

22. AMU

amau, mau G*amu* F, Fr, t, L, LT, TA¹, TA³,
VA, Z; R*ania* R*annui* V*avin* (? *aniu*) FA*camu* FB*flum* P*ivi* VB*tamu* FBr

The name is written « Amu » in most mss. (also « Amu » on Fra Mauro's map; cf. *Zu*, 40, HALLBERG, 29-30 [« Amui » is a misreading]), with other readings like « Anin », etc.; YULE has adopted « Anin », BENEDETTO « Aniu ». I have no doubt that all are corrupt and have retained « Amu » simply because I do not wish to choose a form which is not given by any ms.

Polo, describing the province of Qara Ĵang (Yün-nan) speaks of Zardandan and of Burma, and then devotes three paragraphs to countries that were « behind » and about which he had only vague information : « Bangala », « Caugigu » and « Amu ». All commentators agree that « Bangala » is Bengal, at least as far as the name is concerned; and « Caugigu », again as to the name at least, is Chiao-chih-kuo, the Annamite kingdom, then centred in Tonking. « Amu » alone remains, and all sorts of explanations have been proposed, which I feel it would be useless to discuss. Not lying on Polo's track, « Amu » must have been an important country, since the traveller heard of it, and he knew it to border on the Gulf of Tonking (as a matter of fact, he says the same of « Toloman », which is not true, but can be explained nevertheless; see « Toloman »). PAUTHIER (*Pa*, 428) already felt that Tonking was meant, and CORDIER followed him (*Y*, II, 131), but both were mistaken in thinking that « Amu », etc., could represent 南越 Nan-yüeh. Nan-yüeh, as a name of Annam, was not in use at that time, and the two alternative names we always meet with in the texts of the Mongol period are Chiao-chih-kuo and 安南 An-nan (then read An-nam). Chiao-chih-kuo is represented by « Caugigu », of which Polo certainly heard in Yün-nan. He may then also have heard the name of An-nan, and failed to realize that it was the same as « Caugigu »; but he certainly heard of « An-nan » at a later date, when he went on a mission to Champa or on his return journey to Europe. It was then he knew that it bordered on the sea, and the information contained in his paragraph on the province of « Ania » either dates only from these sea travels, or, if Polo had already heard of An-nan in Yün-nan, was supplemented by them. In other words, I take « Amu » to be only a corrupt representation of *Annam (> *Annā > *Aman > *Amau > *Amu, etc.). This explains how Polo, having distinguished « Caugigu » and « Amu », could give for « Caugigu » characteristics which apply only to the Upper Red River, while in his description of « Amu », bordering on the Gulf of Tonking, we should understand the region of the delta. VON TSCHARNER, 77², accepts « Annam » as a likely solution.

Of « Amu » (< *Annam > Anian) we have an echo in early modern geographical lore. The Venetian cartographer GASTALDI, on his early maps and down at least to 1550, maintained that there was a land junction between Asia and America, although some of his contemporaries already held the opposite opinion. GASTALDI seems to have changed his views as a result of