

Fu An's Mission to Central Asia

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(I)

When the Yüan dynasty was replaced by the Ming several missions were sent to Central Asia to establish friendly relations with, as well as to investigate the movements of, countries in this part of the world which had long been independent from the Yüan. The first of these missions was that of Tsung-lê 宗泐 who went to Tibet and Nepal; the second was that of K'uan Ch'ê 寬徹 who went to Bishbalik where he was kept in custody for six years; and the third was that of Fu An 傅安 who went to Samarkand where he was detained for twelve years.

As to the mission of Tsung-lê, I published a short article some years ago.⁽¹⁾ Concerning the mission of K'uan Ch'ê, Bretschneider translated with commentaries the statement of *Ming-shih* 明史, Bk. 332, of which there is almost nothing to be added.⁽²⁾ Bretschneider describes the mission of Fu An according to the (*Wan-li*) *Yeh-huo-pien* (萬曆) 野獲編 of Shên Tê-fu 沈德符, of which there remains something to be discussed.

Bretschneider writes as follows:

"In the *Yeh-huo-pien* 野獲編, a collection of miscellaneous memoirs, published in 1606, chap. ix., we read as follows:—The *Hsi-yu shêng-lan-shih* 西游勝覽詩 (*Poems written on the curious things seen on a travel to the West*) was composed by An 安. The author's friend, who published the book, states in the preface that An had the cognomen *Chih-tao* 志道, and that he was one of the most remarkable men of Northern China. In the year 1395 he was sent by the emperor Hung-wu 洪武 to Sa-ma-êrh-han 撒馬兒罕 (Samarkand). He accompanied the envoy of the ruler of that country (Timur), who returned from China home. They proceeded from Chia-yu-kuan 嘉峪關 888 li 里, crossed the *Liu-sha* 流沙 (moving sands), and after travelling 2000 li arrived at *Ha-mi-li* 哈梅里 (Kamul, Hami). After this they went through the *Han-hai* 瀚海 1300 li to ancient *Kao-ch'ang* 高昌. Farther westward they reached *I-la-ba-li* 亦刺八里 (Ilibalik). Hence all rivers flow to the west. Farther on 3000 li, *Sa-ma-êrh-han* (Samarkand) was reached. The ruler of that country and his ministers boasted of the great extent of their dominions, and sent the Chinese envoy to visit the most remarkable places of the empire. An officer was appointed to accompany him. Travelling westward, they reached *T'ao-lo-ssü* 討落思 (Tauris or Tabriz). After this they visited *I-ssü-pu-han* 亦思

不平 (Ispahan), and then proceeded southward to *Shi-la-ssü* 失刺思 (Shiraz). On their way back they passed by *Hei-lu* 黑魯 (Herat) and other cities. They had travelled over more than 10000 *li*, and when they returned to Samarkand they had been absent six years. As An Chih-tao 安志道 was not disposed to agree with the propositions of the ruler of Samarkand, he was retained by force. It was only after his (Timur's) death (February 1405) that An Chi-tao was allowed to return home. According to the *Ming-shih* 明史, this Chinese envoy returned home in 1407, after twelve years' absence. Subsequently An Chi-tao was again entrusted with missions to the western countries."⁽³⁾

However, there are three points which are not right in this statement. First, it is not in Book 9, but in the *Supplement*, Bk. 4 of the *Yeh-huo-pien* that this statement is made. I do not know why Bretschneider writes that Fu An's mission in Central Asia is described in Bk. 9 of the *Yeh-huo-pien*. Is it because he referred to the edition of 1606? But, 1606 is the year when Shên Tê-fu wrote the preface to *Yeh-huo-pien* which remained unpublished up to 1713 and Schott's bibliography to which Bretschneider referred says nothing about the edition of 1606. Actually, in the current edition of *Yeh-huo-pien*, there are two statements about Fu An. One is in Bk. 30 to the effect that both Ch'ên Ch'êng 陳誠 and Fu An 傅安 were rewarded very inadequately for their Central Asian missions which were very trial and deserving reward. The other is in the *Supplement* 補遺, Bk. 4, which makes it clear that Fu An was sent to Central Asia not once but several times after his return to China in 1407 from his first mission to Samarkand where he had been retained for twelve years and that he was very poorly rewarded by the government. Shên Tê-fu, the author of *Yeh-huo-pien*, is criticizing some writers who state that Fu An was never sent abroad after his return from Samarkand in 1407 and that he was well rewarded.⁽⁴⁾

