

purifies it entirely. If it be broken, it is repaired by means of goat milk boiled underneath». Part of this curious text is clearly independent from Polo, and it is not even certain that it owes him the « forty years » of maturation of the clay, or even the sentence on fathers and sons; these may have belonged to the stock-in-trade of the Near East, where Polo too perhaps heard them rather than in China and from Chinese. As shown by the remark on the name « Chim », the information was gathered on Persian soil, and the « noblemen » who drink from the vessels were probably those of the Near East, since in China everybody could do it. John, archbishop of Sultanieh (Sulṭāniyyah), who, in 1403, wrote a memoir on Tamerlane and his Court, says in like fashion : « Cin, Machin, which are provinces where rhubarb grows, and where the beautiful bowls are found which are brought to Genoa, and the earth of which they are made is said to be kept forty years » (H. MORANVILLÉ, in *Bibl. Ec. des Chartes*, LV, [1894], p. 16 of the reprint). The explanation of *porcellanum* from the « herb », *i. e.* from the « purslane », though it finds a slight counterpart in the « Lochac » chapter of some Polian Mss., is not derived from them, and represents an independent interpretation. Though it is of course a mistake, it can be accounted for only if we remember that most of the porcelain which went abroad in the Middle Ages was not a white ware, but the green « celadon » (see « Tingiu »). Chinese texts often speak of vessels which detect or ward off poison, for instance those made of rhinoceros horn, but I do not remember that the same property has been ascribed by them to porcelain. But, curiously enough, they speak of the efficaciousness against poison of cowries (see « Cowry », t. I, p. 542) *i. e.* of « porcelain » taken in its primitive sense. The belief spread in the West. In the Inventory of Florimond Robertet, dated 1532, porcelain (in its meaning of china-ware) is said to be « so sound (*saine*) that, if traders should soil it with poison to harm anybody, it would instantly break of itself and fall to pieces rather than tolerate the evil beverage which was meant to injure our inside ». The great Robert Estienne, writing in 1536, recalls that he saw porcelains in Venice and heard that they « never would accept poison » (cf. GAY, *Glossaire archéologique*, II, 258). This notion seems to have been evolved in the Near East. I do not know of any parallel for the repair of broken porcelain by means of boiling goats milk.

Polo says that vessels of Chinese porcelain were « carried throughout the world ». HEYD (II, 679) took exception to this and declared it to be a certain error, since, « in all likelihood », china-ware had not yet reached Europe in Polo's day. I am not certain that HEYD's stricture does not go beyond the mark. First of all, it is a fact that, in Polo's time, Chinese porcelain was extensively exported to the various countries of Asia and the eastern coast of Africa, which is already an ample justification of the words used by the traveller. Moreover, « in all likelihood » is no proof, and it may very well be that some porcelain, already known perhaps under this name, had reached Europe before the end of the 13th cent. Porcelain had been correctly described by the Arabian traveller Sulaymān in the middle of the 9th cent. (cf. FERRAND, *Voyage du marchand arabe Sulayman*, 54; J. SAUVAGET, *Relation de la Chine et de l'Inde*, 16, 57). By the middle of the 12th cent., Abū'l-'Abbās had « Chinese bowls and vases » (? or « bowls and vases of China [*i. e.* porcelain] »), « the substance of which equalled in beauty corindon of the kind called *al-muḥarram* » (FERRAND, in *JA*, 1925, I, 262). It seems incredible that none of the crusaders or the European traders who went to the East should have seen any such vases and brought back any of them to their native lands.

Having under our eyes Polo's French text where china-ware is called « porcelaine », we can but