

Alvise Andreose (Università eCampus), *Su alcuni orientismi nei resoconti di viaggiatori medievali in Cina [On some Oriental words found in medieval travel accounts about China]*

1.1.

Or avint que March, le filz messer Nicolao, enprant si bien le costume de Tartars et lor langajes et lor let{e}res, car je voç di tout voiremant que, avant gramment de tens puis qu'il vint en la cort dou grant segnor, il soit de langajes et de quatre letres et scriture (Marco Polo, *Devisement dou monde*, ed. Eusebi, XV 2)

Now it happened that Marc, the son of Master Nicolau, learnt the customs of the Tartars and their languages and writings, for I tell you quite truly that before a great deal of time after he came to the court of the great lord, he knows several languages and four other different alphabets and writings.

1.2.

La segnorie est a cristiens, ensi con je voç ai dit, mes il hi a ydres asez, et homes que adorent Maomet. Il hi a une jenerasion de jens que sunt appellés *argon*, qe vaut a dire en François *guasmul*, ce est a dire qu'il sunt né de deus generacions: de la lingnee des celz de Tenduc et des celz que aorent Maomet (Marco Polo, *Devisement dou monde*, ed. Eusebi, LXXIII 12-13)

And the rule indeed belongs to Christians, as I have told you above, but there are also idolaters enough and some men who worship Mahomet. And there is also a race of people who are called *argon* in their own tongue, which means to say *guasmul* in French, that is to say that they are born of the two races: of the lineage of those of Tenduc and of those who worship Mahomet.

1.3.

Ego iam senui et canus factus sum potius laboribus et tribulationibus quam etate, sum enim annorum quinquaginta octo. Didici competenter *linguam et licteram tartaricham*, que lingua usualis Tartarorum est, et iam transtuli in lingua illa et lictera totum novum Testamentum et psalterium, que feci scribi in pulcerrima lictera eorum. Et teneo et lego et predico in patenti et manifesto testitimonium legis Christi (Iohannes de Montecorvino, *Epistulae*, ed. Wyngaert, *Sinica franciscana*, I, p. 350).

I have myself grown old and grey, more with toil and trouble than with years; for I am not more than fifty-eight. I have got a competent knowledge of the language and character which is most generally used by the Tartars. And I have already translated into that language and character the New Testament and the Psalter, and have caused them to be written out in the fairest penmanship they have; and so by writing, reading, and preaching, I bear open and public testimony to the Law of Christ (Yule-Cordier, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, III, p. 50)

1.4.

Tandem michi et socio meo preceptum fuit ut orationes ad Deum fundere deberemus, quatinus nobis ventum finaliter exhiberet; quod si haberi posset, nobis honorem maximum exhiberent. Et ut alii intelligere non possent, rector navis *armenice* locutus fuit dicens «Si ventus haberi non possit, hec ossa et vos proiciemus in mari» (Odoricus de Portu Naonis, *Relatio*, ed. Marchisio, VIII 146-48).

Whereupon they enjoined on my comrade and me that we should pour forth our prayers to our God to bestow it upon us. And if this took effect the greatest honour would be shown us. And the skipper said to me, speaking in the Armenian tongue, that others might not understand: "If we cannot have a wind we shall cast those bones of yours into the sea" (Yule-Cordier, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, II, pp. 130-131)

2.1.

Ci comance de la grant provençe dou Catay et conteron dou flun de Pulisanghin.

Or sachiés que mesier March meisme le Grant Sire le mande por mesajes ver ponent: et se parti de Canbalu et ala bien quatre mois de jornee ver ponent. Et por ce voç conteron tout ce qu'il vit en cele voie, alant et vignant. Quant l'en s'en part de la ville et il est alés .X. miles, adonc trove un grant flum qui est apellés *Pulisanghinz*, le quel flum s'ala dusque a la mer Osiane, et chi alent mant merchanz con mercandies. Et desus cest flum a u' mout biaux pont de pieres, car sachiés qe pont n'a en tout lo monde de si biaux ne son paroil, et voç mostrerai raison conmant.... (Marco Polo, *Devisement dou monde*, ed. Eusebi, CIV 1-3)

Here begins [the account] of the great province of Catai and we shall tell of the Pulisanghin river

Now you must know that the Great Khan sent Master Marco as an envoy towards the West: and he set out from Cambaluc and travelled westwards for no less than four months' journey. And we shall hence tell you all that he saw on that road, both on his outward journey and on his return. After leaving the city of Cambaluc and travelling ten miles, one reaches, then, a large river called Pulisanghin, which flows into the Ocean Sea, and here many merchants sail with wares. And over this river there is a most beautiful

stone bridge. For you may know that there is no bridge in all the world so beautiful, nor its equal, and <I shall show you> the reason why...