The second is the appellation of the traveller. Bretschneider is quite wrong when he writes either An or An Chih-tao. The man should be called either Fu An 傅安 or Fu Chih-tao 傅志道. It may be due to Bretschneider's carelessness which is also revealed in his statement about Ch'ên Ch'êng.⁽⁴⁾

The third is the authorship of *Hsi-yu shêng-lan-shih* or more correctly *Hsi-yu shêng-lan shih-chüan* 西游勝覽詩卷. Bretschneider attributes its authorship to Fu An, but it is a collection of poems composed by Fu An's friends in connection with his Central Asian journeys and was edited by Fu An. The *Yeh-huo-pien* calls it *Fu An's Hsi-yu shêng-lan shih-chüan* 傅安西游勝覽詩卷, but in the preface of Ts'êng Ch'i 曾棨, quoted in a biography of Fu An, it is stated that Fu An went several times on mission in far-off countries for the period of twenty or thirty years and could see so many mountains, rivers and important landscapes; that all (of his friends) dedicated to him poems concerning the beautiful sights which he saw during his journeys in the West; and that Fu An edited these poems in one *chüan* 卷 and asked Ts'êng Ch'i to write a preface.⁽⁵⁾ It is also stated in another

biography of Fu An of the *Ming-shih-kao* 明史稿 of Wang Tun-wêng 汪鈍翁,⁽⁶⁾ quoted in the *Kuang-hsü Hsiang-fu-hsien chih* 光緒祥符縣志, Bk. 15, that Fu An was very much made of by government officials in the capital because of his so many missions in Central Asia and that these people composed *Hsi-yu shêng-lan-shih* 西游勝覽詩 or *Poems in praise of beautiful landscapes which (Fu An) saw in his journeys in Western countries*. Actually, it is not only Bretschneider but also some Japanese, including the famous writer Kôda Rohan 幸田露伴, that committed the same mistake.⁽⁷⁾

There are five biographies of Fu An.⁽⁸⁾ According to the *Hsiang-fu wên-hsien-chih* 祥符文獻志, quoted in the *Kuo-ch'ao hsien-chêng-lu*, Bk. 80, Fu An was called Chih-tao by cognomen, his father being named Yen and his mother Tuan by her family name. The Fus were originally lived in T'ai-k'ang-hsien 太康縣 of Ho-nan 河南 Province, where from they removed to Chu-hsien-chên 朱僊鎮 of Hsiang-fu-hsien 祥符縣 of the same province. As Fu An is described as having got into the officialdom by means of knife (*tao* 刀) and brush (*pi* 筆), he did not sit for the civil examination but started his career from the rank of lower official. The *Hsiang-fu wên-hsien-chih* goes on to say that he was appointed *Ping-chia chi-shih-chung* 兵科給事中 in 1394 and *Li-chia chi-shih-chung* 禮科給事中 in 1395 and was promoted to *Li-chia tu-chi-shih-chung* 禮科都給事中 in the same year.⁽⁹⁾ When T'ai-tsu 太祖, the first emperor of Ming, started his reign (1368–1398), he looked for applicants who might go to far-off countries in order to announce the establishment of the new dynasty of Ming. Fu An's application was accepted and he started for his first Central Asian mission in 1395. Up to 1416, he went out to Samarkand and Bishbalik six times, as is recorded in his biography of the *Ming-shih-kao* 明史稿 (of Wang Hung-hsü 王鴻緒), *Li-chuan* 列傳, Bk. 23, and of the *Ming-wai-shih pên-chuan* 明外史本傳, quoted in the *Kuan-ch'ang-tien* 官常典, Bk. 409 of the *Ku-chin T'u-shu chi-ch'êng* 古今圖書集成. He died in his native place in 1429.

(II)

(1) *The First Mission (1395–1407):*

Fu An started for his first mission in 1395, of which nothing is mentioned in the *Shih-lu* 實錄 under the same year. He came back to China in 1407 after thirteen years' detention in Samarkand. This means that, 1407 being the thirteenth year, his start was in 1395.

