

RELICS OF THE MONK SAKUGEN'S VISITS
TO CHINA 1539-1541 and 1547-1550

by A. C. MOULE

Photographs of the two manuscripts and one printed book described below have been sent by Professor S. Iwamura of Kyoto University to Dr N. M. Penzer in Cambridge in the hope that they may help to elucidate Marco Polo's puzzling itinerary down the east of China. Dr Penzer has kindly given the photographs to the University Library.

Some day someone will perhaps be able to tell the reason why Chinese names and facts are so intensely incomprehensible to the western mind as they have been from Marco Polo to the present day. Whatever the reason, the fact is beyond dispute. Those who speak glibly of Antananarivo, Cirencester, Kilimanjaro, Nagasaki, Saskatchewan, Trichinopoli, or Mtesa, will confound Kuang-tung with Kuan-tung, think it most unreasonable that two great cities should be called Hangchow and Hankow, or two political parties Kuo min tang and Ko ming tang, and utter almost every Chinese name with an apologetic giggle as if it were necessarily silly. And Marco Polo. The stages of his journey across Asia, his places in the Near East, or in Africa, or even in India, can be identified with comparatively few real difficulties; but in the Far East, with which he must have been familiar after a stay of quite fifteen years and where about one-third of his place-names occur, hitherto insoluble problems beset every route which he describes. There are, of course, a number of fixed points. We know what he meant by Cambaluc and Ciandu, by Saianfu and Namghin, Coigangiu and Yangiu, Cinghianfu, Sugiu, Quinsai, Fugiu, or Zaitun, and a score or more besides. But though the country between Su-chou (Sugiu) and Hang-chou (Quinsai) has been familiar to hundreds of Europeans and to hundreds of thousands of Chinese, and has been well surveyed and mapped, yet not one of the three places which Polo names in this region has been identified beyond dispute. Even when the spellings, such as Cianglu and Ciangan, seem almost to anticipate Wade spellings of Ch'ang-lu and Ch'ang-an, it has been possible to throw not unreasonable doubt on these seemingly obvious identifications, and some of the best editors have been driven to fix on the most likely places on the map with no regard to the Polo spelling or, it must be added, to the other details which we are told concerning the places in question. This cannot be regarded as a satisfactory proceeding,

even if the result is sometimes plausible, and we shall be grateful if more detailed study of these newly received itineraries can help to solve any of the outstanding problems.

Of the author, or at least owner, of these little sixteenth-century itineraries, Professor Iwamura writes:—

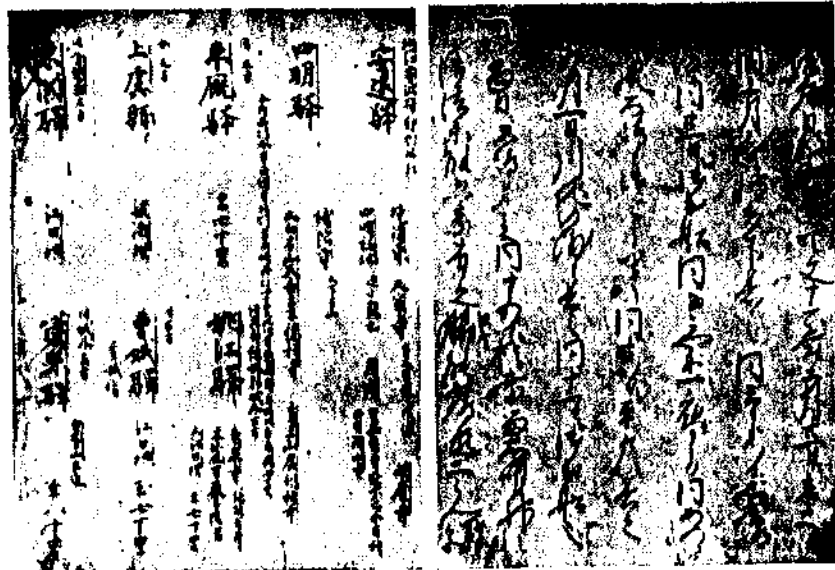
“The priest 策彦 Sakugen (1501–1579; sometimes called by his lay name 周良 Shūryō) was a well known priest scholar. He visited China twice, in 1538–9 and 1546–7, as envoy of the Ashikaga Shogunate to the Ming court. He left Hakata, Kyūshū, and landed at Ningpo, whence he proceeded to Peking, taking the same route on his return journey. The same route was followed on his second trip.”

