QUINSAI
Frontispiece. The maker of Quinsai, Ch’ien Ch’iu (852–932), Wu-su Prince of Wu and Yüeh.
A. C. MOULE

QUINSAI

WITH OTHER NOTES ON MARCO POLO

CAMBRIDGE
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
1957
TO
THE MEMORY OF
MY BROTHER
HENRY WILLIAM
MY PLAYFELLOW IN
QUINSAI
MY CONSTANT FRIEND
AND EXAMPLE FOR
EIGHTY YEARS
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1. QUINSAI . . . . . . . . . . . . . 1

2. HENS WHICH HAVE SKINS LIKE CATS . . . . 54

3. MERCATTE (GAT PAUL) AND PAPION . . . . 61

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PREFACE

These few detached notes, written at different times in the last thirty years and dealing with quite unconnected places, incidents, or single words in the current text of Marco Polo, are brought together here and will illustrate any one of the many English and foreign editions which have been published in recent years, although the explicit references to Marco Polo are to volume, page, or chapter of The Description of the World, 1938. Only the Mercatane and Rens are, I think, absent from the earlier versions derived from Ramusio, and the former is strangely distorted in some French texts. The long note on Quinsai mentions a few passages which were unknown before the publication of L. F. Benedetto’s critical edition, Il Milione, in 1928; but these too will be found in the ‘Broadway Travellers’ version by A. Ricci, 1931 (1950), in Benedetto’s own Italian version, 1932, in L. Hambis, La Description du Monde, 1955, and in the promised Penguin version by R. E. Latham, as well as in my own translation of 1938. The free use of Chinese characters will please, it is hoped, those who can read them, without frightening those who cannot do so. Little notes signed S.S. were added by Dr Stephen Sturton who kindly read my manuscript.

The frontispiece I owe to my late brother George who obtained the photograph from the owner of the old painting, a direct descendant of Ch’ien Liu. The portrait, recorded to have been painted in the year 900, was found at Shao-hsing in 1793 in bad condition and was then repainted or perhaps copied. Then or more recently the figure and the inscriptions were evidently cut out and remounted. The other illustrations are taken from books in the University Library, with the Librarian’s kind leave. The map is my own work, but for the lettering on it I have to thank Mr Ch’u Ta-kao and Miss Margaret Alexander.

I must thank as warmly as possible Professor W. Simon who read my proofs, when I was unable to do so myself, and made many valuable corrections.

My thanks are also due to Sir Percival David, to Professor P. Demiéville of Paris, and to Notes and Queries for leave to print some passages of which they hold respectively the copyright; and very specially to my College for the great generosity which has made publication possible, and to Mr Michal Vyvyan for his most helpful interest.

A. C. M.

TRINITY COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE

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MAKER OF QUINSAI, CH’IEN CH’IU (852–932)  Frontispiece

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4. QUINSAI: THE CITY .
5. QUINSAI: THE WEST LAKE
6. QUINSAI: THE RIVER CHÊ
7. SILKIES . . . . . . . . . . . . . facing page 55
8. GALLUS LANIGER, 1555 . . . . . page 56
A LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

B  .  .  .  Benedetto, Il Milione, 1928
Bl.  .  .  .  E. Blochet, Djami el-Tevariik II, 1911
JA  .  .  .  Journal Asiatique (Paris)
JNCBRAS  .  Journal of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (Shanghai)
RR  .  .  .  Marco Polo, tr. A. Ricci, ed. E. D. Ross, 1931
SPTK  .  .  Siū pu ts‘ung k’an
TP  .  .  .  T’oung Pao (Leiden)
Wy  .  .  .  A. Van den Wyngaert, Sinica Franciscana I, 1929
Y  .  .  .  H. Yule, The Book of Ser Marco Polo, 1903
YS  .  .  .  Yüan shib

MANUSCRIPTS

G  .  .  .  Admont Stiftsbib. 504  .  .  .  14th century
L1  .  .  .  Venice, Mus. Correr 2408  .  .  .  1401
Port. 1502  .  Lisbon, B.N., res. 431  .  .  .  1502
R  .  .  .  G. B. Ramusio, Navigationi et Viaggi, II 1559  print
Span. 1503  .  London, B.M., C. 32. m. 4  .  .  .  1503
TA1  .  .  .  Florence, Bib. Nat., II IV 88  .  .  .  14th century
V  .  .  .  Berlin, Staatsbib. Hamilton 424  .  .  .  15th century
VA  .  .  .  Padua, Bib. Civ., CM 211  .  .  .  1445
VL  .  .  .  Lucca, B. Gov., 1296  .  .  .  1465
Z  .  .  .  Toledo, Bib. Catedrale, 49, 20  .  .  .  c. 1470
Fig. 1. Map of Quinsai based on thirteenth-century plans and modern surveys.