According to the *Kuang-hsü Hsiang-fu-hsien-chih* 光緒祥符縣志, Bk. 15, Fu An was dispatched in place of K'uan Ch'ê 寬徹 who was retained in Bishbalik and could not go as far as Samarkand. It reads as follows:

“At first, Samarkand sent envoys (to China) several times and took with them horses as tribute. The emperor, therefore, dispatched the *chu-shih* 主事 or secretary K'uan Ch'ê as ambassador to Hami, Bishbalik, Samarkand,

and so on. K'uan Ch'ê first arrived in Bishbalik where he was retained by the king Khijîr Khwâja Khân. So, the emperor again dispatched (Fu) An."

Yen Ts'ung-chien 嚴從簡 also states that K'uan Ch'ê was sent to Samarkand and was kept in custody in Bishbalik on the way.⁽¹⁰⁾ But, the truth is that K'uan Ch'ê was sent in 1391 just to Bishbalik and that he had nothing to do with Samarkand. He was dispatched to Bishbalik to acknowledge the courtesy of the king Khijîr Khwâja Khwân who paid tribute in August, 1391. Khijîr Khwâja sent the envoy to the court of Ming when he saw the Chinese embassy which were escorting several hundred Samarkand merchants, captured by the Chinese army in the Sino-Mongolian battle fought in the neighbourhood of Buyur-nor in 1388. According to the letter of the Chinese emperor given to Khijîr Khwâja Khân in 1391, the Samarkand merchants under escort passed Bishbalik in 1387.⁽¹¹⁾ The Chinese embassy of this time was also the first mission from Ming to Samarkand in return for the first mission of Samarkand which came to China in 1387, taking 15 horses and 2 camels as tribute. This means that Fu An's mission was not the first but the second.⁽¹²⁾

The *Shih-lu* tells us that tribute bearers of Tîmûr came to China six times during the period from 1387 to 1397 when Fu An started on his mission to Samarkand.⁽¹³⁾ These six embassies brought 800 horses in all under the name of tribute. In addition, a separate group of Samarkand merchants who came to Liang-chou 涼州 and Peking in 1390 took 670 horses which they were allowed to sell in these two places.⁽¹⁴⁾ During the Ming (1368-1644), so many merchants came to China from the West to trade, pretending to be ambassadors dispatched by so many rulers of so many countries in Western and Central Asia.⁽¹⁵⁾ Under the circumstances, it is not unlikely that the tribute bearers of Tîmûr were merchants, privileged to call themselves ambassadors of Tîmûr, of Samarkand and its adjacent countries, armed with royal letters or with other credentials. Clavijo, the Spanish ambassador, who stayed in Samarkand in 1404, writes that the Chinese ambassadors arrived to demand the payment of tribute which had not been made for the past seven years.⁽¹⁶⁾ These Chinese ambassadors can not be the same as those headed by Fu An, which must have arrived in 1396/97. Seeing that Ch'ên Tê-wên 陳德文, who was the *Pei-p'ing-tao An-ch'a-shih* 北平道按察使, came back from Samarkand in 1407, leaving China at the end of Hung-wu 洪武, that is to say, in 1397, and visiting so many Central Asian countries as ambassador, it is quite likely that it was this Ch'ên Tê-wên who reached Samarkand when Clavijo was still there. It was this Ch'ên, too, who composed so many poems during his mission, edited them in one *chüan*, and presented it to the emperor.⁽¹⁷⁾

During the period when Fu An was detained by Tîmûr, he was taken to many places of his empire, as is described in the *Yeh-huo-pien, Supplement*, Bk. 4, as well as in his biography of the *Hsiang-fu wên-hsien-chih* quoted in the *Kuo-ch'ao hsien-chêng-lu*, Bk. 80. Fu An came back to China after

twelve years' absence. He was quite young when he started to Central Asia, but, when came back, his moustache and eyebrows all turned white and the censor Yao Ch'ên 姚臣 and the grand eunuch Liu Wei 劉惟, both of whom accompanied Fu An, were dead and only seventeen people out of one thousand and five hundred came back alive.

In 1407, Fu An and his party came back escorted by Khudâyâdâd whom Khalîl, the grandson and the successor of Tîmûr, dispatched. It was at this time that the Tîmûr's death and the enthronement of Khalîl were known in China. In return, the *chih-hui* 指揮 Po-a-êrh-hsin-t'ai 白阿兒忻臺 was sent to Samarkand to render reverant service to worship Tîmûr and to deliver the imperial decree to Khalîl to enthrone him as the successor of Tîmûr.

