

ringen, und zwar im Norden 3 runde ohne Namen, im Süden 4 längliche, von denen einer Ör-kou-hai-thu, einer Bagha-Ghaschon, einer Tha-li-mu-tschi (Tarim-See) heisst, einer keinen Namen hat» — — — —.

Upon this Himly comments as follows: »Die Ausgabe mit Erläuterungen des Li Tao Yüan oder Li Kün stammt aus dem Ende des fünften oder dem Anfang des sechsten Jahrhunderts; wie mir Prof. Hirth mitteilt, bekleidete Li 477—500 ein Amt. Das ursprüngliche *Schuei-king* (»Lehrbuch der Gewässer») von Sang Khin aus der Han-Zeit scheint verloren gegangen zu sein; was erhalten ist, soll aus der Zeit der 'drei Reiche' (221—280) sein.» Then he continues: »Der Verfasser, welcher sich meistens auf ältere Werke stützt, hat leider seine eigenen Reisewege im ganzen unberücksichtigt gelassen, oder doch nicht weiter hervorgehoben. Hier schliesst er auf die *eine* Mündung aus dem *Han-schu*. Das *Hon-Han-schu*, die »Geschichte der späteren Han«, stammt aus dem 5. Jahrhundert und enthielt zuerst ein *Si-yü-tschuan*, d. h. »Berichte über die Westlande«. Nach dem *Si-yü-schuei-tao-ki* (1 kün, S. 25 a) hat Sü-sung selber Ergänzungen und Erläuterungen dazu verfasst.»*

Since then the Chinese author derives his material in part from the 5th century and in part from his own experience (19th century), it is easy to see that, in studying the hydrography of the country in relation to time, we may easily fall into serious error, as I did once or twice in the chapter »Eine chinesische Beschreibung des Lop-nor« in my former scientific work, which I have so frequently quoted above. We have to remember that the author of the *Si-yü-schuei-tao-ki*, who has given us these descriptions of the northern and southern routes from Chara-nor to Lop-nor, criticises a work (*Schuei-king-tschu*) which belongs originally to the 3rd cent., but at the same time relies upon the *Han-schu*, a work of the 5th cent. But although he examined the old writings, as I am doing now, he was not able, as I am, to confirm his conclusions by his own observations. Even his description of Lop-nor and the country around is borrowed, for he says, »Als im Jahre 1759 Ali I-Kung Schalas-Maghos ausrottete und Bayar gefangen nahm, kam er am Lop-nur vorbei und berichtete: am 9. des zweiten Monats kam ich an den Lop-nur. Das Land breitet sich weit aus und ist von dichter Waldung bedeckt etc.»**

The description which follows — it may be read in *Peterm. Mitteil.*, in Himly's translation — is consequently upwards of 60 years older than the date of the Chinese author's own journey; all the same his description belongs to a period when the Tarim had already turned into its present most southerly course, and by Lop-nor he probably means Kara-koschun, although in my former monograph I endeavoured to prove the opposite. On the other hand, I am more convinced than ever that the Lop-nor of both the Wu-tschang map and the map in the *Si-yü-schuei-tao-ki* is identical with the desiccated lake on the northern shore of which I discovered the ruins of Lâu-lan. The text makes it perfectly plain, that between the 3rd cent., when the river had two mouths, and the 5th cent., when it had only one, great hydrographical changes took place in that region. The Chinese author says most distinctly, »Here is only *one* mouth *now*«, that is at the beginning of the 19th cent. He does not seem to have understood, or even believed it possible, that any

* *Peterm. Mitteil.*, Ergänzhft. 131, p. 153.

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