

Xiyu xingcheng ji 西域行程記 (*Record of the Journey to the Western Regions*)

by Chen Cheng 陳誠

Vice Director, Bureau of Honours, Ministry of Personnel, Beijing Branch

[*Xingzai libu yanfengqing lisiyuan wailang chen* 行在吏部驗封清吏司員外郎]

and

Li Xian 李暹

Assistant Inspector at the Qinghe Pasturage Office

[*Yuanmasi qinghe jian fu chen* 苑馬寺清河監副臣]¹

Translated by Sally K. Church



Yongle 12 [1414], 1st month 13th day, at the hour of *si* [9 to 11 am], we departed. From the city wall of Suzhou garrison 肅州衛, in Shaanxi Regional Military Commission [*Shaanxi xingdu zhihui shisi* 陝西行都指揮使司],² beyond the northern gate, we passed over a ravine at 8 or 9 places, and

¹ There is no biography for either Chen Cheng 陳誠 or Li Xian 李暹 in the *Ming History* (*Ming shi* 明史). Records of their diplomatic mission to the Western Regions can only be found in scattered references in Chapter 332 of the *Ming History*, entitled “Chapter on the Western Regions” [*Xiyu zhuan* 西域傳]. Some people have said that Li Xian is an error for Li Da 李達. There is a biography of Li Da included in Chapter 174 of the *Ming History* [entitled, *Shi zhao zhuan* 史昭傳], but this Li Da had long held the position of Border Commander [*bianjiang duzhihui* 邊將都指揮], and governed [*zhenshou* 鎮守] Taozhou 洮州 for 40 years. He is not the same as the eunuch Li Da who went on the diplomatic mission with Chen Cheng. There is a colophon by Xie Guozhen 謝國楨 appended to the photolithographic reproduction of the Ming manuscript edition of Chen Cheng’s diary in the first “Collection of Rare Books” [*shanben congshu* 善本叢書] of the Beijing Library [1934], which says, “Li Xian may be an error for Li Da. According to the entry on Herat in the “Western Regions” chapter of the *Ming History*, ‘In Yongle 11 (1413) an envoy from Herat arrived at the capital. The Emperor was pleased, and went to the hall to receive him, rewarding him with gifts [*kao ci you jia* 犒賜有加]. From this time on, envoys from the various countries came, all following the lead of Herat. When they returned, [the emperor] ordered the eunuch Li Da, *yanwai* 員外 of the Ministry of Personnel Chen Cheng, Manager of the Ministry of Finance [*hubu zhushi* 戶部主事] Li Xian 李暹, and the commanding general [*zhihui*] Jin Ha-lanbo 金哈藍伯, and others to escort him.’” This is sufficient to show that there was a person called Li Xian, and that this was not an error for Li Da. Mr Xie [Guozhen] made this mistake because he did not read the chapter carefully. The records [*shiji* 事迹] concerning Chen Cheng and Li Xian are appended here in this work.

² The Geography chapter of the *Ming History* (Chapter 42) says that in Suzhou 肅州 garrison [*wei* 衛] is in Shaanxi Regional Military Commission [*xingdu zhihui shisi* 行都指揮使司]. It was established in the 27th year of Hongwu (1394) in the eleventh month. It is 500

travelled about 5 li. We crossed a large stream (*xi* 溪). On the northern shore we worshiped the gods of the Western Regions as required,³ praying for peace for our men and horses along the journey. After our worship was over, we set up camp, and stayed there for two days.

16th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. After about 70 li we reached a place near the mountain pass of Jiayushan 嘉峪山 and set up camp.⁴

17th day. Clear. We went through Jiayu pass [Jiayuguan 嘉峪關]. On the pass there was a flat mountain ridge. Someone said that in ancient times this was Jade Gate pass 玉門關, and someone else called Yu [Elm] pass 榆關. It is not clear which is correct. Beyond the pass the sand accumulates and seems to go on forever. We travelled more than 10 li. Reached a large grassy area, a sandy river bank, and camped along the river.⁵

18th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. To the south and north all we could see was mountains. We travelled about 70 li, and reached a place called Huihui mu 回回墓 (Muslim cemetery),⁶ there was water and grass there, and we set up camp.

li east of the *xingdusi* 行都司 [Regional Military Commission], therefore it was administered within present-day Jiuquan 酒泉 prefecture, Gansu 甘肅 province.

³ In Volume 5 of *Xinmao Shixing ji* 辛卯使行記, by Tao Baolian 陶葆廉 of the Qing period, hereafter abbreviated as *Shixing ji* 使行記, we have the following entry: “[Eleventh month], Third day. Clear. We set off on our journey from Suzhou Examination Hall. After one li, we came to the Drum Tower, and after another li we went out through the Northern Gate, heading west. Another li brought us through the Commercial Taxes Gate [*shang shui guan* 商稅關], and after another li, on the north side of the road, there was an old beacon tower [*fengtai* 烽台]. After another li, we crossed “Big North River [Beida he 北大河], which was the same as Taolai River 討來河.” [The notes to the original of this text say, “sandbar and rocky shoal, and seven or eight [of these, *pai* 派] away everything is ice.”] In the *Qing yitong yutu* 清一統輿圖, this river is called Taolai he [different characters]. When Chen Cheng says he crossed a large river, he must be referring to the Taolai river, which on modern maps is Linshui 臨水, a western branch of the Ruoshui 弱水, or Ruo River. It is also called Dabei he [Great Northern River]. The worshipping of the gods of the Western Regions must have been done on the northern bank of this river. [The river is called Beida he in *Zhongguo fensheng ditu*ji, p. 101, B4-C4; See Morohashi, Vol. 6, p. 1115d.]

⁴ The original notes to *Shixing ji* say: “There are two layers of walls at Jiayuguan, and both are small. The internal wall is perfectly square and there is space in it only for [*yashu* 衙署]. As for the East and West Gates, the inside of the East Gate is called Guanghua 光化, and the outside is called Chaozong 朝宗. The inside of the West Gate is called Rouyuan 柔遠 (‘gentle to the distant’), and the outside is called Huiji 會極 [‘meeting the extreme’]. The outer wall is rectangular. the northern, southern, and western sides are only about one *zhang* 丈 from the inner wall. The eastern side is rather wide, and has a circumference of 222 *zhang*; it is low and thin. Of the three gates, one is at true west, one is at the northeast and one at the southeast. The wall on the southern side originates from the southwest corner of the outer wall. The wall on the northern side originates from the northeast corner of the outer wall. *Qing yi* [bridge or bank] *dai jin* 傾圮殆盡. There are the remains of a beacon tower [*fengtai*] which can still be recognized . . . The flat ridge to the north of the pass is Jiayushan 嘉峪山, also called Biyu shan 璧玉山 (Jade mountain). South of the pass are the mountains or hills of Renshou 仁壽 and Fengmo 風脈.” When Chen Cheng speaks of a flat ridge at the pass we know that he passed through Jiayushan to the north of the pass [Jiayuguan 嘉峪關].

⁵ *Shixing ji* says, “To the south [it] faces Da Hong Shan (Big Red Mountain) and to the north it has its back toward a long mountain range (changling 長嶺).” This is what Chen Cheng meant by “North and south, everything is mountains.” It also says, “After 13 li, there is a small rectangular mound [*dun* 墩], after 6 li there is the “Three-li mound” [*sanli dun* 三里墩]. To the north of the road is a sand mound [*sha fu* 沙阜], a large, square platform.” This is the large grassy shoal near the edge of the sandy river where Chen Cheng stayed. It must have been near Sanli dun or near the monument [stele, *bei* 碑] on the eastern edge of Jade Gate [Yumen 玉門].

⁶ *Shixing ji* says, “After two and a half li was Huihui *juntang* 惠回軍塘 [Huihui military embankment]. After half a li we stayed in the Huihui posthouse [Huihui *yi* 惠回驛, hostel]. We calculated that we had gone 90 li. West of the posthouse is a Huihui fortress

19th day. Clear and very windy. We set off when it was light and headed west for about 50 li. We reached a place called Shanmacheng 驪馬城⁷ and camped there.

20th day. Clear. We set off at the third watch and headed west for about 90 li. There was an old city wall [*cheng* 城] there. South of the city wall, at the foot of the mountain there were *yi* 夷 people farming. West of the wall there was a river that flowed northwards. We camped at a place called Chijin 赤斤.⁸

21st day. Clear. We set off at the fourth watch and headed north-west. We crossed the river and entered [*page 34*] a flat plain [*pingchuan* 平川]. The way was obstructed by gritty sand, and it was open and expansive in all directions. We travelled approximately a little more than 100 li, and there was an old wall [*qiangyuan* 墻垣]. The place was called Kuili 魁里.⁹ We set up camp there.

22nd day. Extremely clear. We set off at dawn [*pingming* 平明] and headed northwest. Next to the road were some Tatar [Dada 達達] tents [*zhangfang* 帳房]. After about 50 li there was an old wall. The place was called Wangzi zhuang 王子莊.¹⁰ We camped there and stayed one extra day.

[Huihui bao 惠回堡], built in the fifth year of Yongzheng 雍正 (1727). The “Chapter on the Western Regions” in the Ming History calls it Muslim cemetery, but the location of the cemetery is unknown.” Thus we know that the Muslim cemetery referred to by Chen Cheng is the Huihui fortress. The Huihui posthouse [or hostel] is east of the Huihui fortress.

⁷ *Shixing ji* says: “From the Huihui posthouse to Shanmacheng 驪馬城, is altogether only 17 li. But Chen Cheng says it is about 50 li. Perhaps this is because between the two places they crossed nine waterways (channels 溝) and 18 slopes, and this added some distance. Shanmacheng is a small fortress that is desolate and dilapidated 荒廢. In the Jin period it was called Xingma 驛馬 prefecture. In the *Qing yitong yutu* 清一統輿圖, there is a place called Shaogou 燒溝 between Huihui fortress and Chijin Lake 赤斤湖. Shanmacheng must have been in the vicinity of this place.

⁸ Chijin 赤斤 is called Chijin 赤金 in *Shixing ji*, and today it is still called by this name. From Shanmacheng to Chijin lake posthouse and military embankment is 51 li. From the posthouse, two li to the south-west brings one to Chijin mound. Another 35 li is Chijin River, and another 4.5 li is Chijin gorge posthouse. Slightly to the south of the posthouse is Chijin fortress. In the Tang period this was Yumen 玉門 [Jade Gate] prefecture. If we trace it by mileage (distance), the place where Chen Cheng camped must be Chijin gorge posthouse.

⁹ There is no place called Kuili 魁里 on modern maps. From Chijin gorge posthouse to the north-west, [on the way to] at Bulongji 布隆吉, the first large stopping place [stop, station] should be Yumen prefecture 玉門縣. Kuili is probably in this region. When Mr Tao goes here from Chijin, he travels 90 li. but Chen Cheng records it as over 100 li. Mr Tao adds a note to his entry on Chijin posthouse, saying that the Nanshan pass 南山隘口 is called Yimatu 依馬兔, popularly written as Yaomo 妖魔 [devil] mountain, and also called Kulong pass [Kulong kou 窟隆口], which is 80 li south-west of the fortress.” Kuili and Kulong have quite similar sounds, so perhaps they are two different names for the same place.

