

Finally researches are necessary regarding the periodical rains of India, »at what season they set in, if the difference in precipitation is great in different countries, both as regards season and volume; from which direction and with which wind they come to each country of India, and what effects they produce . . . By a careful examination of these countries and these different situations in relation to seas and mountains, etc., one would, no doubt, be enabled to explain the real causes of these rains, of the different seasons of which they fall in these regions, etc. . . .» Very wise words indeed, and which it should take a long time to realize!

A new time is dawning! The map is there with its detailed outlines of the coasts, the physical phenomena which return with the seasons are very well known — and were known in Alexander's days —, but the human longing for conquering the Unknown is no more satisfied with mere facts, it demands reasons.

Tibet remains practically unknown, for Delisle's excellent map does not seem to have made any impression on the time.¹ And, after all, Delisle had only combined the information of his time in a new, original way. Exactly the same material had been at the disposal of Visscher and every other draughtsman ever since 1662. But they had not ransacked the texts so thoroughly as he did. Therefore a traveller who pretends to have lived for a very long time in the Kingdom of Boutan, i. e. Tibet, relies, not upon his own faculty of observation, but on the old maps and geographical dogmas, that is to say, upon the general ignorance, where only such men as Andrade, Grueber, Gerbillon, were splendid exceptions.

If I say that the following passage from the »*New Description*» of Tibet of this unknown fellow is the most important in his store of materials, one may judge of the value of the rest.² The Kingdom of Boutan is situated in Asia, he says, and towards the east, he adds in the style of Marco Polo, »it borders upon China, to the west upon Indoustan, that is to say the Kingdoms of Néepal or Nercerri (?), to the north upon the Kingdoms of Foukten (?) & the Kalmoucs in Tartary, & to the south upon Mogol, or even, as some pretend, upon the Kingdom of Syam . . . The country is altogether full of Mountains, why the cold is very strong, though one is rather near the Equator. The Mountains are, the very greatest part of the year, covered with snow, & nearly everywhere totally sterile . . . From Bengal to Lassa one reckons three months journey.» Dam is mentioned, but we are not told of its whereabouts. Lassa is surrounded by mountains on all sides. Musk is the most important trade which was already known by the old Suleiman in the ninth century.

¹ Eleven years after Delisle's map of 1705 (Pl. XL), the »*Grosser Atlas über die Gantze Welt . . . von Joann Baptist Homann, Nürnberg MDCC XVI*», was published, and all its text, p. 36, has to tell is: »In der grossen Tartarey sind unter anderen folgende Königreiche zum wenigsten den Namen nach am bekandtesten als . . . Barantola, Necbal, Tanju, gross Thibet, klein Thibet, Kasgahr, Samarkand und Balch, von welchen allen man, weil von dem gantzen Land bishero noch nichts bekandt ist, nichts sonders vermehlen kan, sondern es der folgenden Zeit und genaueren Entdeckung überlassen muss.» Here is a cartographer who confesses his ignorance, and expresses his wishes for the future.

² *Nouvelle Description du Royaume de Boutan, Faite par un Voyageur qui y a demeuré fort long-temps. Le Nouveau Mercure, Paris 1718, p. 73 et seq.*