

to be inundated, though not deeply, by water which overflows from the Jemischek and makes its way into the Jätim-tarim. At that period vast areas of the lowland become converted into a marsh; but the circumstances vary a good deal from year to year in accordance with the varying levels in the different river-arms. Two other small lakes on the right of our route are the Tschong-köl and the Uja-köl, while on the left lies the Bos-köl. Beside the Uja-köl there is a hut. Most of these lakes were at that time dry, though in some of them, e. g. the Bos-köl, there were older depressions containing pools called *tschol*. Further, we noticed on the left Kötäk-tschol and Tus-alghutsch-daschi, a low-lying level bed of salt, surrounded by steppe, forest, and tamarisks; from it salt is extracted. The forest still continued to be in places very dense, with ancient trees; indeed the natives affirm, that this is the richest forest-tract in the whole of the Tarim delta. We ourselves ascertained too that the forests situated farther to the west cannot for one moment be compared with it. From this we may at once infer, that the present main channel of the Tarim is of younger date than these more easterly waterways, and hence that the river, even at this late stage of its course, has shifted to the right.

The next lake on the right, and a dried up lake, is the Suvurghu-mus-kadaghan-köl. It is a striking fact, that nearly all the geographical names in this region end in the suffixes *köl*, *tschol*, or *daschi*; and as an actual fact it is impossible to travel any distance without crossing over former lake-basins or ravines or depressions, which were manifestly formed in time past by flowing water. One native even ventured to assert, that he believed a long time back, say two hundred years, the whole of this region was covered with water, and consisted of a labyrinth of lakes and marshes, connected together by canals and river-arms, which at a later stage of development contracted into a few main arteries and larger lake-basins. Bold though this statement is, and mere vague tradition though the basis is that it rests upon, it is nevertheless not altogether unlikely. When the river first turned south-east and south, it may perhaps have spread itself out as an ever-changing delta, and some time may have elapsed before it settled down into anything like permanent channels. The great number of names, that have as one constituent a word meaning »water» in some shape or form, also points to the same conclusion.

On the left there comes next a dry lake called Tapeldini-köli, while on the right are long lines of low overgrown dunes and tamarisk-mounds. Although a clump of forest shows every now and again, on the whole the kamisch-fields predominate, and often there are patches of ice hidden amongst them, survivors from the inundations. At the next bend, where we doubled the left arm or river, there enters a canal, one meter broad and about the same in depth, which at the season of high flood carries water from the river on the east to that on the west. At the point where our track crossed this canal, and close to the river-bank, we observed a distinctly marked threshold, giving rise to a cataract (*scharkurun*), with a descent of 1.09 m. in height. The canal was at that time perfectly dry. Here then we have a proof, that the eastern arm is more than one meter higher than the western arm.

The Kok-ala arm was frozen throughout, and on its bank were a couple of uninhabited huts, and a third at Kok-aladake-kotan, on its left bank. Young forest is common on the opposite side. At the bend of Jäkän-okuluk-uj the river was 3 m.