Of the books he writes:—

“The originals are in the Myōchiin Temple in Kyoto, and designated as national treasures. They have never been printed. Besides these there is Sakugen's diary of his China trips. It is as valuable as those I am sending, or perhaps more interesting to you, because it describes in detail the canal route from Ningpo to Peking. It amounts to about 900 leaves. I may add that the diary is printed in the *Dai Nippon Bukkyō Zensho*, but this printed edition is an extremely poor one, with much mis-reading of the MS.”¹

1. The first itinerary consists of 18 pages, including the cover. On the cover 驛程錄 (*i ch'êng lu*) *Ekitei roku*; with seals: to right of title 翰苑遺 (han yūan i) “a scholar's remains”; below title 策彦 (*ts'ê yen*) Sakugen. On verso of cover, 12 columns of writing which seems to have no relation to the contents of the book, e.g. 文王之治岐也五十者杖於家 etc. Folio 1a–5b, the itinerary from 寧波 Ning-po to 北京 Peking; consisting of the names of the post stages 驛 *eki* in large characters, with notes in small characters of locks, etc., places of interest, and distances, but no dates. Thus it begins (Folio 1a):—安遠驛 An-yüan i—inside the walls of 鄞 Yin hsien, Ning-po fu, in Chê-chiang. 境清寺 Ching-ch'ing monastery, 天寧寺 T'ien-ning monastery (contains statues of the 500 *lo-han*), 延慶寺 Yen-ch'ing monastery, 四明福地 Ssü-ming fu ti (a Taoist place), 月湖 Yüeh hu (Moon Lake) (once visited by 賀秘監 Ho Pi-chien, who now has his Memorial Hall here. To the west is the 湖心寺 Hu-hsien monastery).

¹ Since these notes went to press, Mr Cudde, who has very kindly read the proofs and made several important corrections, has found the *Ekitei roku* printed in *Zoku shiseki shūran*, Vol. 1, Tokyo, 1930, pp. 559–66, and the first part of *Dai Min fu* in *Dai Nippon Bukkyō Zensho, yūhōden sōsho*, 4, pp. 404–5. But students may still be glad to know that clear photographs of the original manuscripts may be seen at Cambridge. Also, since these notes were written, Professor Iwamura has sent to Dr Penzer (who has again kindly given them to the University Library) a complete set of photographs of Sakugen's manuscripts preserved in the Myōchiin Temple (for details see K. Kuroita, *Kokuhō kenzōbutsu hōmotsu mokuroku*, Tokyo, 1936, pp. 54–5). The largest item is the diary of both visits, the text of which, as Professor Iwamura says, is printed in *Dai Nippon Bukkyō Zensho, yūhōden sōsho*, 4, pp. 99–378. For a full biography of Sakugen, see S. Kitamura, *Gozan bungaku shikō*, Tokyo, 1942, pp. 790–810.



1. A page of *Ekitei roku*

2. A page of *Dai Min Fu*



3. The last page of *Dai Min Fu*

4. Fol. 16 of *Yen 'tu shui i*

Folio 1b takes him from 蕭山 Hsiao-shan to north of Hang-chou, and is filled with notes of the famous monasteries, hills, etc. round the 西湖 Hsi hu or West Lake. Folio 2a goes by quick stages from 長安 Ch'ang-an (Marco Polo's Ciangan?) to the south bank of the great river at 呂城 Lü ch'êng, again occupying much space with the monasteries of 金山 Chin shan (Golden Island) and 焦山 Chiao shan at the crossing of the 楊子江 Yang-tzū chiang. Thence he seems to have visited Nanking (應天府 Ying-t'ien fu), giving the city walls the exaggerated circuit of 350 *li*, or about 100 miles, and noting that foreigners were not admitted into the city. From Nanking he returned to the Grand Canal *via* 儀真 I-chên, 廣陵 Kuang-ling, and 邵伯 Shao-po, reaching the Yellow River (黃河 Huang ho) just north of 淮安 Huai-an (Coigangiu). Across the river, the route follows the Canal through the territories of Huai-an, Hsü chou, Yen chou, Chi-ning, Tung-p'ing, Tung-ch'ang, Kao-t'ang, Chi-nan, Tê chou, Ho-chien to 通州 T'ung chou. Folio 5b begins with the 會同館 Hui-t'ung kuan, the two hostelrys for official envoys, and then enumerates the nine gates of the city of Peking and the nine gates of the Palace. Folio 6a begins with the summary, "The road from Ning-po to Pei-ching is 4575 *li*, equal to 762.5 Japanese *ri*", followed by the four officially licensed (勅 *ts'ê*) monasteries, 大興隆 Ta hsing-lung with 3000 monks, 大隆善 Ta lung-shan with 500, 大慈恩 Ta tz'ü-ên with 2000, and 大隆福 Ta-lung-fu with 1000 monks. Then, without heading or explanation, it gives the tribute carried by the three ships which seem to have brought the embassy from Japan: Number of long swords (太刀 *tachi*) on the first ship, 12,954; copper, 銅子, 120,000 catties (斤 *kin*); long swords presented by myself (自進), 290; officials, 15; accompanying merchants, 112; crew, 58 men. Long swords presented by the second ship, 5875; brass, 紅銅, 90,000 catties; presented by myself, 160; officials, 5; accompanying merchants, 95; crew, 40. Long swords on the third ship, 5323; copper, 88,500 catties; presented by myself, 260; officials, 6; accompanying merchants, 90; crew, 35 men. Total for the three ships, 456 men; total number of long swords, 24,862; copper, 298,500 catties. Then follow details of provisions supplied from government stores (廩給) at Ning-po, on the way to Hang-chou, at Hang-chou, on the way to Peking, and at Peking, where it reads "white rice 5 bushels, 1 sheep, 1 goose, 1 fowl, other food 12 varieties, every 5 days; but sheep, goose, and fowl shared by ten persons." And then, "For the ships in the 18 Chia-ching year (1539)", items of food; and finally, 大明嘉靖十九庚子季小春初五書于寧波嘉賓堂 "written in the Chia-pin t'ang at Ning-po on the 5 day of Little Spring (3 Nov.) in the 19 (*kêng tzü*) Chia-ching year (1540) of the Great Ming." The last two pages (inside and outside of the back cover) are filled with writing, the inside, like that on the inside of the front cover, with no apparent relation to the itinerary, and the outside almost all faded and illegible.

