

fore the hydrography of the interior of the continent has to be completely changed, and a fact which had been known for fifteen hundred years was disbelieved and destroyed. Here indeed the words of Arrian may be used, when he says that Alexander, confounding the sources of the Nile with those of the Indus only on account of the crocodiles, was »forming his conclusions about things so great from such small and trivial premisses». But we should not judge Mercator too severely, for even 260 years after his time Klaproth confounded two other great rivers in these regions, and led the Tsangpo into the Irrawaddi instead of the Brahmaputra.¹

The Gangetic hydrography of Mercator was uncritically accepted by many able geographers, amongst them ORTELIUS and HONDIUS.² We have now to examine three of Ortelius' maps.

The first, Pl. XXI, has the title *Tartariæ sive Magni Chami Regni typus* (1570).³ Here the Himalaya, or rather the whole of High Asia is marked as a long latitudinal range, Imaus mons qui & Caucasus, or Monte Dalanguer and Monte Vssonte. North of Monte Dalanguer Abiamu fl. occupies a very great space of Central Asia. North of and parallel with the Amu-darya is the Chesel fl. or Sirdarya on the upper course of which we find Marco Polo's stations just as on Mercator's map. Oecharde and Bautisus have disappeared. In the heart of the continent, and north of the mountainous belt are Solitudines vastæ and further north Desertum Lop, which is indeed correct. N.E. of Monte Vssonte are Camul and Turfan with a legend: His montibus Rhabarbarum prouenit. East of Monte Vssonte is the country of Caidu and on the shore of the enormous Lacus salsus is the city of Caidu. To the east of the same lake is the province Thebet. The city of Thebet is placed on the river Mecon fl. M. Paul: Quian, which falls into a lake called Minla lacus. Marco Polo's Kiang has thus, within ten years, and by two famous geographers, been mistaken for, in one case the Bautisus of Ptolemy bound for the Glacial Ocean, in the other for the Mekong bound for the southern Sea, while Kinsha-chiang, the great Yangtse-chiang bound for the East Chinese Sea, remained unknown.

¹ Pierre Bergeron says of Mercator's Ganges: »Je n'ai jamais pû me persuader que ce fût un même, comme a tres-bien remarqué feu Mr. le Garde des Seaux de Marillac, en un Traité particulier sur ce sujet. Ce qui se peut encore confirmer par la longue course du Gange, depuis les montagnes d'Ussonte & Augracot (qui sont le Caucase & l'Imave des anciens) dont il sort jusqu'au golfe de Bengale, où il s'embouche. Ce qui est encore témoigné par les Relations nouvelles des Jesuites, qui ont remonté le long de ses rivages jusqu'au grand Roiaume de Thebet, ou Tibet.» Voyages faits principalement en Asie dans le XII, XIII, XIV et XV siècles — Tome premier, A la Haye 1735 p. 77.

² In the text to *Newer Atlas, oder Weltbeschreibung, Ander Theil, Amsterdami, apud Iohannem Ianssonium, Anno 1641*, the different versions about the source of the Ganges are enumerated: some say it has no special origin, others that it comes from the Scythian mountains, still others that it comes with great noise from its source, etc. And finally: »Dieser Fluss wird in der H. Schrift Pison genennet, von den Geographis noch diese stunde gesucht, und von etlichen für den jenigen gehalten, welcher sich in den *sinum* oder Meerschoss Bengalæ begibt, dieweil er nemblich bey den Inwohnern dieser ort Guengua heist. Unser *Mercator* aber hält den Gangem aus wichtigen Ursachen für den Rio de Cantaon.»

³ Ortelius: *Theatrum*, 1570.