

was a region thirteen days in extent so abounding in lakes and mud and ice, that it was impracticable to horses and had to be covered with dog sledges; people lived there underground on account of the great cold. Things look as though the description of this part of Qoniči's dominions was based on true facts, while the notice on the province of Darkness largely echoes tales which have been current in the mediaeval Orient. Of these tales, a lucid account is given in *Y*, II, 485-486. The notion of a land of Darkness in the north has sometimes become mixed up with another one, that of a miraculous darkness which occurred in the Caucasian Gog and Magog. Moreover, a region of Darkness was also mentioned in the Indian Ocean. Another tradition, that of the « dumb trade », is involved in connection with both the northern province of Darkness and some of the southern islands.

Polo's notice on the province of Darkness, where « the sun is not seen, nor moon, nor star, but it is always as dark as we have in the early evening » (cf. Vol. I, 472), makes no distinction between seasons. *LT* inserts « for the greater part of the time of the year »; RAMUSIO, « for the greater part of the months of the winter »; according to RAMUSIO, the hunters there collected furs « in the summer, when they have day and light continually ». YULE felt inclined to ascribe the perpetual darkness to Rustichello's ignorance, and « to credit Marco with the improved version in RAMUSIO ». This can hardly be the case. None of the Polos ever was in the « province of Darkness », and the traveller merely repeated what was then the common belief in the East. The changes in *LT*, and above all in RAMUSIO, seem decidedly to betray an editing based on more recent information.

Apart from the important trade in furs, the only characteristic feature in Polo's account of the province of Darkness is the use by Tartars, to find their way back from it, of mares which longed after their foals left behind. YULE (*Y*, II, 485) thought that this was « probably a story of great antiquity, for it occurs in the legends of the mythical *Ughuz*, Patriarch of the Turk and Tartar nations, as given by Rashid-uddin »; he also adduced a similar legend from later Greek forms of the romance of Alexander (in C. MÜLLER's *Pseudo-Callisthenes*, Bk. II, ch. xxxix [not « xxxiv » as in YULE]). He might have added that the story occurs also in connection with Alexander in the *Talmud* (cf. NÖLDEKE, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderromans*, 25-26, in *Denkschr. d. K. Ak. d. W.*, Ph.-Hist. Kl., Vol. 38 [1890]).

In Rašidu-'d-Dīn, there are two different accounts of the legend of Oγuz-khan, one at the beginning of his general account of the tribes, which has been edited and translated by ERDMANN (*Vollstaendige Uebersicht*, 6-23), BEREZIN (*Ber*, I, 12-25) and SALEMANN (in the Introduction to RADLOV's *Das Kudatku Bilik*, I [1891], xiv-xxviii); nothing is said there of the land of Darkness. Of Rašid's second account, I know only the version published by ERDMANN (*Temudschin*, 464-507), which is not very reliable. The land of Darkness is also mentioned in Rašid's unpublished *History of China*, which is not at my disposal for the present, and I cannot say whether it is connected there with Oγuz-khan. In Rašid's account, as translated in ERDMANN's *Temudschin*, the part of the « wise adviser » in all difficult cases, the one who suggested the use of four mares and nine she-asses, is a certain بوشی خواجه Būšī-ḥwājah, but the name is uncertain, and the gloss attached to it (p. 474) clearly corrupt; it would be useless to propose corrections without readings from several Mss. In ERDMANN's translation, the name of the land of Darkness is written قاراهولون Qarā-Hūlūn, « Black Hūlūn » (p. 478), the second part of which, according to ERDMANN (p. 86), is « surely » a rendering