

north-east. The lake reached as far as he went, stretching N. 53° E. He found two huts amongst the tamarisks in two different places. Just beyond the last of these he observed a *kara-dung* or »black hill», presumably a clay eminence with dead kamisch on it. From its top he saw the lake still stretching onwards in the same direction; but as the atmosphere was thick with dust, he was unable to see more than a couple of hundred meters. At that point however the lake appeared to be a good deal narrower than it was over against our camp, and my Loplik fancied that it swung away to the east and south-east. The shore was accompanied all the way by the belt of low sand, bound with vegetation, but except for that it consisted of barren schor. He saw no kamisch however, either on the shore or in the lake; though in two places he noticed dead kamisch beaten down by the wind, like that on a cape at our camp, where it lay almost horizontal, pointing towards the south-west. Besides this, the kamisch at our camp was so heavily charged with dust and silt that you could walk upon it: it was like a moving quagmire above the pools underneath.

The reconnaissance yielded no positive result, and I am still in uncertainty as to the north-eastward extension of the Kara-koschun. Anyway Prschevalskij's and Pjevtsoff's idea, that the lake is on the whole 90 versts long, is not very far from the truth. What Kosloff, the only traveller who has followed the southern shore of the Kara-koschun, thinks about it will appear from the subjoined extract from his pamphlet on *Lop-nor* (p. 34). »Below the village of Abdal the Tarim divides into three branches, which form several lakes, big and small, amongst the tall reeds. The direction in which not only these streams, but also the entire body of water, extend is from south-west to north-east. Both the northern arm and the southern are 60 versts long; between them winds the third, the middle arm, which comes to an end after a course of 85 versts, being the very remotest artery of the Tarim. As soon as the water stops, the vegetation also very soon stops as well. In the vicinity are broad marshes (schor), stretching north-east for a distance of 300 versts, and these are the extreme tentacles of the Lop-nor. On the north this salt morass is bordered by the sandy desert, and on the south by the sandy desert of Kum-tagh, which has however no connection whatever with the former desert.»

I have already pointed out the improbability of this account.\* If it be taken literally, its statement is tantamount to an absurdity, for according to it the salt marsh which forms the extreme north-eastward continuation of the Kara-koschun (410 km. from the mouth of the Tarim) must be the lake of Toli at the southern foot of the Tschöl-tagh; i. e. the old salt depression of the Lop-nor is made to extend right across the whole of the Kuruk-tagh system. If we measure off the 410 km., the distance he gives, towards the east-north-east, as he probably means us to do instead of to the north-east, then his *solontschakis*, or »salt morasses», will reach as far as the lake of Chala-tschi (Chara-nor). Kosloff travelled along their southern shores from Abdal to Chala-tschi. But it is evident, that these salt-marshes can have nothing to do with the Kara-koschun in its recent stadium, because the six altitudes which are shown on the general map that accompanies Roborovskij's

\* See *Petermanns Mitteilungen*, Ergzhft. 131, p. 144.