

European Geographers, even not very long ago, believed that Andrade had discovered the Sacred Lake, though the Jesuit Father himself never said a word about the Manasarovar. I have proved in Vol. I that the origin of this mistake is to be found in KIRCHER'S *China . . . illustrata* (Amsterdam 1667), and especially in the following passage¹, where he, involuntarily, confounds Andrade's »tanque» with information he had obtained elsewhere about the lake Manasarovar: *Iter verò quod P. Antonius Andrada Lusitanus in Regnum Thebet aggressus fuit, tale est: Ex Lahor Gangem trajiciens primò in Scrinegar & Ciapharangam urbes ingentes populosissimasque, ex hisce per altissimum montem transgressus in summitate ejus ingentem lacum, commune Indi, Gangis caeterorumque Indiae majorum fluminum hydrophylacium detectum observavit.*

The second paragraph of Wilford is this: »and in the years 1715 and 1716, it (Manasarovar) was visited by the missionaries P. Desiderius, and Emanuel Freyer (Freyre).» To which Rev. Hosten has the note: »It appears from Carlo Puini's *Tibet . . . secondo la relazione del P. Ippolito Desideri* (1715—1721), Roma 1904, that Desideri did not pass near Lake Manasarovar. He does not mention it.»

Here, however, Wilford is perfectly right. Desideri is the first European, of whom we know, who has visited Manasarovar. It is true that he does not mention this name, for he calls his lake Retoâ. But his description does not leave any room for doubt. These are his own words:

Further on we passed a plain called Retoâ, where there is a great lake which has a circumference of some days walking, and from which the Ganges is supposed to originate. However, as a consequence of what I could observe on my way and which I heard experts of the places as well as of the Mogol to agree on, it seems to me that the above mentioned mount of Ngari Giongar (Kailas) should be recognized as the true origin and source of the Ganges, as well as of the river Indus. That mount being the highest from which the land slopes on both sides, the one as well as the other, the waters, either from rain or from melting snow, which descend from there on the western side, flow into the second Tibet, as practically shown by facts; and after having gone through it, cross the Little Tibet In the same way the waters descending from Ngari Giongar on the eastern side flow first into the said lake Retoâ, then, following their way down, they form the river Ganges Moreover, that lake is the object of a great veneration by those superstitious people; therefore, they meet sometimes there in a pilgrimage, and make the tour all round the lake with great devotion believing to acquire many indulgences, and in some way to win many particular jubilees.²

There is no other lake in Tibet of which such a definition could be given, except Manasarovar, and other arguments are superfluous. With his admirable perspicacity Desideri has not contented himself with the information he got from the natives; he has also used his own eyes: »Permi però, da quel che ho nel passaggio

¹ P. 64^b.

² *Vide* Vol. I, p. 274, 275.