

Gerbillon conquers the new details quoted above. In his three lakes one of the surrounding small lakes has been included. Tsing-su-hai is the Chinese name for the Mongol Odon-tala or Star Sea, through which the uppermost Hwangho, Altan-gol, flows, and empties itself in the western lake.¹

Further Gerbillon was told by the same mandarin that from Sining to the very frontiers of the Kingdom of Tibet the ground constantly and at a sensible rate becomes higher, and that the great number of mountains one has to climb when trav-

¹ The above description should be compared with the one translated by Bitchurin, from Chinese sources in 1833: »The Yellow River is in Chinese called Khuan-khe, in Tangut Morchu, in Mongol Shara-muren. It takes its origin in the western neighbourhood of Koko-nor under the name of Altan-gol, and runs to Odontala; after going through the lakes Tsariyn-nor and Noriyn-nor it flows to the S.E., and returns to the N.W., and then takes its course to the N.E. . . .» Bitchurin knows four Chinese descriptions of the source of the Yellow River, but specially refers to the one by Amida who in 1782 was sent to make a detailed research of the place. This explorer found at 300 li west of Odon-tala a hill, Altan-gasu-tsilu, on the top of which a lake is fed by innumerable springs; here is the real source of the Yellow River, for the water goes to Altan-gol, which, itself, has its sources in Bayan-khara-ula. Having received many tributaries Altan-gol flows to Odon-tala, where innumerable springs dip up from the ground, which, regarded from a height, resemble stars, — therefore Odon-tala, and in Chinese Sin-su-khai, the Star Sea. Altan-gol receives the water of all these springs, as well as that of two tributaries, after which it falls into Tsariyn-nor. After running about 50 li to the S.E. it empties itself into the Noriyn-nor; on the way between the lakes it receives four rivulets. Issuing from the Noriyn-nor Altan-gol takes the Mongol denomination Khatun-gol (Princess River). — *Istoriya Tibeta i Khukhunora s 2282 goda do R. Ch. do 1227 goda po R. Ch. . . . Perevedena s Kitayskago Monakhom Iakinfom Bitchuriniym St. Peterburg 1833, II p. 180 et seq.*

On d'Anville's map of 1733 the two lakes are remarkably well drawn, under the names Tcharin Nor and Orin Nor, S.W. of Koko-nor and on 35° N. lat. Such they remained on European maps for 150 years. Petermann's map, *Indien & Inner-Asien*, in Stielers Hand-Atlas, N:o 44 b, for 1875, is, for instance, a faithful copy after d'Anville, though Petermann puts the two lakes at 34° N. lat.

On his fourth journey, 1883—1885, General Prshevalskiy was the first European to reach the lakes. He gives an excellent description of Odon-tala, which he found traversed by several rivulets, of which two were more considerable, and formed the sources of the Yellow River. One of them is, as Prshevalskiy supposes, identical with the Altan, or Altiyn-gol of Chinese geographers. He found the latitude to be nearly 35°. His description shows how very correct the Chinese observations had been. »But as they had been incorrectly placed on the geographical maps, as no European had visited them before, I called, with the right of the first explorer, the western the Expedition Lake and the eastern the Russian Lake.» — *Att Kyakhtiy na Istoki Sheltoy Reki, St. Peterburg, 1888, p. 153 and 198*, and my translation from the Russian original: *General Prschevalskij's Forskningsresor i Centralasien, Stockholm 1891, p. 318 and 334; with a preface by A. E. Nordenskiöld.* —

On Koslov's beautiful map, *Vostochniy Tibet (Kam), May 1900—June 1901*, where the lakes have nearly exactly the same latitude as on d'Anville's map 170 years earlier, the names given by Prshevalskiy are retained together with Dsharin-nor and Orin-nor. Koslov calls the Altan-gol Soloma, for which Prshevalskiy had had the name Upper Khuan-khe or Hwangho. But on his general map *Attchotnaya Karta k opisaniyu puteshestviya P. K. Koslova v Mongoliya i Kam*, we again find the name Altan-gol. The Tsigenor in Bitchurin's translation is probably the Chikey-nor of Koslov's map. The name for Odon-tala, which was written Tsing sou hai by Gerbillon, Sin-su-khai by Bitchurin, and Prshevalskiy, is identical with Father Martini's Sing sieu, while the latter's Sosing may be Oring. The names Expedition and Russian have of course to disappear, as the lakes already were baptized hundreds of years ago.

The two freshwater lakes at the source of the Hwangho resemble in many respects the Manasarovar and the Rakas-tal, and their connection with the Satlej. This fact is the one reason for this digression. The other is that Koko-nor and the source of the Hwangho are situated on one of the highways leading to Tibet, a road travelled by Grueber and Dorville, van de Putte, Huc and Gabet. We shall have to return to this region later on.