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Je li Marko Polo došao u Kinu?

Osvrt na Međunarodnu konferenciju u Tianjinu o Marku Polu i Kini 13. stoljeća

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Međunarodna konferencija u Tianjinu o Marku Polu i Kini 13. stoljeća je održana od 17. do 20. kolovoza 2000. godine pod zajedničkim pokroviteljstvom Kineske istraživačke udruge za povijest dinastije Yuan, Odsjeka povijesti Sveučilišta Nankai i Instituta za obrazovanje iz Hong Konga. Na konferenciji je sudjelovalo više od 50 znanstvenika iz brojnih azijskih i europskih zemalja, npr. iz Japana, Južne Koreje, Italije, Velike Britanije, Francuske, Švicarske i Hrvatske, kao i Tajvana, Hong Konga, Makaoa i Kine kao zemlje domaćina. Na konferenciji je predstavljeno 56 istraživačkih radova i 2 knjige¹. U nastavku teksta dat će se poseban osvrt na proučavanja o Marku Polu.

Marko Polo, čuveni talijanski moreplovac i putnik iz srednjeg vijeka, je 1271. g. ušao u Kinu iz Pamirsa, a 1275. g. putem svile stigao do Shangdua (koji se nalazi na jugoistoku današnjeg Zhengnanqija na području Unutarnje kineske Mongolije). Nakon toga je u Kini proveo 17 godina, proputovao područjima Sjeverne Kine, Xi'ana, Chengdua, Kunminga i posjetio jugoistočne priobalne gradove. Marko Polo je napustio Fuzhou 1291. g. i preko Perzije stigao u Veneciju 1295. g. Potom je bio zarobljen u pomorskoj bici između Venecije i Đenove, pa je u zatvoru piscu Rusticianu, podrijetlom iz Pise, ispričao priču o svojim putovanjima po Dalekom istoku. Rusticiano je zapisivao sve što je Marko Polo govorio i tako je nastalo djelo *Opis svijeta*, poznatije pod nazivom *Putovanja Marka Pola*. Već se duže vremena postavlja pitanje vjerodostojnosti *Putovanja Marka Pola*. Je li on ikada došao u Kinu? Znanstvenici iz brojnih zemalja dugo raspravljaju o ovim pitanjima.

Marko Polo je zaista bio u Kini

Od samog nastanka *Putovanja Marka Pola*, stotinama godina su se vodile rasprave o i njegovim putovanjima. Ipak, od 19. stoljeća ljudi su prestali ovo djelo smatrati potpuno apsurdnim, odnosno izmišljotinom, jer je ono doživjelo zajedničku potvrdu u

¹ Znanstveni članci su objedinjeni pod naslovom Handbook of International Conference on Marco Polo and China in the 13th Century (16.-20. kolovoza 2000.), Sveučilište Nankai, Tianjin, Kina.

kineskom i drugim jezicima, te je utvrđeno da su u njemu uglavnom navedeni oni uvjeti koji su u Kini vladali u tom povijesnom razdoblju. Ovdje je bitno spomenuti jedno otkriće prof. Yana Zhijua iz 1941. godine. On je pronašao dokument “*Zhanchi*” o oštećenom “*Yongle Dadianu*” (*Yongle statutu*), u kojem je zabilježeno da su početkom 1291. godine tri emisara iz Ely Khanatea koji su se zvali Wuludai, Abish’a i Huozhe (Oulatai, Apousca i Coja), bili u pratnji princeze Kuokuozhen (Cogatra) na njezinom putu od Perzije do Kine. Datum odlaska i imena ovih triju emisara u potpunosti se podudaraju s imenima navedenim u *Putovanjima Marka Pola*. To je bio nedvojbena dokaz vjerodostojnosti knjige Marka Pola. Ipak, neki strani znanstvenici još uvijek sumnjaju u to. Primjerice, Craig Clunas, sa Odsjeka za Daleki istok Muzeja Victoria i Albert, u svojem članku *Explorer’s Tracks (Tragovi istraživača)*, objavljenom u časopisu *Thames* 1982. g. (u dodatku o Kini) tvrdi da Marko Polo uopće nije bio u Kini. Prof. Yan Zhijiu sa Sveučilišta Nankai je napisao poseban članak u kojem opovrgava njegove tvrdnje.² U posljednjih tridesetak godina kineski su znanstvenici postigli značajne uspjehe na području proučavanja Marka Pola. Najznačajniji su među njima prof. Cai Meibiao³ sa Istraživačkog instituta za modernu povijest Kineske akademije društvenih znanosti, prof. Chen Dezhi⁴ sa Sveučilišta Nanjing koji je u potpunosti dokazao status Marka Pola, putove kojima je prolazio kroz Kinu, te drugi znanstvenici koji su potvrdili imena mjesta. Dr. Frances Wood⁵, pročelnica Kineskog odjela britanske biblioteke, je 1995. godine objavila svoju knjigu *Je li Marko Polo išao u Kinu?* u kojoj je izrazila svoje sumnje i potpuno zanijekala činjenicu da je Marko Polo bio u Kini. To je ponukalo prof. Yanga Zhijua da napiše svoju tezu *Marko Polo je zaista išao u Kinu* u kojoj pobija njezine tvrdnje⁶ i gdje posebno odgovara na sumnje dr. Wood da se u *Putovanjima Marka Pola* nigdje ne spominje Kineski zid⁷.