2. The second manuscript (in, I think, different hands) consists of 25 pages, excluding the cover. The label on the cover is 大明譜 *Dai Min Fu*, with the date 嘉靖廿六年 (1547) and some illegible words below. The first eleven pages are filled with continuous writing. This is written in Japanese cursive which I cannot read, and may probably be a brief diary. There are many dates, beginning with 天文十六年二月廿一日 (12 March, 1547) which was the day when the embassy left Yamaguchi for Hakata, whence they departed on 23 March, 1547; Ning-po was reached on 17 April, 1548, and Peking (上京) on 15 May, 1549. They left Peking on 31 August, 1549, and on 17 January, 1550 the party reached Ning-po (至寧波) again. The fourth page ends with summaries, e.g. "from Peking to Ning-po, time 141 days, distance 4588 *li*". Then follow details of the swords (太刀) which they had again brought, and the persons attached to the embassy, etc.; and mention of other places like 台州 T'ai-chou and 溫州 Wên-chou, sometimes written in Japanese with Chinese in the margin, and sometimes *vice versa*. Throughout this MS. there are side notes in *kana*. This part ends with the date 五月一日 (16 May, 1550), and then follows the itinerary which is almost identical with that of ten years before. The last page bears the date, signature, and place: 嘉靖廿九年卯月十五日柳井藏人卿直鞠浙江寧波府嘉賓堂書之. "On the 15 day of the *mao* moon of the 29 Chia-ching year Yanai Kurōdo Satonao wrote it in the Chia-pin t'ang at Ning-po fu in Chê-chiang." The *mao* moon is, I believe, normally in China the second moon and this day would be 3 March, 1550; but this author seems to use *mao* for the fourth moon, and Ueda *Daijiten s.v.* has 陰曆四月 "fourth moon of the lunar kalendar", so that this would be 1 May, 1550.

3. The third book is a little Chinese road-book, printed in 1535, which Sakugen presumably bought in China and brought home to his monastery in Japan, where it is carefully preserved and is believed to be the only copy surviving in Japan or China. It consists of a cover, with a title (apparently printed on the *verso* of the cover), and sixteen leaves of which the first is occupied with preliminary matter, and the last page is blank. It is on the whole well and cleanly printed with a clear illustration at the top of the title and on every page from 2a to 16a, but it seems to be a bookseller's publication, with many vulgar forms and abbreviations such as 伏 for 佛, 扶 for 揚, and some misprints such as 各 for 谷 (10a) or 十中下 for 上中下 (15a).

On the cover the label reads 沿途水驛 *Yen t'u shui i*, "Post stations along the roads and streams", with the seal 策彥 Sakugen below; and to the right of the label is written in two columns 浙江杭州府直至北京順天府程途. "The road to travel from Hang-chou fu in Chê-chiang straight to Shun-t'ien fu the Northern Capital (Pei-ching, Peking)." Below the label is the name 謙齋 Kensai, Sakugen's pen-name.

