Geog 126: Maps in Science and Society

Two great early travelers: Ibn Battuta and Marco Polo
Ships dispatched from Egypt about 1485 BCE by Queen Hatshepsut to the land of Punt to bring back frankincense, cinnamon, baboons, dogs, and myrrh trees.
Hatshepsut (1507–1458 BC)

- Fifth pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt
- Second historically-confirmed female pharaoh
- Daughter, sister, and wife of a king
- Reigned longer than any other woman of an indigenous Egyptian dynasty
- Sent five ships, 21 m long, crew of 210 men including sailors and 30 rowers
- Later almost disappeared from Egypt's archaeological and written records
A tree from Punt
The Spice and Silk Routes
IBN BATTUTA
(1304-1368)

“Almost two centuries before Columbus, a young Moroccan named Ibn Battuta set off for Mecca; he returned home three decades later as one of history’s great travelers...”

National Geographic 1991.
Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Battuta

- b. February 24, 1304; d 1368 or 1377
- Arabian, Berber scholar and judge from a school of Sunni Islamic law
- Known as a traveler and explorer, covered 73,000 miles in 30 years
- Almost the entirety of the known Islamic world and beyond
- North Africa, West Africa, Southern Europe and Eastern Europe in the west, to the Middle East, Indian subcontinent, Central Asia, Southeast Asia and China
The Account

• At the instigation of the Sultan of Morocco, Abu Inan Faris, several years after his return, Ibn Battuta dictated an account of his journeys,

• This account, recorded by Ibn Juzayy and interspersed with the latter's own comments, is the primary source of information for his adventures

• Book called تحفة النظر في غرائب الأمصار وعجائب الأسفار or A Gift to Those Who Contemplate the Wonders of Cities and the Marvels of Travelling,

• Referred to as the Rihla الرحلة, or "Journey"
Arrival at Alexandria pp. 47-50

“At length on April 5th (1326) we reached Alexandria. It is a beautiful city, well-built and fortified with four gates and a magnificent port. Among all the ports in the world I have seen none to equal it except Kawlam [Quilon] and Calicut in India, the port of the infidels [Genoese] at Sudaq [Sudak, in the Crimea] in the land of the Turks, and the port of Zaytun [Canton?] in China, all of which will be described later.”
The lighthouse at Alexandria, one of the "wonders of the ancient world"

• "I went to see the lighthouse on this occasion and found one of its faces in ruins. It is a very high square building, and its door is above the level of the earth. Opposite the door, and of the same height, is a building from which there is a plank bridge to the door; if this is removed there is no means of entrance. Inside the door is a place for the lighthouse-keeper, and within the lighthouse there are many chambers. The breadth of the passage inside is nine spans and that of the wall ten spans; each of the four sides of the lighthouse is 140 spans in breadth. It is situated on a high mound and lies three miles from the city on a long tongue of land which juts out into the sea from close by the city wall, so that the lighthouse cannot be reached by land except from the city. On my return to the West in the year 750 [1349] I visited the lighthouse again, and found that it had fallen into so ruinous a condition that it was not possible to enter it or climb up to the door."
Major locations visited

- **Morocco**
  - Tangier
- **Algeria**
  - Tlemcen (Tilimsan)
  - Miliana
  - Algiers
  - Mitiza
  - Oaks mountain
  - Bijaya
- **Constantine**, named as *Qusantînah.*
- **Annaba**, also called Bona.
- **Tunisia**
  - Sousse - also called *Susah.*
  - Sfax
  - Gabes
  - Libya
  - Tripoli
  - Somalia
  - Mogadishu
  - East Africa
  - Kilwa
  - Mombasa
  - Mali
  - Walata
  - Timbuktu
  - Gao
  - Tunis - At that time Abu Yahya (son of Abu Zajaria) was the sultan of Tunis.
Trade was the life-blood of the Mamluk Empire, and caravanserai ("hotels" for caravan travelers) were built to encourage trade. One caravanserai for Syrian merchants had 360 lodgings above the storerooms and enough space for 4,000 guests at a time! Ibn Battuta would be staying at places like this built along the main trade routes.

