

the water-parting, and in this way the great rivers are born, not suddenly from a special line, marked by a very high range, but over a rather large area, where all crests, slopes and valleys send feeders down to the upper courses of the rivers.

The very great difference between the country west and east of this Tang-la line, exists anyhow just as Richthofen has described it. The country east of this line is, as he says, typically peripheric.

Nirgends ist der Gegensatz gegen die centralen Landschaften, in solchen Ländern, die ihnen benachbart sind, schärfer gezeichnet. Auf dem Plateau, wo die Zerstörungsproducte zurückbleiben, sind die Gebirge mehr eingehüllt und unkenntlicher, als wenn sie als Inseln aus einem Meer aufragten, denn dieses würde in einem bestimmten Niveau seine Grenze erreichen und darüber den Gebirgsbau klar hervortreten lassen, während die subaërischen Schuttgebilde sich aus den Depressionen hoch nach den Abhängen hinaufziehen. Wie anders das Land aussehen würde, wenn dort den Gewässern gestattet wäre, den Schutt hinweg zu räumen und nach tiefern Regionen zu führen, das zeigt klar die östliche Hochgebirgslandschaft, welche sich mit anscheinend wenig verändertem Charakter bis weit über die chinesische Grenze nach Sz'-tshwan hin ausbreitet¹

As pointed out before, Richthofen has shown that the plateau character of Chang-tang is an entirely secondary phenomenon.

Regarding the Kwen-lun, he says that it consists of a broad series of tremendous parallel ranges which chiefly are situated in countries without outlet, and, therefore, ordinarily rise with soft undulating forms from the steppe deposits which fill the latitudinal valleys. Partly, however, they have been captured by the peripheric regions. This description would suit the whole country down to the Tsangpo. Almost all the ranges in the interior of Tibet are more or less parallel to the Kwen-lun and Himalaya, and the plateau ranges go, as I believe, slowly over into the eastern ranges near the upper courses of the Indo-Chinese rivers.

From the very scanty European information then existing, and from Chinese maps, Richthofen was able to follow seven parallel ranges of the Central Kwen-lun. It is unnecessary to enter upon his views here, as we have richer material nowadays and as the description of the Kwen-lun does not enter in the plan of this work. From Chinese sources Richthofen finds only one communication regarding the western part of the Central Kwen-lun, and that is about the sources of the Hwang-ho, which are placed, by the Chinese, west of Charing-nor and Oring-nor and Odon-tala in the Bayan-khara-ula.

When the first volume of *China* appeared, PRSHEVALSKIY had already finished his journey to Lop-nor, but it took some time before all his results were known. So, only a very short time after the appearance of *China*, the representation Richthofen had given to the Central Kwen-lun was antiquated and had to give way to a quite different conception of the ranges, especially south of Lop-nor. But

¹ Op. cit., p. 258.