Across the top of the title-page is 親賢書堂 *Ch'in hsiên shu t'ang*, the style of the publishing bookshop, which I have not been able to trace. Below this is a clearly engraved picture of a traveller who carries at one end of his yoke a long-handled umbrella and some undefined object, perhaps a garment, and at the other end his psaltery (琴 *ch'in*, *koto*) and what looks like a large book or a small box hung in a cloth sling, while a second man seems to be pointing the way past a tree. Near the tree is a mark of four short parallel lines which in one form or another appears in several of the illustrations (e.g., 7a, 7b). Below the picture is the title in large characters, 圖相南北兩京路程 *T'u hsiang nan pei liang ching lu ch'êng*, "Road stages to the South and North Capitals, illustrated", and in smaller form 水陸通南北程驛遠東西 "waterways and roads reach from south to north, Post stages separate east and west." Nanking is, in fact, only incidentally mentioned on folio 4a. The first leaf is occupied by 40 lines of doggerel verse: "A Song of following the land and water routes." It begins 試問錢塘赴北京行と相去幾千程我今連一爲歌唱請君記誦在胸襟茲從武林吳山驛... "If you ask, from Ch'ien-t'ang to reach Peking, How many thousand (*li*) of road they are apart, I have now put it all together in a song Which I beg you to learn by heart. Here we begin from the Wu-shan post in Wu-lin (Hang-chou), . . ."; and it ends: "Above are the names of fifty-six post-stages, following the windings and curves, twistings and turnings, of the rivers and streams. If, sirs, you wish to know the names of the post stages, Accept this long song to tell you from beginning to end. End of Song." Then follows, on folio 1b, the imprint, 嘉靖乙未孟冬游氏親賢堂刊 "Engraved at Mr Yu's Ch'in hsiên Hall in the 10 moon of the Chia-ching (year) *i-wei* (November 1535)."

The itinerary begins on folio 2a with the heading: "Complete number of the Markets, Towns, Customs-houses, Fords, Posts, Rivers, Lakes, Locks, Sluices, on the straight road to go from Hang-chou fu in Chê-chiang to the Northern Capital (Peking) Shun-t'ien fu." Then, 杭州府地面 "Territory of Hang-chou fu", a formula to be repeated *mutatis mutandis* as often as the route passes from one Department or *Fu* to another, and the starting point 吳山驛 *Wu-shan jih*. Each stage is put at the top of a fresh column either in white characters on black ground, or in black on white, in brackets, followed by the distance to the next stage and often by other remarks. These remarks include advice about the suitability or otherwise of the place for stopping, or what may be bought there, etc., e.g. (石門灣) 好歇船有米麥絲綿等賣至皂林十八里 or (folio 3a) (八天) 不宜歇船有魚鮮等宜董慎湖左石橋五十間小人多至吳江二十里. Interest is shown, as it is by Sakugen in his MS. itinerary, in the walls and gates of any city which may be encountered, as (蘇州府) 石城有門六座 "(Su-chou fu) stone walls, with six gates", or "(Yang-chou fu) new and old walls, the new a stone wall, the old an earth wall; five gates . . ."

There are, I think, 185 stages from Hang-chou to 通州 T'ung chou inclusive. The nine gates of Peking are named, beginning with 崇文門 卽哈塔 "Ch'ung-wên Gate, namely Ha-ta", where we note the still current clipping of 海岱 Hai-tai to Ha-ta. Finally there is this summary: Hang-chou fu level water (*i.e.*, with no marked current) to Huai-an, 1098 *li*, including four locks; Huai-an against the current to 長溝 Ch'ang-kou in 濟寧 Chi-ning, 1085 *li*, including 14 locks; Ch'ang-kou following the current to 沂沽 Chih-ku 1375 *li*, including two lower locks (? 閘下二); Chih-ku against the current to T'ung-chou 320 *li*. Level, adverse, and following currents add up to 3878 *li*: the route passes through 12 *fu*, 15 *chou*, 26 巡檢司 *hsün-chien ssü*, 3 洪 *hung*, 17 military barriers, 6 sluices (埧 *pa*), 36 locks (閘 *cha*), 25 開關閘 *k'ai kuan chien* (?), 11 level-water locks, 2 鹽運司 *yen yüen ssü*, 3 提舉司 *t'i chü ssü*. The *explicit* on folio 16a is almost identical with the heading on folio 2a, except that it is followed by 途境卷之終. "End of the chapter . . .", so rather suggesting, as does the mention of Nanking on the title, that there may have been a separate little volume or chapter for the road to Nanking. After the *explicit* is another impression of Sakugen's seal.

The pictures seem to have little direct relation to the text, though most of them suggest travel. Four show city gates (one labelled 南城門 "south city gate"), and others scraps of city wall, one a lock, several show boats; and the umbrella of the title reappears several times, the psaltery at least once.

I am obliged to my friends, the late Professor G. Haloun, and Messrs E. B. Ceadel, T. Kamei, D. L. Keene, P. Van der Loon for very kind help in several places.