¹⁰ Dada 達達 is the same as Dada 韃靼 (Tatar). This tribal group [*buzu* 部族] was based in the early period from the southern part of present-day Hulunbei'ermeng 呼倫貝爾盟 in Heilongjiang province to the northern part of Xilinguolemeng 錫林郭勒盟 in Inner Mongolia. In the 11th century, the Tatar, Mongol, Mie'erqi 蔑兒乞, Wengjila 翁吉剌, Kelie 克烈, Wanggu 汪古 and other groups united into an alliance led by the Tatars, in opposition to the rule of the Liao dynasty. Therefore Tatar was once the generic term for all the groups on the Mongolian steppes [*caoyuan* 草原]. The name Wangzi zhuang 王子莊 does not appear on modern maps. Mr Tao travels 50 li northwest from Yumen prefecture, and stays in an inn on the street at Sandaogou 三道溝 military embankment. This must have been where Wangzi zhuang was, or somewhere nearby. The 60-70 earthen buildings were grouped together into a small trading market [*shi ji* 市集].

24th day. Clear. We set off early and headed north. In the middle of the road there were trees whose branches and trunk resemble mulberry and elm trees [*sangyu* 桑榆], and whose leaves were like the ginkgo [*yinxing* 銀杏]. It was called a Wutong 梧桐 (Parasol) tree. We travelled about 70 li and reached a place called Lugour 蘆溝兒,¹¹ where we set up camp.

25th day. Clear. We set off early and headed north. Along the entire way there were high and low sand dunes, and the land was open and expansive in all directions. There were mountains only in the south. We travelled more than 100 li, to a place where some *yi* people were farming. It was rich with water and grass. The place was called Bulongji 卜隆吉.¹² We camped there and stayed for two days. It was very windy.

28th day. Clear. We set off when it was light [*ming* 明], and crossed the Bulongji river 卜隆吉河. We headed north-west and entered a flat plain. It was open and expansive in all directions, and devoid of water and grass. There were only shiny black rocks [*linlin* 磷磷]. Along the road there were many skeletons of dead horses. To the north there were distant mountains. It was extremely cold during the day. We travelled more than 100 li and found no water. We stopped next to the road to rest that night.¹³

¹¹ Mr Tao headed west from Santonggou 三通溝 and after 20.5 li arrived at a small fortress called “Four-family beach willow-waterway posthouse” [*sijiatan liugou yi* 四家灘柳溝驛]. This Liugou 柳溝 may be the place Mr Chen calls Lugou’er 蘆溝兒. However, Sandaogou 三道溝 is only 20.5 li east of Liugou, and Mr Chen says it is 70 li away. The name Liugou posthouse 柳溝驛 doesn’t occur on modern maps. It may be near present-day Huangyawan 黃閘灣.

¹² Bulongji 卜隆吉 is the Bulongji’er 布隆吉爾 referred to by Mr Tao. He says that it is 65 li from Liugou posthouse to this place, whereas Chen says it is more than 100. Mr Tao’s note says, “In recent times there have been efforts to control and regulate the postal routes, because the numbers that have been reported have exceeded the true number.” This is true indeed. Xie Bin 謝彬, in his “Travels through Xinjiang” (*Xinjiang youji* 新疆遊記, published in 1923 by Shanghai’s Zhonghua shuju), says that from Yumen pass travelling north-west there are ten waterways [*daogou* 道溝] before one reaches Bulongji’er 布隆吉爾 city. [These are Toudaogou 頭道溝, Erdaogou 二道溝, Sandaogou 三道溝, and so forth.] During Tang times, this city was on the eastern border of Jinchang 晉昌 prefecture in the jurisdiction of Guazhou 瓜州. The *Ming History* considers Bulongji’er *chuan* 卜隆吉爾川 [river or plain] a border area of the two Mongol departments, Hami 哈密 and Chijin 赤斤. {Note that the place-name dictionary identifies Bulongji’er cheng as a place in present-day Gansu province, south-east of Anxi 安西 prefecture. In the Qing period, its status changed to Liugou 柳溝 garrison. -- SKC}

¹³ Mr Chen travels from Bulongji’er 布隆吉爾 city northward and crosses Bulongji’er River. Then his route heads north-west. He doesn’t choose the westward road to Anxi 安西, but instead enters a desolate desert and travels 100 li, finding no water, and spending the night on the side of the road. This is sufficient to show that Mr Chen’s journey to Hami 哈密 does not follow the route Baidunzi 白墩子 – Hongliuyuan 紅柳園 – Daquan 大泉 – and Malian jingzi 馬蓮井子, because to travel on this route one must head west to Anxi zhou 安西州, and then turn north to Baidunzi. This is a long way round, about 240 li. Therefore Chen’s route, beginning at Bulongji’er and heading north-west, then turning north, saves a large part of the journey. According to the *Qing yitong yutu* 清一統輿圖 (Middle Volume, West 2, and North, First Volume, West 2), there is another road east of Baidunzi {and this must be the one he took -- SKC}. From Bulongji’er city to the north, one crosses the Sulai 蘇賴 River [modern Shule 疏勒 River]. First one heads north-west and passes through Zhuntuolai 準托賴. Therefore, when in Mr Chen’s record for the 28th he says “We crossed the Bulongji River and headed north-west, entering a flat plain, and travelling over 100 li. We didn’t find water and stopped on the roadside to rest” must be referring to Zhuntuolai or its vicinity.

29th day. Clear. We set off early, and headed north. We travelled more than 50 li and began to get to the end of the flat plain. There was a small frozen brook and we camped there. We broke up the ice and melted it for both men and horses to drink.¹⁴

Second month, 1st day. Clear. We set off early, and headed north-west. Along the way there were sand dunes of varying heights. There was no water or grass at all. We travelled more than 70 li and reached a small channel of frozen water where we camped. We broke the ice to get water for the horses.¹⁵

2nd day. Clear. We set off early and headed north. All along the way there were ridges and plateaus both high and low. Again there was no water or grass, nor was there any ice, so there was nothing to eat or drink for ourselves or for our horses. We travelled 50 li, and then late in the day, we reached a sandy, desolate place where we spent the night.¹⁶ [page 35]

3rd day. Clear. We set off early and headed north. We entered the gorge [shanxia 山峽]. The mountain was coarse and ugly [cu'e 粗惡]. In the middle of the road there were small ice caves, and we were not able to go around them. We travelled through [this region] for 150 li. There were ice pools and spring outlets. We camped at a place called Woluhaiya 斡魯海牙.¹⁷

4th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. Empty and desolate in all directions. We travelled more than 50 li. There was a spring in a place called Kedunbula 可敦卜刺¹⁸ and we camped there.

5th day. Clear. We set off at dawn, and headed north. The mountain path was very rugged, and there was no water or grass to be seen. We travelled more than 100 li and late in the day reached a mountain valley where we rested.¹⁹

¹⁴ North of Zhuntuolai there is a place called Boluochunji 博羅椿集. The place where Mr Chen camped must be here or nearby.

¹⁵ From Boluochunji, travelling north and slightly west, one passes through a place called Chahanchunji 察罕椿集. Mr Chen must have camped here or in this vicinity.

¹⁶ From Chahanchunji, travelling north and slightly west, one passes through a place called Halabo'ertun 哈拉博爾屯. The sandy shoal on which Mr Chen camped must have been here or in this vicinity.

¹⁷ From Halabo'ertun travelling to the north-west, one passes through a place called Eligenbulake 額里根布拉克. After passing this place, one enters the "Starry Gorge" [Xingxing xia 星星峽]. The place called Woluhaiya 斡魯海牙 where Mr Chen camped must be at Sandy Spring Well [shaquan jingzi 沙泉井子], north-west of this gorge.

¹⁸ Kedunbula 可敦卜刺 is perhaps located between Sandy Spring Well and Naqin 納沁 River. According to Gu Zuyu 顧祖禹 of the Qing dynasty, author of *Dushi fangyu jiyao* 讀史方輿紀要 [Essentials of Geographical Knowledge for the Study of History], "The Uighur river [Weiwu'er he 畏吾兒] is 130 li east of the garrison [wei 衛]. Lady Spring [Niangzi quan 娘子泉] is east of that river, and is called Kedunbula by the local people." He also says, "Helu chuan 合露川 (Helu River) is south-east of the garrison. Princess Huigu 回鶻公主 of the Tang period lived here, and the remains of the city wall are still extant." There is a note in Mr Tao's *Shixing ji* which says, "As for the Uighur River, today it is called Wulatai River [Wulatai shui 烏拉台水]. The lower reaches are at Kedunbulake 可敦布拉克, which is now mistakenly called Adonggou 阿東溝 [eastern waterway]. It is 250 li east of Hami." However, according to *Qing yitong yutu*, the Wulatai River was west of the main routes, and between them there were two other [small] rivers; this must be too far away from the main road. I suspect that the Naqin River is the Uighur 畏吾兒 River, and that Kedunbula or Niangzi quan (Lady Spring) must be east of the lower reaches of this river.

¹⁹ According to modern maps, this place must be opposite Kshuitai 苦水台, in the middle reaches of the Uighur 畏吾兒 River.

6th day. Clear. We set off early and headed north. We crossed a flat plain, and forded a large stream [xi], called the Weiwu'er 畏吾兒 (Uighur) river. South of the stream was an ancient temple, called Alihusituoyin 阿里忽思脫因. There were some yi people there engaged in farming. There was good water and grass. It was the location of a large beacon tower [yandun 煙墩] for Hami 哈密. We travelled more than 70 li and made camp, and stayed there an extra day.²⁰

8th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. Crossed a flat plain, and travelled 130 li before we found water and grass. We camped there. An envoy from Hami came to meet us.²¹

9th day. Clear. We set off when it was light, and headed west. The whole way was flat plain. After about 90 li we reached the city of Hami, and camped next to the orchard on its south-eastern side. We stayed there for 5 days.²²

15th day. Clear. We set off early, right at dawn. Outside the eastern gate of the city of Hami, we crossed a stream [xishui 溪水] and headed west. It was entirely flat plain. We travelled more than 70 li, and then found a place that was inhabited where there was water and grass, and camped there.²³

16th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. There was an ancient walled city called Lazhu 臘竺, with trees and many dwellings. There was a ruined monastery and crumbling wall. The climate of this place was like the Central Plain [of China]. After passing through this city we travelled more than 90 li, and camped at a place where there was good water and grass.²⁴

²⁰ The “large stream” [daxi 大溪] must refer to the middle reaches of the Uighur River. The place where he camped is at Dayandun 大煙墩 on modern maps. The ancient monastery is called Alihusituo 阿里忽思脫.

²¹ Mr Chen headed west for 130 li, and passed through Changliu shuitai 長流水台 and Bulu'er 布魯爾 in order to reach Huanglu ridge 黃蘆岡. This is the place with water and grass where they camped.

