

Arka-köl	= 5.80 m.
Tajek-köl	= 6.50 »
Kara-köl	= 5.32 »
Avullu-köl	= 3.92 »
Tschivilik-köl	= 4.07 »

The mean of all the soundings which I took in these five lakes, 38 in number, amounts to 4.78 m. The mean of all the soundings taken in the Kara-koschun amounts to 2.366 m. Thus the mean depth of the Kontsche-darja lakes is exactly double the mean depth of the Kara-koschun. And even though the water-surface of these small lakes lies a few meters above the water-surface of the Kara-koschun, nevertheless there may be portions of their bottoms which lie at a lower absolute altitude than the deepest hollows in the Kara-koschun depression. Earthy islands, holms, and reedbeds are incomparably smaller and fewer in the Kara-köl lakes than in the Kara-koschun; the former give the impression of possessing more of the character of real lakes. We have estimated, that the volume of the Kara-koschun in the beginning of April amounted to 2500 million cub.m. If we regard the Kara-köl system of lakes as a whole, 40 km. long and 10 km. broad on an average, then, with a mean depth of 4.78 m., its volume amounts to 1900 million cubic meters. And although this figure is not strictly comparable with that for the Kara-koschun, since in the latter case the shallow reed-fields are also taken into account, we find nevertheless that, although the area of the Kara-köl lake-system is only one-sixth of the area of the Kara-koschun, yet their cubic contents are not far from being as great as the cubic contents of the Kara-koschun. Anyway it is not right to describe them as »but paltry remnants of the migratory Kontsche-darja.»

In this critical examination of the rejoinder which Kosloff has made, in his book issued in 1899, to Richthofen and myself, I believe I have now dealt with all the so called »proofs» which he advanced for his identification of the Kara-koschun with the Lop-nor. I should not have dwelt so long upon this question, were it not for the insistent energy with which Prschevalskij's views have been defended by Kosloff and several other russian geographers. I do indeed regard with the greatest esteem Kosloff's wish to preserve for his great teacher, Prschevalskij, the honour of being the first discoverer of the Lop-nor, and I attest my admiration for the valuable, exact, and persevering explorations which Kosloff himself has carried out in the country of Lop; but scientific truth must take precedence over all such considerations as these. And it is clear that as our material increases our views will be widened, and the entire problem will be set in a more distinct and intelligible light in proportion as the region becomes better known. It is unfortunate for Kosloff, that he should have placed such blind confidence in Prschevalskij's views as to the position of Lop-nor, for they rest upon no convincing proof. By doing so he has done himself an injustice and detracted from the value of his discovery of the Kuruk-darja, for he came across it just at the point where the old river issued into the ancient lake. When he published his book Kosloff was the only European who had seen the northern shore of the old Lop-nor, and its poplar-trunks, at least at a distance; but unfortunately he did not know how to interpret what he saw. Had he gone a few kilometers farther south and dis-