Written in the conventional literary style of the time, Ibn Battuta’s Rihla is a comprehensive survey of the personalities, places, governments, customs, and curiosities of the Muslim world in the second quarter of the fourteenth century.
İPEK YOLU
SILK ROAD
Ibn Battuta’s Tomb in Tangiers
Ibn Battuta’s geographical legacy

Abu Abd Allah Muhammad al-Idrisi (1100-1165)
Tabula Rogaine, drawn by Al-Idrisi for Roger II of Sicily in 1154
Catalan Atlas
1375
Majorcan cartographic school, possibly by Abraham Cresques
After???
Piri Ries world map of 1513 (Fall of Constantinople, 1453; Rise of Ottoman Empire)
Marco Polo

• 1254-1324
• Most famous Westerner to travel the Silk Road.
• Journey through Asia lasted 24 years
• Crossed Mongolia to China
• Confidant of Kublai Khan (1214-1294)
• Traveled the whole of China
• Returned to Venice
The Polo Story: Venice
Marco Polo (c.1254 - 1324)
The Outward Journey

- Venetian Marco Polo *traveller and writer* -- one of the first westerners to visit China.
- Born c. 1254 into a wealthy merchant family.
- Polo's father and uncle, Niccolò and Maffeo Polo, were jewel merchants.
- In 1260 they left Venice to travel to the Black Sea, moving onwards to central Asia and joining a diplomatic mission to the court of Kublai Khan, the Mongol ruler of China.
- Khan asked the Polo brothers to return to Europe and persuade the Pope to send scholars.
- Arrived back in Venice in 1269.
- In 1271, they set off again, accompanied by two missionaries arrived 1275
- For the next 17 years the Polos lived in the Emperor's lands.
- Marco was sent on various diplomatic missions which gave him the opportunity to see many parts of China.
The return journey

- Around 1292, the Polos offered to accompany a Mongol princess who was to become the consort of Arghun Khan in Persia.
- The party sailed from a southern Chinese port via Sumatra, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), southern India, and the Persian Gulf.
- After leaving the princess in Iran, the Polos travelled overland to Constantinople and then to Venice, arriving home in 1295.
- Marco became involved in a naval conflict between Venice and Genoa and in 1298 was captured by the Genoese.
- In prison, his stories attracted the attention of a writer from Pisa, Rustichello, who began to write them down, frequently embellishing them as he went.
- The resulting book was extremely popular and was translated into many languages under a number of titles, including 'The Million', 'Book of the Marvels of the World' and the 'Travels of Marco Polo'.
- After Polo was released he returned to Venice, where he remained for the rest of his life.
- Died 8 January 1324
Kublai Khan

(September 23, 1215- February 18, 1294)
(Mongolian: Хубилай хаан, Chinese: 忽必烈汗; pinyin: Hūbìliè Hàn), was the fifth and last Great Khan (1260–1294) of the Mongol Empire. In 1271, he founded the Yuan Dynasty, and became the first Yuan emperor.
The Travels

The Travels is divided into 4 books

• Book One describes the lands of the Middle East and Central Asia that Marco encountered on his way to China.
• Book Two describes China and the court of Kublai Khan.
• Book Three describes some of the coastal regions of the East: Japan, India, Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, and the east coast of Africa.
• Book Four describes some of the recent wars among the Mongols and some of the regions of the far north, like Russia.
BOOK III

I. Of India, distinguished into the Greater, Lesser, and Middle—Of the Manners and Customs of its Inhabitants—Of many remarkable and extraordinary Things to be observed there; and, in the first place, of the kind of Vessels employed in Navigation.

II. Of the Island of Zipangu.

III. Of the nature of the Idols worshipped in Zipangu, and of the People being addicted to eating Human Flesh.

IV. Of the Sea of Chili, between this Island and the Province of Manji.

V. Of the Gulf of Keinan, and of its Rivers.

VI. Of the Country of Zimba, of the King of that Country, and of his becoming tributary to the Grand Khan.

VII. Of the Island of Java.

VIII. Of the Islands of Sondur and Koudur, and of the Country of Lochac.

IX. Of the Island of Pentan, and of the Kingdom of Malaun.

X. Of the Island of Java Minor.

XI. Of the Kingdom of Felech, in the Island of Java Minor.

XII. Of the Second Kingdom, named Basman.

XIII. Of the Third Kingdom, named Samara.

XIV. Of the Fourth Kingdom, named Dragolan.

XV. Of the Fifth Kingdom, named Lambri.

XVI. Of the Sixth Kingdom, named Fanfur, where Meat is procured from a certain Tree.

XVII. Of the Island of Nocueran.

XVIII. Of the Island of Angaman.

XIX. Of the Island of Zelian.

XX. Of the Province of Maabar.

XXI. Of the Kingdom of Murphili or Monsul.

XXII. Of the Province of Laoc, Loac, or Lar.

XXIII. Of the Island of Zelian.

XXIV. Of the Kingdom of Koulam.

XXV. Of the Kingdom of Komari.

XXVI. Of the Kingdom of Dely.

XXVII. Of the Kingdom of Guzerat.

XXVIII. Of the Kingdom of Kanan.

Province of Turkomania

33
dwell amongst the mountains and in places difficult of access, where their object is to find good pasture for their cattle, as they live entirely upon animal food. There is here an excellent breed of horses which has the appellation of Turki, and fine mules which are sold at high prices.1 The other classes are Greeks and Armenians, who reside in the cities and fortified places, and gain their living by commerce and manufacture. The best and handsomest carpets in the world are wrought here, and also silks of crimson and other rich colours.2 Amongst its cities are those of Kogni, KaiSariah, and Sevasta, in which last Saint Blaise obtained the glorious crown of martyrdom.3 They are all subject to the great khan, emperor of the Oriental Tartars, who appoints governors to them.4 We shall now speak of the Greater Armenia.