²² Mr Chen travelled 90 li north-west from Huanglu ridge to Hami City. He camped next to an orchard south-east of the city. *Shixing ji* describes this section of the route in detail: “Travelling west on grassy land for 20 miles, one comes upon a small village [cun 邨], which is called Single Tree [yikeshu 一顆樹] by the Chinese and Haramuti 哈喇木提 by the Muslims [chan hui 纏回]. To the north-west one travels over desert. After 4 li there is a waterway with a little more than 20 small trees. Turning west, we travelled 26 li and found fields and scattered trees. After two li there was Xinzhuang 新莊 [new village], called Kezihumu 克子胡木 by the Muslims. After one li we turned south-west, and after 3 li there was a Muslim village of three families south of the road, and a clump of white poplar trees [baiyang 白楊]. After 3 li we came to Cai Lake 蔡湖, called Saibashi 賽巴什 by the Muslims. There was a school [yixue 義學] there and a temple. We turned southwards and after one li came to Shijiadun 十家墩 [ten family mound]. After 3 li we came to Shabashi 沙巴什, and after another 3 li to Shang'aya'er 上阿雅爾 Bridge. . . After 3 li the road was lined with thick willow trees [guanliu 官柳]. We turned south-west, passed over Xiaya'er 下雅爾 Bridge and in one li came to the eastern gate of Hami. [page 52]

²³ *Shixing ji* and *Xinjiang youji* (Travels through Xinjiang) both say that they went from Hami westward for 60 li, and stayed in Toubao 頭堡 [first fortress], which has the Muslim name of Sumuhalahui 蘇木哈喇灰. Southeast of this place there is a spring. When Mr Chen says that after 70 li they camped at a place that was inhabited, and had good water and grass, it must have been here.

²⁴ Lazhu 臘竺 is another name for Nazhi 納職, today's Sanbao 三堡, which is also called Tuoheqi 托和齊. A note in Volume 6 of *Shixing ji* says: “Nazhi prefecture of the Tang is 120 li from Yizhou 伊州 (Hami). Present-day Sanbao is about this distance from Hami.” Moreover, if you read out the name Tuoheqi quickly, it sounds a bit like Nazhi. Therefore the city is certain to have been here. Xu Song 徐松, in his *Xiyu shuidaoji* 西域水道記 [Waterways of the Western Regions] says that [it is] at Chengzaogou 橙槽溝, west of Taipian 太偏. Mr Chen says that after passing this city he travelled through [tongxing 通行] for 90 li and camped in a place where there was good water and grass. Thus the place where he stayed must have been somewhere to the west of Lazhu.

17th day. Clear. We set off early and headed northwest. There were sand dunes of varying heights, but the place was completely uninhabited. [page 36] The road was coarse and ugly. We travelled more than 90 li and camped where there was a little water and grass.²⁵

18th day. Clear. We set off early and headed north-west. Upward and downward slopes were all covered with black rocks. We travelled more than 50 li, to a place called Tanli 探里. There was a bit of water and grass, and we camped there.²⁶

19th day. Clear. We set off early, and headed north-west. We entered a large plain [*chuan* 川], but there was no water or grass. After the hour of *wu* 午 [11 am to 1 pm] we arrived at a beach, on which there were many Wutong trees. Someone said it was a station, but there was no water or grass here either. We travelled on until the middle of the night, and reached another place where there were several earthen huts. There were two or three small water caves, and a pond of bitter water. Someone said this was a station, but it was difficult for people or horses to stay there. We continued on and reached . . . [There is a gap in the text here.]

20th day. At the hour of *si* 巳 (9 to 11 am), we reached another place where there were one or two earthen huts, and two small water caves, so we were able to give men and horses a little water. We resumed the journey and reached a sandy bank, where there were 3 or 4 springs. We had a drink there and rested. In the middle of the night we resumed the journey and reached. . . [There is a gap in the text here.]

21st day. At the hour of *si* (9 to 11 am) we reached a large grassy area, next to which was a small mountain. At the foot of the mountain there was a big spring. On the mountain itself there was a earthen hut. The place was called Chiting 赤亭. From the time when we first entered the large plain on the 19th we had travelled continuously for two days. It had taken 500 li to traverse this plain. We set up camp here and stayed an extra day.²⁷

²⁵ According to *Shixing ji*, from Sanbao 三堡, heading north-west for 11 li, one comes to Shazaoyuan 沙棗園 (Sandy Date Garden). After 49 li [you come to] Sandaoling posthouse 三道嶺驛, whose Muslim name is Taleqi 塔勒奇. When Mr Chen says he travelled over 90 li and camped in a place where there was some water and grass, it must be here. This place is a general overnight stopping place for travellers, and it is true that from Sanbao to here is only 60 li. Perhaps this is a figure that is exaggerated by the local people.

²⁶ According to *Travels through Xinjiang*, from Sandaoling posthouse heading north-west for 12 li [one reaches] Duck Spring [Yazi quan 鴨子泉], and in 35 li one reaches Ladder Spring [Tizi quan 梯子泉]. Then turning south-west and travelling 3 li one reaches Hongzhuang 紅莊 [Red Village]. I suspect this is the place called Tanli 探里 which Mr Chen says he reached by going north-west over 50 li and where he camped because there was a small amount of water and grass.

²⁷ From Tanli travelling west, passing through Liaodun posthouse 瞭墩驛, Wutong nest [*wu*] 梧桐窩, Three rooms [*san jian fang* 三間房], Thirteen rooms [*shisan jian fang* 十三間房], and other stopping places, he travelled for two days (on the 19th and 20th) and did not stop to rest. Then he went directly to Chiting 赤亭, and only after travelling 50 li, set up camp. *Shixing ji* says "From Thirteen rooms going west for 130 li, arrived at Qiketengmu 七克騰木. All along the way there was an unusual wind [*guai feng* 怪風].

Therefore we changed our stopping place to One Bowl Spring [Yiwan quan 一碗泉]." Whenever Mr Chen uses the word *chuan* 川 [river] he is always referring to a flat desolate plain. Qiketengmu is another name for Chiting. Qiketengmu means "obtaining spring water". The Geography chapter of the *New Tang History* calls it Chiting shouzhuo 赤亭守捉, and it is also [the site of] Zetian monastery 澤田寺, mentioned in *Gaochang ji* 高昌記 by Wang Yande 王延德. From Tanli to Chiting is actually 450 li. Mr Chen calls it 500 li in order to round off the number.

23rd day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. In the middle of the road there was an ancient walled city. We travelled for 90 li, where there was a place where some *yi* people were living in tents. The place was called Bican 必殘. We camped there and stayed an extra day.²⁸

25th day. Clear. We set off early and headed north-west. North of the road the mountains are dark red like flames. It is called Flame Mountain [Huoyan shan 火焰山]. South of the road there was a sandy ridge, and they say that it accumulated from whirling sand blown up by the wind. In the middle there was a series of rivers, which [together] was called the Floating Sands River [Liusha he 流沙河]. We travelled on about 90 li and reached Luchen 魯陳 city. We camped west of the city, and stayed there for four days.²⁹ [page 37]

Third month, 1st day. Clear. We set off at dawn and headed west. In the middle of the road there was a small walled city. There were many dwellings, good fields and gardens. We travelled on more than 50 li and reached the city of Huozhou 火州. We camped south-east of the city and stayed there three days.³⁰

²⁸ According to *Shixing ji*, from Qiketengmu heading west, one passes through Yingzishu 英子樹, Sixty-mile Mound (Liushili dun 六十里墩), Sulutu 蘇魯圖, Thirty-li mound (*sanshili dun* 三十里墩), Dongkan'er 東坎兒, Baza 巴雜, and other such stopping places, to reach Pizhan posthouse 關展驛. Altogether one travels 90 li. Mr Chen says that in the middle of the road [or journey] there was an ancient city wall. Over 200 li south-west of Pizhan there is one called the Tang Wall [Tang cheng 唐城], or Dilapidated Wall [Po chengzi 破城子]. It is not in the middle of the road [journey], so I fear that there is an error in the transmission of the existence of this wall. Bican 必殘 is another way of writing Pizhan. After the Northern Wei dynasty it was Baiji 白棘, in the city of Gaochang 高昌. In the Yibo 夷貊 chapter of the Southern History [Nanshi 南史], it is called Baichang 白刃, or mistakenly as Baili 白力. The "Various Barbarians" chapter [zhu yi zhuan 諸夷傳] of the *Liang History* [Liang shu 梁書] also mistakenly calls it Baidao 白刀. In the Song it was called Baozhuang 寶莊, and in the Ming Beichang 北昌.

²⁹ From Pizhan there are two routes to Turfan 吐魯番. According to modern maps, one is directly west, passing through Three Waterways [Sandao gou 三道溝], Lianmuqin 連木沁, Subashi 蘇巴什, Shengjinkou 勝金口, and Yaozhuangzi 腰莊子 to reach Turfan. *Shixing ji* and *Travels through Xinjiang* both use this route. Another route is from Pizhan heading south-west, passing through Keqike 克其克, Langan 欄桿, Si'erkefu 斯爾克甫, Amanxia 阿曼夏, Lukeqin 魯克沁, Ayakemali 阿牙克買力, Sanbao 三堡, Xi'an palace 西安宮, and Dongkan'er 東坎兒. But Mr Chen says he first headed toward the north-west, thus he first went through Sandaogou 三道溝, to Lianmuqi 連木齊, then turned south-west, followed the small river and reached Lukeqin 魯克沁. This is why north of the road they could see Flame Mountain [Huoyan shan 火焰山], which was formerly called Jinling 金嶺. Mr Chen also says that on the sandy ridge south of the road there was a river whose name was "Flowing sand river" [Liusha he 流沙河]. Volume 6 of *Shixing ji* has a note on Lianmuqi posthouse saying, "In several places there are warm springs, which converge in a small river which flows to the south-east for 70 li. When it reaches Se'erqibu 色爾啟布, it branches into three. The northern channel flows northwest for over 40 li and reaches north of Lukeqin city. The southern channel flows westward, reaching south of Lukeqin." Lukeqin city is the place Chen calls Ludong city 魯東城. And Liusha [Flowing Sands] River refers to the small river into which Lianmuqi warm springs converges. In the Latter Han dynasty it was called Liuzhong 柳中, and it was governed by the Commandant of the Centre [*wuji xiaowei* 戊己校尉]. Chief Officer [*changshi* 長史] Ban Yong 班勇 lived here. In the Tang it belonged to Jiaohe commandery 交河郡 in Xizhou 西州. In the *Song History* 宋史 it was called Liuzhong 六種, and in the Yuan, Luguchen 魯古塵. The *Ming History* called it Liucheng 柳城, Luchen 魯陳, and even Liuchen 柳陳. In *Xiyu renwulue* 西域人物略 it was called Luzhenr 魯珍兒 and at the beginning of the Qing it was called Lukechake 魯克察克 [Lukchak] or Lugute 魯古忒. Only in the Qianlong 乾隆 period of the Qing was it changed to Lukeqin 魯克沁.

