

and the pythons of India been called boas. The first notions of an enormous reptile capable of seizing man, and even the great quadrupeds, came to us from India and the coast of Guinea. However indifferent names may be, we can scarcely admit the idea, that the hemisphere in which Virgil described the agonies of Laocoon, (a fable which the Greeks of Asia borrowed from much more southern nations) does not possess the boa-constrictor. I will not augment the confusion of zoological nomenclature by proposing new changes, and shall confine myself to observing that at least the missionaries and the latinized Indians of the missions, if not the planters of Guiana, clearly distinguish the *traga-venados* (real boas, with simple anal plates) from the *culebras de agua*, or water-snakes, like the *camudu* (pythons with double anal scales). The *traga-venados* have no transverse bands on the back, but a chain of rhombic or hexagonal spots. Some species prefer the driest places; others love the water, as the pythons, or *culebras de agua*.

Advancing towards the west, we find the hills or islets in the deserted branch of the Orinoco crowned with the same palm-trees that rise on the rocks of the cataracts. One of these hills, called Keri, is celebrated in the country on account of a white spot which shines from afar, and in which the natives profess to see the image of the full moon. I could not climb this steep rock, but I believe the white spot to be a large nodule of quartz, formed by the union of several of those veins so common in granites passing into gneiss. Opposite Keri, or the Rock of the Moon, on the twin mountain Ouivitari, which is an islet in the midst of the cataracts, the Indians point out with mysterious awe a similar white spot. It has the form of a disc; and they say this is the image of the sun (Camosi). Perhaps the geographical situation of these two objects has contributed to their having received these names. Keri is on the side of the setting, Camosi on that of the rising sun. Languages being the most ancient historical monuments of nations, some learned men have been singularly struck by the analogy between the American word *camosi* and *camosch*, which seems to have signified originally, the sun, in one of the Semitic dialects. This analogy has given rise to hypotheses