Tem, where a different language is spoken. Also half a day's journey from Kírèra, with an allied language; four days from 'Agiai, or 'Adjai, with a different language. In coming to the sea, Sem passed successively Tádšar, Máló, Atogbáma, Gbési, 'Ege on the coast, near Popo.

3. Kíámba, or Dšámba, called Tem by the Káure, who are subject to them, and by the 'Asindše, i.e. Hausas.—From Bárena, or Andrew George, of Gloucester, born in the town Kíáfádo, where he was brought up, married, and had a child of about fourteen years of age when he was seized on account of a relative's debt and sold to the Gbési, who carried him to the sea by way of Dahóme. He has been in Sierra Leone twenty-three years, with some countrymen and two country-women.

Remarks.—Kíáfádo is the Kíámba capital, and is situated one day's journey from the River Mò, which cannot be forded in the rainy season, but in the dry season reaches to the loins, or under the arms, and has its source in the country of Kígábáfula, a Kíámba

dependency, near the village Bádire, and, flowing from east to west, reaches the country Gbánda, an Ašánte dependency, whence the Hausas bring their cola-nuts.

C. Third Group—

1. Kóama.—From Mápala, or Peter Johnson, of York, born in the town Gmáro, where he lived till about his eighteenth year, after which he was kidnapped, and was ten months on his way to the Bight, a distance which may be accomplished in two or three months. He has been in Sierra Leone for three years, with only two countrymen.

Remarks.—Kóama is west of Gmádoán, east of Dšána, north of Díwiča. In the Kóama country the men go entirely naked, and the women use an apron of twigs before and behind.

2. Bágbálar, pl. Bágbálenze, which latter form is also used for the country.—From Bádšóřóšo, or Richard Laudman, now in the barracks at Freetown; who, being the only representative of his tribe in Sierra Leone, was kindly permitted to come to me by the favour of Major O'Connor. He was born in the town Gúrgóníma, where he was brought up, married three wives, and had a child of about five years of age when he was kidnapped at the instigation of his brother-in-law, and sold to various owners, till at the end of two years he reached the sea. He has been in Sierra Leone for two years and eight months.

Remarks.—Gúrgóníma is about one and a-half day's journey from Girewára, the Bágbálar capital, and half a day from the large River Móra, which is not fordable even in the dry season. The Móra flows from Dagbána and Gúrénze, and goes down to Vár and Nyí-póronze. Bágbálenze is situate north-west of Gúrénze, where a different language is spoken, and of Kóama, with a language closely allied; west of Bákíónze, where the same language is spoken, and east of which lies Nyambíma where people speak like the Gúrèša; east of Bádúrze, where a different language is spoken; north of Marunía, pl. Bášurníma, where a cognate language is spoken; south of Vár (sing. Vantína), with a different language. On his way to the sea Laudman passed through Kánúrze, with the same language; Kándšar, with a language like that of Gúrénze; Yárwa, with a different language; Kúmbur, Dšálugbána, Kókurinzi, Gbéze, and Dahóme, all which countries have likewise different languages.

D. Fourth Group—

1. Kásm.—From Bágólómo, or James Thomas, of York, born in the town Kápu, was two months in travelling to the sea, and is now about twenty-two years old. He has been in Sierra Leone two and a-half years, and is the only individual speaking this language.

Remarks.—Kásm is east of Kándšóřóř, west of Gúrèša, called also Dšindšindšin, on account of their singing.

2. Yúla, pl. Yúlezi.—Likewise from Landman, he being the only individual in Sierra Leone speaking this language. His mother was a native of Yúla, and her sister came to take care of him when he was a little boy. From her he learned to speak Yúla before he went to his mother's country, which he has often done since about his fifteenth year, stopping there sometimes for a whole month.

Remarks.—Yúla borders on Bágbálar in the north west, and is reached from Gúrgóníma in one day.

V. NIGER-DELTA LANGUAGES.

A. First Group: 1. 'Ibo Dialects—

N.B. In Sierra Leone certain natives who have come from the Bight are called 'Ibos. In speaking to some of them respecting this name, I learned that they never had heard it till they came to Sierra Leone. In their own country they seem to have lost their general national name, like the Akus, and know only the names of

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