(2) *The second mission (1408-1409):*

The *Ming-shih-kao* 明史稿 (Biography, 30), and the *Ming-wai-shih pên-chuan* 明外史本傳, quoted in *Ku-chin t'u-shu chi-ch'êng* 古今圖書集成, *Kuan-ch'ang-tien* 官常典, Bk. 409, write about the second mission of Fu An to Central Asia as follows:

"Next year (*i.e.* the 6th year of Yung-lo = 1408) the king (of Samarkand) sent an embassy to bring horses as tribute. The emperor ordered (Fu) An and other people to accompany the embassy as far as Herat and to give valuable things to (the rulers of) Herat and its adjacent countries. And in the next year (*i.e.* the 7th year of Yung-lo = 1409), embassies of Samarkand, Herat and (Kara) Khoja came together with (Fu) An and others to the court (of Ming) and contributed 550 western horses, which was very much appreciated by the emperor."

The *Shih-lu* records the same thing as follows:

"On the day of *jên-wu* 壬午 of the 4th month of the 6th year of Yung-lo 永樂 = May 8, 1408), Sha-hei-nu-êrh-ting 沙黑奴兒丁, a chief of Samarkand, and others who brought tribute took leave. The *chi-shih-chung* 給事中 Fu An and others were ordered to accompany them and to give Khalîl, the king, 14 sets of embroidered silk and to grant to chiefs of Herat and other regions various things in accordance with their ranks."⁽¹⁸⁾

"On the day of *chi-i* 己巳 of the 6th month of the 7th year of Yung-lo (= August 17, 1409), the *Li-chia chi-shih-chung* 禮科給事中 Fu An and his party came back from Herat and Samarkand. (The rulers of) Herat and its adjacent regions sent ambassadors Ma-lai 麼賚 and others who came (to China) via (Kara) Khoja and other countries, all of which sent ambassadors, too. The total number of horses brought by these ambassadors amounted to 550. *Chao* 鈔 or paper money was given to these ambassadors according (to the number of horses)."⁽¹⁹⁾

Khalîl is son of Mirânshâh, the third son of Tîmûr, and, depriving Jahangîr, the eldest son of Tîmûr and his legitimate successor, of the throne, he ruled the empire from 1405 to 1409.

(3) *The Third Mission (some time after August 17, 1409- ?):*

The *Shih-lu*, next to the statement about the coming of Ma-lai, says:

"Then, (Fu) An was ordered to escort Ma-lai and his party who were going back to their country and to give brocade and embroidered silk to the chiefs."⁽¹⁹⁾

So, Fu An started on his third mission some time after August 17, 1409. It is not known when he came back from the third mission.

(4) *The Fourth Mission (some time after January 28, 1412-December 27, 1413):*

According to the *Ming-shih-kao* and the *Ming-wai-shih pên-chuan*, "In the 9th year (of Yung-lo = 1412), Mahmûd, the king of Bishbalik, sent an embassy (to the court of Ming) to bring tribute. At that time, (Fu) An and his party already came back. The emperor once more ordered (Fu) An and his party to escort the ambassadors (as far as Bishbalik) and to give (Mahmûd) an imperial letter to instruct him not to fight with the Oirats. For this reason, the presents from the emperor were especially rich. In the 11th year (of Yung-lo = 1413), Mahmûd and the kings of (Kara) Khoja, Turfan, Luckchun, and Turfan sent envoys to the court under the guidance of (Fu) An and brought *hai-hsi* 海西 or falcon and excellent horses. They were rewarded satisfactorily and escorted by envoys (other than Fu An and his party) as far as their native countries."

The coming of the embassy from Bishbalik in the 9th year of Yung-lo is recorded in the *Shih-lu* under the day of *jen-shu* 壬戌 of the 12th leap month of the 9th year of Yung-lo (= January 28, 1412) as follows:

"Mahmûd, the king of Bishbalik, sent his ambassador Ma-hei-ma 馬黑麻 who brought horses and spotted leopards. The emperor ordered the Department of Rites to feast the embassy."⁽²⁰⁾

And, as to the coming of embassies in the 11th year of Yung-lo, the *Shih-lu* states as follows:

