

South of it is Haraouso, a river flowing eastwards, which comes to an end before reaching the eastern boundary of Tibet. Compared with the situation of Poutala and Retink this river ought to be the Tsangpo, but unfortunately Dame, a place in later years mentioned by della Penna and Nain Sing, is south of it, and, still worse, so is Lassa or Barantola the capital of Boutan. The Haraouso is therefore simply Nak-chu, or the upper Salwen, in the neighbourhood of which I was stopped by the governor of Nak-chu in 1901.¹ Nak-chu means Black water, and so does Hara-ussu in Mongol. A good number of Mongol nomads are living in this region.² This explains why the Mongol and not the Tibetan name has reached Delisle.

As could be expected Grueber's route from Lassa to Agra is entered. Between Lassa and Tache Linbou (Tashi-lunpo) it crosses a range of mountains, the later on so famous Kamba-la, which is not mentioned in Grueber's narrative. Then follow M. Langur or Himalaya, which is correctly shown as a continuation of M. de Naugracut, and, on the southern side, Couti, Nesti, Catmendour-Patan, Necbal, Etonde, Patna and Benares. At some distance from Tache Linbou is a mountain Zeketcha, which seems to be identical with Shigatse. Grueber had forgotten the magnificent river he crossed south of Lassa, and therefore no sign of the Tsangpo is here to be seen on Delisle's map.

It is surprising that the Tsangpo-Brahmaputra could keep itself hidden for such a long time. The Indus and Ganges have been known ever since Alexander's days, and even the Satlej is marked on Ptolemy's map. In 1705 Delisle believes that he has placed the sources of these three rivers fairly correctly. But he does not so much as suspect the existence of the Tsangpo. Through thousands of years this river remains concealed between Himalaya and Transhimalaya. And still it had been crossed by Odoric, Grueber and Dorville, and perhaps Verbiest and Gerbillon and other Jesuits in Peking had heard it mentioned, for to the Chinese it was very well known. When the members of the French Academy of Science, together with the learned Jesuits in Peking, so late as in 1705, — and after having gathered information about Hatun-ussu, Mur-ussu, Akdam, and Nak-chu, had not succeeded in finding the least sign of the Tsangpo, one may be justified to ask how ever it would have been possible for Ptolemy to draw a map of the whole course of the Tsangpo!

That the transverse valley of the river through Himalaya was unknown to Delisle is not surprising, for it cannot be said to be more than superficially known even in our days. But the lowest part of the river appears now for the first time, under the name of Laquia, perhaps on account of its coming from the district of Lakhimpur? It takes its origin in the Lac de Chaamay, which now, as a rather suspicious object, has been deported into the unknown darkness of Indo-China.

¹ Central Asia and Tibet, Vol. II, p. 374.

² »The Dam Sok Mongols living along the Lh'asa highroad north of Nag-ch'uk'a (Nak-chu) are of the same stock as the Ts'aidam Mongols.» Rockhill, »A Diary etc.», p. 157.