

Marco Polo and

the Silk Road

(10th–14th Century)

马可·波罗与  
10—14世纪的  
丝绸之路

荣新江 党宝海 主编



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# 序

袁行霈

由北京大学国际汉学家研修基地召集的“马可·波罗与10—14世纪的丝绸之路”国际学术研讨会于2016年11月19—20日顺利召开,到会的有来自欧洲、美洲、亚洲8个国家的30多位专家学者。共同的兴趣把我们聚在一起,旧雨新知,济济一堂,以文会友,以友辅仁,这是我们的缘分,也是我们的荣幸。

在这次研讨会上,大家就马可·波罗与10—14世纪丝绸之路的研究各抒己见,展开讨论。在马可·波罗研究方面,涉及诸多专题,如马可·波罗是否到过中国,如何通过元代外国人名的译写特点在汉文中寻找马可·波罗,《马可波罗行纪》的文本系统,《行纪》对欧洲地理学的影响,马可·波罗著作中的元代政区、军事、纪年、建筑、宗教礼俗,等等。在丝绸之路研究方面,会议分为陆上丝绸之路、海上丝绸之路两大主题,分别讨论“丝绸之路”的概念问题、路线问题、移民问题,以及丝绸之路上商品的种类、运输的途径等。此外,本次会议还有多篇论文研究10—14世纪的中外关系,涉及中国的外销商品、中国对域外国家的认识、古代波斯对远东的了解、外来占卜术的传入、中国绘画技巧与题材的传出等。以上议题对于深化马可·波罗研究、丝绸之路研究、中外关系史研究,对于推进中外学术文化交流,都是很有意义的。我们基地一向的风格是,沉潜下来做高端的学术研究,不急功近利,不求一时的热闹。“马可·波罗研究”就充分体现了这一点。

宋代朱熹有一句广为传诵的名言:“旧学商量加邃密,新知培养转深沉。”(《鹅湖寺和陆子寿》)在19世纪,中国人通过英国外交官和汉学家梅辉立(William F. Mayers)知道了马可·波罗;也是在19世纪,德国地理学家李希霍芬(Ferdinand von Richthofen)提出了“丝绸之路”的概念。在当时的中国,

这些无疑都属于“新知”的范畴。它们作为新的知识资源和认识角度进入中国,拓宽了当时中国知识分子的视野。如今,当年的新知似乎已经变成了旧学,“丝绸之路”成了中国人耳熟能详的词汇,已经浑然不觉它是一个外国词语的汉译。然而,事实上,旧学因不断注入新的研究资料和新的问题意识、辅之以新的研究手段,而又历久弥新。

马可·波罗是享誉世界的伟大旅行家,他的行记对增进西方对东方的了解发挥了积极的作用。由于马可·波罗研究的重要学术意义,北京大学国际汉学家研修基地在2009年成立之初,就把“马可·波罗研究”作为基地的重点科研项目。2010年,“马可·波罗研究计划”正式启动。自2011年9月以来,由北京大学历史学系荣新江教授、党宝海副教授主持的《马可波罗行纪》研究班每周集体研读,北京大学、中国社会科学院、故宫博物院、中国人民大学、北京师范大学等高校和科研单位的三十余位专家学者及研究生参加,迄今共举行了116次会读,完成了近百节的翻译和注释工作。我要特别提出的是,荣新江教授曾带领研究班的学者们,不畏艰险,到中国新疆、到中亚、两次到伊朗,进行实地考察。因为许多地点必须通过实地的调查才能找到确切的位置,才能与今天的地名对应起来。除此之外,研究班多次举办国际、国内学术会议,出版研究论集,《马可·波罗 扬州 丝绸之路》这本书就是我们在江苏扬州举办的马可·波罗国际会议的论文选。

值得一提的是,已经有十余位外国知名专家参与马可·波罗研究班的集体研究,短的一个月,长的半年。本次参加会议的艾骜德教授、朴贤熙副教授、西村阳子副教授都曾是马可·波罗研究班的成员。廉亚明教授、安德烈欧塞副教授、四日市康博研究员曾参加过马可·波罗研究班在扬州举办的学术会议。可以说,已经形成了一个国际性的研究团队。

北大国际汉学家研修基地召开这次会议,既是为了推动马可·波罗与丝绸之路的研究,也是为了促进中外学术界更为深入而广泛的合作。我们欢迎各国学者经常到北大国际汉学家研修基地来,跟我们共同研究。基地愿为大家提供一个深度合作的平台。我们期待着更多学者跟我们建立密切的关系,共同为推进马可·波罗研究、丝绸之路研究、中外关系史研究做出自己的贡献!