"On the day of *hsin-ch'ou* 辛丑 of the 11th month of the 11th year of Yung-lo (= December 27, 1413), embassies came from Mahmûd, the king of Bishbalik, Ha-san 哈三, the prince of (Kara) Khoja, Sai-yin tieh-mu-êrh 賽因帖木兒, *wan-hu* 萬戶 of Turfan, and Kuan-yin-nu 觀音奴, *wan-hu* 萬戶 of Luckchun. These people arrived under the guidance of the *chih-shih-chung* 給事中 Fu An and his party and brought excellent horses and *hai-hsi* 海西 or falcons. The emperor gave them things according to their rank and dispatched envoys to take imperial letters to Mahmûd and others and give them coloured silk."⁽²¹⁾

(5) *The Fifth Mission (1414- ?):*

The *Shih-lu* states under the day of *jen-ch'ên* 壬辰 of the 10th month of the 12th year of Yung-lo (= November 23, 1414) as follows:

"An envoy who came back from the Hsi-yü 西域 reported that the mother and the younger brother of Mahmûd, the king of Bishbalik, died successively. (The emperor) sent the *chih-shih-chung* Fu An and others to (Mahmûd) to bring him a letter of consolation and embroidered silk and lining."⁽²²⁾

In this connection, both the *Ming-shih-kao* and the *Ming-wai-shih pên-chuan* make comment that it was due to the imperial intention to make foreigners attached to him. But, no records are available as to the time when Fu An and his party came back.

(6) *The Sixth Mission (1416- ?)*:

The *Ming-shih-kao* and the *Ming-wai-shih pên-chuan* says:

"In the 13th year (of Yung-lo), that country (*i.e.* Bishbalik) sent ambassadors to inform of the death of Mahmûd and brought tribute. The emperor sent (Fu) An to pay respect to the dead and console the bereaved family. He also conferred upon Mahmûd's nephew the title of king (of Bishbalik). The ambassadors told (to the authorities of Ming) that Bishbalik is on bad terms with Herat and that both of them are just on the point of starting war. But, China wanted to keep neighbouring countries in peace and tried to let (the king of Bishbalik) understand the necessity to be in friendly relations with his neighbours, consolidating his own territory. When the emperor was informed of Khudâyâd 忽歹達 who had been taking service to the last four rulers (and for the moment, to Na-hei-shih-chih-han 納黑失只罕) and was deeply relied upon by the people, he gave him a letter to praise him. He also gave him coloured silk and so on.

A statement a bit more in detail is made in the *Shih-lu* under the day of *jên-yin* 壬寅 of the 3rd month of the 14th year of Yung-lo (= April 16, 1416), which runs as follows:

"Na-hei-shih-chih-han 納黑失只罕, the nephew of Mahmûd, the king of Bishbalik, sent envoys Ha-chih 哈只 and others and brought horses and some native products as tribute and informed of the death of Muhmûd who had no children. (The emperor) sent the *eunuch* Li Ta 李達 and the *chi-shih-chung* 給事中 Fu An 傅安 to excute a religious ceremony for the peace of the dead. And (the emperor) let the two envoys bring a decree to appoint Na-hei-shih-chih-han, the king of Bishbalik, to whom he gave silk embroidered with gold, helmet, armour, bows and arrows, and swords. (The emperor) gave his mother coloured silk and so on. Ha-chih and other envoys told that Bishbalik was on bad terms with Herat and that both of them were intending to fight each other. On hearing it, the emperor issued another decree to Bishbalik and Herat to let them reconcile with each other to establish a friendly relation and look after their subjects to let them enjoy peace. When the emperor learnt that Khudâyâd, a chief of Bishbalik, took service to four kings and was deeply relied upon by the people of Bishbalik, now assisting Na-hei-shih-chih-han, he praised him with a decree, coloured silk and so on."⁽²³⁾

This statement of the *Shih-lu* adjusts the error of date of the *Ming-shih-kao* and the *Ming-wai-shih pên-chuan*, both of which date the sixth mission of Fu An in the 13th year of Yung-lo.

Now, both the *Ming-shih-kao* and the *Ming-wai-shih pên-chuan* conclude Fu An's biography in the following way:

"(Fu) An was sent to far-off countries six times and discharged the mission so well that kings and chiefs of distant countries have become Chinese subjects and are paying tribute in succession. The emperor who appreciated his service rewarded him many times. (Fu An) asked for retirement to his native country because of his advanced age, when he came back from the last mission, but the emperor did not accept it but encouraged him to continue to serve. He was just given salary and stayed in the capital without doing any governmental service. The emperor who gave Fu An's mother careful consideration instructed him to serve her well, but did not allow his retirement. When the emperor Hsüan-tsung 宣宗 ascended the throne, (Fu) An asked for *ch'ih-ming* 勅命 or an imperial appointment through the Department of Officials (Li-pu 吏部) which refused it for the reason that (Fu An's) qualification had never been inspected (because of his long absence from China). However, the request was finally accepted by the imperial opinion that (Fu) An did so much for the state by going out on so many missions to Central Asia that his request should be accepted as an exception. (Fu) An died in the 4th year of Hsüan-tê 宣德 (1429). His funeral was held as a governmental function."