Prof. Wood je posjetila Tianjin da bi sudjelovala na ovoj međunarodnoj konferenciji, pa se očekivalo da će se očitovati o to tome je li Marko Polo bio u Kini ili ne. Umjesto toga, ona je izdala novi članak pod nazivom *Tekst ili osoba*. Tu izražava svoje uvjerenje da su u vrijeme širenja knjige *Putovanja Marka Pola* u prvobitnom rukopisu, brojne druge osobe uljepšavale i dodavale nove podatke, što je na kraju urodilo debelom i ozbiljnom *vjerodostojnom* povijesnom knjigom koja je nastala iz brošure od nekoliko stranica. Ona je posebno naglasila da znanstvenici trebaju biti oprezni i uzeti u obzir jedno od najvažnijih djela na ovom području: *Opis svijeta Marka Pola* koje su napisali A. C. Moule i P. Pelliot nakon provjere brojnih izdanja knjige, gdje se

² Yang Zhijiu, Marco Polo and China, Globe, Beijing, br. 10, 1982.

³ Cai Meibiao, On Marco Polo Being in China (O Marku Polu u Kini), Chinese Social Science, Beijing, br. 2, 1992. U članku se daje naglasak na istraživanje o “jeziku i ideji”, te on zaključuje da je Marko Polo bio jedan od “Ortog trgovaca koji je pripadao skupini Semu (zapadnih) trgovaca”.

⁴ Chen Dezhi, The Route and Time of Marco Polo’s Voyage in China (Putovi i vrijeme putovanja Marka Pola po Kini), The Collected Research Papers on the Yuan Dynasty and the History of the Northern Minorities (Zajednički istraživački rad o dinastiji Yuan i povijesti sjevernih dijelova Kine), br. 6, 1996.

⁵ Frances Wood, Did Marco Polo Go to China? (Je li Marko Polo išao u Kinu?) Copyright 1995, Jennifer Kavanagh.

⁶ Yang Zhijiu, Marco Polo did go to China, History Study, Beijing, br. 3, 1997.

⁷ Huang Shijian, Gong Yingyan, Marco Polo and the Great Wall (Marko Polo i Kineski zid), Social Science, Beijing, br. 3, 1998.

tvrdi da su se u novim izdanjima dodavali i pojavljivali neki novi podaci. Znanstvenik Henss Michael iz Švicarske se složio s njezinom tvrdnjom, no brojni su znanstvenici istaknuli da se u knjizi mogu pronaći brojni detaljni opisi prilika upravo tog vremena. Ne čini se uvjerljivim da je Marko Polo naveo toliko mnogo detalja na temelju nekog manjeg rukopisa. Wang Ting sa Sveučilišta Fudan smatra da ova knjiga ipak ima veliku povijesnu i akademsku vrijednost, čak i kad se uzme u obzir da su neki sadržaji naknadno dodavani.

Jednom riječju, rasprava o tome je li Marko Polo išao u Kinu još nije okončana, a oni koji u to sumnjaju nisu našli novih dokaza koji bi potkrijepili njihove teze.

Provedena su daljnja istraživanja o vjerodostojnosti Putovanja Marka Pola

Teze predstavljene na konferenciji su bile dokaz da su znanstvenici proveli daljnja istraživanja o *Putovanjima Marka Pola* i ponudili su se mnogi novi materijali koji su u skladu sa zapisima iz starih kineskih knjiga.

