

our brother to go back. Benedict would not listen to him, saying that he had never yet let himself be deterred by fear of death from the duty of obedience, much less would he do so now in a business from which so much glory to God might be expected. It would be most unworthy conduct, he said, to frustrate the hopes of so many for fear of death; and to throw away all the expense that had been incurred by the Archbishop of Goa and the Viceroy. He hoped still to carry through the undertaking by the help of Him who had thus far brought him prosperously, but in any case he would rather risk his life in the cause than draw back from his purpose.

So he girded up his loins for the journey, and bought ten horses for himself and his comrade and their goods, having already one more at his house. Meanwhile the chief of the caravan went off to his home, which was some five days from the capital, to get ready for the journey, and after his arrival sent back a message to our friend to start as soon as possible, and to hasten the other merchants by his example. He was glad enough to do so, and set out accordingly, in the middle of November 1604, proceeding first to a place called IOLCI, where duties used to be paid and the king's passports to be inspected. After this in twenty-five days, passing successively HANCIALIX, ALCEGHET, HAGABATETH, EGRIÁR, MESETELECH, THALEC, HORMA, THOANTAC, MINGIEDA, CAPETAL COL ZILAN, SARC GUEBEDAL, CANBASCI, ACONSERSEC and CIACOR,¹ they reached ACSU.² The difficulties of the

¹ I cannot identify one of these places in any routes or maps of Central Asia except *Canbaschi*, which appears in K. Johnston's map of Asia as *Kumbashi*, and is mentioned in the Russian Reports as one of the most important settlements of the Aksu district (*Russians in Central Asia*, p. 160). Of the other names *Hancialix* translated from Ricci's spelling would be probably *Khan-Chalish*; *Sarc Guebedal* is probably the same name as *Saregabedal* which occurs further on; *Aconsersec* is possibly the *Saksak* of Berghaus's map; *Ciacor* is probably *Shakyar*, which indeed is the name of a town some 4° east of Aksu, but which also appears to be common to many other places in the country, if it is not indeed a local