Actually, Fu An's mother reached the age of one hundred,⁽²⁴⁾ which must have been the reason why Hsüan-tsung allow his retirement to let him serve her well after so many years' absence from China.

The "imperial appointment" which Fu An wanted to get means an imperial order to give an official title to his father and mother in proportion to the title Fu An was occupying.⁽²⁵⁾ In a biographical note on Fu An in the *Hsiang-fu wên-hsien-chih*,⁽²⁶⁾ it is stated that in the spring of the second year of Hsüan-tê (1427) an imperial order was issued and that his late father was entitled the *chi-shih-chung* 給事中 and his mother the *an-jên* 安人,⁽²⁷⁾ both of which were in accordance with the rank and title of Fu An himself. According to the *Shih-lu*, the appointment was given in 1425,⁽²⁸⁾ two years earlier than that given in the above biography. Probably, the *Shih-lu* is to be followed.

I am not so much interested whether Fu An was adequately rewarded by the emperor or not as Shên Tê-fu discusses in the *Yeh-huo-pien*, but here is one point which should be clarified in connection with his Central Asian mission. The *Shih-lu* records under the year 1425⁽²⁷⁾ a report from the Department of Officials in Peking to the effect that the *chi-shih-chung* Fu An just came back from Samarkand after more than twenty years' sojourn there and that his request for an "imperial appointment" (*ch'ih-ming* 勅命) could

not be accepted. The *Ming-shih-ch'ieh* 明史竊, Bk. 34, (fol. 12 r.) describes the matter much more in detail. It runs as follows:

"In the 13th year (of Yung-lo = 1415) he was sent to Bishbalik to entitle Na-li-shih-han 納里(黑?)失罕, the king. He was retained by the Pei-lu 北虜 and once more forced to stay for nine years. *He could only come back in the 1st year of Hung-hsi* 洪熙 (= 1425). At that time, his mother was almost one hundred years old. (Fu) An himself became aware of his old age and incompetence in official service and asked for retirement. Also he asked for the *ch'i-ming* saying that he stayed in foreign countries on mission for the period of twenty-two years, leaving his mother without being looked after (by her son) and that he would like to sit beside her and please her morning and evening for the rest of his life. However, the Department of Officials was of the opinion that, though (Fu) An had taken service for a long time, his qualification having never been inspected by the Department, there were no precedents to give the *chih-ming* to such a person. The emperor said that (the *chih-ming* should be given to him) because he went on mission to (the remote countries of) Barbarians where he stayed for more than twenty years, taking so much pains, and that (his request) should be accepted as an exception. Thus, (Fu) An was given *chih-ming* and allowed to retire to his native country. The emperor instructed to furnish him annually the rice at the rate of twelve *shih* 石 and with two palaquin bearers (eight bearers according to the *Fu-shih chia-ts'ang-li* 傅氏家傳曆 quoted in the *Hsiang-fu wên-hsien-chih* 祥符文獻志 in the *Kuo-chao hsien-chêng-lu*, Bk. 80, fol. 2 v. and the *Huang-chao chung-chou jên-wu chih* 皇朝中州人物志, Bk. III, fol. 9 v.-10 r. and so on). (Fu An) died in the 4th year of Hsüan-tê (1429)." (29)

The *Huang-ming shih-fa-lu* 皇明世法錄, Bk. 81, (fol. 26 r.) also states that Fu An came back from Samarkand in the 1st year of Hung-hsi. (29) The *Kuo-chüeh* 國權, Bk. 19, (Vol. II, p. 1264, ed. 1958) records, too, under the day of *kuei-ssü* 癸巳 of the 1st year of Hung-hsi 洪熙 (= August 19, 1425) that a *kao-shên* 告身 (30) was given to Fu An, the *chi-shih-chung of the Li-pu in Hsing-tsai* (that is to say, in Peking) 行在禮科給事中, who came back from Samarkand at that time and that this was an exception granted to (such a man as) Fu An whose qualification had not been inspected (by the Department of Officials) because of his absence from China for more than twenty years on foreign missions. (31)