Liberali Paolo iz Italije je istaknuo da bi se znanstvenici trebali više usredotočiti na analizu onih dijelova koji su realni i onih koji su preuveličavani. Samo bi takvi podaci mogli biti korisni za obje strane. Njegova je zamisao bila opće prihvaćena od strane svih sudionika.

Osim dokaza u *“Zhanchiju”* o *“Yongle Dadianu”* gdje se spominje potpuno isto vrijeme i mjesto odlaska triju emisara iz Kine, što je opisano u *Putovanjima Marka Pola*, prof. Yang Zhijiu u svojoj novoobjavljenoj knjizi *Marko Polo u Kini*⁸ donosi svoje nove dokaze. Kao prvo, Marko Polo je zaista došao u Tenduc i Xuande, a to dokazuju kineski povijesni izvori. Drugo, Marko Polo je tvrdio da je rodendan vladara Kublaj kana bio 28. rujna, što se u potpunosti podudara s podacima u *Biografiji Kublaj kana* u *Povijesti Yuana*. Treće, opis ceremonija povezanih s proslavom lunarne nove godine, kada su državni službenici izražavali svoje poštovanje i čestitali vladaru, vrlo se malo razlikuje od zapisa navedenih u *Povijesti Yuana*. Četvrto, njegov opis o načinu kažnjavanja za vrijeme dinastije Yuan se podudara s njihovim *Krivičnim zakonikom* u *Povijesti Yuana*. Li Zhi-an sa Univerziteta Nankai je izrazio svoje stavove u djelu pod nazivom *Ispitivanje i tumačenje pobune Nayana koju je zabilježio Marko Polo*, u kojem navodi kako se opisi podudaraju s kineskim i perzijskim izvorima. Neki od najtočnijih podataka u knjizi Marka Pola su podatak da je Kublaj kan koristio astrologe za proricanje pobjeda ili poraza, da je osobno jahao na slonu kada bi išao u bitke, da su u znak napada udarali u bubnjeve i svirali glazbu, smrt Nayana i njegovo štovanje Krista, dodjeljivanje Priznanja o nazočnosti vojnim oficirima uz *paifu* (odlikovanje) itd. U *Dodatnom objašnjenju povijesti o kanu koji jaši na slonu u knjizi Marka Pola*, Wan Ting smatra da je jedan od najsnažnijih dokaza onaj o vladarevu jahanju na dresiranom slonu (kao i Chengzonga, Yingzonga, Taidinga i Wenzonga) dok ide u obilazak ili na putovanje, jer predstavlja važan simbol tog povijesnog razdoblja. Nitko tko nije posjetio Dadu ne bi mogao to čuti niti vidjeti. Prema tome, ova se neobična pojedinost može smatrati dokazom da je Marko Polo zai-

⁸ Yang Zhijiu, *Marco Polo in China*, Copyright 1999, Nankai University Press, Tijanjin.

