

The travels of marco polo

People



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It was in 1254 when Maffeo Polo, a rich Venetian merchant, and his business partner brother Niccolo Polo were engaged in a journey outside Venice, Italy for trading in Constantinople and Far East. Traveling on a Silk Road was a long sail, good enough for merchants like them. However, as they planned going back home using the same route, they were trapped by the civil war between Hulagu and his opponent cousin Barka in Bukhara, and thus decide to use an eastward route although it was unfamiliar to them.

There they meet an ambassador of Hulagu who became an instrument of the meeting between the Polos and the great emperor as the latter was excited meeting a Latin for the first time. The Polos were treated with high respect especially when the emperor learned about the Catholic faith. He sent off the Polos to go home and ask the Holy See to send 100 educators and teach Khan's citizens become Christians. However, the death of Pope Clement IV made the Polos stranded again but this time in Acre, Italy, year 1269.

The College of Cardinals' anointing of a new Pope happened in the late 1271. Handling gifts and letters from Pope Gregory X (Teobaldo) of Piacenza, Polo brothers sailed themselves off again, with two friars and Niccolo's 17-year old son Marco Polo. Reaching the war zone, the two friars were discouraged and hesitant to continue the journey with the group. The mission that was originally tasked to supposedly 100 educators was forcedly fall solely to Marco Polo. This was the beginning of the latter's meaningful journey to Asia, parts of Africa and Europe.

Long after Marco Polo's travel and escapades to Asia, he was able to sum up his accounts in a book written by him with the help of his romanticist writer <https://assignbuster.com/the-travels-of-marco-polo/>

friend Rusticiano de Pisa. It has the full documentation of Marco, accounted diligently in four parts and given the title The Description of the World a. k. a. The Travels of Marco Polo..

Marco Polo's Travel Account on the Silk Road

Middle East and Central Asia

On their three and a half years of journey in the Silk Road, Marco had plenty of systematic observations from Middle Easter's custom, religious practices, traditions, food, food preparations, history, climate, geographical, and natural resources to having a fascination on civilizations, tribes and beautiful Persian women, which Marco expressed in his original words as " a handsome race, especially the women, who, in my opinion, are the most beautiful in the world."

The group sailed from Laias port to Armenia until they reached the Persian Gulf. From Homurz to Kerman, passing Herat, Balkh, Badakhshan, they were able to get on Pamir, a plateau between Afghanistan and Tibet, and described as the highest place on earth. They traded with Tibetan Buddhists in Campichu.

China (Cathay) and Kubilai Khan's court

As planned, the group reached their destination in Kublai Khan's court, which is located in Shangtu, almost 200 miles away from Peking to deliver the oil as Pope Gregory X's gift to the emperor. Marco Polo observed Kublai Khan's splendid living as royalty and nobleman with wisdom power, wealth and skill. He discovered how Chinese give importance in record-keeping, feasts and festivals, and wondrous inventions such as monetary systems using

stamp, paper and wood as money, literally running man as express messenger, fine highways, and the use of "black stone" or coal for fuel. He expressed his praises in his line "To this city everything that is most rare and valuable in all parts of the world finds its way."

East Coast: Asia, Southeast Asia and Africa

The fluency of Marco Polo in four different languages made the Polos ambassador of Khan Empire in some countries. At the same time, Kublai Khan was successfully conquered the whole of China. The Polos were allowed to go home in Venice with 600 crewmembers, which mostly did not survive believing that some were drowned, some were lost in storms, and some were died due to some malignant illnesses.

There they encountered adventurous travels as they sailed south from Vietnam to Indochina. He also made beautiful accounts of the place such as Madagascar, Sri Lanka, Japan, Siberia, Ethiopia, and the coast and islands of the Indian Sea. On his accounts, he still admitted having this line, "I have only told the half of what I saw!"

Wars and the Northern Region

While en route, the group heard the sad news that the great Mongolian emperor and conqueror of China Kublai Khan is already dead. After which, they arrived in their homeland Venice in 1295. Soon after their arrival, Marco Polo was engaged in a war against Genoa, which happened to be the most difficult rival of Venice's sea-going trading. Marco Polo was imprisoned. He started his storytelling and then put it in writing afterwards.

He clearly gave emphasized his praises as he was impressed in the Chinese civilization under Mongol ruling.

He concluded his book with this explanation, " I believe that it was God's pleasure that we should get back in order that people might learn about the things that the world contains. Thanks be to God! Amen! Amen!"

Analysis and Conclusion

Marco Polo is not just a famous traveler and a relative of Venetian merchant during their times. He could be called anthropologists. Based on his great accounts traveling to the Silk Route or Silk Road, he made thorough information not just about the geographical route, but mostly its noteworthy and interesting details, which made his travel story a travelogue.

He was able to educate his readers in his generation and even up to this modern era. His book was not just about Chinese civilization, Mongolian wars and Kublai Khan's Empire although his utmost impression with it was given full attention. Furthermore, he gave focus on some facts in Asia and its people; how they were differ from each other, Christianity as well as other religious belief and practices, etc. He also managed completing his document without making any biased statements.

This is the irony, trading as the primary goal of the Polos during their journey in the Silk Road was given sufficient justification in the book because in the end, trading serves as the main reason of the great traveler Marco Polo's captivity in Genoa.

R E F E R E N C E

Latham, Ronald. *The Travels of Marco Polo*. New York: Penguin, 1958.

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