For a casual reader it may look that Fu An was dispatched to Central Asia for the seventh time from which he came back in 1425. But, the truth is that he had been staying in Peking up to 1425 when he asked for the *ch'ih-ming*, as well as for his retirement. In the report of the Department of Officials as recorded in the *Shih-lu* and the *Kuo-chüeh*, it is described as if Fu An came back from Samarkand in 1425 after more than twenty years' stay there. And the *Ming-shih-ch'ieh* states that Fu An was detained by the Pei-lu for nine years and quotes Fu An who describes himself as served for

foreign missions during the period of twenty-two years. However, the number of more than twenty years or of twenty-two is the total of period of Fu An's service in foreign missions. Fu An was sent out abroad six times, of which the total of years amounts to twenty-three if we follow the Chinese way of calculation, presuming that he was absent from China for two years in each of the 3rd, 4th, 5th and sixth missions.

The first mission	to Samarkand	1395 - 1407	13 years
The second mission	to Samarkand	1408 - 1409	2 years
The third mission	to Samarkand	(1409)-(1410)	(2) years
The fourth mission	to Bishbalik	(1412)- 1413	(2) years
The fifth mission	to Bishbalik	1414 -(1415)	(2) years
The sixth mission	to Bishbalik	1415 -(1416)	(2) years
			1395 -(1416) 23 years

I should think that the twenty-two years in the *Ming-shih-ch'ieh* is a mistake for twenty-three. Fu An served for foreign missions for the period of twenty-three years and his thirteen years' detention in Samarkand was so well known that the Department of Officials summarized his career as if he came back from Samarkand in 1425 after more than twenty years' detention. As to the *Ming-shih-ch'ieh*, the author, neglecting the four missions made between the first and the sixth, misunderstood that he was forced to stay in Central Asia for nine years after his mission to Bishbalik in 1415. He deducted thirteen years from twenty-two and got nine years which he explained as the period during which Fu An was retained by the Pei-lu. Fu An was sent to Bishbalik and there are no other records to tell that he was caught by the Pei-lu which usually means the Mongols.

In this way, I conclude that there was no seventh Central Asian mission by Fu An.

NOTES

- (1) K. Enoki: *Tsung-lé's Mission to the Western Region in 1378-1382*, In: *Oriens Extremus*, XIX, 1, 1972, pp. 47-53.
- (2) E. Bretschneider: *Mediaeval Researches*, II, pp. 237 and 238. The *Shih-tsu-tien* 氏族典, Bk. 168, quotes the *Chi-hsing-t'ung* 奇姓通 which states that K'uan Ch'é 寬徹 was native of Han-yang 漢陽 and passed the civil examination in a year of Hung-wu 洪武 (1368-1398). However, no information about him either in the *Ch'ien-lung Han-yang fu-chih* 乾隆漢陽府志 or in the *T'ung-chih hsü-chih Han-yang-hsien-chih* 同治續修漢陽縣志. Of his mission to Bishbalik, see the *Ming T'ai-tsu shih-lu* 明太祖實錄, Bk. 212, under the 9th month of the 24th year of Hung-wu (pp. 3141-3142, ed. Taiwan) and Bk. 249, under the 1st month of the 30th year of Hung-wu (pp. 3611-3612, ed. Taiwan).
- (3) E. Bretschneider: *Mediaeval Researches*, II, pp. 144-145
- (4) The edition of *Yeh-huo-pien* 野獲編 which Bretschneider referred to is not known. An early Ch'ing edition in movable wooden type is available at the Naikaku Bunko (*Kaitei Naikaku Bunko Kanseki Bunrui Mokuroku* 改訂内閣文庫漢籍分類目錄, p. 284), which

