

whole Tibetan highland between Kwen-lun and Himalaya has been pressed together, and forms only one single mountain wall running east and west. This wall separates the plains of India from the plains of Central Asia.¹

Therefore it is not surprising that Ptolemy, at so early a date, made the same mistake from the unreliable and uncertain information he could gather. India was comparatively well known. It was bounded on the north by a high range of mountains. The Tarim basin was, on account of its trade roads, also known to a certain extent. It was bounded on the south by a high range of mountains. There were no trade roads through Tibet, and Tibet itself remained completely unknown. Therefore the northern slopes seen by some informants, and the southern slopes seen by others, were believed to belong to one and the same range. To Ptolemy, Tibet did not exist at all and Bautisus could not be the Tsangpo.

¹ Fifteen hundred years later we find exactly the same representation on many European maps of Asia. On GASTALDI's map the Ganges takes its origin from the same range which forms the southern boundary of Diserto de Camul. The French traveller BERNIER has on his map of 1699 only one single range north of India, from the southern slopes of which the Indus and the Ganges take their rise, just as in PTOLEMY's days, and immediately north of the same range is Zagathay, Tartarie and Turquestan, that is to say no sign of Tibet. In 1730 STRAHLENBERG, relying upon other authors, begins to open up some space for Tibet, but only in the east. Three years later D'ANVILLE published his map, which was indeed a revelation to the geographical world. The secrets which, ever since ERATOSTHENES' days had been kept within the narrow walls of the Imaus and Emodus were at once discovered, the mountain ranges opened up and separated and Tibet occupied its due situation north of the Himalaya. And amongst the new labyrinth of mountains, lakes and rivers in Tibet the Tsangpo was, perhaps, the most prominent feature.