

visited the place, and his association with « Çulficar » must have occurred later on in China. From the context, and if we take into consideration the administrative customs of the time, it is probable that « Çulficar » was one of the foreigners whom Qubilai was so willing to appoint to fairly high posts, but that does not imply that he was more than a director of the local mines, just as Polo's three years' tenure of office at Yang-chou may have been simply in connection with the gabelle administration (see « Singiu »).

The exact location of the asbestos mines which were under « Çulficar »'s supervision during three years has not yet been determined. During the Mongol dynasty, the only known text which relates to the extraction of asbestos is the one which is met with twice in *YS* (6, 5 b, and 205, 1 b); from it we learn that, at Ahmad's request (see « Acmat¹ »), it was decided, on October 26, 1267, to extract asbestos in the 別法赤 Pieh-ch'ieh-ch'ih mountain (on this name, see LAUFER, in *TP*, 1915, 365-366; *Ch*, I, 149; the other form which embarrassed LAUFER, p. 365, is due to Ch'ien-lung's orthographical « reforms »). Pieh-ch'ieh-ch'ih is certainly a transcription, and supposes *Bäkäči (the « red » [eh'ih] mountains of Pieh-ch'ieh spoken of by SCHLEGEL are just as wrong as his precise localization in Ssü-ch'uan is arbitrary; CHARIGNON's Bogda[-ōla] is even worse); and his foreign name suggests a probable localization out of China proper; it may or may not be the mountain mentioned by Polo.

The problem may however be approached from another angle. Polo says that the mountain where asbestos was found yielded also ordinary steel and « andanique » (*q. v.*) It is extremely tempting to see here the *pin-t'ieh* of the Chinese (cf. LAUFER, *Sino-Iranica*, 515-516; see « Andanique »); in 984, Wang Yen-tê, giving an account of his recent embassy to Kao-ch'ang (see « Carachoço »), says that there is *pin-t'ieh* at I-chou (= Qomul; see « Camul »). The mountain north of Beš-baliq which is mentioned by Wang Yen-tê and which yielded sal-ammoniac may also come under consideration; for a discussion of this point, see « Andanique » and « Ghinghin talas ».

In 1655, MARTINI inserted in his *Novus Atlas Sinensis* a paragraph on Mongolia, to which he gives the name of « Kingdom of Taniu » (see also the quotation which has passed into KIRCHER, *China Illustrata*, 1667, 206-207). YULE (*Y*, I, 215), who miscopied « Tangu », thought of the Tangnu-ōla, which cannot be a general name for Mongolia. Without being too positive, I think MARTINI, who was rather fond of archaisms, called Mongolia in this passage by the title of the ancient Hsiung-nu Emperors, 單于, read generally *shan-yü*, but for which *tan-yü* has often been used in the past (it has been revived in the extraordinary spelling *tan-hu* adopted by DE GROOT, *Die Hunnen des vorchristlichen Zeit*). It was in this great country of « Taniu », extending from Manchuria to Samarkand, that MARTINI mentions and describes a herb which passes through fire without suffering any change and which must be asbestos. MARTINI seems to have seen some of it, brought of course to China; and we may suppose, unless MARTINI's notice is second-hand and of an antiquarian character, that a certain quantity of asbestos still found its way from Mongolia to China in the second quarter of the 17th cent., although we are left in the dark as to the exact site where it was mined.