sta bio u Kini. U *Tri nova dokaza o Putovanjima Marka Pola u Kini*, Dang Baohai sa Sveučilišta Beijing daje tri nova primjera: 1. Legenda o rođenju Bugu kana je istovjetna kao i one koje su pronađene u kineskim i perzijskim dokumentima iz istog razdoblja. 2. Naredbe da se sruše zidovi gradova Catal i Manggi je dokazana na temelju povijesnih kronika iz vremena dinastije Yuang i rane dinastije Ming. 3. Dekret o sadnji drveća uz cestu, koji je propisao Kublaj kan, isto se može pronaći u *Yuan Dian Zhang* i *Tongzhi Tiaoge (Statut dinastije Yuan)*. Usporedbom *Putovanja Marka Pola* i *Zhishun Zhenjianga (Kronike Zhishun Zhenjianga tijekom perioda Zhishun)*, Liu Yinseng sa Sveučilišta Nanjing u djelu *O Mar Sargisu*, tvrdi kako je narodni jezik Mar Sargisa trebao biti Turki i da je Marko Polo najvjerojatnije s njime kontaktirao u Zhenjiangu, kada su razgovarali o nestorizmu u Samargandu. Ono što je opisano u knjizi *Marka Pola* vjerojatno su u cijelosti prepričane riječi Mara Sargisa, jer je zapis o crkvama u Samargandu naveden kao i u djelu *Daxingguo Zhi (Kronike Daxingguoa)* o *Zhishun Zhenjiang Zhiju*, što se podudara s opisima u knjizi *Marka Pola*. U svezi teze *Kineski musliman u knjizi Marka Pola*, nakon detaljne analize puta kojim je prolazio Marko Polo po sjeverozapadnoj i sjevernoj Kini, Qui Shusen sa Sveučilišta Jinan je istaknuo da se podatak *Marka Pola* o muslimanima koji izrađuju zlatni brokat u gradovima Hebeje, podudara s onim koji je opisan u kineskim i perzijskim izvorima. Npr. *Biografija Hasana* u *Povijesti Yuana* iznosi podatak da je u tom području bilo muslimana oko 3000 *hu* (obitelji) u Xunmalinu (smještenom zapadno od *Zhangjiakoua* u pokrajini Hebei); *Biografija Zhenghaia* u *Povijesti Yuana* daje podatak da je 300 *hu* muslimana izrađivalo zlatni brokat u *Hongzhou* (današnjem Xinyangu u pokrajini Hebei); podatak o Xunmalinu se nalazi u *Jami al-Tawarikh* koji je napisao perzijski povjesničar Rashid al-Din, što potvrđuje podatke iz knjige *Marka Pola*. Nadalje, dijelovi u kojima se spominje prisiljavanje muslimana da ubijaju svoju stoku na tatarski način nakon sukoba s Ahmedom, se ni po čemu ne razlikuje od *Yuan Dianzhang*. Nova knjiga *Marko Polo i rajski grad Hangzhou*⁹, koju je napisao Bao Zhicheng iz Ureda za vanjsku politiku pokrajine Zhejiang, nudi podatke o točnom vremenu kada je Marco Polo posjetio Hangzhou na svome putu prema sjevernoj Kini. Na kraju se donosi zaključak da je opis Hangzhoua vjerodostojan. U svojoj tezi *Službena cesta prema sjeveru od Quanzhoua i cesta kojom je Marko ušao u Fujian*, Gao Rongsheng tvrdi kako se putovanje *Marka Pola* podudara sa službenom cestom iz vremena Songa i Yuana, što se može smatrati još jednim dokazom njegovih putovanja po Kini. Nakon proučavanja vojnog garnizona iz Jianghuaijua, pokrajine iz vremena dinastije Yuan, tijekom boravka *Marka Pola* u Kini, Wang Xiaoxin sa Sveučilišta Nankai ocjenjuje da je opis vojnog garnizona, koji je prisutan na više mjesta u knjizi *Marka Pola*, vrlo vjerodostojan, jer on spominje da su se postrojbe uglavnom sastojale iz *Kitata* kojima su pomagali *Manzi*, što se u potpunosti podudara s *Povijesti Yuana*.¹⁰

⁹ Bao Zhicheng, *Marco Polo and the Heaven City Hangzhou*, Copyright 2000, Xinfeng Publishing House, Hongkong.

¹⁰ Wang Xiaoxin, *A Brief Survey of the Garrison Army in Jianghuai (Fujian Inclusive) Province (1275-1291)*, Handbook of International Conference on Marco Polo and China in the 13th Century (August 16-20,2000), Nankai University, Tianjin, China.

Zajedničko je svim prethodno spomenutim autorima da su oni proveli daljnja istraživanja o određenim zapisima i potvrdili ih izvorima iz kineskog i drugih jezika, te su na taj način provjerili vjerodostojnost *Putovanja Marka Pola* iz neke druge perspektive.

Drugi aspekti istraživanja o Marku Polu

Na konferenciji su sudionici raspravljali i o drugim aspektima istraživanja o Marku Polu. U svezi njegova nadimka "milijun", Antonio Simonetti i Sandra Simonetti iz Hrvatske su obavili istraživanje o nadimku Marka Pola i izišli s tezom *Milijun: interakcija nadimka Marka Pola, aritmetička jedinica i knjiga*. Oni vjeruju da je "milijun" bio također i nadimak obitelji Marka Pola koja je imala kuću u Veneciji u posjedu obitelji Polo. U tezi se isto tako raspravlja i o korelaciji svih triju značenja riječi "milijun" te koje značenje ona ima u europskim zemljama, posebice kao aritmetička jedinica.

