

Rašidu-'d-Dīn's legend of Oγuz-Khan (cf. RISCHE, 128) would tend to show, however, that the story was originally referred to countries in the north-east, and perhaps connected with Plan-Carpine's account on dog-headed people (*Wy*, 74; see « Femeles », p. 686).

In the case of the « Kergis », *i. e.* the Circassians, and the dense cloud, there is, however, a curious parallel text in Hethum's chapter on Georgia (*Rec. des Hist. des Croisades*, Arm., II, 129, 269). Georgia, according to Hethum, is divided into two kingdoms, Georgia proper and Abkhazia (« Abcas »). « In the kingdom of Georgia (proper), there is a great marvel, which I would not dare to relate, if I had not seen it. But, since I have been there myself and have seen it, I dare say and narrate that there is in Georgia a province called Hamsen (= Hampasi), which extends well to three days' [journey], and as long as that province lasts, there is everywhere such a darkness that no man can see anything, and nobody is bold enough to enter that land, since he would be unable to come back. The people of the country say that they hear the voice of men, the crow of cocks and the neighing of horses, and that from a river which flows out from there they see clear signs that men really live there. Reading Armenian and Georgian histories, we find that there was a cruel Emperor in Persia, whose name was Savoureux (= Sapor), who worshipped the idols and persecuted the Christians. Once he ordered that all the inhabitants of Asia should come and sacrifice to the idols, and that those who would not come would be burnt... [Some fled...] When they were in the above-named country of Hamsen, this bad Emperor met them and ordered that all the Christians should be cut to pieces. Then the Christians implored the mercy of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and instantly came that great darkness which blinded the Emperor and all his people. The Christians escaped, and remained in that darkness, and there they will remain, according to what is believed and related, until the end of the world. » This text of Hethum has been copied almost word for word by Maundevile. The editors of Hethum in the *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades* say that this Land of Darkness is the same as that mentioned by Polo and by Ibn Baṭṭūṭah; but they are clearly mistaken. Hethum's Land of Darkness is not in subarctic regions, but in the Caucasus, and the parallel account to adduce is that of the « Kergis » of Plan Carpine.

Fra Mauro gives two notices on a region of Darkness; they are placed right and left of his long straight line of the Laquedives and Maldives (*Zu*, 52; HALLBERG, 529). One is : « Note that the ships which, sailing with a south wind, let themselves be carried near the islands are drawn by the currents into the Darkness (*a le tenebre*), and once entered therein, on account of its density and also of that of the water which is very adhesive (*tegnente*), they must perish ». The other says : « And mark that when sailors see the birds of the said islands, feeling that they have come too near them they go away from them, because beyond them there is such a dense darkness that ships which would venture to enter it could neither advance nor retire, and it is known from experience that those who have ventured [there] have perished. » Elsewhere, the island of « Bandan » is said to be « near the Darkness » (*propinqua a le Tenebre*; cf. *Zu*, 49).

In the case of the Caucasus as in that of the Maldives, the origin of the accounts of regions of Darkness probably lies in occasional dense fogs, of the same kind as those which, in eastern Persia, were ascribed to the enchantments of the Qaraunas (cf. Vol. I, 121).

In *Y*, II, 486, CORDIER has quoted a note by PARKER according to which Ibn Baṭṭūṭah's account