

Humboldt must have had too much confidence in Kien Lung's maps. He does not believe in the Hindu-kush as being a continuation of the Himalaya. Ich bestreite nicht nur.... die Behauptung, dass der Hindu-kho die Fortsetzung des Himalaya sei, dessen Richtung östlich von der Bolor-Kette N. W—S. O ist; sondern ich bestreite hauptsächlich hier, dass die Kette von 36° oder die welche Kafirstan im N. begrenzt und welche ich den nördlichen Hindu-kho nenne, am Nord-Abhänge von S. W. nach N. O. und nicht von O. nach W. laufe. He finds it a pity that for such a long time no attention had been paid to the »Asiatic range» (Elburs, Hindu-kush, Kwen-lun) and that the part east of Bolor, which the three Tibets bound towards the north, is missing on almost all maps, even if they show the part of the Hindu-kush which is west of Bolor as a continuation of the Himalaya.¹ Humboldt regards the meridional Imaus as identical with the Bolor.²

He quotes Dr. LORD³ who, like so many of the time, believed in a high plateau-land of Central Asia north of the Himalaya. He could have added G. W. TRAILL who speaks of the »Table land of Tartary» north of the Himalaya,⁴ that is to say: there is no sign of Transhimalaya or Kara-korum.

It is quite touching to read what Humboldt says at the end of the chapter about Kwen-lun and Himalaya:⁵ Nichts hat mich in meinem Leben mit lebhafterem Bedauern erfüllt, als dass es mir nicht vergönnt gewesen, selbst in jene berühmten Regionen einzudringen, wo ich ihr Verhältniss zu den Cordilleren der Neuen Welt erforschen wollte.... Das ist das Geschick des Menschen: Am Ziele seines Lebens stehend, vergleicht er nicht ohne Betrübniß das Wenige, was er geleistet hat, mit dem, was er zur Vergrößerung des Gebiets der Wissenschaften gern hätte unternehmen mögen. At the same time he condemns⁶ the custom to compile without criticism, and to fill up the blank spaces and join heterogeneous materials which give a false resemblance of accurateness to geographical works and maps of regions, which least of all have been visited by Europeans.

But even at an age when he had lost the force to undertake any difficult journeys, Humboldt had the same indefatigable interest in the great Asiatic problems and tried to direct the attention of others to them. Thus he gave HOOKER some important hints for a traveller in the Himalayas, amongst which was the following:⁷ Si l'on est assez heureux de traverser la grande Cordillère de Kouen-lun pour arriver à Yarkand, en remontant vers les sources du Chajouk, affluent de l'Indus,

¹ Op. cit., p. 597.

² Op. cit., p. 116.

³ *Journal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, June 1838, p. 522, 527.

⁴ *Statistical Sketch of Kamaon. Asiatic Researches*, Vol. XVI. Calcutta 1828, p. 160.

⁵ Op. cit., p. 611.

⁶ Op. cit., p. 23.

⁷ *Journal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. XVII, part I, Calcutta 1848, p. 324.