

probably somewhat incorrect; still that is of little consequence. Urghu-khoito, or the Eastern, lies rather in the west; but the lakes altogether extend from west-south-west to east-north-east precisely as the Kara-koschun does, and the intervals between them were no doubt filled with reeds, just as those portions of the Kara-koschun which stretch between its open expanses are at the present day.

But the instructive fact is that the Tarim emptied itself into these same small lakes. One of them is called the Tarim Lake; and we also have on the map the name Nukituqia-tarim. The text says, »Baghan-ghaschon, which is the southern bank of the Tarim River» — a perfectly unassailable indication that the river emptied itself into that lake.

On the other hand, the map does not show any river-arm whatever emptying into any of these lakes. The Tarim empties itself entire into the Lop-nor. Is it conceivable that these small lakes were connected with the Lop-nor, and that the connecting arms were only hidden in the kamisch? That is very likely to have been the case at the time the Lop-nor was flitting towards the south. But it is far more likely, that the delineation of the Tarim and the Lop-nor are copied from a far older source, dating from the time which has left in the desert at the present day such clear indications as the Kuruk-darja, with its forests, the Lop-nor basin, and the ruins of Lâu-lan.

The information given to the author of the *Si-yü-schuei-tao-ki*, with regard to the position of the Ike-ghaschon and Bagha-ghaschon, that they lay south of the Lop-nor (the lake which even *then* had been dried up for hundreds of years) is derived from his own age, for he must certainly have come in contact with many merchants and officials who had travelled between Sa-tscheo and the country of Lop. Notwithstanding this information, that the Tarim emptied itself into the small southern lakes, the compiler of the Wu-tschang map has not dared to depart from the statements in the old sources, that this river emptied itself into the Lop-nor; accordingly on his map we have these small lakes depicted as isolated and detached, deriving their water from God knows where.

Richthofen's conclusion, »That the Tarim formerly had only one easterly course to the true great Lop-nor, but later, at the place where it is now joined by the Ugen-darja, it threw off a branch to the south-east, which became the main river», describes exactly the actual course of events; but his addition, »that this branch discharged into the once isolated Khas-Lake, enlarged it, and made it the chief reservoir», is incorrect, for the hydrographical changes to which he is alluding took place in the small lakes lying south and south-west of the Lop-nor.

On the Wu-tschang map we have, south-west of Lop-nor, a lake which resembles the Khas-nur (Khas-omo) almost down to the minutest details. The lake in question bears no name. Richthofen says with regard to it: »as none of the earlier maps have it, and as it corresponds in almost every respect to Khas-omo, it is probable that, owing to some error, the latter lake has been delineated twice over. Though I know of no other instance of the kind, I conjectured this to have been an error even before Prschevalskij's journey, inserting both lakes, however reluctantly, on the map accompanying my work on China.»*

* From *Kulja* etc., p. 147.

Hedin, Journey in Central Asia. II.