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**马可·波罗研究**

**Study of Marco Polo**





# Fragments of China: the *f* manuscript of Marco Polo's *Devisement dou monde*\*

Chiara Concina

(Università degli Studi di Verona, Italy)

## 1. *The manuscript tradition of Marco Polo's Devisement dou monde*

As is well-known to all Marco Polo scholars, the manuscript tradition of the *Devisement dou monde* (*The Description of the World* or *The Book of the Marvels of the World*) is particularly problematic.

The aim of this paper is first to summarise briefly the principal evidence concerning the manuscript tradition of the text, and second to provide an overview of the contents, and of the codicological and linguistic features of a new fragment (designated with the letter *f*), that I happened to discover a few years ago.

I will, therefore, start by noting that Luigi Foscolo Benedetto's 1928 critical edition of Marco Polo's book has been the point of departure for all subsequent studies of the manuscript tradition of the text.<sup>①</sup> In fact, this Italian scholar demonstrated – beyond reasonable doubt – that the original linguistic features of *The Book of the Marvels of the World* (which was composed in 1298 by Marco Polo and Rustichello of Pisa while in prison in Genoa)<sup>②</sup> must have corresponded to that peculiar variety of French that commonly goes by the name of 'Franco-Italian'; that is, a type of Old French affected by morphological and lexical Italianisms.<sup>③</sup> Recent studies have pointed out that in the period between Pisa's defeat at the Battle of Meloria in 1284 and the

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\* This paper is a synthesis of some of the topics already discussed in Andreose/Concina 2016.

① Benedetto 1928.

② Barbieri 2004b; Andreose 2015a; Andreose 2016a.

③ Capusso 1980; Ineichen 1989; Capusso 2008; Andreose 2015b; Andreose 2016b.

liberation of the prisoners in 1299, a workshop for the production of manuscripts, using mainly Pisan prisoners as scribes, was established in the prisons of Genoa<sup>①</sup>.

Today at least 46 manuscripts from this workshop are known (I will briefly come back to this point at the end of my paper),<sup>②</sup> and it is possibly in here that Marco Polo and Rustichello of Pisa collaborated to write the *Description of the World*.

Unfortunately, we have today only one surviving manuscript containing these distinguishing Franco-Italian linguistic peculiarities: Ms. fr. 1116, preserved at the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris and indicated with the letter *F*. This codex is commonly referred to also as the ‘geographical codex’, precisely because its language may correspond to the original one. As for what concerns all the other surviving manuscripts that convey Marco Polo’s book, it is well known that they belong to the indirect tradition, being translations of the original texts (i.e. into standard Old French, Tuscan and North-Italian vernaculars, Latin, Catalan, Castilian, etc.).<sup>③</sup>

These manuscripts offer different versions of the text and, according to Benedetto’s surveys,<sup>④</sup> can be grouped into two families, proceeding separately from a common model: family A, including Ms. fr. 1116 (*F*) and the versions of Marco Polo’s book transmitted by the group of mss. in standard Old French (*FG*)<sup>⑤</sup>, in Tuscan vernacular (*TA*)<sup>⑥</sup>, in North-Italian vernacular (*VA*)<sup>⑦</sup>, as well as the widespread Latin translation made by the Dominican friar Francesco Pipino,<sup>⑧</sup> deriving, in its turn, from this last group of manuscripts; and family B, that is far less numerous, including only the fragmentary Latin translation of the

① Avril/Gousset 1984; Gousset 1988; Benedetti 1990; Cigni 2000; Cigni 2006a; Cigni 2006b; Cigni 2007; Cigni 2008; Cigni 2010; Cigni 2013; Zinelli 2015; Cambi 2016.

② Zinelli 2015, 85-87, lists 47 manuscripts, but for the ms. Pisa, Biblioteca Cateriniana, n. 43, see Benedetti 1990, 141, 142 n. 80; Cambi 2015, 159-162.