³⁰ According to modern maps, when one travels north-west of Lukeqin to Sanbao (Halahezhuo 哈喇和卓), the old city of Gaochang is to the east. When Mr Chen says that as he went west, in the middle of the road was a small city [wall], he was perhaps referring to this. Mr Chen also says that after travelling more than 50 li he reached Huozhou 火州 city. Huozhou is Halahezhuo (Karakhodjo), which is also the Sanbao of today's maps. In the Han period it was the territory of Cheshi qianwang 車師前王 [the

5th day. Clear. We headed north-west travelling on a flat plain [*pingchuan di*]. After about 70 li we reached the city of Turfan 吐爾番. We camped south-east of the city and stayed one day.³¹

7th day. Clear. We moved camp to the city of Ya'er 崖兒城, 30 li west of Turfan. It was near water and grass, and convenient for setting up camp. We stayed there 17 days.³²

24th day. Clear. We set off when it was light. From the city of Ya'er we followed the river south out of the gorge, and then headed south-west. Because Sultan Mohammad [Mahamuwang 馬哈木王] [resides] south of the mountains, the road divides into two, one to the north and one to the south. After going 50 li, we camped at a place where there was grass.³³

25th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. On a flat plain we travelled more than 50 li. There was a small city whose name was Tuosun 托遜. We camped south-east of the city where there was water and grass.³⁴

26th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. We travelled more than 50 li, and then camped near some houses.³⁵

earlier king of Cheshi?]; in the Sui it was the country of Gaochang; in the Tang it was under the jurisdiction of Jiaohe commandery in Gaochang xian 縣, and in the Ming it was called Huozhou.

³¹ Tu'erfan 吐爾番 is also called Tulufan 吐魯番. The word *fan* 番 in Uighur [*weiyu* 維語] sounds like *pan* 潘. During the Qianlong era of the Qing dynasty, a Muslim named Wushi 烏什 from this country used the name of his home town to call it the name Tu'erman 圖爾滿. Man is another way of transliterating *pan* 潘. Now, Xizhou in the late Tang was occupied by people of Turfan [Tufan 吐蕃], and I suspect that at this time it was called the city of Tufan 吐蕃. After a long time the sound changed and became Tulufan 吐魯番. From Shengjinkou 勝金口 heading west across an open expanse [*pingkuang* 平曠], after 2 li one descends a mountain slope, and after 23 li there are Mongol yurts [Menggu bao 蒙古包]. In another 30 li there are deserted homes. After another 5 li there are village trees [*cunshu* 村樹] on the left of the road for several li. After another 12 li there are village dwellings [*cunshu* 村舍] on the left and right sides. One passes by a Muslim [*chan hui*] mosque with an old pagoda [*ta* 塔] four or five *zhang* high, shaped like a bottle, covered with elegant and ornate carvings. After one li one crosses an earthen bridge – this is called Sandy River 沙河, and after 2 li [one comes to] the Han city of Tulufan 吐魯番. Altogether the distance is 75 li. (See *Shixingji*, volume 6.)

³² Mr. Tao says that going west from Tulufan for 20 li, one descends a high slope in three levels. This is Ya'erya 雅兒崖, which is also the Ya'ercheng 崖兒城 that Mr Chen says is 30 li west of the city (of Turfan). It is sometimes abbreviated as Yacheng 崖城, and the local people call it Ya'erhetu 雅爾和圖. The word *ya'er* 雅爾 is Turkish for a steep cliff, and the word *hetu* 和圖 is Mongolian for a walled city. In the Han period it was the capital of Cheshi in its early period. At the time of Qu 麴 power in Gaochang [499-640 AD] it was Jiaohe commandery. In the Tang, at the time of Xizhou, it was called Jiaohe prefecture [*xian*]. At the end of the Tang, the Huigu 回鶻 people moved westward to Turfan, and the Western Liao appointed the king of Huigu as prince of Jiaohe. At the end of the Yuan, Jiaohe was subsumed under the department [*bu* 部] of Turfan [Tulufan 吐魯番] and the city of Jiaohe gradually went to ruin.

³³ According to modern maps, between Turfan and Tuokexun 托克遜 there is a place called Sixty-li Mound [Liushi li dun 六十里墩]. Mr Chen probably camped near this place.

³⁴ Tuokexun 托克遜 is popularly known as Nine Towers (*jiutai* 九台). It is a strategic region for communications on the North-South route in the Tianshan range. In the Republican era a prefecture was set up to help govern it and now it is Tuokexun *xian*.

³⁵ According to modern maps, heading westward from Tuokexun, one must follow along Alagou 阿拉溝 [Ala waterway], first skirting along the shore of the waterway and then, after about 40 li, there is a place called Yila Lake [Yila hu 伊拉湖]. The place where Mr Chen camped is probably near Yila Lake. Mr Tao called it Yilali Lake [Yilali hu 伊拉里湖].

27th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west [*the manuscript edition corrects it to 'south-west'*]. We travelled more than 30 li. There was a place with water and grass, called Xizhe'erbulake 奚者兒卜刺, and we camped there.³⁶

28th day. Clear. We started off in the middle of the night we headed west, and traversed a flat plain. We travelled on more than 150 li. There was a large beacon tower [*yandun*], called Alubugujili 阿魯卜古蹟里. After passing through this place we entered a gorge [*shanxia*], and headed west alongside rocks and ravines [*jian*]. At sunset we rested next to the road at the side of the ravine. There was only dry grass for the horses to eat.³⁷

29th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and followed the ravines toward the west. There were and rocky hills on all sides. The road was rugged. We travelled more than 60 li, and then rested on a stony shoal.³⁸ [page 38]

30th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and followed the ravines toward the west. We travelled more than 50 li, and rested on a grassy shoal.³⁹

4th month, 1st day. Clear. At the fifth watch, we followed the ravine and headed west. We passed through four or five rocky precipices and the road became a bit wider. After travelling more than 100 li, we camped on a grassy plain.⁴⁰

2nd day. Clear. We set off when at first light and headed north-west. We passed over two high mountains. On the second mountain there was an area of deep water. The place was called Kudannawu'er 窟丹納兀兒. When we came down the mountain we crossed a flat plain, and travelled on more than 90 li. On the south, next to the mountain, we camped in a place called Halabula 哈喇卜刺. There was a large snowfall that night. We stayed three days.⁴¹

³⁶ Xizhe'erbulake 奚者兒卜刺 is a place that the Buddhist monk Xuanzang 玄奘 of the Tang dynasty also visited. In *Dasi'ensi Sanzang fashi zhuan* 大慈恩寺三藏法師傳, it is called Afushiquan 阿父師泉. It is present-day Age'erbulake 阿格爾布拉克 [Arghai Bocak], southwest of Tuokexun prefectural seat.

³⁷ Following the northern shore of Alagou to the west, and travelling about 100 li, there is a place called Xiwaituolagai 西外托拉蓋. When Chen says he went westward more than 150 li [and arrived] at a large *yandun* 煙墩 called Alubugujili 阿魯卜古蹟里, it may have been on the roadside next to the ravine west of this place.

³⁸ Following the northern shore of Alagou to the west for [another] 20 li, there is a place called A'er'enzi 阿爾恩孜. Not far beyond this, one turns and follows the southern shore of the waterway and heads west. There are large mountains both to the north and south. When Mr Chen says that he travelled on a steep mountain road over 60 li and slept on a rocky shoal, this must have been on the southern shore of Alagou, west of A'er'enzi.

³⁹ According to modern maps, west of Alagou there is a place called Wulalengge 烏拉楞格. This may be the grassy shoal on which Mr Chen camped.

⁴⁰ The grassy shoal on which Mr Chen camped, more than 100 li to the west, is perhaps Qiaolongguole 喬龍果勒, west of present-day Wulalengge, or in this vicinity.

⁴¹ According to modern maps, in the upper reaches of the Alagou it turns here and flows northward. The communication route also follows it toward the north and slightly to the west. When Mr Chen says he crosses two mountains, these are the two sections, northern and southern, of Gunshalabo'erqi'er 滾沙拉博爾齊爾 Mountain. When he says that "on the second mountain there was some deep water [*shui yi hong* 水一泓], and it was called Kudan'nawu'er 窟丹納兀兒, it is probably Kelongdaban 科隆達坂 of today's maps. When he descended the mountain, crossed a flat plain, and travelled over 90 li, stopping at Halabula 哈喇卜刺, which must be at or near Yikesumukure 依克蘇木庫熱, on the northern shore of the Wulasitai 烏拉斯台 River.

6th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed north-west. We crossed three high mountains and the road was very rugged. After travelling about 90 li, we came to more high mountains, [called] Botuotu 博脫禿, and we rested in a gorge between the mountains.⁴²

7th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed south-west. We followed the gorge and emerged from it, then headed north-west again, following the flat plain to its end. We travelled about 70 li to a place called Diansitu 點司禿, where we camped. That night there was a large snowfall.⁴³

8th day. Snowed, then cleared. We set off early and headed north-west. The snow was several feet [*chi* 尺] deep on the road. At noon we reached a place below a rocky precipice, called Taba'erdala 塔把兒達刺. There was another large snowfall. We travelled more than 90 li, and camped on the plain in the snow.⁴⁴

9th day. Snowed, then clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. The road was level, and there were many ravines [*jianshui* 澗水]. We travelled more than 70 li to a place called Yitusi 尹禿司, where we camped.⁴⁵

10th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south-west. Crossed a flat plain. There were many ravines. We travelled more than 100 li, and camped near a river mouth, to its north, at the foot of the mountains. The place was called Woluhaiya 斡鹿海牙.⁴⁶

11th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west out of the mouth of the gorge. At the base of the mountain there were springs bubbling up in a helter-skelter fashion. The ground was very dangerous. We emerged from the gorge and headed north again. There was another large river. We traveled about 100 li and made camp on a mountain slope. [*page 40*] There was a large snowfall that night.⁴⁷

⁴² According to modern maps, from Yikesumukure 依克蘇木庫熱 travelling north-west, one leaves the modern route and goes into a mountain gorge, reaching Gurendaban 古仁達坂, and this is perhaps the tall mountain called Botuotu 博脫禿 that Chen speaks of.

⁴³ According to modern maps, if one travels south-west from Gurendaban 古仁達坂 one reaches near the upper source [*shang yuan* 上源] of Bayinguole 巴音果勒 River, and there is a place there called Chahan'nuo'er 察汗諾爾. This may be the Diansitu 點司禿 that Chen says is about 70 li to the south-west.

⁴⁴ According to modern maps, the main communication route goes to the north-west, passing through Zhakesitaidaban 札克斯台達坂, which is the mountain range where the Bayinguole 巴音果勒 and Zhakesitai 札克斯台 rivers fork [*fenshui* 分水]. Taba'erdala 塔把兒達刺 must be in this vicinity.

⁴⁵ Yinkesi 尹克司 is approximately west of the northern shore of the upper reaches of Zhakesitai river. However, modern maps do not show a place called Yintusi 尹禿司.

⁴⁶ According to modern maps, when one leaves the main road on the Wulasitai 烏拉斯台 river, and heads south-west, one reaches a place called A'erxian 阿爾先. To the north there are mountains, and just as Mr Chen says, near the mouth of the river [or plain], the northern mountain descends. The place called Woluhaiya 斡鹿海牙, where he camped, may be A'erxian.

