

»Thus, in his estimation, *one* mountain-system, and not *two*, lies between the Indian and the Central Asian basin.» Mirza Haidar mentions the road from Khotan to India, and knows the intermediate stations, Rudok, Guge, and Spiti, indicating that he or his informants had been over it.

In Chapter XCIV of Part II, p. 420 of the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, there is an interesting description of the difficulties of the Kara-korum road represented to the Khán by those who had had experience of them: »It is now too late [in the season] to achieve anything; for very soon all the waters and rivers will be frozen over, so that no water will be obtainable: nor is there sufficient firewood to be found to melt the ice, for watering the cattle and horses. It will also be hardly possible to kill enough kutás to make a sufficient supply of soup. It is for these reasons that, on previous occasions, several armies have been dismounted [lost their horses] on this road.» The Khán, being convinced, turned back from Khotan, and advanced along the road which Mirza Haidar had taken.

Ney Elias is of the opinion that the Khán had started from Khotan with the intention of crossing by one of the direct routes to Ngari-khorsum. But these routes are »practically impassable» — »never used by traders or travellers and are very little known». Ney Elias concludes: »Mirza Haidar's route (and the one the Khan afterwards followed) was the ordinary one, over the Kara-korum pass, as is evident from Nubra being mentioned as the first point reached on arriving in Ladak.» (*Ibidem*, p. 420n.)

When, in 1533, Sultan Said Khan Ghazi was on his way from Máryul in Tibet (*i. e.* Leh in Ladak) back to Yarkand, he died on the road, and from that incident dates the well-known name, Daulet Bek-öldi, near Dapsang. Mirza Haidar accompanied him on his first stage¹ and then took leave of him. Four days later he got news that the Khan had crossed the pass of Sákri. »He had reached Nubra in safety and was camped there, intending to proceed towards Yárkand after the festival of the Sacrifice.» As Nubra is mentioned, the Sákri may easily be meant for Kardung-la above Leh, as Ney Elias supposes. Then they set north on their homeward road with all speed, and »crossed the ice passes (muzájat)». There is not the slightest doubt about this »muzájat» or ice-pass being the Saser-davan, though H. W. BELLEW identifies Sákri with Saser.²

The Khan was very ill, and to get him away to some more hospitable place, his followers mounted him upon his horse and made eight days' journey in four. Mirza Haidar thinks it would have been better to construct a litter. »But the armies excused themselves for not making one, on the ground that it could not be carried over the passes.» After these four days' journey, the Khan died, which must have

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 445.

² *Vide: Kashmir and Kashghar*, p. 168.

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