③ The most recent critical edition of *F* is given by Eusebi 2010, then revised in Burgio/Eusebi 2018. On the localisation of *F* see Gousset 1996, 354; Eusebi 2010, XII; Andreose 2015b, 267-272; Andreose 2016b.

④ Benedetto 1928, XI-CCXVII.

⑤ Ménard 2001-2009.

⑥ Bertolucci Pizzorusso 1994.

⑦ Barbieri/Andreose 1999; see also Andreose 2002.

⑧ Prášek 1902.

manuscript Zelada 49.20 (*Z*)<sup>①</sup> – housed at the Capitulary Archives of Toledo –, a Venetian translation (*V*),<sup>②</sup> a Latin abridged version (*L*),<sup>③</sup> and one more version in Venetian (*VB*).<sup>④</sup> In addition, it should be remembered that, while composing his extensive travel anthology (*Navigazioni e Viaggi*, printed in Venice in 1559), Giovanni Battista Ramusio possibly drew the text for Book II (which includes Marco Polo's account)<sup>⑤</sup> from a model that was very similar to the Zelada manuscript. It also should be noted that the manuscripts of the B-group, and *Z* in particular, transmit some portions of text that are not contained in the manuscripts of the A-group. It is important to remember that these additional sections of the narrative have been proven to be part of the original text conceived by Marco Polo and Rustichello of Pisa.

Since Benedetto's 1928 edition, the manuscript tradition and family groupings of the manuscripts of Marco Polo's travel account have been investigated and discussed further over the years. From the 1920s and 1930s<sup>⑥</sup> to recent times,<sup>⑦</sup> Italian scholars proposed certain modifications to the grouping of the manuscript tradition hypothesized in Benedetto's edition. I will not discuss the details of each of these hypotheses, but will only note that all of them place the manuscript fr. 1116 rather far from the archetype, despite the fact that, as I have already mentioned, its linguistic features must be very similar to the original ones.

Furthermore, in his edition, Benedetto thought that the circulation of the *Book of the Marvels of the World* in the original Franco-Italian language was proven also by the existence of a fragmentary text contained in three leaves of a codex damaged by fire: the British Library's Cotton Otho D V.<sup>⑧</sup> In the year 2000, Professor Philippe Ménard examined the text of this manuscript and proved that it was not Franco-Italian, but Anglo-Norman, and that the version preserved in the Cotton manuscript does not belong to any of the known

① Barbieri 1998. See also Burgio/Mascherpa 2007.

② Simion 2007-2008.

③ Burgio/Mascherpa 2007.

④ Gennari 2008-2009.

⑤ Milanesi 1980, and the online hypertext edition *Ramusio digitale*: <http://virgo.unive.it/ecfworkflow/books/Ramusio/main/index.html>.

⑥ Peretti 1920; Casella 1929; Terracini 1933.

⑦ Barbieri 2004c; Burgio/Eusebi 2008; see also the summary provided in Andreose 2015b, 267-272.

⑧ Benedetto 1928, XXXI-XXXIII.

families.<sup>①</sup> Thus, the newly discovered fragment *f* of the *Devisement dou monde*, proves the existence of other Franco-Italian manuscripts, because, as we shall see, it is very close to manuscript *F*, both in terms of language and text. Consequently, its importance resides in the fact that it is the only other known witness containing the original language in which Marco Polo's book was written.

## 2. A brief account of the discovery of the fragment *f* of the *Devisement dou monde*

Before looking in detail at the contents and main features of the fragment, I will quickly mention the circumstances of its discovery.

In 2006 I was working part-time for an antiquarian bookshop in Milan and, in January, I was asked to examine four vellum folios pasted onto the wooden inner boards of two identical bindings (Fig. 1-2). These bindings, which were devoid of the volumes they had once enclosed, had been acquired a few years before from a Roman dealer, and were housed in the last drawer of one of the bookshop's closed stacks, just in front of my desk. From the very first glance at the parchment pastedowns, and at what was written on them, the toponyms from the Western Asiatic region left little doubt that what I was looking at was a fragment of Marco Polo's book.