⁴⁷ According to modern maps, if you head south-west from A'erxian 阿爾先, emerge from a gorge, turn to head northwards and travel about 100 li, you will reach a place called Bayinbuluke 巴音布魯克. The mountain slope where Mr Chen camped is probably at Bayinbuluke or nearby.

12th day. Snow. We set off at dawn and followed along the same way. Headed north-west for more than 70 li, and camped in the snow on a mountain slope.⁴⁸

13th day. Clear. We set off at dawn and headed north, crossing Adadaban 阿達打班. The mountain was high and the snow deep. Neither man and horse could find their way. We sent some on ahead to tread through the snow and find the way. Only at nighfall were we able to descend the mountain. We travelled more than 50 li, and rested here and there on a sandy shoal.⁴⁹

14th day. Clear. We set off at dawn and headed north. The land was completely flat. We travelled for more than 50 li. There was a place with green grass, called Nalatu 納刺禿, and we set up camp there.⁵⁰

15th day. There was a large snowfall, but after noon it became clear. At first we headed north. After crossing a mountain we travelled more than 50 li and descended the mountain. To the east and west there was a large river which flowed westward. The place was called Konggesi 孔葛思. We camped there and stayed an extra day.⁵¹

17th day. Clear. We set off at dawn and headed west. We travelled more than 50 li to a place called Telehala 忒勒哈喇, and camped near a place where some *yi* people were living in tents. Sultan Mohammad sent someone to greet us. We stayed one extra day.⁵²

19th day. Clear, We set off at dawn. We followed the river to the west and descending, travelling for 50 li. About 5 or 7 li from where Sultan Mohammad had his tents, we set up an outpost [*zhanshe chu* 站舍處] and made camp, staying there 13 days.⁵³

5th month, 3rd day. Clear. We broke camp and followed the river to the west for more than 30 li. We camped there, and stayed an extra day.⁵⁴

5th day. Clear. We set off at dawn and headed west. Followed the flat plain for more than 50 li to a place called Dielihala 迭力哈喇, and camped there.⁵⁵

6th day. Clear. We set off at dawn and headed west. Crossed a large stream, and followed the road where there were some wheat fields. We travelled about 50 li, and camped next to the stream.⁵⁶

⁴⁸ The mountain slope where Mr Chen camped in the snow is probably where the main road turns and heads from north-west to north, south of Adadaban 阿達打班 [Daduotedaban 達朵特達坂].

⁴⁹ Adadaban 阿達打班 Mountain is called Nalati 那拉提 on modern maps.

⁵⁰ Nalatu 納刺禿 is transliterated as Nalati 那拉提 on modern maps.

⁵¹ When here again he goes north over a mountain, this is the southern branch of the Alashan 阿拉山 mountain. The river is the Gongnaisi River 鞏乃斯河 of today's maps (also called Gongjisi River 鞏吉斯河). Konggesi 孔葛思 is another way of transliterating Kansu 坎蘇, which is its name on modern maps.

⁵² According to modern maps, if you head west and slightly north from Kansu 坎蘇 you will cross the Gongnaisi River 鞏乃斯河, and if you travel over 50 li you will reach Halabulake 哈刺布拉克. Telehala 忒勒哈喇 is probably in this vicinity.

⁵³ This place is probably at or near the Yuqukebutai'er 玉曲克布台爾 of modern maps.

⁵⁴ This place is probably the Jialegezi'a'duoshi 加勒格孜阿朵什 of modern maps.

⁵⁵ Dielihala 迭力哈喇 is probably on the main road south-east of Tiemulike 鐵木里克, according to modern maps.

7th day. Clear. We set off at dawn and headed west, following the river and travelling 50 li. We camped on a sandy shoal.⁵⁷ [page 40]

8th day. Clear. We set off when it was light, and headed south-west, crossing a long mountain. We travelled about 70 li, to a place called Alashi 阿剌石. Next to the river there was a settlement and we camped there. It rained in the night. We stayed two days.⁵⁸

11th day. Cloudy, [then clear]. We set off when it was light, and headed west. Crossed the mountain river at two places. The river flowed swiftly. All along it there were bridges made of jia-wood [*jiamu* 架木, wood for construction] that grows on the cliffs in narrow places. We travelled about 70 li to a place called Tegeqiao 忒哥橋 [Tege bridge] and made camp.⁵⁹

12th day. Clear. We set off when it was light, and headed north-west. Crossed a long, flat area [*ban* 板], and descended into a flat plain. We travelled about 90 li, and camped on the shore of the Ili [Yilie 衣烈] River in a settled area.⁶⁰

13th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. Travelled about 70 li, and camped next to the river.⁶¹

14th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. Crossed three or four low mountains. Travelled 90 li, and camped near a ford.⁶²

15th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. We descended, following the river, and travelled about 90 li. We camped next to the river and stayed an extra day.⁶³

On the North-South road, people camp on both sides of this river. [There are] about 100 households [*hu* 戶] here. Hasan 哈三 presented horses and returned to the capital.

17th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and descended, following the river. We travelled for about 50 li and camped on the shore of the river.

⁵⁶ The place must be on the main road south of Tiemulike 鐵木里克, according to modern maps.

⁵⁷ Estimating according to modern maps, the sandy shoal on which they camped must be on the main road south of Tashilibu'erma 塔什立布爾馬. [page 57]

⁵⁸ According to modern maps, Alashi 阿剌石 must be on the main road south-west of Tashilibu'erma 塔什立布爾馬. It should be somewhat to the north or south of [*nan bei xiang zhi* 南北相值] Gu'erdan 古爾丹, south of the Ili River 伊犁河. The Changshan [Long mountain 長山] that they crossed must be the Western peak [*xitou* 西頭] of Awulale 阿吾拉勒 Mountain.

⁵⁹ Tegeqiao 忒哥橋 is probably located east of modern Qibatuobaiké 奇巴托拜克, near the mouth of the lower reaches of the northern branch of the Ili River.

⁶⁰ The place where they camped must be the first stopping place [zhan 站] between Tegeqiao 忒哥橋 and Yamadu 鴨馬渡 of modern maps. Yili River 衣烈河 is the Ili River 伊犁河.

⁶¹ The place where they camped must be the second stopping place between Tegeqiao 忒哥橋 and Yamadu 鴨馬渡.

⁶² The place where they camped must be near the eastern short of Yamadu 雅馬渡, which is the convergence 匯 of the Keshi [Kesh 喀什河] River and the Ili River.

⁶³ The place where they camped, according to modern maps, must be at Tumuxiukebayizhakeyi 吐木休克巴依札喀依. Both the northern and southern roads come to rest at the two shores of this river.

18th day. Cloud and rain. We set off early and followed the shore of the river, heading west for about 90 li. We camped next to the river.

19th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and descended, following the river. Travelled about 50 li. We emerged from the mouth of the Alimali 阿力馬力, and camped at the ford of the river. We stayed there an extra day.⁶⁴

21st day. Clear. We set off early, and headed descending toward Nanshan 南山 [Southern Mountains]. We travelled about 130 li, and camped near a farming settlement.⁶⁵ [page 41]

22nd day. Clear. We set off early and headed south-west, entering a gorge. We crossed Xianglidaban 巷里打班. The mountain path was rugged, and the snow was several feet [*chi*] deep. We travelled more than 90 li, and then came down the mountain. We camped at a place where there was green grass.⁶⁶

23rd day. Cloudy. We set off when it was light and followed the mountains and ravines toward the west. We travelled more than 50 li, and camped in a place where there were *yi* people living in tents.⁶⁷

24th day. Large snowfall. We set off early and travelled about 50 li. We camped at the foot of Songshan 松山 [Song Mountain].⁶⁸

25th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. We followed the river and flat plain and travelled about 90 li. We camped there and stayed an extra day.⁶⁹

27th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. It was a flat plain and the water flowed eastward. We travelled about 70 li and camped there.⁷⁰

⁶⁴ Alimali 阿力馬力 [Almalik] originally referred to Linqin 林檎, which is a small apple. This type of fruit is produced in great quantity here, therefore this has been taken as the place-name. Yelu Chucai's 耶律楚材 *Xiyou lu* 西遊錄 and the Taoist adept Chang Chun's 長春真人 *Xiyou ji* 西遊記 both call it Alima 阿里馬. The *Yuan History* appendix on places in the north-west calls it Alimali 阿里麻里. One theory is that it is the name of a city whose ruins are 80 li north-west of the city of Yining 伊寧, 14 li north-west from Suiding 綏定 city. Another theory is that it is the name of a region, comprising the area south of the Taleqi 塔勒奇 and Kegan 克干 mountains, north of Hantengeli 汗騰格里 mountain, and including the current region of Ili. Mr Chen was referring to the region of Alimali, all the residents of the cities and towns of this region, south of the Ili River, all on the south of Yining *dukouka* 渡口卡, cross Ili River, therefore this *duka* is called Alimali kouzi 阿力馬力口子. In the *Qing yitong yutu*, Yining is called Ningyuan 寧遠 city, and in *Xiyu tuzhi* 西域圖志 it is called Gulezha 固勒札 (Kulja). Another name for it is Jindingsi 金頂寺.

⁶⁵ The place where they camped is approximately at Kelizhate 科里札特 [Kol'zh Ag] on modern maps.

⁶⁶ The place where they camped is approximately at Dute 杜特 [Duty], and the Xianglidaban 巷里打班 they crossed seems to refer to Ketemian 克特眠 pass [*shankou* 山口, Ler. Ketmmn].

⁶⁷ At the place where they camped there were tents of *yi* peoples [*yi ren zhangfang* 夷人帳房]; according to modern maps it was probably Wulegan—Akesu 烏勒干—阿克蘇 [Ulken-Aksu].

⁶⁸ The place where they camped at the foot of Song mountain 松山 was probably Podeluoertai 婆得佐爾台 [Podzortoe] on modern maps.

⁶⁹ The place where they camped was probably Shashannuoye 沙山諾耶 [Shashanoe] on modern maps.

⁷⁰ The place where they camped was probably at Kegan 科干 [Kegen'] on modern maps.

28th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. We crossed the plain and then turned north-west. We went about 80 li to a place called Kuotuotu 闊脫秃, and camped near some settlements.⁷¹

29th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. We entered a gorge where there was a large pond of water. On the road to the north was a large pile of rocks, like a low mountain. The place was called Shuangtashi 爽塔石. Once we had crossed this we went on smoothly for more than 100 li, and camped amidst the mountains and rivers [*shanchuan* 山川].⁷²

6th month, 1st day. Cloudy, with a strong wind and slight rain. We set off when it was light and headed west on the flat plain. North of the road the mountains were very high. We travelled about 70 li and camped on a grassy shoal. We stayed an extra day.⁷³

3rd day. Cloudy and rainy. We stopped after the hour of *wu* [11 am to 1 pm]. [Then] we set off and headed west. We travelled for about 40 li and camped there.⁷⁴

4th day. We set off when it was light and headed west. It was a flat plain, and there was a small sea [*haizi* 海子], that was about 100 li from north to south. From the east, the western shore was not in sight. It is called Yixike'er 亦息渴兒 (Issuk-kul). We travelled about 90 li and camped next to the lake.⁷⁵ [page 42]

5th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. Following the lake shore we travelled about 50 li, and camped on a mountain ridge [*gangshan*].⁷⁶

6th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. We followed the lake shore and travelled about 70 li, camping in a grassy place.⁷⁷ [Some editions combine the 5th and 6th days together in one entry.]

