

discrepancies will naturally arise between the observations of different travellers. But as I think that Marco Polo did not see one of the Lob-nor, but travelled between them, there is no necessity to enlarge on this question, fully treated of in this note.

See besides the works mentioned above : *Nord—Tibet und Lob-nur Gebiet*. . . . herausg. von Dr. G. Wegener. Berlin, 1893. (Sep. abd. *Zeit. Ges. f. Erdk.*)—*Die Geog. wiss. Ergebnisse meiner Reisen in Zentralasien*, 1894-1897, von Dr. Sven Hedin, Gotha, J. Perthes, 1900.

Bonvalot and Prince Henri d'Orléans (*De Paris au Tonkin, à travers le Tibet inconnu*, Paris, 1892) followed this Itinerary : Semipalatinsk, Kulja, Korla, Lob-nor, Charkalyk, Altyn Tagh, almost a straight line to Tengri Nor, then to Batang, Ta Tsien lu, Ning-yuan, Yun-nan-fu, Mong-tsü, and Tung-King.

Bonvalot (28th October, 1889) describes Lob in this manner : "The village of Lob is situated at some distance from [the Charchan daria]; its inhabitants come to see us; they are miserable, hungry, *étiques*; they offer us for sale smoked fish, duck taken with *lacet*. Some small presents soon make friends of them. They apprise us that news has spread that Pievtsov, the Russian traveller, will soon arrive" (*l.c.* p. 75). From Charkalyk, Prince Henri d'Orléans and Father Dedeken visited Lob-nor (*l.c.* p. 77 *et seq.*), but it was almost dry; the water had receded since Prjevalsky's visit, thirteen years before. The Prince says the Lob-nor he saw was not Prjevalsky's, nor was the latter's lake the mass of water on Chinese maps; an old sorceress gave confirmation of the fact to the travellers. According to a tradition known from one generation to another, there was at this place a large inland sea without reeds, and the elders had seen in their youth large ponds; they say that the earth impregnated with saltpetre absorbs the water. The Prince says, according to tradition, *Lob* is a local name meaning "wild animals," and it was given to the country at the time it was crossed by Kalmuk caravans; they added to the name *Lob* the Mongol word *Nor* (Great Lake). The travellers (p. 109) note that in fact the name Lob-nor does not apply to a Lake, but to the whole marshy part of the country watered by the Tarim, from the village of Lob to end of the river.

The Pievtsov expedition "visited the Lob-nor (2650 feet) and the Tarim, whose proper name is Yarkend-daria (*tarim* means 'a tilled field' in Kashgarian). The lake is rapidly drying up, and a very old man, 110 years old, whom Pievtsov spoke to (his son, 52 years old, was the only one who could understand the old man), said that he would not have recognized the land if he had been absent all this time. Ninety years ago there was only a narrow strip of rushes in the south-west part of the lake, and the Yarkend-daria entered it $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the west of its present mouth, where now stands the village of Abdal. The lake was then much deeper, and several villages, now abandoned, stood on its shores. There was also much more fish, and otters, which used to live there, but have long since disappeared. As to the Yarkend-daria, tradition says that two hundred years ago it used to enter another smaller lake, Uchukul, which was connected by a channel with the Lob-nor. This old bed, named Shirga-chapkan, can still be traced by the trees which grew along it. The greater previous extension of the Lob-nor is also confirmed by the freshwater molluscs (*Limnaea uricularia*, var. *ventricosa*, *L. stagnalis*, *L. peregra*, and *Planorbis sibiricus*), which are found at a distance from its present banks. Another lake, 400 miles in circumference, Kara-boyön (*black isthmus*), lies, as is known, 27 miles to the south-west of Lob-nor. To the east of the lake, a salt desert stretches for a seven days' march, and further on begin the Kum-tagh sands, where wild camels live." (*Geog. Jour.* IX. 1897, p. 552.)

Grenard (III. pp. 194-195) discusses the Lob-nor question and the formation of four new lakes by the Konchek-daria called by the natives beginning at the north; Kara Kul, Tayek Kul, Sugut Kul, Tokum Kul. He does not accept Baron v. Richthofen's theory, and believes that the old Lob is the lake seen by Prjevalsky.

He says (p. 149): "Lop must be looked for on the actual road from Charchan to Charkalyk. Ouash Shahri, five days from Charchan, and where small ruins are to be found,