

form, who inhabits a tent composed of turquoise and all kinds of precious stones. In the midst of it grows a tree with a thousand branches, and every branch contains a thousand cells in which a thousand lamas live. The lake tree has a double crown, one rising like a sunshade and shading Kang-rinpoche, the other overshadowing the whole world. Each of the 1022 branches bears an image of a god, and all these images turn their faces towards Gossul-gompa, and in former times all the gods gathered together here . . . The lake is the central point of the whole world. Sambu Tashi grew out of the lake tree. Sochim Pema Dabge is of very holy, clear, and pure water. The Gyagar Shilki chorten stands in the lake. The palace of the lake god is in the lake.»<sup>1</sup>

Baron ANTON VON OW regards this document as very important and exclaims:

»Hier, auf der merkwürdigsten Höhe des Erdkreises, haben wir also den See leibhaftig vor uns, der vor mehreren tausend Jahren schon als mythischer See Haomas und Schiwas gepriesen wurde, hier haben wir vor uns den mythischen Pushkara, Lotusteich, aus welchem Brahmā sich erhebt, hier den mythischen See Chin der Chinesen, in dessen Mitte das göttliche Knäblein auf Lotus gebettet ruht!«<sup>2</sup>

He then shows how the legend of the lake-god in the centre of the lake is familiar all over Asia and extended even to Egypt and Babylonia. At another place von Ow has the following interesting passage:<sup>3</sup>

»Das westliche Tibet und das merkwürdige Land der heiligen Seen im Norden des Himalaya, wo das Quellgebiet von Indus, Ganges und Brahmaputra nahe zusammenstösst, muss den Ahnen der arischen Inder wohl bekannt gewesen sein. Das Land am oberen Ganges enthält die geheiligtesten Stätten indischer Götterverehrung. Die Verlegung vieler Göttertaten nach diesem Teile des Gebirges und das Wallfahrten dahin gehen in eine sehr frühe Zeit zurück.«<sup>4</sup>

Lassen believed that the Indians now living in the plains, attracted by the wonders of the mountains, placed the abodes of their gods in the inaccessible regions of north-western Himalaya. Now von Ow asks why no sacred *tirthas* were placed in the central parts of the Himalayas; even Nepal does not play any important part in the classical literature. As a rule peoples of the plains regard the high inhospitable mountains with respect or even fear. And therefore: why should the most ancient Indians, only »attracted by the wonders of the mountains«, have placed their holiest *tirthas*, not only in the highest abodes of eternal snow and ice in the north-

<sup>1</sup> I cannot be responsible for the correctness of this translation which was carried out by my Munshi, but I hope he has not misunderstood the general meaning of the text.

<sup>2</sup> *Anthropos*, Bd. V, 1910, Heft. 5, 6, p. 1065.

<sup>3</sup> Hom, der falsche Prophet aus noachitischer Zeit, p. 152.

<sup>4</sup> Atkinson pictures the Aryan immigrants arriving at the Ganges and sending some adventurous spirits to explore its sources. »After traversing the difficult passes across the snowy range and the inclement table-land of Tibet, they discovered the group of mountains called Kailas and the lakes from which flowed forth the great rivers to water and give life to the whole earth. The rugged grandeur of the scene, the awful solitude and the trials and dangers of the way itself naturally suggested to an imaginative and simple people that they had at length rediscovered the golden land, the true homes of their gods whom they had worshipped when appearing under milder forms as storm and fire and rain in the plains below.«