

addition « where Alexander is said to have fought against Darius ». But this also has a counterpart if not in the usual text of Odoric, such as it is printed for instance by VAN DEN WYNGAERT, at least in the Italian Ms. of Florence, Bibl. Naz., sez. Palatina, No. 54 of CORDIER's list (*Y*¹, II, 60-61, 102, 338); it has many peculiar passages, the authority of which is not doubtful. There we read : « Then I came to Persia, in the city which is called Taurisio, and on the way I passed the Red River (il fiume Rosso), where Alexander routed Darius the King of Asia; and in that city we have two convents ». The Franciscans really had two convents in Tabrīz (cf. GOLUBOVICH, *Bibl. Bio-bibl.*, II, 265). The Fiume Rosso, or Red River, is also mentioned by Pegolotti, and YULE was of opinion that it was the Araxes (Arās > Rosso); but this is a certain error, and CORDIER (*Y*¹, III, 164) already remarked that the river meant must be a tributary of the Araxes, the Qizil-çai (Turk., « Red Stream »), which waters Hoi. There have been, and there are several Red Rivers in Persia, called Hula'an-murān in Mongolian (cf. QUATREMÈRE, *Hist. des Mongols*, 96-97) or Surḥ-āb in Persian (cf. *LS*, 436, 439), and there was even a quarter called Surḥ-āb either in Tabrīz itself or in its suburbs (cf. LE STRANGE, *Nuzhat-al-Qulūb*, transl., 81-82). But, judging from Pegolotti's text, CORDIER's identification has much chance to be the correct one. Yet, in spite of the text, I very much doubt whether Odoric located Darius's defeat at the Red River. The Italian Ms. of Florence is an uncouth piece of work; and its statements, important as they are, cannot be taken at their face value. Odoric said that, on the way to Tabrīz, he had crossed the Red River, but it must be at Tabrīz itself that he placed the battle between Darius and Alexander. At any rate, Tabrīz is the place indicated by Fra Mauro, whether his source be Odoric or not. This location must be connected, I think, with the mistaken identification of Susa with Tabrīz. Although the decisive battle between Alexander and Darius had been fought at Arbela in Mesopotamia, later Iranian tradition transferred it more to the south-east, and Firdausī places it on the confines of Kermān. From the data in Odoric and Fra Mauro, it seems that, perhaps on account of the popular *Book of Esther*, Susa had finally been adopted as being the place of the encounter.

This also may explain why Polo places the battle in the north-eastern part of Ḥorasān, and both Odoric and Fra Mauro at Tabrīz; the location must be dependent on different locations of the Dry Tree. It is true that Fra Mauro's map shows the Dry Tree in India, south of the Imaus; but this is only because he was then drawing from another source than that to which he is indebted for his notice on Tabrīz. Polo says that « people of the country » placed the battle at the Lone Tree or Dry Tree, but that does not necessarily mean that he obtained that information on the spot; « people of the country » may be the Christians in the Near East in general. Things look as though in Christian circles of the East, European as well as native (and Bar Hebraeus' mention of King John = Prester John betrays their reciprocal influence), the defeat of Darius had finally come to be located at the Dry Tree, and the Dry Tree to be placed in the region of Susa. This would explain how some should have discovered the Dry Tree at Tabrīz, because Tabrīz was identified with Susa, and Susa was supposed to be the place of the battle between Darius and Alexander. As to Polo, all that he probably heard in the East was that Darius had been defeated at the Dry Tree. But he thought that the Dry Tree was the same as the holy Oriental Plane of north-eastern Ḥorasān of which he had made his Lone Tree; and this is why he located in north-eastern Ḥorasān the place where the Achaemenid Empire met its end.