

Darkness in Fra Mauro. The Land of Darkness, north of Russia, occurs also in Armenian and Georgian sources (cf. BROSSET, *Histoire de la Géorgie*, I, 491).

The above accounts of the Land of Darkness are clearly based on the true fact of the long arctic nights. But there are others of a purely legendary character. In relating Chinghiz-khan's campaigns, Plan-Carpine has a paragraph on an expedition to the east (*contra Orientem*) against the « Kergis » (*Wy*, 61-62); he was indebted for his information to « Russian clerks » whom he had met at Güyük's court (such is the meaning of *ut nobis dicebatur ibidem*, with reference to a foregoing paragraph [*Wy*, 60]; the passage, mispunctuated in D'AVEZAC's edition, 659, has been misunderstood by RISCH, *Johann de Plano Carpini*, 131). In the course of his advance, Chinghiz reached the Caspian Mountains (*Caspios montes*), which being in this part made of magnetic stone (*de lapide adamantino*), attracted his arrows and iron weapons. The people shut up between the Caspian Mountains (*inter Caspios montes conclusi*), hearing the noise of the army, began to break up the mountain. When the Tartars came again later ten years they found the mountain broken up. But the Tartars were prevented from advancing by a dense cloud, which made them blind, nor could the people on the other side proceed for the same reason. Before reaching the said mountain, the Tartars had travelled more than one month across a large desert. From there, marching further east, Chinghiz' army again spent more than one month crossing a desert and reached an inhabited country, with roads, where no human being, however, was visible. The Tartars finally got hold of a couple, who told them that the inhabitants lived in the earth under the mountains. Chinghiz, keeping the wife, sent the husband with the order that the inhabitants should submit to him. But the inhabitants assembled through underground ways (*per vias occultas sub terra*), and, sallying forth suddenly, killed a great many Tartars; Chinghiz, seeing that he would achieve nothing, and unable to stand the noise of the rising sun (which was the reason why the people lived underground), retired with his army. Plan Carpine seems to be the source of one of the passages on the Place of Darkness in Maundevile.

The whole account is of course of a legendary character, but some of its constituents can be determined with a certain accuracy. VAN DEN WYNGAERT, probably because of the advance « to the east », has been of opinion that the « Kergis » were the Kirghiz, living west of the Baikal; but he was surely mistaken. As said by RISCH, the « Kergis » are here certainly the Circassians (see «Çic»), and the Caspian Mountains are the Caucasus; the « shut up » people are an echo of the traditions on Gog and Magog. RISCH answers the objection that the Circassians did not live east of the Mongols by saying that neither did the Kirghiz. But we must not take these bearings too strictly. Plan-Carpine has narrated in the preceding paragraphs the campaigns of Jöçi against the Comans, and of another son of Chinghiz against Prester John and the Christians of « Greater India », who had repelled him with Greek fire. On the way back, the latter army came across a nation where women had a human figure, but males were dogs who threw themselves into the water and immediately afterwards rolled themselves in dust; the season being winter, the dust, mixed up with the water, froze into a hard crust against which arrows hit in vain and were thrown back; finally, the dogs, biting the Tartars, killed many of them and obliged the rest to retreat. There are many counterparts to these folklore tales in other mediaeval sources (cf. those adduced by RISCH, 126-128), and no accurate geographical data can be expected. The parallel tale from