2.2.

In hac civitate moratur *abassi*, id est papa in lingua sua qui est caput omnium illorum idolatrarum, quibus dat et distribuit secundum morem suum omnia illa beneficia que ipsi habent (Odoricus de Portu Naonis, *Relatio*, ed. Marchisio, XXXIII 6-7)

In that city dwelleth the Abassi, i.e. in their tongue the Pope, who is the head of all the idolaters, and who has the disposal of all their benefices such as they are after their manner (Yule-Cordier, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, II, p. 250)

3.

Et quant l'en est alés tres jornee, adonc treuve l'en la tre nobilissime cité qui est apellé Quinsai, que vaut a dire en franchoit la cité dou ciel» (Marco Polo, *Devisement dou monde*, ed. Eusebi, CLI 4)

And when one is gone riding these three days journeys then one finds the very most noble city which is called Quinsai, which means to say in French the city of Heaven.

Hinc recedens, veni ad unam civitatem nomine Cansaye, quod idem est civitas celi (Odoricus de Portu Naonis, *Relatio*, ed. Marchisio, XXIII 1)

Departing thence, I came unto the city of Cansay, a name which signifieth "the City of Heaven" (Yule-Cordier, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, II, p. 192)

4.

Hoc secundum miraculum videns *lo Melic*, id est Potestas...

Dum sic dixissent, *lo Melic* accipi fecit illos tres fratres...

Dum autem sic illic manerent, perexit Cadi ad *lo Melic* dicens ei...

(Odoricus de Portu Naonis, *Relatio*, ed. Wyngaert, *Sinica franciscana*, I, p. 430)

saraceni [...] nunc subiacentes imperio *Daldili* (Odoricus de Portu Naonis, *Relatio*, ed. Marchisio, VII 27)

In medio autem palatii est una magna pigna alta passibus pluribus quam duobus, que tota est de uno lapide pretioso nomine *merdacas* (Odoricus de Portu Naonis, *Relatio*, ed. Marchisio, XXVI 15)

5.1

Cum autem fuerimus in Polumbo, ad portum ascendimus aliam navim nomine *conchum* ut in Indiam superiorem, sicut dictum est, iremus ad quandam civitatem nomine Caytan, in qua sunt duo loca nostrorum fratrum, ut ibi istas sanctas reliquias poneremus. (Odoricus de Portu Naonis, *Relatio*, ed. Marchisio, VIII 154-155).

And when we were there in harbour at Polumbum we embarked on board another ship called a *junk*, and went as has already been said to Upper India, to a certain city called Zaiton, in which our friars have two houses, in order there to deposit those sacred reliques. (Yule-Cordier, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, II, p. 131)

5.2

Deinde volentes navigare ad Sanctum Thomam Apostolum et inde ad Terram Sanctam ascendentes *iunkos* de inferiori India, que Minubar vocatur, in vigilia sancti Georgii tot procellis ferebamur, quod sexaginta vicibus vel amplius fuimus quasi demersi sub aqua usque ad profundum maris, et solo divino miraculo evadentes tot mirabilia vidimus, scilicet ardere mare, dracones ignivomos volantes et occidentes aliorum *iunkorum* personas in suo transitu, nostro divina ope manente illeso virtute Corporis Christi, quod portabam, et meritis Virginis gloriose et sancte Clare. (Iohannes de Marignollis, *Chronicon Bohemorum*, ed. Wyngaert, *Sinica franciscana*, I, p. 537)

Le nave over *çonchi* che navegano questo mar [= il Mare Indicum] portano quatro albori e, oltra de questi, do' che se può meter e levar et ha da 40 in 60 camerele per i marchadanti e portano uno solo timon [...] (Fra Mauro, *Mappamundi*, ed. Falchetta, p. 191 n° 48)

6.

In hac contrata homines utuntur navigio quod vocatur *iase*, sutum solummodo spago. In unum istorum navigiorum ego ascendi, in quo nullum ferrum potui in aliquo reperire. In quod dum sic ascendissem in viginti octo dietis me transtuli usque ad Tanam... (Odoricus de Portu Naonis, *Relatio*, ed. Marchisio, VII 19-21)

In this country men make use of a kind of vessel which they call *Jase*, which is fastened only with stitching of twine. On one of these vessels I embarked, and I could find no iron at all therein And having thus embarked, I passed over in twenty-eight days to Tana... (Yule-Cordier, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, II, pp. 113-114)