

墨山; for the location of Mo-shan, also called *Shan* 山 in the Han Annals, in the westernmost Kuruk-tāgh is established.<sup>6</sup> On their farther course to the east the waters of the river are said to pass south of the town of *Chu-pin* 注賓. By this, as I have been able to prove elsewhere, the site of Ying-p'an at the head of the present Kuruk-daryā must be meant.<sup>7</sup> 'Farther east', we are told, 'they pass south of the town of *Lou-lan* and then run off eastwards.' A reference which the commentator makes here to the story of a Chinese military colony established at this town has been fully elucidated by me in *Serindia*. It renders it quite certain that by the 'town of Lou-lan' the site of the ruined station L.A. and its vicinity are intended.<sup>8</sup> The statement as to the river's course being south of the town is in complete agreement with what the surveys recorded above in Chap. VI. sec. v have shown us of the succession of ancient river-beds, all deltaic branches of the Kuruk-daryā and several of them of great width, crossed on our march to L.A. from the south. To the north of the ruined station we had met with only a few dry beds and none of considerable size.

The next passage of the text directly concerns us here and may therefore be quoted in full: 'The waters of the river (*Ho*) 河 proceed farther east, to empty themselves in the *Yu* marshes 洳澤 which are those called by the [*Shui*] *ching* the *P'u-ch'ang* lake 蒲昌海. The waters accumulate in the north-east of *Shan-shan* 善善 and in the south-west of the Town of the Dragon 龍城.

'River of the north.'

Story of the 'Town of Dragon'.

'The Town of the Dragon is the site of the town in which at one time resided *Chiang Lai* 姜賴. This was a great kingdom of *Hu* 胡. An overflow of the *P'u-ch'ang* lake covered up the capital of this kingdom. The foundations [of this town] are still preserved; they are very extensive. If at sunrise one starts from the western gate one arrives at sunset at the eastern gate. At the scarped foot of this town a canal had been made. On the line which has survived of it, the wind blowing has gradually produced the form of a dragon of which the face turned westwards regards the lake. It is from this that the name "Town of the Dragon" is derived.'

For the interpretation of the important topographical points here furnished by Li Tao-yüan's account, the facts recorded in Maps Nos. 29, 32, on the basis of our surveys of 1914 and 1915 afford safe guidance. These show us that the ancient river-beds, forming part of the Kuruk-daryā delta and traced by us in the area south of the Lou-lan Site, must have terminated farther east in marshes by the western shores of that great salt-encrusted sea-bed, dried up since a far earlier period, which in the *Shui ching* and also in the Former Han Annals bears the alternative names *P'u-ch'ang* lake or 'Marsh of Salt' (*Yen-tse* 鹽澤). The present freshwater marshes of the Kara-koshun, formed by the dying Tārīm near the south-western extremity of the same salt-encrusted Lop sea-bed, provide an exact counterpart to those 'Yu marshes' in which the river-beds of ancient Lou-lan once emptied themselves.

Interpretation of Li Tao-yüan's story.

It was along the approximate line of their outflows into those marshes that the survey between Camps C. ccxxxix. a and C. ccxli. a was made under my instructions by Afrāz-gul in February, 1915. As will be seen from the ground shown on that line in Maps No. 32. A. 3, 4 and No. 29. D. 4 and from the surveyor's diary record, a series of dry beds, recognizable moreover in some places by dead Toghrak trunks washed down from the banks higher up, were successively encountered by him. South-eastwards they lose themselves in the vast expanse of hard crumpled-up salt which marks the former Lop sea-bed. By the side of these outflows there are found, for a distance of over forty miles from north-east to south-west, stretches of ground showing a surface of salt-encrusted clay, and in places still retaining dead reeds and tamarisks. These stretches of ground obviously

Dried-up terminal marshes of Kuruk-daryā.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Chavannes, *T'oung-pao*, 1905, p. 552, note 7; *Serindia*, i. pp. 334, 420.

<sup>7</sup> See *Serindia*, i. p. 420; below, Chap. XXI. sec. ii.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, i. pp. 421 sqq.