

BURIAL CUSTOMS GOLD & COWRIES IN TOLOMAN ≠ MARCO POLO

HERE HE TELLS OF THE PROVINCE OF TOLOMAN. Toloman is a province toward the sunrising. The people of *this province* are idolaters and have a language for themselves and belong to *the rule* of the great Kaan. They are very beautiful people *and tall* and are not [58d] at all quite white, but brown people. They are truly *all-proved and valiant* men of arms. They have cities enough and lands subject to them in *this province*, but castles they have in great quantity in very great *and steep* mountains and fastnesses. And when they die, they have the corpses burnt, and they take the bones which remain which cannot be burnt and put them in little caskets of wood. And then they carry them into great mountains and high and put them in *steep places* of great caves, hung *high* in such a way that neither man nor beast can go to touch them. And gold enough is found there also in that province. For their money is gold, and the money which they spend in small sums is of cowries from *Indie* in such way as I have told you above. And likewise all these provinces spoken of above, that is Bangala and Caugigu and Amu, spend gold and cowries. There are few<sup>1</sup> merchants, but those who are there are very rich and carry much wealth in their merchandise. They live on flesh and on milk and on rice. They have indeed no wine from vines, but make drinks of rice and of spices which are very good, like the other provinces above. Now we will leave you this province, where there is nothing else which does to mention, and we will tell of a province which is called Cuigiu toward the sunrising.

HERE HE SPEAKS OF THE PROVINCE OF CUIGIU. Cuigiu is a city and province which is toward the sunrising twelve days journeys distant from Toloman. For when one sets out from Toloman he goes riding twelve days journeys upward by a river where he finds towns and villages enough, but there is nothing else which does to mention. And when one is gone [59a] other twelve days journeys upward by this river then at the end one finds the said city of Cuigiu which is very beautiful and great and noble.<sup>2</sup> They are all idolaters and are subject to the rule of the great Kaan. They live by trade and by handicrafts. Moreover I tell you that they make cloths of the bark of certain trees and they are very beautiful, and indeed

<sup>1</sup> V: *molte*

<sup>2</sup> The opening words of the chapter in V are: "Starting from Toloman one rides twelve marches and arrives at a river, where are found many cities and villages, and in them is nothing to say; and passing this river twenty-two marches one finds at the end of this Ougni which is a very great & noble city." And in VB: "Vinti uui is a city and province toward the sunrising, distant from Toloman by twelve marches, and it is set on a river, and has cities and villages enough upon it; and travelling up by the river other twelve marches one finds the beautiful and great city called Singul."