O povezanosti između *Putovanja Marka Pola* i religije u vrijeme dinastije Yuan, Otsaka Tomoko sa Univerziteta grada Yokohame je napisao tezu *Tibetanski budizam opisan u knjizi Marka Pola*. On smatra da su opisi lamaizma u *Putovanjima Marka Pola* odraz zapadnog kršćanskog shvaćanja tibetanskog budizma za vrijeme dinastije Yuan, te vjeruje da je to bio dio političke strategije Yuanskog dvora da potvrdi legalitet svoje vlasti. U ranije spomenutoj tezi Qiu ShuSen je isto tako spomenuo ideju da muslimani, koje je Marko Polo vidio na svojem putu od Conglinga do Shangdua duž puta svile, predstavljaju čvrst dokaz o širenju islama prema istoku. Rivalstvo između muslimana i kršćana za vladarevu naklonost, koje se odrazilo kao sukob s Ahmedom i sukob s Nayanom, zabilježenima u *Putovanjima Marka Pola*, može poslužiti kao vrijedan povijesni materijal za proučavanje religija za vrijeme dinastije Yuan.

Premda još uvijek postoji nekih nedokazanih i netočnih tvrdnji, sudionici su se složili da *Putovanja Marka Pola* zaista pružaju važan izvor podataka i materijal koji nije tako detaljno zabilježen u drugim izvorima, posebice kada se spominju politički incidenti (npr. sukob s Ahmedom i sukob s Nayanom), kulturni običaji, osobine pojedinih mjesta, te društvene i gospodarske prilike kojima je bio svjedok.

U svome članku *Je li Marko Polo došao u Kinu: Neke ideje o popularizaciji rezultata akademskih istraživanja*, Fang Jun sa Instituta za obrazovanje iz Hong Konga je istaknuo da je vrlo malo ljudi izvan ovog kruga stručnjaka upoznato s akademskim pitanjem: Je li Marko Polo došao u Kinu? Nakon analize udžbenika za srednje škole i fakultete u zemlji i inozemstvu, on je uočio razlog zašto rezultati akademskih istraživanja nisu popularni u javnosti. Također je ponudio brojna rješenja ovog problema koji je privukao veliku pozornost u medijima.

Međunarodna konferencija u Tianjinu je bila još jedna važna konferencija o Marku Polu nakon Međunarodne konferencije o Marku Polu u Bejingu¹¹ kojoj je pokrovitelj bio Kineski međunarodni koledž za kulturu, Udruga za sino-talijansku kinesku i zapadnu kulturnu razmjenu, te Udruga za stranu kulturnu razmjenu iz Bejinga.

¹¹ Kineski međunarodni koledž za kulturu je nakon konferencije u Bejingu izdao *Marco Polo: Herald of the Chinese and Western Cultural Exchange* (Marko Polo: Glasnik kineske i zapadne kulturne razmjene) (Beijing, Shangwu Press, 1995.).

Tijekom diskusije na ovoj konferenciji, mogli smo jasno vidjeti da je zahvaljujući naporima znanstvenika iz različitih zemalja, sve manje onih koji niječu ili sumnjaju u činjenicu da je Marko Polo bio u Kini, jer postoji sve više dokaza u korist vjerodostojnosti *Putovanja Marka Pola*. Vjerujem da će proučavanja o Marku Polu u budućnosti dati sve točnije podatke i da će sve više znanstvenika priznati vrijednost materijala sadržanih u knjizi Marka Pola.

Did Marco Polo Come to China?

A Review on Tianjin International Conference on Marco Polo and China in the 13th Century

Qiu Shusen

China Research Association for the History of Yuan Dynasty ,History Department of Nankai University and Hong Kong Institute of Education, jointly sponsored the Tianjin International Conference on Marco Polo and the 13th Century China, from August 17 to August 20, 2000. More than 50 scholars took part in the conference. They came from the Asian and European Countries like Japan, South Korea, Italy, Britain, France, Switzerland and Croatia, as well as Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao and Mainland China. The conference received 56 research papers and 2 books.¹ The following passages specially comment on the study of Marco Polo.

Marco Polo, a famous Italian traveler in the Medieval Age ,entered into China from the Pamirs in 1271,and came to Shangdu(located in the southeast of today's Zhengnanqi of Inner Mongolia of China) in 1275 along the Silk Road. Then he lived in China for 17 years, ever toured Northern China, Xi'an, Chengdu, Kunming and Southeast coastal cities. Marco Polo left Fuzhou in 1291, via Persia, arrived in Venice in 1295. He was arrested in a sea battle between Venice and Genoa, narrated the story of his Eastern voyage in prison to Rusticiano who was a novelist of Pisa. Rusticiano noted down the Marco's oral account, and wrote *The Description of the World* ,commonly known as *The Travels of Marco Polo*. What about the creditability of *The Travels of Marco Polo*? Whether he came to China? The scholars in various countries has long been discussing these questions.

