

(East Turkestan), and estimates its distance from Tschang-an'i (at that time the capital of China) to be 5000 li (2,500 versts), and adds that all the rivers which flow east of Yü-tien (Chotan) empty themselves into that lake, and on its shores stand the towns which are subject to the kingdoms of Leu-lan and Gu-schi.* Rémusat, when speaking about the country of Niei-mo in his *Histoire de la Ville de Khotan*, in the chapter headed »Sous les Thang» gives from Chinese sources the following information, »Les villes sont entièrement désertes et le pays tout à fait dépeuplé. Plus loin, au nord-est, à mille li, est l'ancien royaume de Na-fo-po, ou le pays des Leou-lan»; to which Rémusat adds the note, »sur le lac de Lop.»**

Prschevskij visited Lop-nor again during his fourth journey (1883—85), and spent no less than two months on its shores. In his account of this journey he says, »with regard to the existence of another Lop-nor along the continuation of the Tarim and east of the bend at the mouth of the Ugen-darja, a hypothesis suggested by Baron Richthofen in 1878, I will say, in addition to the reply which I wrote at the time, that we cross-questioned the people of Lop-nor exhaustively with regard to this matter, and they were unanimous in denying the existence of any such lake, and moreover they declared, that so far as local tradition reached back into the past, the lake beside which they were living had always occupied the same position.»***

The travellers who have visited the Lop-nor country since then, namely Carey and Dalgleish, Bonvalot and the Prince of Orléans, Pjevtsoff and his companions, and Littledale—all confirmed the accuracy of Prschevskij's observations; but none of them, with the exception of the Pjevtsoff expedition, and particularly the labours of Bogdanovitsch, add to our knowledge of the country. *Petermanns Mitteilungen* was quite right, when as early as 1878 it stated that the Lop-nor problem could only be settled after fresh investigations made on the spot.† But, as I have already said, the new visits were unfruitful, and none of the travellers I have named, always with the exception of those of the Pjevtsoff expedition, seems to have been aware, that the position of Lop-nor had ever been a subject of discussion. It was for this reason that in the year 1896 I resolved I would not follow the usual route, but would travel east of all the waterways, so as to ascertain whether any canal did form a lake to the east, or not. This led to the discovery of the eastern waterway. In the lecture which I gave before various geographical societies, including those of Stockholm, St. Petersburg, and London, I was of course only able to refer to the problem in the briefest terms. But brief though my allusions were, they sufficed to put fresh life into the old dispute as to the position of the Lop-nor. I must therefore quote the following short passage from my address.

»On March 31 I left Tikkenlik. We found that Konchek-darja divides, so that a part of its water goes to Chivilik-kul; but the larger portion, under the name of Ilek,

* In V. V. Grigorieff's Russian translation of Ritter, published by the Geog. Soc. of St. Petersburg, Historical-geographical Appendix, part i., p. 19.

** Pp. 65—66. With regard to the historico-geographical notices about Lâu-lan, I beg to refer to Mr Karl Himly's and Prof. Dr. A. Conrady's essay on the subject in vol. VI of this work, while the topographical information will be found at the end of the present volume.

*** *Ot Kijachty na Istoki Scholtoj Reki*, p. 294.

† Vol. XXIV p. 474.