

*Portulaca oleracca*, in Chinese is 馬齒莧 *ma-ch'ih-hsien*, lit. « horse-teeth amaranth »; another ancient designation is *ma-ch'ih* [龍牙] *lung-ya*, « horse-teeth and dragon sprouts », the second part being perhaps for 龍牙 *lung-ya*, « dragon teeth », which is in fact given by TARANZANO; another name, for a species with smaller leaves, is 鼠齒蜆 *shu-ch'ih-hsien*, lit. « rat-teeth amaranth » (cf. *Pên-ts'ao kang-mu*, 27, 12 b; STUART, *Materia Medica*, 347). These names are said to have been given on account of the way in which the leaves are ranged on the stalk, but, whatever the case may be, there is something in the purslane which reminded the Chinese of the teeth of certain animals; and we know that one of the best attested ancient names of the cowry in Chinese was *pei-ch'ih*, « shell teeth » (see « Cowry »). On the other hand, I cannot but be struck by the extraordinary coincidence which, independently of any European influence (hardly possible moreover in view of the mediaeval scholarship it would have required), occurs in the Siamese name of the « purslane »: this is *phǎk blâ*, « cowry vegetable », in other words *porcellana* (cf. PALLEGOIX, *Dictionarium linguae Thai*, 54). I wonder whether some analogous comparison did not help in the corruption which altered a derived form of *porcilaca*, « purslane », and made it coincide with *porcellana*, « cowry ».

### 318. PULISANGHIN

<i>palisangin</i> V	<i>pulisangan</i> R	<i>pulisangim</i> FAt
<i>poluisanguis</i> VL	<i>pulisanghin</i> Ft, FBr, t	<i>pulisanglinz</i> VA
<i>pulinçanghim</i> LT	<i>pulisanghinc</i> (?) L	<i>pulisangra</i> FAr
<i>pulinzachi</i> TA <sup>3</sup>	<i>pulisanghins</i> FB	<i>pulisangriz</i> P
<i>pulinzanchiz</i> TA <sup>1</sup>	<i>pulisanghinz</i> F	<i>pulisanguins</i> FA
<i>pulinzanghym</i> LTr	<i>pulisanghyn</i> Z	<i>pullicanzino</i> VB
<i>pulisanchi</i> Fr		

The question has long been debated whether we should take this name for the Persian Pul-i-sāngin, « Stone Bridge », or as a Sino-Persian Pul-i-Sangin, « Bridge of the Sang-kan », 桑乾 Sang-kan being then commonly used as a name of the 渾河 Hun-ho (cf. Y, II, 5-8; « Hwan-ho » and « Lu-ku-k'iao » are bad transcriptions for « Hun-ho » and « Lu-kou-ch'iao »). Polo certainly gives the name which was known to Persian-speaking people, and he may not have had himself a clear idea about what it really meant. But if we remember that Rašidu-'d-Dīn speaks of the Sang-kan river, and calls it آب سنکین Āb-i-Sangin, « Sangin river » (Bl, II, 463), the balance of evidence will be in favour of Pul-i-Sangin, « Bridge of the Sang-kan ». Moreover, Polo gives as the name of a river what is really the name of a bridge, and his error would be more serious if the name meant only « Stone Bridge ». It is possible however, that the name, originally derived from that of the Sang-kan river, was given in Persian-speaking circles the easy popular etymology of Pul-i-sāngin, « Stone Bridge ».