

been the desiccation itself that occasioned the town to be abandoned. If however it was possible to build the Dragon Town in the vicinity of Lâu-lan, the change in the lake which led to the desertion of the latter town cannot have been of any great consequence. And if the great change, the disappearance of the Lop-nor, took place in the beginning of the 14th century, then unquestionably it took place two hundred years before the Jesuit order was founded, so that the journey of Hallerstein and d'Espinha, and their topographical determinations, have nothing whatever to do with the solution of the Lop-nor problem. Still less ought we to use their determination of the position of Ajrilghan, in the way Kosloff does, as a proof that the Lop-nor and the Kara-koschun are one and the same lake. From what I have said above, Kosloff's statement is perfectly self-evident, when he says, that »the confluence of the Kontsche-darja and the Tarim lay, even at the time when the Jesuits fixed its position, a good deal farther south than the position in which the Chinese maps put Lop-nor.» But when he goes on to add, »Consequently, previous to these missionaries' visit to Ajrilghan, the Lop-nor existed where the Kara-koschun-kul does now», he is guilty, in the first place of drawing a false conclusion, and in the second place of jumbling together things which have no connection with one another, for the situation of the Lop-nor cannot ever have coincided with the Kara-koschun, neither at the time of the Jesuits' visit, nor at any other time either before or since. The Lop-nor was situated in the northern part of the desert; for at least 160 years past the Kara-koschun has been in the southern part of the desert. At the time when the Lop-nor existed, the Kara-koschun did not exist, and now, since this latter lake has been formed, the former has dried up. In other words, they are two perfectly distinct lakes we have to deal with. Had Kosloff worded his sentence thus, »At the time of the Jesuits' visit to Ajrilghan the Tarim emptied itself into the same terminal lake that is now called the Kara-koschun», he would have been perfectly correct.

Continuing my quotations from Kosloff's book: — »Further, Baron Richthofen says, that the Chinese map shows south of Lop-nor nothing but flat lowlands, while the mountains, which answer to the Altin-tagh, are, according to Baron Richthofen, placed south of the lake of Khas-nur.»

»On the accompanying Chinese map,* I repeat, the same map which Richthofen used as the basis of his reply, we see, south of Lop-nor, the word »Nukitu-daban». Now *daban* means »pass»; hence at the place indicated by this word there exists a pass. And even on Chinese maps you do not find, Baron Richthofen tells us, anything that does not really exist. That is to say, between the lakes Lop-nor and Khas-nur there are mountains; and in fact we have a confirmation of this in V. M. Uspenskij's essay, »*The Country of Kuke-nor and Tsin-hai*,** which is based upon Chinese sources.» Then follows, as in *Lop-nor*, a quotation from Uspenskij's translation. Instead of re quoting this passage, I will use the translation of the same passage, which at my request Mr Himly made in 1899; it is more accurate than Uspenskij's.*** In the third part of the *Si-yü-schuei-tao-ki*, pp. 22 b—23 a, which treat of Edsinei and Kara-nur, we read:

* By Wegener and Himly (see below).

** *Sapiskij Imp. Russ. Geogr. Obschtsch. po Otdjel. Etnografija*, vol. VI. pp. 57—196 (St. Petersburg, 1880).

*** See above *Peterm. Mitteil.*, Ergänzhft No. 131, p. 145.