

it is insisted, that they sprang from the same stock with the *Hebrews* and *Arabs*; a third assertion is that of the *Arabs* themselves and of M. PAUW, who hold it indubitable, that they were originally *Tartars* descending in wild clans from the steeps of *Imaus*; and a fourth, at least as dogmatically pronounced as any of the preceding, is that of the *Brāhmens*, who decide, without allowing any appeal from their decision, that the *Chinas* (for so they are named in *San-scrit*) were *Hindus* of the *Cshatriya*, or military class, who, abandoning the privileges of their tribe, rambled in different bodies to the north-east of *Bengal*, and, forgetting by degrees the rites and religion of their ancestors, established separate principalities, which were afterwards united in the plains and valleys, which are now possessed by them. If any one of the three last opinions be just, the first of them must necessarily be relinquished; but of those three, the first cannot possibly be sustained; because it rests on no firmer support than a foolish remark, whether true or false, that *Sem* in *Chinese* means life and procreation; and because a tea plant is not more different from a palm, than a *Chinese* from an *Arab*: they are men, indeed, as the tea and the palm are vegetables; but human sagacity could not, I believe, discover any other trace of resemblance between them. That the *Chinese* were anciently of a *Tartarian* stock, is a proposition, which I cannot otherwise disprove for the present, than by insisting on the total dissimilarity of the two races in manners and arts, particularly in the fine arts of imagination, which the *Tartars*, by their own account, never cultivated; but, if we show strong grounds for believing, that the first *Chinese* were actually of an *Indian* race, it will follow that M. PAUW and the *Arabs* are mistaken: it is to the discussion of this new and, in my opinion, very interesting point, that I shall confine the remainder of my discourse.

In the *Sanscrit* Institutes of Civil and Religious Duties, revealed, as the *Hindus* believe, by MENU, the son of BRAHMA, we find the following curious passage: "Many families of the military class, having gradually abandoned the ordinances of the *Vēda*, and the company of the *Brāhmens*, lived in a state of degradation; as the people of *Pundraca* and *Odra*, those of *Dravira* and *Cambōja*, the *Yavanas* and *Sacas*, the *Pāradas* and *Pah-lavas*, the *Chinas* and some other nations." A full comment on this text would here be superfluous; but, since the testimony of the *Indian* author, who, though certainly not a divine personage, was as certainly a very ancient lawyer, moralist, and historian, is direct and positive, disinterested and unsuspected, it would I think, decide the question before us, if we could be sure, that the word *China* signified a *Chinese*, as all the *Pandits*, whom I have separately consulted, assert with one voice: they assure me, that the *Chinas* of MENU settled in a fine country to the north-east of *Gaur*, and to the east of *Camarup* and *Népāl*; that they have long been, and still are, famed as ingenious artificers; and that they had themselves seen old *Chinese* idols, which bore a manifest relation to the primitive religion of *India* before BUDDHA's appearance in it. A well-informed *Pandit* showed me a *San-scrit* book in *Cashmirian* letters, which, he said, was revealed by SIVA himself and entitled *Sactisungama*: he read to me a whole chapter of it on the heterodox opinions of the *Chinas*, who were divided, says the author, into near two hundred clans. I then laid before him a map of *Asia*; and, when I pointed to *Cashmir*, his own country, he instantly placed his finger on the north-western provinces of *China*, where the *Chinas* he said, first established