7th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed south-west, entering a gorge. We travelled about 90 li, and camped on a mountain slope.⁷⁸

⁷¹ Kuotuotu 闊脫秃 is probably Ha'erhala 哈爾哈拉 [Karkara] on modern maps.

⁷² Shuangtashi 爽塔石 is Shentashi 申塔什 [Santash] on modern maps.

⁷³ The grassy shoal where they camped must be at Qiupu 丘普 [Tyup] of modern maps.

⁷⁴ The place where they camped, by estimates based on modern maps, should be at Ku'ermingte 庫爾明特 [Kurmenty].

⁷⁵ The place on the lake shore where they camped is called on modern maps Keluomude 科羅姆得 [Kormundy]. The word *haizi* 海子 or small sea is referring to Yixike'er 亦息渴兒 [Issyk-kul], also called Yisaike 伊塞克, which in Turkish means "Hot Sea". The Qing author Xu Song 徐松, who wrote *Xiyu shuidao ji* 西域水道記, calls it Temuertuchuo'er 特爾穆圖綽爾 [Temurtunor]. *Xiyu tuzhi* 西域圖志 calls it Tusikule 圖斯庫勒, and its modern name is Yisaike Lake 伊塞克湖.

⁷⁶ The mountain ridge 岡山 on which they camped was probably at or near present-day Tamuqi 塔姆齊 [Tamui].

⁷⁷ The place where they camped was probably at Ruibachiye 瑞巴尺耶 [...] on modern maps. From Ku'ermingte 庫爾明特 to this place is about 210 li, which is the distance from the eastern end of the Hot Sea to its western end.

⁷⁸ From the western end of the "Hot Sea", Mr Chen travels toward the southwest, entering a gorge, for about 90 li and then stays 宿 on the mountain slope. We can see that he neither takes the northern route, south of Chui River 吹河 and north of Alishan Great Range 阿歷山大嶺, taken by the Taoist adept Changchun and most of the other ancient travellers, nor does he take the southern route on the upper reaches of the Nalin River 納林河, but instead he takes the middle road between the northern and southern

8th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. We crossed Changshan 長山 [Long Mountain], and travelled about 120 li, then descended the mountain and camped in a grassy shoal.⁷⁹

9th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed south-west. It was a flat plain, and we travelled for 90 li. We camped at the foot of the mountain.⁸⁰

10th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south-west. We ascended a high mountain called Ta'ertashidaban 塔兒塔石打班. The rocky path was rugged and it was 100 *zhang* 丈 high. The snow was several feet [*chi*] thick. We travelled about 70 li, crossed a mountain, and camped in a grassy area.⁸¹

11th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and followed the river to the south. We travelled about 50 li. We camped on a mountain slope near a place called Halawuzhi 哈刺烏只 where *yi* people were living in tents. We were near the tent of the chief [*toumu* 頭目] Hudaida 忽歹達. We stayed there three extra days.⁸²

15th day. It snowed. We set off when it was light and headed north. At the foot of a high mountain there were flat slopes. There we resumed our journey west, travelling more than 50 li, and camping in a grassy shoal.⁸³

16th day. Clear. We set off when it was light we followed the course of the river to the west. We crossed the river 7 or 8 times. It was flowing swiftly. We travelled 90 li and camped in a grassy shoal.⁸⁴

17th day. Clear. We set off when it was light. We followed the gorge and headed west, then set off north again up a high mountain [*page 43*]. The road was rugged and there was not room for horse and man to walk side-by-side. We travelled about 50 li, descended the mountain and camped there.⁸⁵

routes. Although this route is not a main thoroughfare, when Mr Chen records the place where they camped he often does not mention the precise [concrete] name of the city or town, but says only that it is at the foot of [such and such a] mountain and whether there was grass or water, so one can go only according to the direction and distance to hypothesize the name of the place where he camped. However, the route from the Hot Sea to Sailan [Sairan 賽藍], the middle route, is rather straight [*zhijie* 直捷]. The mountain slope on which they camped is probably at or near Kechike'erka 科尺科爾卡 [Kochkorka] on modern maps.

⁷⁹ The sandy shoal on which they camped is probably at or near Kezhaerte 柯札爾特 [Kyzart] of modern maps.

⁸⁰ The place where they camped should be at the foot of Kaiyierta 開伊爾塔 [Kayirta] mountain on today's maps.

⁸¹ The place where they camped must be Sharuibulun 沙瑞布倫 [Sar'upun] on today's maps, or in that vicinity.

⁸² The Halawuzhi 哈刺烏只, where they camped after following the river toward the south (and slightly west), going for about 50 li, is at Chaminde 查敏得 [Chamyndy] on today's maps, or in that vicinity.

⁸³ The grassy shoal where they camped, is probably near the mouth of the second branch that flows east to west on the shore of the Keyuekeyuemeilin 克約克約梅林 [Kekemeran] river on today's maps.

⁸⁴ The grassy shoal where they camped is probably a place west of Sharuihameishi 沙瑞哈梅什 [Sar'lkatsh] and north of the Nalin River 納林 on today's maps.

⁸⁵ The place where they camped, is probably at Tuoluke 陀盧克 [Toluk] on today's maps, or nearby.

18th day. Clear. We set off early and entered a gorge, travelling north-west. We crossed the mountain, descended into the flat plain, and travelled more than 100 li. We camped in the middle of the plain. There was a hailstorm [*yubao* 雨雹].⁸⁶

19th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. We followed the plain and crossed a river, entering a gorge. We travelled more than 100 li, and camped next to the river.⁸⁷

20th day. Clear. We set off early. We followed the gorge and went upstream toward the west. We crossed Daban 打班, and travelled more than 150 li, camping at the foot of the mountain.⁸⁸

21st day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. It was a flat plain, and on the road there were many streams. Ascending slopes and descending into rivers, we continued smoothly for more than 150 li, and camped on a mountain ridge.⁸⁹

22nd day. Clear. We set off early and headed west into the mountains. There was a large stream flowing east. We passed through a flat plain and went on smoothly 150 li. We camped next to the mountains.⁹⁰

23rd day. Clear. We set off early and headed north-west up the mountain. We crossed the slope and then descended, following the river westwards and travelling about 100 li. Then we set up camp.⁹¹

24th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. We emerged from the mountain pass, and found a large plain. We travelled about 150 li. We camped where there was an ancient wall in the middle of the plain.⁹²

25th day. Clear. We set off early and followed the plain westwards for about 150 li. We camped alongside the river.⁹³

26th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west for more than 50 li. Reached Yangyi 養夷 city, and rested the horses nearby. After the hour of *wu*, [11 am to 1 pm] we resumed the journey and travelled until evening [*wan* 晚], continuing smoothly for 150 li. We camped in a grassy area.⁹⁴

⁸⁶ The place where they camped is probably at Tuoergante 陀爾干特 [Torkent] on today's maps, or nearby.

⁸⁷ The riverside where they camped, is probably at Mazhaersu 馬札爾蘇 [Mazarsu] on today's maps, or nearby.

⁸⁸ The place where they camped is probably at Alatai 阿拉台 [Alatay] on today's maps, or nearby.

⁸⁹ According to today's maps it is probably next to Halabula 哈拉布拉山 mountain.

⁹⁰ The mountainside where they camped, should be about 90 li east of Manasi 馬那斯 [Manas] mountain pass [*ai* 隘], according to today's maps, or thereabouts.

⁹¹ From the place in the previous entry toward the west and slightly north, approximately 10 li after Manasi mountain pass, is near the source of the western branch of the Keyuekeyuerruisu 克約克約瑞蘇 [Kyukyüresy].

⁹² The place where they camped and where there was an ancient wall, [and] according to modern maps, the mountain pass where he emerges, is the strategic pass of Meidengtale 梅登塔勒 [Maydantal]. It is near the source of the Agusu 阿古蘇 [Aksu] river.

⁹³ The riverside where they camped is probably in the region of the middle reaches of the Agusu river of today's maps.

⁹⁴ The place he reached after travelling over 50 li to the south-west is Yangjigan 養吉干 [Yangikend], where Mr Chen rested (but did not camp). The "Western Regions" chapter of the *Ming History* says that Yangyi 養夷 is 360 li east of Sairam, situated amid the chaotic mountains. This places it exactly [*fang wei zheng he* 方為正合], at the grassy place where they camped 150 li, which according to modern maps is probably Suobeitesikeye 索亨特斯科耶 [Sovetskoye] or in that vicinity.

27th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. It was all flat plain. We travelled about 100 li and camped where there was a Muslim *a'erge* 阿兒哥.⁹⁵ [page 44]

28th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed south-west. We travelled for about 150 li and camped on the plain.⁹⁶

29th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed west. The entire way was flat and level. We travelled about 70 li and camped at a place called Habusu 哈卜速. The leader [*toumu*] of Sailan 塞藍 [Sairam] sent a messenger to greet us. The north [circuit] also comes here as their first assembly point. We stayed an extra day.⁹⁷

7th month, 2nd day. Clear. We set off early and headed west, travelling for more than 50 li. Passed to the west of Sailan [Sairam] city, and camped near the river. We stayed there for two days.⁹⁸

5th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. The road was flat, and we travelled about 100 li. We camped in a place called Yuedugu'erba 月都孤兒巴, where there was water and grass.⁹⁹

6th day. Clear. We set off in the middle of the night and headed south-west. Travelled for more than 150 li, and camped near a settlement. A messenger was sent from Samarkand [Samaerhan 撒馬兒罕] to greet us.¹⁰⁰

7th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. Travelled about 40 li. We camped in a field east of the city of Dashigan 達失干 [Tashkent] city. We stayed there for two days.¹⁰¹

10th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south-west. It was flat road all the way. We travelled about 100 li and camped in a place called Keya'er 渴牙兒.¹⁰²

11th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south-west. Passed through a flat plain, and travelled about 70 li. Reached a muddy river, whose name was Dazhan 大站. There were 5 or 6 boats there

⁹⁵ The Muslim *a'erge* 回回阿兒哥 where they camped is probably Kelecheshate 克勒車馬沙特 [Keltemat] on modern maps, or thereabouts.

⁹⁶ The plain [*yu*an] on which they camped is probably Halamuerte 哈拉木爾特 [Karamurt] on modern maps, or thereabouts.

⁹⁷ Habusu 哈卜速, according to modern maps, is probably at Mingkante 明坎特 or thereabouts. When Mr Chen says that on the northern road he reached this place and met, he means that the middle road on which he was travelling was where Mingkante and the northern route met. This is also evidence that supports the idea that Mr Chen took the middle road.

⁹⁸ Sailan 塞藍 city [Sairam, Sayram], according to modern maps, is still called Sailan today. It is located 13 li east of Qimukente 齊姆肯特 [Chimkent].

