

=Great Golden. But we have seen that *Thaigin* is not the only reading. That of the MSS. seems to point rather to some name like *Kaichau*. A hypothesis



Plan of Ki-chau, after Duhalde.

which has seemed to me to call for least correction in the text is that the castle was at the *Ki-chau* of the maps, nearly due west of P'ing-yang fu, and just about 20 miles from the Hwang Ho; that the river was crossed in that vicinity, and that the traveller then descended the valley to opposite P'u-chau fu, or possibly embarked and descended the river itself to that point. This last hypothesis would mitigate the apparent disproportion in the times assigned to the different parts of the journey, and would, I think, clear the text of error. But it is only a hypothesis. There is near Kichau one of the easiest crossing places of the River, insomuch that since the Shen-si troubles a large garrison has been kept up at Ki-chau to watch it.\* And this is the only direction in which two days' march, at Polo's rate, would bring him within 20 miles of the Yellow River. Whether

there is any historic castle at Ki-chau I know not; the plan of that place in Duhalde, however, has the aspect of a strong position. Baron v. Richthofen is unable to accept this suggestion, and has favoured me with some valuable remarks on this difficult passage, which I slightly abridge:—

“The difficulties are, (1) that for either reading, *Thaigin* or *Caichu*, a corresponding place can be found; (2) in the position of *Cachanfu*, setting both at naught.

“*Thaigin*. There are two passages of the Yellow River near its great bend. One is at T'ungkwan, where I crossed it; the other, and more convenient, is at the fortress of Taiching-kwan, locally pronounced *Taigin-kwan*. This fortress, or rather fortified camp, is a very well-known place, and to be found on native maps; it is very close to the river, on the left bank, about 6 m. S.W. of P'u-chau fu. The road runs hence to Tung-chau fu and thence to Si-ngan fu. T'aiching-kwan could not possibly (at Polo's rate) be reached in 2 days from P'ing-yang fu.

“*Caichu*. If this reading be adopted Marsden may be right in supposing *Kiai-chau*, locally *Khaidju*, to be meant. This city dominates the important salt marsh, whence Shan-si and Shen-si are supplied with salt. It is 70 or 80 m. from P'ing-yang fu, but *could* be reached in 2 days. It commands a large and tolerably populous plain, and is quite fit to have been an imperial residence.

“May not the striking fact that there is a place corresponding to either name suggest that one of them was passed by Polo in going, the other in returning? and that, this being the only locality between Ch'êng-tu fu and Chu-chau where there was any deviation between the two journeys, his geographical ideas may have become somewhat confused, as might now happen to any one in like case and not provided with a map? Thus the traveller himself might have put into Ramusio's text the name of *Thaigin* instead of *Caichu*. From *Kiai-chau* he would probably cross the River at T'ungkwan, whilst in returning by way of Taiching-kwan he would pass through

\* I am indebted for this information to Baron Richthofen,