Marco Polo did come to China

Since the birth of "*The Travels of Marco Polo*", people had had endless debates on him and his travels for hundreds of years. However, since the 19th century ,people no longer consider "*The Travels of Marco Polo*" utterly absurd. It was confirmed by the other collateral evidences in Chinese and other languages, and was also generally in accordance with the condition of China in that period. Here especially I'd like to mention Prof. Yan Zhijiu's discovery in 1941. He found a document in "*Zhanchi*" of the damaged "*Yongle Dadian*"(*Yongle Statute Book*),which recorded that at the beginning of 1291, three emissaries from Ely Khanate named Wuludai, Abish'a, Huoz-

¹ The scholars' articles was collected in *Handbook of International Conference on Marco Polo and China in the 13th Century* (August16-20, 2000), Nankai University, Tianjin, China.

he (Oulatai, Apousca and Coja) convoyed Princess Kuokuozhen (Cogatra) to Persia from China. The departing date and the names of the three emissaries were fully the same as it was narrated in *"The Travels of Marco Polo"*. This forcibly proved the truthfulness of Marco's book. However some foreign scholars are still doubtful about it. For example, Craig Clunas from the Far Eastern Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum, denied the fact that Marco Polo had been to China in his article of *"The Explorer's Tracks"* published in *China Supplement* of the *Thames* in 1982. Prof. Yan Zhijiu of Nankai University specially wrote a article refuting him.² In the recent 20-30 years, Chinese scholars have achieved great successes in the Study of Marco Polo. Much convinced is that Prof. Cai Meibiao³ of Research Institution of Modern History in China Academy of Social Sciences, Prof. Chen Dezhi⁴ of Nanjing University fully testified the status of Marco Polo, the route of his voyage in China and other scholars' confirming of the place names. In 1995, Dr. Frances Wood,⁵ the director of China Department of Britain Library published her book *"Did Marco Polo Go to China"* which summed up all the doubts and totally denied the fact that Marco Polo had been to China. Upon this, Pro. Yang Zhijiu wrote the thesis *"Marco Polo Did Go to China"* to refute her⁶. Huang Shijian, Gong Yingyan also wrote the article *"Marco Polo and the Great Wall"* to specially response to Wood's doubts that *"The Travels of Marco Polo"* said nothing about the Great Wall.

Prof. Wood made a special trip to Tianjin to attend the international conference and we all thought that she would express her opinion on whether Marco Polo went to China, but she only advanced her new article *"The Text or the Person"*. She believed that during the spreading of *"The Travels of Marco Polo"* in the form of handwritten copy it had been embellished with much of others' private ideas, which made it become a heavy and serious *credible* history from a pamphlet with only a few pages. She especially reminded scholars to be cautious with the most authoritative work *"Marco Polo's Description of the World"* written by A.C. Moule and P. Pelliot who wrote it after checking various editions of the book, because new information would have been added as it came to the notice of the scribe. Scholar Henss Michael from Swiss was in agreement with Wood's opinion, but there were still some other scholars pointing out that a lot of detail-descriptions reflecting the features of that period can be found in the book. It is not likely that Marco Polo could write so many details if he only edited the book from secondhand materials. Wang Ting from Fudan University considered it to be of high historical and academic values even if some added materials were later put into the book.

² Yang Zhijiu, *Marco Polo and China, Globe*, Beijing, No.10, 1982.

³ Cai Meibiao, *On Marco Polo Being in China, Chinese Social Science*, Beijing, No.2, 1992. In the article focused on the "language and idea", he concluded that Marco Polo was "a Ortog merchant belonging to *Semu*(western) merchants".

⁴ Chen Dezhi, *The Route and Time of Marco Polo's Voyage in China, The Collected Research Papers on the Yuan Dynasty and the History of the Northern Minorities*, No.6, 1996.

⁵ Frances Wood, *Did Marco Polo Go to China?* Copyright 1995, Jennifer Kavanagh

⁶ Yang Zhijiu, *Marco Polo did go to China, Hitory Study*, Beijing, No.3, 1997.

⁷ Huang Shijian, Gong Yingyan, *Marco Polo and the Great Wall, Chinese Social Science*, Beijing, No.3, 1998.

In one word, discussion on whether Marco Polo went to China was not held in the conference and doubters advanced no new grounds as well.

*Further research has been made on the truthfulness of
“The Travels of Marco Polo”*

The theses provided in the conference proved that scholars had made further research on “*The Travels of Marco Polo*” and offered many materials confirming to the records of Chinese ancient books.

