

Thus I have also inserted in these first chapters some information that has come to my knowledge since the first volumes were printed, and such information as has been published in the last four or five years. Approaching our own time my attention will be concentrated more and more upon the Kara-korum Proper, and having dealt with the recent exploration in the glacier region of the western-most part of the system, I will finally make an attempt to show in how far the Kara-korum and Transhimalayan Systems may be said to belong to one and the same gigantic system of folds in the earth's crust.

In the first chapter of Vol. I of this work, I have made an attempt to show, by a few examples, how very scanty and uncertain the real geographical features are which may be drawn out of the epical songs and other works of Sanskrit literature regarding the mountains to the north of India. As the result proved to be very poor when dealing with the whole world of mountains to the north, we could indeed not expect to find the slightest hint of the existence of the Kara-korum System which is only a part of the whole. Mount Kailâsa, which from a general point of view may be said to belong to this system, was the single part of it that we found mentioned in many of the poetical works of the ancient Hindus. But, on the other hand, when, according to Hindu conception, Mount Meru or Sumeru is regarded as the centre around which the four continents, amongst which is Jambudvîpa or India, are situated, it may also, from a very generalizing point of view, be said that Mount Meru includes the Kara-korum as well as all other mountain systems belonging to the Tibetan highlands.¹ But it is superfluous to add that the Kara-korum in reality was a perfect stranger to the geographical conception of the Hindus, and that even the Himalaya and the Kailâsa, and in a still higher degree the Meru, to the mind of the Hindus first of all, were poetical conceptions with, it is true, a background of real knowledge. The real knowledge of the geography of High Asia may be said to cease with the Kailas, north of which the *terra incognita* began.²

¹ In Dr. O. FRANKE'S work on Jehol I find the following interesting passage regarding the temple Hsü-mi fu-shou miao in Jehol: »Was den Namen anlangt, so ist Hsü-mi (alte Leute: Su-mei) eine Verstümmelung von Hsü-mi-lou oder Su-mei-lu, und dies ist eine Umschreibung des indischen Sumeru, des Namens jenes mythischen, '3360000 Li hohen' Berges, der sich mitten aus dem Meere erhebt und der auch in der nicht-buddhistischen Sanskrit-Literatur eine Rolle spielt. Im Tibetanischen heisst derselbe hlunpo....» *Beschreibung des Jehol-Gebietes*, Leipzig 1902, p. 56. The name Lunpo or Hlunpo we remember from one of the highest ranges of the Transhimalaya (Cp. the coloured panoramas, Vol. III, p. 318—319). Lunpo-gangri would thus mean the Sumeru Mountains, and the Sumeru would in this case practically be the same as the eastern continuation of the Kara-korum System.

² LASSEN says of the mountains Kailâsa and Gandhamâdana: »Diese Berge bezeichnen in dieser Richtung die Gränze der wirklichen Kenntniss, denn über die Einsiedelei des Râgarshi Arshtishêna hinaus ist es dem Menschen nicht erlaubt zu gehen.» — E. T. ATKINSON says: »Meru in its widest sense embraces the elevated table-land of Western Tibet between Kailâs on the east and the Muztâgh range on the west and between the Himavat on the south and the Kuen-luen range on the north.» *The Himâlayan Districts of the North-western Provinces of India*, Allahabad 1884, Vol. II, p. 290.