⁹⁹ Yuedugu'erba 月都孤兒巴, according to modern maps, is probably at or near Weirebusikeye 維熱布斯科耶 [Vrevskoe].

¹⁰⁰ The place where they camped is at or near Qierqike 齊爾齊克 [Chirchik].

¹⁰¹ Dashigan 達失干 is today's Tashkent of Central Asia (Tashigan 塔什干). It is also the same as Zheshiguo 赭時國 in *Datang Xiyuji* 大唐西域記.

¹⁰² Keya'er 渴牙兒 is probably at or near Yangyuele 養約勒 [Yaniyulb].

for transporting luggage across. Horses crossed by walking through the river. It was muddy and dangerous and many died. We stayed there an extra day.¹⁰³

13th day. Clear. We sent someone to Shalu Heiye 沙鹿黑葉 [Shahrukha], with gifts to present to their leader [toumu] Yedige'erhaban [也的哥兒哈班]. We set off at midday, and headed south-west. After entering a plain, where there was no water or grass at all, we travelled about 300 li. We reached a settlement called Diza 底咱, where we camped, and stayed there an extra day.¹⁰⁴

15th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south-west. The land was completely flat. We travelled about 90 li and camped in a place called Miza'er 米咱兒. We stayed there for two days.¹⁰⁵ [page 45]

18th day. Clear. We set off in the middle of the night and headed west, passed through a rocky gorge and travelled about 70 li. We camped in a place called Duobo 多薄.¹⁰⁶

19th day. Clear. We set off at the fifth watch and headed west. The land was completely flat. We travelled about 70 li and camped in a place called Shilasi 石刺思.¹⁰⁷

20th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. The land was flat plain and we travelled about 70 li. We camped at a place called Halabulan 哈刺卜蘭.¹⁰⁸

21st day. Clear. We set off early and headed west, crossed a large stream. The beach was shallow and wide. We travelled more than 40 li. We camped in an orchard east of Samarkand, and stayed there 10 days.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰³ The Dazhan 大站 (Great Station) is reached by heading about 70 li south-west. The muddy river is the Xi'er river 錫爾河. Dazhan must be the ford [crossing] of Xi'er river. According to modern maps, it is called Qinazi 奇那茲 [Chinaz], but according to Mr Chen's account, he forded the river as soon as he set off, so he must have stayed on the shore opposite Qinazi.

¹⁰⁴ Diza 底咱 is Dieshizhake 迭史札克 [Dzhizak] of modern maps. Shaluheiye 沙鹿黑葉 is another way of writing Shaluhaiya 沙鹿海牙 of chapter 332 of the *Ming History*. It is situated on a small ridge near Xi'er River 錫爾河 to the north-west. Its original name was Feinaikate 肥那開忒 [Finaket] or Feikente 肥肯特 [Finakend]. It had been destroyed by Chinggis Khan (Chengji sihan 成吉思汗), and in the 25th year of Hongwu (1392) it was reestablished by Timur (Tiemu'er 帖木兒) who called it Shahrokhia 沙哈魯克亞 [Sharokia]. The reason why it was given this name was because of a story, for which please see the note on the section on Shahrukha in *Xiyu fanguo zhi*.

¹⁰⁵ Miza'er 米咱兒 is probably at Geleye-Ala 格勒耶-阿拉 [Gallya-Aral] or thereabouts.

¹⁰⁶ Duobo 多薄 is probably at Tumusuke 吐木蘇克 [Tumshuk] or thereabouts.

¹⁰⁷ Shilasi 石刺思 is probably at Halasinuogeberjiesike 哈刺斯諾格巴爾杰斯克 [Krasnogvardeysk] or thereabouts.

¹⁰⁸ Halabulan 哈刺卜蘭 is probably at Heshidala 嚇什打拉 [Khashdala] or thereabouts.

¹⁰⁹ Sama'erkan 撒馬兒罕 (Samarkand) has many transliterations in ancient records. It has been called Ma'erkangda 馬爾康打 [Marcanda] in *Ancient Greek Places* [Xila gudi zhi 希臘古地誌]. The *Wei History* [Wei shu 魏書] calls it Xiwanjin 悉萬斤. The *Suishu* 隋書 calls it Kangguo 康國. The *Xiyuji* 西遊記 calls it Samojian 颯秣建. The *Jingxingji* 經行記 calls it Samojian 薩末建. The *New Tang History* 新唐書 calls it Tangguo 唐國, or in one place Samojian 薩末建. The *Liao History* [Liaoshi 遼史] calls it Xunsigan 尋思干. The *Xiyuji* 西遊記 calls it Xiemisigan 邪米思干. The *Xishiji* 西使記 calls it Xunsigan 擣思干. The *Secret History of the Yuan* [Yuan mi shi 元秘史] calls it Xuemisijia 薛迷思加 or Xuemisijian 薛迷思堅. The *Qinzheng lu* 親征錄 calls it Xuemisigan 薛迷思干. The *Yuan History* calls it Xunsigan 尋思干, Xuemisigan 薛迷思干, or Samaergan 撒麻耳干. The *Hasanna zhuan* 哈散納傳 calls it Xuemizegan 薛米則干.

8th moon, 1st day. Clear. Very windy. We set off when it was light and headed south-west. We travelled about 30 li and camped at a place called Mixi'er 米昔兒.¹¹⁰

2nd day. Clear. We began heading toward the direction of *wu*, and then travelled south-west. We crossed a small ridge, and went on for about 30 li. There was a tall earthen house situated on a stone mountain. It had been built by Timur 帖木駙馬. We camped in a place called Tadahalachi 塔達哈刺赤.¹¹¹

3rd day. Clear. We set off after lunch, headed south-west and entered a gorge. The mountain path was rugged. We travelled about 70 li, and at nightfall we slept on the mountain.¹¹²

4th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed south-west, down a long slope. We reached a large village. We travelled 60 li and camped at a place called Shalisan 沙李三.¹¹³

5th day. Clear. We set off when it was light, headed south-west more than 10 li. We camped near the city of Keshi 渴石城 [Kish, Kesh] and stayed there an extra day.¹¹⁴

7th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed south. We crossed a flat plain and continued about 50 li, camping at a place called Tuolibalazhen 脫里把刺鎮.¹¹⁵

8th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south-west. There were small [mountains] everywhere. [page 46] We travelled about 60 li and camped in a place called Huojinmanla 火進滿刺, next to a small river.¹¹⁶

9th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south. We crossed a flat mountain ridge, then headed east, travelling about 70 li. We camped next to a river in a place called Dayidieli 大亦迭里.¹¹⁷

10th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south, crossing a mountain. We travelled about 100 li and camped in a place called Bai'a'erba 白阿兒把, on a mountain [or hill].¹¹⁸

The *Guokanzhuan* 郭侃傳 calls it Huansigan 換斯干. The *Ming History* 明史 calls it Samaerhan 撒馬兒罕. The ancient city is on the plateau of Afulasiyabu 阿夫拉司亞布 [Afrasiab] east of the present city.

¹¹⁰ Mixier 米昔兒 is probably present-day Sazhagan 撒札干 [Sazagan] or thereabouts.

¹¹¹ Tadakelachi 塔達喀刺赤 is probably Saruikule 撒瑞庫勒 [Sarykul] at the western end of the Hot Sea or thereabouts. {The name of the place in the text, Tadahalachi 塔達哈刺赤, is transliterated slightly different from that in the note.}

¹¹² The mountain where they camped is probably at Ta'erzilejia 塔爾茲勒加 [Tardzhilga] or thereabouts.

¹¹³ Shalisan 沙李三 is probably in the region of the lower reaches of the first branch to the north of the various westward branches of the Hashihadaerya 哈什哈打爾牙 [Kashkadarya], east of Kuqikake 庫齊卡克 [Kuchkak].

¹¹⁴ Keshi city 渴石城 is Ha'ershi 哈爾什 [Karshi] city.

¹¹⁵ Tuolibala zhen 脫里把刺鎮 is probably at Dashite 打什特 [Dasht] or thereabouts.

¹¹⁶ The shore of the small river Huojinmanla 火進滿刺 where they camped is probably at Mंगाite 滿該特 [Mengyt] or thereabouts.

¹¹⁷ The river Dayidieli 大亦迭里 next to which they camped is probably Guzha'er 古札爾 [Guzar] or thereabouts.

¹¹⁸ When he says [they were] on Bai'a'erba 白阿兒把 mountain, it must be at Zhehegannabaerba 者赫干那巴兒把 [Dehkanaa] or thereabouts.

11th day. Clear. We set off at the fifth watch and headed south. Entered a gorge, travelled perhaps eastward and crossed a rocky gorge called Iron Gate Pass [Tiemenguan 鐵門關]. When we emerged from the pass, we crossed a small river. After travelling about 70 li, we camped on a grassy shoal.¹¹⁹

12th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south. We crossed a stone bridge and travelled about 100 li, camping in a place called Xiebilan 屑必藍.¹²⁰

13th day. Clear. We set off early, headed south, and crossing a mountain. We passed through a large village, travelled about 60 li and camped in a place called Yingge'er 嬰哥兒.¹²¹

14th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south, then headed east. We passed through a large village and then travelled about 60 li, camping near some settlements in a place called Abi'amu 阿必阿母.¹²²

15th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south. After passing through a large village, we travelled about 50 li, and reached the edge of a river named Amu 阿木. There were 7 or 8 small boats there. On the eastern shore there was a walled city with a moat [*chengchi* 城池] called Dielimi 迭里米. We camped on the shore of the river. We stayed there two days and then crossed it.¹²³

18th day. Clear. The crossing of both men and horses took until night-time [*wan* 晚], we travelled all night long, then headed south-west crossing a sandy plain, where there was no water at all. Reached [There is a gap in the text here.]

19th day. Early, went smoothly for 150 li. We reached a large village, and camped at a place called Xieji'er 斜吉兒.¹²⁴

20th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south-west. We passed through a large village, and travelled about 60 [*page 47*] li. We camped on the north-east of Balahei 八刺黑 city and stayed there for two days.¹²⁵

¹¹⁹ The grassy shoal on which they camped and the rocky gorge through which they passed, refers to Tiemenguan 鐵門關 [Zheleznye vorota] (Iron Gate). The place where they camped is probably at Zhe'erbente 者爾奔特 [Derbent] or thereabouts.

¹²⁰ When he says they headed south and crossed a stone bridge, and camped, after travelling 100 li, at Xiebilan 屑必藍, this must refer to Shilabate 石拉巴特 [Shirabad] of modern maps, or that vicinity.

¹²¹ Yingge'er 嬰哥兒 is the Ange'er 安哥爾 [Angor] of present-day maps.

¹²² Abiamu 阿必阿母, according to today's maps, is probably where the northern branch of the Amu River 阿姆河 intersects with the main communication route.

¹²³ The river on whose shore they camped is probably the Te'ermiji 特爾迷季 [Termez], on the eastern shore of the Amu River 阿姆河, which is the Dielimi 迭里米 of the account [*jiwen* 記文].

