

through valleys, and crossing many rivers and tracts of wilderness. And in all this way you find neither habitation of man, nor any green thing, but must carry with you whatever you require. The country is called Bolor.»¹ Kircher has, of course, used another version of Marco Polo, but the difference does not much matter. The point is the extraordinary way in which he explains the situation of Bolor.² He says that Marco Polo's description of Bolor does not contain anything that would not agree perfectly with the mountain which »nowadays is called Langur and which is situated in the kingdom of Lhasa». And he adds: »Le Pere Jean Gruberus, qui la visitée & la parcouruë tout à pied raconte que quoiqu'il fit ce voyage au milieu de l'esté il eust peine (estant au plus haut) de pouvoir s'empescher de mourir tant à cause de la subtilité de l'air qui ne permet pas la respiration, que parce qu'il y a une certaine herbe pestilentielle & venimeuse, laquelle evapore une senteur puante . . .» He concludes that Marco Polo »calls that country Belor, in which, a short time ago Thebeth was discovered». On his map (Vol. I, Pl. XI) Belor mons is situated between Tanchut Regn. and Reg. Tibet. Thus his text does not agree with his map, where the distance is considerable between Belor mons and Lassa Reg., in which he says Langur is situated, and Langur should be identical with Marco Polo's Bolor. He gives the following partly correct and partly confused description of the country between Si-ning-fu and Lhasa. They had crossed the »Hoang» twice and reached Si-ning in 30 days from Peking. »Après leur despart de Sining ils marcherent pendant trois mois de temps dans le desert de Kalmack de Tartarie, & arriverent au commencement du Royaume de Lassa, que les Tartares appellent Barantola. Ce desert est en partie montagneux, & en partie plain & uny, mais cette differente disposition de lieu ne luy donne pas plus de fertilité dans un endroit que dans un autre, n'y plus de disposition a estre plus abondant en quelques unes de ses parties; puisqu'il est esgallement couvert de sable par tout. Il est vray pourtant qu'on y trouve assés souvent des ruissaux dont les rivages fournissent abondamment de l'herbe, & du pasturage pour toute sorte d'animaux.» He says there are people who believe this desert goes the whole way from the heart of India to the Glacial sea. Marco Polo calls it Lop, the Tartars called it formerly Belgian and now Samo, the Chinese Kalmuk, others Caracathai or the black Cathaie. The only animals that are to be found in it are »des tauraux sauvages», wild yaks. The natives dwell in »maisons portatives»³ on the banks of the rivers where they find sufficient grazing for the flocks.

The southern part of the country he describes in this way is the Transhimalaya.

Then follows a more detailed description of Langur or l'Angur, a mountain, the horrors of which have impressed other missionaries, Desideri and Beligatti, in the same way.

¹ Yule: Marco Polo, 3d edition, revised by Henri Cordier London 1903. Vol. I, p. 171.

² Regarding Bolor see Yule's erudite article: »Notes about the Bolor» etc. Journal Royal Geogr. Society Vol. XLII 1872, p. 473 et seq.

³ Here Odorico is more correct: »Les gens de ce pais demeurent en tentes de fuerre (feutre).