Liberali Paolo from Italy pointed out that scholars should focus on analyzing which parts are real and which parts are exaggerated. Only that can be helpful to both sides. His idea met with general approval midst the participants.

Besides the evidence in “*Zhanchi*” of “*Yongle Dadian*” that mentioned just the same time and place of the departure of the three emissaries from China as what was discussed in “*The Travels of Marco Polo*”, Prof. Yang Zhijiu, in his newly published book “*Marco Polo in China*”⁸, put forward his new proofs. First, that Marco Polo really arrived in Tenduc and Xuande was proved by Chinese history sources. Second, Marco said that Emperor Qublai’s birthday was on September 28, which completely identified with “*The Biography of Qublai*” in “*Yuan History*”. Third, Marco’s description of the lunar New Year celebration ceremony in which the imperial government officials paid respect and congratulations to the emperor showed little difference from the records of “*Yuan History*”. Fourth, his record about the number of punishment in Yuan Dynasty coincided with “*Criminal Code*” of “*Yuan History*”. Li Zhi-an from Nankai University expressed his idea in “*Examining and Expounding on Nayan’s Rebellion Recorded by Marco Polo*” that Marco Polo’s descriptions are conformed to Chinese and Persian sources. What is most accurate in Marco’s records is Emperor Qublai’s using astrologers to practice divination of victory or failure, his riding elephant to go out to battle personally, beating drums and playing music as attack order, Nayan’s death and his worship to Christ, granting of Certificate of Appointment to military officers besides *paifu*(tally), etc. In “*An Additional Explanation of the History about Khan’s Riding Elephant in Marco Polo’s Book*”, Wan Ting thought that the powerful evidence of the emperors’ (including Chengzong, Yingzong, Taiding, Wenzong) ride on trained elephants going for the tour of inspection in Yuan Dynasty, is an important symbol of that period. Anyone who hasn’t been to Dadu could not see and hear this. So this peculiar thing can prove that Marco Polo did come to China. In “*Three New Inner Evidences for Marco Polo’s Voyage to China*”, Dang Bao-hai from Beijing University advanced three examples: 1. The legend of Bugu Khan’s birth is the same as the Chinese and Persian documents in the same period; 2. The orders to remove the walls of the cities in Catal and Manggi was proved by the local chronicles of Yuan and early Ming period; 3. The decrees of planting trees along the road delivered by Kublai Khan can also be founded in “*Yuan Dian Zhang*” and “*Tongzhi Tiaoge*”(The Statute Book of Yuan Dynasty). By comparing “*The Travels of*

⁸ Yang Zhijiu, *Marco Polo in China*, Copyright 1999, Nankai University Press, Tianjin.

Marco Polo" and "*Zhishun Zhenjiang Zhi*"(*The Chronicles of Zhengjiang During Zhi-shun Period*), Liu Yinsheng from Nanjing University held in "*About Mar Sargis*" that Mar Sargis' native language should be Turki and Marco must have contacted with him in Zhenjiang, talking about Nestorism in Samargand. What was described in Marco's book may all originate from Mar Sargis' words, because the recordation about the Samargand churches in "*Daxingguo Zhi*"(*The Chronicles of Daxingguo*)of "*Zhishun Zhenjiang Zhi*" generally accorded with the descriptions in Marco's book. In the thesis "*Chinese Muslim in Marco Polo's Book*", after a careful observation about the route of Marco Polo's journey in the Northwest and the North of China, Qiu Shusen from Jinan University pointed out that Marco's record about Muslims making golden brocades in the cities of Hebei was just the same as described in the Chinese and Persian sources. For example "*The Biography of Hasana*" of "*Yuan History*" showed the fact that there were Muslims of 3000 *hu* (families) living in Xunmalin(located in the west of Zhangjiakou of Hebei Province) ; "*The Biography of Zhenghai*" of "*Yuan History*" showed the fact that 300 *hu* Muslims made golden brocades in *Hongzhou*⁹ (today's Xinyang of Hebei Province); The recordation about Xunmalin in the "*Jā-mī'al-Tawārikh*" by Persian historian Rashid al-Din are conformed to Marco's book. Furthermore, passages to forcing Muslims to kill livestock in the Tartar's way after the Ahmed Incident shows no difference with "*Yuan Dianzhang*". The new book "*Marco Polo and the Heaven City Hangzhou*"⁹ by Bao Zhicheng from Foreign Affairs Department of Zhejiang Province probed into the times and accurate time of Marco's visit of Hangzhou and his travel route in South China. It finally came to the conclusion that Marco's description of Hangzhou is credible. In his thesis "*The Official Road Northward from Quanzhou and the Route along which Marco Entered Fujian*", Gao Rongsheng deemed that Marco's travel route quite coincided with the official road in Song and Yuan period, which can be viewed as another proof of his travel to China. After a survey of the garrison army in Jianghuai province of Yuan Dynasty during the period of Marco's stay in China, Wang Xiaoxin from Nankai University viewed that Marco Polo's description of garrison army's being found everywhere is close to the fact, and Marco's account that the garrison army was mainly consisted of *Kitat* assisted with *Manzi* wholly coincided with "*Yuan History*".¹⁰