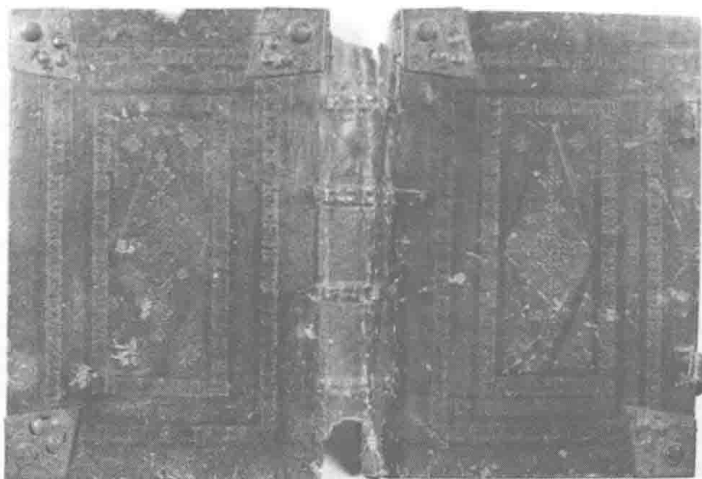


Fig. 1 Binding I (containing ff. 1 and 2).

① Ménéard 2000.

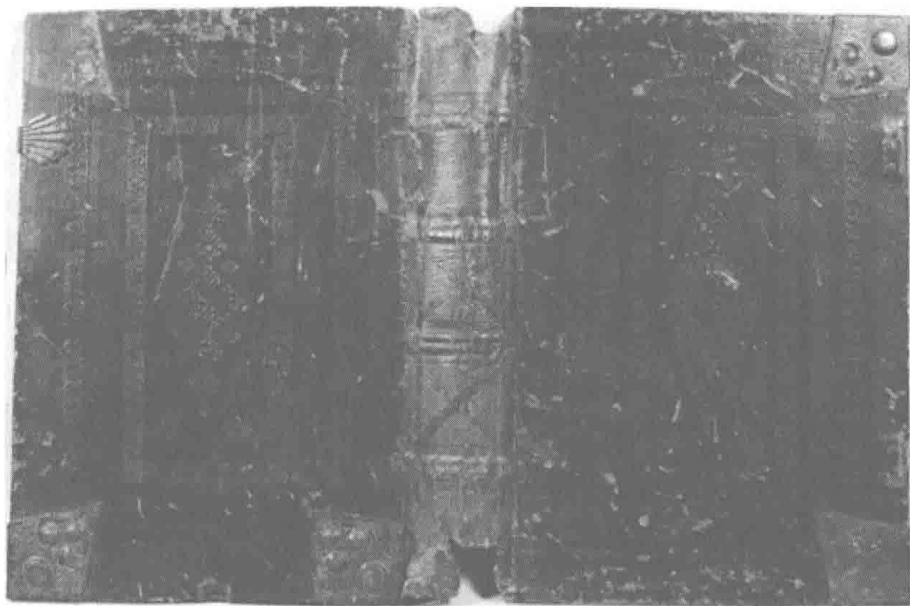


Fig. 2 Binding II (containing ff. 2 and 3).

Unfortunately, the identification of the work transmitted by these four folios, triggered a chain reaction that, after only a few hours following the discovery, led them to be delivered to a restorer, in order to detach the fragments from the wooden boards of the bindings on which they were pasted, and, a week later, to be brought to the United States to be sold. Before their sudden disappearance, I was able to take a scan of the visible sides of the folios (ff. 1 recto, 2 recto, and 3 verso, 4 verso). I published a study on the portion of the text available from my scans in an essay edited in 2007.<sup>①</sup>

The first two folios (1 and 2) disappeared immediately. They were sold to a private economics book collector because they contained the passages in which Marco Polo describes the use of paper money in Kublai Khan's empire. Thanks to the kind support of a colleague in New York, I finally obtained the images of the two sides of the folios that were pasted on the boards at the time of my discovery, which are folios 1 verso and 2 verso.

The two remaining leaves (that is ff. 3 and 4) were bought by two international antiquarian booksellers: the William Reese Company of New Haven, and Maggs Bros Ltd. of London. In September 2006, in New York, Mr. William Reese allowed me to take pictures and to transcribe the missing text of

① Concina 2007.