the country of Rám. Of the former of these, the capital was Iconium, corrupted by the oriental writers to Kuniyah, and by those of the Crusades to Kogni; of the latter, Sceaste or Sceastapolis, corrupted to Siwas or Siwae. The chief from whom the dynasty of Seljuks derived its appellation, was by birth a Turkman, of Turkistan, on the north-eastern side of the river Sihon or Jaxartes, but in the service of a prince of Khazars, on the Wolga, from which he fled and pursued his fortune in Transoxiana; as did some of his family in Khorasan. Having acquired great celebrity, they were at length enabled, by the means of numerous tribes of Turkomans who joined their standard, to establish a sovereignty, or, in point of extent, an empire, the principal seat of which was in Persia. Amsk, which, about the year 1660, wrested the title of Minor from the Greek emperors, and formed the kingdom of which we are now speaking. Through its territory the Christian princes repeatedly forced their way in their progress to the Holy Land, and it is computed by historians that not fewer than six hundred thousand men perished in this preliminary warfare. At length the power of the Seljuks yielded to the overwhelming influence of the house of Jengiz-khan, and in our author's time they were reduced to insignificance; but from their ruins sprang the empire of the Ottomans, the founder of which had been in the service of one of the last sultans of Iconium.

The pastoral habits of the Turkoman Tartars are preserved to this day, even in Asia Minor, and the distinction of their tribes subsists also. The Turki breed of horses is esteemed throughout the East, for spirit and hardness.

1 The pastoral habits of the Turkoman Tartars are preserved to this day, even in Asia Minor, and the distinction of their tribes subsists also. The Turki breed of horses is esteemed throughout the East, for spirit and hardness.

2 "Et ibi sunt soriani et tapetii pulchrioris de mundo et pulchrioriis coloribus," are the words of the Latin text.

3 "Blaise, bishop of Sebasta, in Cappodocia, in the second and third centuries," says the Biographical Dictionary, "suffered death under Diocletian, by decapitation, after being whipped and having his flesh torn with iron combs. It is difficult to say how the invention (of wool combing) came to be attributed to him; but it had probably no better origin than the circumstance of his being tortured with the instru-
CHAPTER XVIII.
OF THE CITY OF CAMADI AND ITS RUINS; ALSO TOUCHING THE CARAUNA ROBBERS.

“After you have ridden down hill those two days, you find yourself in a vast plain, and at the beginning thereof there is a city called CAMADI, which formerly was a great and noble place, but now is of little consequence, for the Tartars in their incursions have several times ravaged it. The plain whereof I speak is a very hot region; and the province that we now enter is called REOBARLES. The fruits of the country are dates, pistachioes, and apples of Paradise, with others of the like not found in our cold climate. [There are vast numbers of turtledoves, attracted by the abundance of fruits, but the Saracens never take them, for they hold them in abomination.] And on this plain there is a kind of bird called francolin, but different from the francolin of other countries, for their colour is a mixture of black and white, and the feet and beak are vermilion colour.”
Polo’s Impact on Cartography

- First new map with names mentioned by Polo was *Catalan Atlas of Charles V* (1375)
- Mid-fifteenth century the cartographer of Murano, Fra Mauro, meticulously included all of Polo's toponyms in his map of the world
- A heavily annotated copy of Polo's book was among the belongings of Columbus.
- Other thirteenth-century European travelers who journeyed to the court of the Great Khan and wrote books were André de Longjumeau, William of Rubruck and Giovanni da Pian del Carpine with Benedykt Polak
Columbus’ Copy of the Travels
Catalan Atlas 1375
See: http://www.newberry.org/smith/slidesets/ss25.html
Fra Mauro
World Map
1457-9
(Shown inverted)
Museo Correr, Venice
Compendious Map of Marco Polo's Asia and adjacent countries

- Conjectural route of the elder Polos
- Conjectural route of Marco Polo
Similarities

- Extensive travel by many means of transportation
- Much toponymy, later taken up by cartographers
- Embellished, especially wrt riches
- Dictated to others
- Highly popular accounts
- Immense impact on world knowledge
- Set the stage for the age of discovery