

to the position of the towns of Korla and Schah-jar the district of Ajrilghan, that is to say the confluence of the Jarkent-darja and the Kontsche-darja, as well as the middle course of the former river, we obtain the whole of the arc of the lower Tarim, the upper two-thirds of which, notwithstanding the representation of the Chinese map, has existed for at least 200 years, as is clear from the local traditions which M. V. Pjevtssoff gathered.»

»In this way the objections of Baron Richthofen and Mr Sven Hedin, which are built up upon the Chinese map, fall to the ground; and the same applies to Mr Sven Hedin's ingenious hypothesis set forth on pp. 201—205 of vol. XLII (1896) of *Petermanns Mitteilungen*, under the title of *Ein Versuch zur Darstellung der Wanderung des Lop-Beckens in neuerer Zeit*, which has been reproduced since then by a number of Russian and foreign journals.»

»With regard to the second unnamed lake which is shown on the Chinese map as lying west of the Khas-nur, it will represent either the Ajagh-kum-kul or perhaps the Tschong-kum-kul; though for our present purpose it is immaterial whether we identify it with either the one or the other of these lakes. In any case it does not represent the Kara-buran, because the Chinese map shows a mountain at the eastern end of this lake, whereas in reality there are no mountains on the east side of Kara-buran.»

»The Kara-buran, as well as the Tschertschen-darja, which falls into it after a course of 600 versts, was plainly unknown to the compiler of the Chinese map, who was also ignorant of the oases of Tschertschen and Nija.»

This interesting and ingenious examination, in which General Stubendorff's experience peeps out strongly, was already printed in Kosloff's essay entitled *Lop-nor*. The point we are now discussing, the interpretation and identification of the Khas-nor (Khas-omo), seemed to me to be almost practically solved in 1899, when I wrote with regard to it: »Nach dieser chinesischen Beschreibung scheinen freilich Stubendorff, Grigoriew, und Kosloff recht zu haben, allein ich bin jetzt nicht in der Lage, diesen Punkt der Lop-nor-Frage zu entscheiden.» Baron Richthofen, to whom I wrote about the matter, was unable to recede from his opinion, and replied to me as follows, a reply which I quoted afterwards in *Peterm. Mitteil.*

»Ich bin jetzt fester als jemals zuvor von der Richtigkeit Ihrer und meiner Ansicht überzeugt. Angesichts aller Thatsachen erscheint es mir völlig haltlos, den Khas-omo der chinesischen Karte mit dem Gass-See von Prjevalskij zu identifizieren. Da muss man doch der chinesischen Karte Gewalt anthun, die sie nach meinen Erfahrungen nicht verdient. Dagegen liegt die Identifizierung von Kara-koschun und Khas-nor völlig klar, sowie man das Ganze der Karte ins Auge fasst.»

I repeat once more, that all this discussion about the Chinese map is superfluous, now that we know from my latest explorations what was the exact site of Lâu-lan, the city which was situated on the shore of the »Salt Lake«. In consequence of this discovery the proofs which Kosloff adduces with such an air of triumph and such consciousness of victory lose their point entirely, and the only interest attaching to this question of the Chinese map is, that it teaches us how far we may on the whole repose confidence in a Chinese map. It is simply for this reason, that I am about to dwell for a moment upon the above-quoted passage from