¹²⁴ Xieji'er 斜吉兒 is the Xieheji'erde 斜赫吉爾得 [Siahgiird] of modern maps.

¹²⁵ Balahei 八刺黑 is Balehe 巴勒赫 [Balkh] of today's maps, written Bahlika in Sanskrit. It is called Zariaspa in *Ancient Greek Places* [*Xila gudi zhi* 希臘古地誌]. The *Weishu* chapter on [the country of] Yeda 嚧噠 calls it Badiyan 拔底延 and the chapter on Tuohuoluo 吐火羅 calls it Boti 薄提 city. The *Northern History* [*Beishi*] calls it Boluo 薄羅. The biography of Dharma Jiduo 達摩笈多在 the

23rd day. Clear. We set off early and headed west or north-west. The landscape was expansive in all directions; only in the south were there distant mountains. We travelled about 100 li, and camped at Keshi 渴石.¹²⁶

24th day. Clear. We set off early, and headed north-west. There were large villages all along the way, and we travelled about 50 li. There were mountains and rivers, and we crossed [the river] on horseback over a stone bridge. The place was called Beilihata 亭里哈塔. We camped at the end of the bridge.¹²⁷

25th day. Clear. We set off early and headed north-west. It was flat the whole way. We travelled about 100 li, and camped at a place called Aotu 奧禿.¹²⁸

26th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. It was flat the whole way. We travelled about 60 li, and camped at a place called Duke 都克.¹²⁹

27th day. Clear. We set off toward evening and travelled west. We crossed a sandy plain that was completely uninhabited. We travelled to . . . [There is a gap in the text here.]

28th day. . . . Early . . . travelled more than 100 li. We camped slightly to the east of Anduhui 俺都匯 city, and stayed there for three days.¹³⁰

9th month, 2nd day. We set off early and headed south-west. There was soft sand all along the way. We travelled about 100 li, and camped near the river at a place called Aochixia'er 奧赤下兒 Mountain.¹³¹

3rd day. Clear. We set off early and headed south-west over flat sand. We travelled about 90 li and camped at Halingbuban 哈令卜板 where there was a settlement.¹³²

Biography of Eminent Monks Continued [Xu gao seng zhuan 續高僧傳] calls it Boquluo 薄佉羅. The *Zhengfa nianchu jing* 正法念處經 calls it Poquluo 娑佉羅. The *Xiyuji* 西域記 calls it Fuhe 縛喝. The *Ciensi Sanzang fashi zhuan* 慈恩寺三藏法師傳 calls it Fuheluo 縛喝羅. The *Wang Wu Tianzhu zhuan* 往五天竺傳 calls it Fudiye 縛底耶. The *New Tang History's* chapter on Xie [...] calls it Fudiye 縛底野, and its *Geography Treatise* calls it Fuchi 縛叱 city. The *Xiyoulu* 西遊錄 calls it Bancheng. The *Xiyouji* 西遊記 calls it Banli 班里 city. The *Qinzheng lu* 親征錄 and the *Basic Annals of Taizu* 太祖本紀 in the *Yuan History* call it Banlehe[or ke]班勒訖. [Also in the *Yuan History*,] the "Appendix on North-western Areas" 西北地附錄 calls it Balimo 巴里墨, the chapter on Chahan 察罕 calls it Banleji 板勒紀, and the chapter on Subutai 速不台 calls it Bilihan 必里罕. The *Ming History* chapter on Kuncheng 坤城 calls it Balihei 把力黑, and also calls Bactria by [the same name *duiyin*?]. Today it is Ba'erke 巴爾赫, west of Mazhalishalifu 馬札里沙里夫 [Majar-i Sherif] in the northern border region of Afghanistan, renamed Vazirabad by the Russians. {The last statement is unverified.}

¹²⁶ Keshi 渴石 is probably Chahe'erbazi-Nimulike 查赫爾巴茲-尼木立古 [Chaharhazi-nimlik] or thereabouts.

¹²⁷ Beilihata 亭里哈塔 stone bridge point is probably the place where the main communication route intersects with the lower reaches of the Bangjibaba 邦吉巴巴 [Bondibaba].

¹²⁸ Aotu 奧禿 is probably at or near Hafei'erhala 哈非爾哈拉 [Kafirkala].

¹²⁹ Duke 都克 should be Hezha-Duokehe 何札-多可赫 [Hodzho-Dokokh]. Duke sounds quite like the latter part of the Russian name.

¹³⁰ Anduhui 俺都匯 city is the translation of Andkhvoy on modern maps.

¹³¹ Aochixia'er Mountain 奧赤下兒山 is probably Zhalaige 札賴噶 [Dzhalauga] or thereabouts on modern maps.

4th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south-west. There were flat ridges all along the way. We travelled about 90 li, and camped at a place called Bali'an 巴里暗.¹³³

5th day. Cloudy. We set off early and headed south-west. After crossing a gorge, we ended up in a large village. We travelled about 90 li and camped at a place called Maimuna 買母納. We stayed there three days because many of the people in our group were ill.¹³⁴ [page 48]

9th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south-west. Crossed a gorge and ended up in a large village. We travelled about 60 li and camped at a place called Yalimali 丫里馬力.¹³⁵

10th day. Clear. We set off early and headed south-west up a mountain. We crossed a gorge and travelled about 60 li, camping at a place called Nalin 納鄰.¹³⁶

11th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. We climbed up mountains and down slopes. Then a large village appeared. We travelled 40 li and camped at a place called Haisha'er 海霎兒.¹³⁷

12th day. Clear. We set off in the middle of the night and headed west. We crossed a gorge and reached a large village. After travelling about 100 li we camped at a place called Chechetu 車扯秃. We stayed there for a fortnight. We waited for Shahalu 沙哈魯 (Shahrukh) to appear and journeyed back.¹³⁸

28th day. Clear. We set off early and headed west. We crossed a plain and travelled about 70 li, camping at a place called Bokan 跛看.¹³⁹

29th. Clear. We set off early and headed west. We crossed the mountains to the south, and ended up in a large village, named Mala'ao 馬刺奧. After travelling about 70 li, we camped in a field, and stayed an extra day.¹⁴⁰

Intercalary 9th month, 1st day. Clear. We set off when it was light, and headed west, following the river. We crossed a gorge and ended up on a plain. After travelling about 50 li, we camped in a field at a place called Guliba'an 骨里巴暗. We stayed there five nights.¹⁴¹

¹³² Halingbuban 哈令卜板 is probably Hailabade 海拉巴得 [Khayrabad]. Its sound is quite close.

¹³³ Bali'an 巴里暗 is probably at Shalai 沙賴 [Saray] or its vicinity.

¹³⁴ Maimuna 買母納 is Meimingna 梅明訥 [Meymaneh].

¹³⁵ Yalimali 丫里馬力 is probably at Halakele 哈刺可勒 [Karakol] or its vicinity.

¹³⁶ Nalin 納鄰 is probably at Chahe'erxiamuba 查赫爾夏木巴 [Chakharsham'a] or its vicinity.

¹³⁷ Haishaer 海霎兒 is probably at Balamu'ergerbu 巴拉木兒哥布 [Bala Morghab] or its vicinity.

¹³⁸ Chechetu 車扯秃 is probably at Da'erbizhamake 達爾巴比札馬克 [Daryaizemak] or its vicinity.

¹³⁹ Bokan 跛看 is probably at Dalayibamu 達拉伊巴木 [Darayam] or its vicinity.

¹⁴⁰ Mala'ao 馬刺奧 was probably at Moge'er 莫哥爾 [Morgor] or this vicinity.

¹⁴¹ Guliba'an 骨里巴暗 is probably at Halai-nai 哈賴-奈 [Kalaiy-Nau] or its vicinity.

7th day. Clear. We set off when it was light and headed north-west. We travelled more than 10 li and camped at a place called Malachuo 馬刺綽 where there were many houses.¹⁴²

8th day. Clear. We set off at noon, and headed south-west. We entered some level mountains, and followed the gorge, heading south-west. We did not emerge from the mountain until the hour of *si* [9 to 11 am] on the 9th, having travelled more than 200 li. We arrived at a village, whose name was Sete'erge 色忒兒革, and camped next to the river.¹⁴³

10th. Clear. We set off at the fourth watch. We headed south-west, following the river. We travelled about 80 li, and camped near some houses at a place called Tuduan 吐端, and stayed there for one night.¹⁴⁴

12th. Clear. We set off at the forth watch and headed south-west. We crossed a small mountain and travelled about 130 li, camping at a place called Zhaladengji 扎刺等吉.¹⁴⁵

13th day. Clear. We set off at the third watch and headed south. We entered a gorge; the road was rugged. We travelled about 120 li and camped at the foot of a mountain in a place called Tuohusilaba'er 脫忽思臘巴兒.¹⁴⁶

14th day. Clear. We set off at dawn. We headed south-west and crossed a small mountain. We travelled more than 30 li, emerged through a mountain pass, and camped slightly east of Herat [Halie 哈烈]. We calculated that the journey to Herat had lasted an entire 9 months. Master Chen's [Chen gong 陳公] entire report of his diplomatic mission is recorded in *Yuanjian leihan* 淵鑿類函.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² Malachuo 馬刺綽 is probably at or near Lamake 拉馬克 [Lamak].

¹⁴³ The shore of Sete'erge River 色忒兒革河 is probably at Gulelang 固勒朗 [Gul'ron] or its vicinity.

¹⁴⁴ Tuduan 吐端 is probably at Yakedalahete 牙克達拉赫特 [Yakdarakht] or its vicinity. But when it says to the south-west, it should say to the south-east.

¹⁴⁵ Zhaladengji 扎刺等吉 is probably at Halabage 哈拉巴格 [Karaag] or its vicinity.

¹⁴⁶ Tuohusilaba'er mountain 脫忽思臘巴兒山 is at Gandou 干斗 [Gandao] or its vicinity.

¹⁴⁷ Halie 哈烈 is a translation for Herat, today called Helate 赫拉特. This is the final destination for Chen Cheng's diplomatic mission. Herat in the *Qinzheng lu* was called Yeli 也里, and also Yeli 野里. The *Yuan History* also called it Yeli 也里. The *Secret History of the Yuan* called it Yilu 亦魯, and this was also a different way of transliterating Herat. To reach Herat from the north, there are both eastern and western routes. Most people travel the eastern route, that is, from Halai-nai 哈賴-奈 southward to Lameng 拉孟 [Lamon], crossing Habuzi pass 哈布茲山隘 [Per. Kaudi] and turning south-west to A'ermalahe 阿爾馬拉赫 [Armalakh], then turning south-west and passing through Halaohé 哈勞赫 [Karokh] in order to reach Herat. This route is relatively short. But Mr Chen took the western route, because from Halai-nai 哈賴-奈 he went the other way, to the north-west, reaching Lamake 拉馬克 [Lamak], and then headed westward (and slightly south) more than 200 li, to reach Gulelang 固勒朗 [Gul'ron], and then turned southward (and slightly east) to reach Herat. Therefore, considering his direction, Chen took the western route. As to why Chen didn't take the shorter eastern route, perhaps it was to avoid the Habuzi pass 哈布茲山隘 or for some other reason.