

recommendation, and so they were received with great honour and kindness at Tashi-gang. Here they stayed more than a month occupied with preparations for the three months' long journey through the desert which begins from Tashi-gang and trying to find some companions and a good occasion for a start.

»The third Tibet is called Tibet Proper, or by another name Butan, and in the language of the country it is called Po. In its extension from west to east it is very great. It begins from Trescij-khang and Kartôa¹ and stretches the whole way to China. From Trescij-khang to the extreme frontier of China it is a journey of six whole months and somewhat more. In the west this Tibet is bounded by the second Tibet or Lhata-yul; in north-east and east it is bounded by China and by the low Tartary. To the north it is bounded by hard and desolate places, being the way which leads to high independent Tartary and the kingdom of Yarkand. In the southern direction it is bounded by some barbarian peoples who call themselves Lhobà and who do not permit anybody to enter their country. In the south and south-west is a province of Mogol's empire, called Altibari, beyond the Ganges. To the south-east is the kingdom of Nepal. The third Tibet it so vast, that one needs six months good and continuous journey between Gartok and Sining. Its breadth is very different in different places. The province of Zang-tò, which is 2½ months across, stretches far to the north to the wild rocks which are on the frontier to the kingdom of Yarkand, and to the impracticable mountains which form a wall to high, independent Tartary or the country of the Dsungarians.»

This orientation, in a few words, is wonderfully correct and clear, and connects, as it were, Desideri's own discoveries with those of Marco Polo.

On October 9th they start from Tashi-gang for the »gran deserto», accompanied by a Tartare Princess and her court, her officials and ladies, and an army of Tartar and Tibetan horsemen and great caravans with provisions and luggage. Desideri gives an excellent description of the picturesque and lively scenery this tremendous company offered.

Two days' journey from Trescij-khang the party arrived in a »valle deserta» called Car-toa (Gartok) where they stayed till after the middle of October. He says: »To begin with I shall talk of the Great Desert of the west, which stretches from Cartoa to Ngari-giongar, and from Ngari-giongar sinks to Toscioâ and from Toscioâ descends to Retoâ and from Retoâ takes you to the province and people of Zang-to.»

From Gartok they had for about 15 days rising ground to the north, and arrived, on November 9th, at the very highest places which are to be passed during the whole journey, in a part of the desert which is called Ngari. »From these places one goes on constantly sinking the whole way to the very city of Lhasa.»

The following passage of Desideri is interesting:

»The water which from the just mentioned high regions runs to the west, i. e. towards the two above mentioned Tibets, is giving rise to the Indus; the other which streams to the east, i. e. towards the rest of this great desert and towards the lake of Retoa, or, as it is in a foreign pronounciation, Redoc, and towards the frontiers of the third Tibet, is giving rise to the Ganges.»

¹ Gartok.