

the lake must be extremely shallow. We at length reached the lake shore by way of a deltaic branch, now cut off and dead, though still full of water and tolerably deep; its continuation could be detected a good distance from the shore, in the shape of a deeper channel running through the otherwise shallow northern part of the lake. There were also a couple of similar branches, but less developed. I could not however make out whether they were independent streams that originated in the nearest mountains on the north-west or whether they were — and this is indeed the more probable — actual deltaic branches belonging to the final part of the river's course, branches which become filled when the river rises exceptionally high, the water making its way over at some point or points where the right terraced bank is lower than usual. If this latter is the case, we might indeed speak of a very rudimentary and minimal delta.

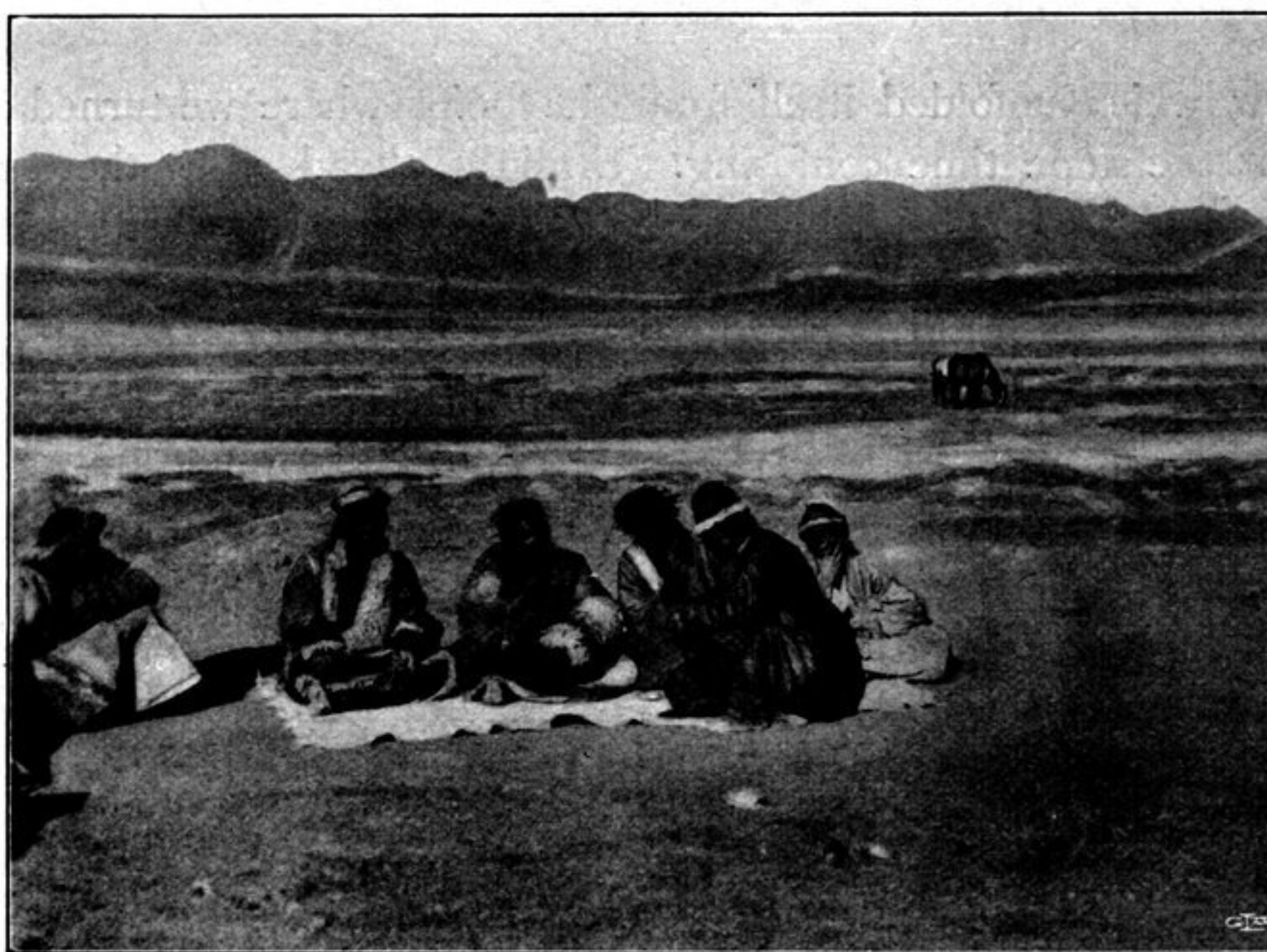


Fig. 14. SCHANIG-NAGBO.

Reliable data with regard to the configuration of the lake-bottom could only be obtained by taking a series of soundings outside the river mouth. Owing to the heavy »sea» that was on, I was unable to do anything in that respect. Off the promontory which projects between the estuary and the rudimentary delta, the water was, as I have said, extremely shallow. Its colour towards the east appeared to indicate that the lake is shallow also in that quarter; in other words, a bank of deposited river-mud seemed to curve round the outside of the estuary. And its presence is rendered more credible by the fact that the fresh water radiates out to such a great distance into the lake. This acts as a kind of barrier to the salt-water, converting the river-mouth into, as it were, a basin, which during the warm season is fed by fresh water only, coming from above. Even then, when the wind was blowing hard from the south and the waves came driving in off the lake, the salt water was unable to penetrate into the river mouth. Perhaps the conditions