

unknown but early date, the lake seems to have been of much the same size as now, as appears from its being called a marsh, and from its representation on the old Chinese maps.

In the succeeding Middle Ages, there is reason to believe that Lop-Nor was again decidedly larger than now. In an old local account of Tung Hwang (Sa-Chow), which Rev. G. W. Hunter of the China Inland Mission kindly translated for me, he found an itinerary of the ancient trade route, already referred to, from Tung Hwang to Lulan. Lulan, however, is not mentioned, and the whole country appears to have been almost uninhabited, apparently because the itinerary was not written till after the abandonment of that region. At a distance of one hundred and eighty miles (seven hundred and ten li) from Tung Hwang, this "very important road," as it is called, is said to reach a lake called Cho-hu-tong, apparently Lop-Nor, which, so the account goes on, is connected with the Ta-leng-mu (Tarim) River. This would necessitate the expansion of the lake to a point eighty miles east of Lulan, and fully fifty from the present eastern end of the Kara Koshun marsh. The water would have to rise nearly, or quite, to the twelve-foot strand.

Other facts agree with the itinerary. Grenard speaks of having seen at Keriya a Chinese map dating from the eighteenth century, but probably based on earlier surveys. It showed Lop-Nor in its present position, but very much larger than now. Another suggestion of the mediæval behavior of the lake is found in the destruction of the so-called Dragon Town of Lung-shong, lying at some unidentified point southwest of Lop-Nor, perhaps at Merdeck. The