The common point of the ideas of the aforementioned authors is that they all made further study on a certain record and made it confirmed by the sources in Chinese and other languages, thus testified the credibility of "*The Travels of Marco Polo*" from a certain angle of point.

⁹ Bao Zhicheng, *Marco Polo and the Heaven City Hangzhou*, Copyright 2000, Xinfeng Publishing House, Hongkong.

¹⁰ Wang Xiaoxin, "A Brief Survey of the Garrison Army in Jianghuai(Fujian Inclusive) Province(1275-1291)", *Handbook of International Conference on Marco Polo and China in the 13th Century(August16-20,2000)*, Nankai University,Tianjin,China.

The other aspects of the research on Marco Polo

On the conference, the participants also discussed other aspects of the research on Marco Polo. In respect of the nickname of Marco Polo "million", Antonio Simonetti and Sandra Simonetti, both from Croatia, dealt with a textual research on Marco Polo's nickname in their thesis "*Million: An Interaction of Marco Polo's Nickname, the Arithmetic Unit and the Book*". They believed that "million" was also the nickname of the Polo family which dated back to a house property in Venice belonging to Polo family. The thesis also discussed the correlation of all the three notions of the word "million" and what those mean to the European countries particularly from the point of arithmetic unit.

With reference to the connection between "*The Travels of Marco Polo*" and the religion in Yuan Dynasty, Otsuka Tomoko from Yokohama City University wrote the thesis "*Tibetan Buddhism Described in the Book of Marco Polo*". He deemed that the depiction of lamaism in "*The Travels of Marco Polo*" reflects a Western Christian's feeling to Tibetan Buddhism and lamaists. It also discussed the role of Tibetan Buddhism in the Yuan Dynasty and believed that it was a political strategy for the Yuan Court to verify the legality of its reign. In the aforementioned thesis, Qiu ShuSen also conveyed the idea that Muslims whom Marco Polo saw during his trip from Congling to Shangdu along the Silk Road is a vigorous proof of Islam's spreading to the East. While the contest between the Muslims and the Christians for the emperor's favor reflected in the Incident of Ahmed and the Incident of Nayan recorded in "*The Travels of Marco Polo*" provided precious historical materials for the study of the religions in Yuan Dynasty.

Although there are some unfounded and inaccurate points in it, the participants agreed that "*The Travels of Marco Polo*" really provides many important materials which has not been recorded in detail in other sources, especially the political incidents (e.g. the Incident of Ahmed and the Incident of Nayan), cultural customs, local features and the social and economic situations which he experienced or witnessed.

Through his article "*Whether Marco Polo Came to China: Some Ideas for the Popularization of the Achievements of Academic Research*", Fang Jun from Hong Kong Institute of Education pointed out that few people beyond the circle of experts know this important academic issue: whether Marco Polo came to China. After analyzing the textbooks for secondary school and college students in and abroad, he further observed the reason why academic achievements are not popular among the public. He also recommended many solutions to this problem, which attracts much attention of the media.

Tianjin International Conference was another important conference on Marco Polo after the Beijing Marco Polo International Conference¹¹ jointly sponsored by Chinese International Culture College, Sino-Italian Chinese and Western Cultural Exchange Association, and Beijing Foreign Cultural Exchange Association. Through the di-

¹¹ Chinese International Culture College edited *Marco Polo: Herald of the Chinese and Western Cultural Exchange* (Beijing, Shangwu Press, 1995) after Beijing conference.

scussion on this conference, we can clearly see that, with the efforts of the scholars in various countries, there are less scholars who deny or doubt the fact that Marco Polo went to China ,there are more proofs proving the truthfulness of "*The Travels of Marco Polo*". I believe that the study on Marco Polo will be more accurate, and the value of the materials in Marco's book will be recognized by more and more scholars.