

Already in a dedication to their great work<sup>1</sup> it had been said: »The mountain systems of the Himálaya, Karakorúm, and Kuenlúen, include the highest elevations of our globe.» Whilst they introduced the English signification High Asia they always only mentioned three principal ranges running through these elevated regions, and the Hindu-kush was the western continuation of the Kara-korum. But there was never a word of a system between Kara-korum and Himalaya, which, in height and extension could be compared with the latter.

Some ten years later a more popular work in four volumes was published by HERMANN VON SCHLAGINTWEIT, in which we get some new glimpses of his views regarding the systems north of the Tsangpo.<sup>2</sup> Here it is not always easy to find in how far the expressed views are the results of their own observations or whether they have been influenced by others. A few quotations will be sufficient.

It had been believed that the northern boundary of the Indian rivers was formed by »Künlün», which at that time had never been reached by any European. But the Schlagintweits were surprised to find that the Kara-korum consisted of ridges even higher than those of the Himalaya. They found that the Kara-korum in reality was the principal range of High Asia and stretched between 95 and 73° E. long. The fact that the Kara-korum is the highest of the three ranges is somewhat hidden by the high position of the snow limit, depending upon the comparatively slight precipitation. To the west the Kara-korum continues in Hindu-kush and Bolor-tagh, that is to say, it divides into two branches. As to the eastern continuation he has the following surprising idea:

»In seiner östlichen Hälfte gabelt sich der Karakorúm (bei 85° ö. L. v. Gr.) in zwei wohl nahezu gleich hohe Zweige; diese begrenzen gegen Norden und gegen Süden eine verhältnismässig nicht sehr bedeutende Depression, deren Richtung der Wasserscheide des Gebirges parallel ist. Die Seen Téngri und Námur liegen in dieser Senkung, welche gegen Osten offen bleibt . . .»

This is mere speculation, for at that time the interior of Tibet was quite unknown, and it is hard to see why he made the Kara-korum branch off into two eastern ranges from 85° E. long. It is, however, interesting to see that Hermann von Schlagintweit believed in an eastern continuation as far as to 95° E. long. The rivers beginning on the Kara-korum and flowing north pierce the Kwen-lun in the same way as do the rivers of the Himalaya running south. Yarkand-darya, Karakash, and Keriya-darya are mentioned as examples. The peaks and ridges of the Kwen-lun are much lower than those of the two other systems. The average height

<sup>1</sup> Results of a scientific mission to India and High Asia, undertaken between the years MDCCCLIV, and MDCCCLVIII, by order of the Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Company, by Hermann, Adolph, and Robert de Schlagintweit. With an Atlas of panoramas, views, and maps. Leipzig and London 1862. This work contains an overwhelming amount of observations, gathered in four big volumes.

<sup>2</sup> Reisen in Indien und Hochasien, Band II: Hochasien. Jena 1871.