

After MARSDEN, but prior to YULE, PAUTHIER proposed quite a different solution. Although generally paying RAMUSIO scant attention, PAUTHIER (*Pa*, 354-355) accepted in the present case the latter's isolated reading «Thaigin» (which he miscopied «Taighin») as the only correct one and substituted in his edition «Taïcin» in place of the readings of his French mss. «Taïcin», according to PAUTHIER, was a transcription of 太慶 T'ai-ch'ing, the name of a fortified pass (關 *kuan*) on the western bank of the Huang-ho, and somewhat south-west of P'u-chou-fu.

RICHTHOFEN, who did not accept YULE's explanation of Chi-chou, himself expressed the opinion that Polo may have used two different routes, passing through «Kieh-chou» («Caiciu» of F) when going to Yün-nan and through «Taiching-kwan» («Thaigin» of R) on his return, or *vice versa* (Y, II, 26-27). PENZER (*Pe*, XLVII-XLVIII), although attracted by YULE's Chi-chou, repeated RICHTHOFEN's argument and traced on his map the itineraries resulting from the different solutions proposed.

I am surprised that PAUTHIER's T'ai-ch'ing should have been taken seriously. The true name is 大慶關 Ta-ch'ing-kuan in all Chinese sources, but this is of small account since *ta* was still pronounced with a final *-i* in the Mongol period. It is also of no great consequence that Ta-ch'ing sounded Dai-k'ing or Tai-k'ing in Polo's time, and not with the modern northern pronunciation which we transcribe Ta-ch'ing and which PAUTHIER and RICHTHOFEN render as «Taitching» and «*Taigin-kwan*» respectively. The result is that Polo's transcription of such a name should be \*«Taichin», not «Thaigin» as in RAMUSIO, or «Taïcin» as the name was restored by PAUTHIER in his edition. More important is the fact that Ta-ch'ing-kuan, although known as one of the crossings of the Huang-ho, was never the residence of the military governor of Shan-hsi province, contrary to PAUTHIER's statement, and in 1328 Äsän-tämür simply passed through it to enter Shan-hsi. But what is fatal to PAUTHIER's theory is the position of Ta-ch'ing-kuan. We are looking for a place between P'ing-yang-fu in the north-east and P'u-chou-fu in the south-west. Now Ta-ch'ing-kuan is south-west of P'u-chou-fu, and moreover on the western bank of the Huang-ho (although BRETSCHNEIDER and PENZER's maps put it on the eastern bank); it was a sort of advanced post of P'u-chou-fu, a bridge-head still belonging to Shan-hsi, although situated on the other side of the river. It is evident that the place does not fulfil any of the conditions required for its identification with «Caiciu».

There is another reason which ought to have at once disposed of RICHTHOFEN's opinion. While admitting that «Caiciu» is Chieh-chou, RICHTHOFEN looked for «Thaigin» at Ta-ch'ing-kuan because, Polo having, possibly, travelled by two different routes when going and returning, «the traveller himself might have put into Ramusio's text the name of *Thaigin* instead of *Cai-chu*». But such an opinion betrays a fundamental misconception of the way in which Polo's book has come down to us. It is quite clear that Polo used but one name, and that discrepancies such as «Caiciu», «Thaigin», etc. are the result of copyists' errors.

As for the name which Polo used, I must frankly admit that, whatever solution we adopt, we shall have to make some allowances for certain inaccuracies in the text, the first one, quite evident, being that Polo locates «Cacionfu», the modern P'u-chou-fu, west of the Huang-ho, while it is east of it and reached from P'ing-yang-fu before crossing the river.

YULE's identification of «Caichu» with Chi-chou is not probable. Chi-chou is practically