

Of the importance of this work we get an impression from the following words by Strindberg: »His work, which touches history, geography, ethnography, archeology and philology, aroused, as was due, attention in the whole of learned Europe. It is quoted and mentioned in the *Transactions of the Petersburg Academy*, in the *Mémoires of the French Academy of Sciences*, in *Philosophical Transactions*; it is mentioned and discussed in *Journal des Savants*, very highly appreciated in *Acta Literaria*, translated 50 years after its first appearance, and is still in 1816 cited by Alexander von Humboldt in his »*Vues des Cordillères*.¹

The work is remarkable for its time. He knows his classics, he knows Plano Carpini, Rubruck, Marco Polo, and everything else that was written about Central Asia at his time. In some places he criticizes Witsen's map. He gives us a new division of Great Tartary, namely 1) Little Tartary far to the west, 2) Usbeck, the country of the Turckomans on the eastern side of the Caspian Sea, the Cosaci Horda and the Carakalpaks, 3) Great Kalmucky under the Chontaish together with the kingdom of Caschkar or Little Buchary, 4) the Mungal kingdom, 5) East- or Chinese Tartary, 6) the kingdoms of Thibeth and Tanguth, »where the Dalai Lama or the so called Priester John has his residency, and where the temporal power is in the hands of two Vice-Roys or Chans, but the soldiery is a kind of Kalmucks, called Coschiuth or Coschioth.»

He finds it difficult to identify several of the names mentioned by Marco Polo, Rubruck, Goës, and others, as many of the places they refer to have been destroyed by later wars and migrations. As Strahlenberg had no opportunity to visit Central Asia personally, he refers to the information he got from Tatars in Tobolsk. They told him that the N.W. frontier of China, where no wall, only immensely high mountains are situated, is called Tzin ma Tzin, or Zinnu ma Zinn. The reason for this should be that at a certain epoch the Kingdoms of Choten and Thibeth belonged to China, and were included in the appellation Tzinn. Though both were separated from each other by high mountains, they belonged to each other politically, and China was understood as Tzin, Choten and Thibeth as Ma Tzin, i. e. on this side of China. The Turks and Tatars, on the other hand, who used to call not only North-China but also Thibeth and Choten Katai, said Katai-Katai when speaking of the whole.

Geographischen Beschreibung der alten und neueren Zeiten, und vielen andern unbekanntten Nachrichten vorgestellt, Nebst einer noch niemahls ans Licht gegebenen Tabula Polyglotta von zwey und dreyssigley Arten Tartarischer Völcker Sprachen und einem Kalmuckischen Vocabulario, Sonderlich aber Einer grossen richtigen Land-Charte von den benannten Ländern und andern verschiedenen Kupfferstichen, so die Asiatisch-Scythische Antiquität betreffen; Bey Gelegenheit der Schwedischen Kriegs-Gefangenschaft in Russland, aus eigener sorgfältigen Erkundigung, auf denen verstatteten weiten Reisen zusammen gebracht und ausgefertiget von Philipp Johann von Strahlenberg. Stockholm, in Verlegung des Autoris, 1730. — Strindberg enumerates the following translations: An Historico-Geographical Description of the North and Eastern parts of Europe and Asia; London 1738; Description Historique de l'Empire Russien. Amsterdam (Paris) 1757, 2 vol.; Nueva Descripcion geographica del imperio Ruso, en particular y en general. Trad. del Francés. Valencia 1786.

¹ The value of Strahlenberg's work and map for the knowledge of North and N.E. Asia is often pointed out by Baron A. E. Nordenskiöld in his Voyage of the Vega, Vol. II.