consists of 30 *chüan* 卷 with the preface of Shên Tê-fu 沈德符 of 1606 and the editorial note of Ch'ien Fang 錢枋 of 1700. According to the preface of 1713 of Shên Chên 沈振 to the Supplement, it is in this year that the book was printed for the first time. There are some discrepancies between the information concerning the edition of the *Yeh-huo-pien*, but one thing which is quite clear is that there is no edition of 1606 except the autographical one. Bretschneider must have mistaken the date of Shên Tê-fu's preface as the date of publication. In the footnote, he refers to Wilhelm Schott, *Verzeichniss der Chinesischen und Mandschu-Tungusischen Bücher und Handschriften*, Berlin, 1840, pp. 77-78, but the *Yeh-huo-pien* commented by Schott is the edition of 1828, consisting of 34 *chüan*, including four *chüan* of Supplement. Actually, Bretschneider is not so careful in referring to the *Yeh-huo-pien* as he has omitted the mention to Fu An in Bk. 30 of the same book under the title of 使西域之賞 or the *Reward to the missions to Central Asia*. He also fails to refer to the *Yeh-huo-pien*, Bk. 30, in which Shên Tê-fu gives an abridgement of *Shih-hsi-yü-chi* 使西域記 of Ch'ên Ch'êng 陳誠, of whose Central Asian mission he writes only very briefly on the basis of the *Ming-shih* 明史 and the *Huang-ming ta-chêng-chi* 皇明大政記 (*Mediaeval Researches*, II, pp. 147-148). As to the *Yeh-huo-pien*, see the following references: 千頃堂書目 (卷五, 史部): 明史 (卷九七, 藝文志史類): 國立中央圖書館善本書目 (中華叢書, 上, p. 558): 晚明史籍考 (卷四 and 版本表): 王立中「萬曆野獲編校補」(文瀾學報, II, 2, 1936, 16 pp.): アジア歴史辭典 (VII, p. 473): W. Franke, *An Introduction to the Sources of Ming History*, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press 1968, p. 102.

- (5) The biography of Fu An, entitled 禮科都給事中傅公 and reprinted from the *Hsiang-fu wên-hsien-chih* 祥符文獻志, in the *Kuo-chao hsien-chêng-lu* 國朝獻徵錄, Bk. 80. At the end of this biography, a poem of Hsü Pin 許彬, which was composed when he saw Fu An off on his Central Asian journey. This is another evidence to show that the *Hsi-yu shêng-lan shih-chüan* was not the collection of Fu An's poems but of his friends.
- (6) Wang Tun-wên 汪鈍翁 is Wang Yüan 汪琬 (1624-1691) who participated in the compilation of the *Ming-shih* and wrote 175 biographies. Cf. 李晉華, 明史纂修考, p. 78, and the *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, II, pp. 480.
- (7) Kôda Rohan wrote in his famous historical novel entitled *Unmei* 運命 (first published in 1919) as follows: "(Fu) An traversed tens of thousand *li* in the territories of barbarians and stayed for nearly twenty years outside China. He composed the *Hsi-yu shêng-lan-shih*, which was very much appreciated by the people of later period interested in foreign matters." (幽秘記, 1925, Tokyo: Kaizôsha 改造社, p. 153). Also see the *Ajiya Rekishi Jiten* アジア歴史辭典, Vol. VIII, Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1961, p. 73.
- (8) Two in the *Kuo-chao hsien-chêng-lu* 國朝獻徵錄, Bk. 80; one in the *Ming-shih-kao* 明史稿, *Li-chuan* 列傳, 23; one in the *Huang-ch'ao chung-chou jên-wu chih* 皇朝中州人物志, Bk. 3, by Chu Mu-ch'ieh 朱睦㮮, which is the same as one in the *Kuo-chao hsien-chêng-lu*: one in the *Ming-shih-ch'ieh* 明史竊 Bk. 34, by Yin Shou-hêng 尹守衡; and the last in the *Kuang-hsü Hsiang-fu-hsien-chih* 光緒祥符縣志, Bk. 15, which is the reproduction of the biography of Fu An written by Wang Tun-wên 汪鈍翁 in his *Ming-shih-kao*.
- (9) He first took service to the Hou-chün Tu-tu-fu 後軍都督府 of Nanking as an official (吏), then to the Ssü-i-kuan 四夷館 as *T'ung-shih shê-jên* 通事舍人, and to the Hung-lu-ssü 鴻臚寺 as *Hsü-pan* 序班, and then he removed to the *Ping-chia chi-shih-chung* in 1394. He was promoted to the *Li-chia tu-chi-shih-chung* before he was sent for his first Central Asian mission. But, according to the *Hsüan-tsung Shih-lu* 宣宗實錄, Bk. 4 (p. 0117), his title was *Li-chia chi-shih-chung* 禮科給事中 in the seventh month of the first year of *Hung-hsi* 洪熙 (=August 18, 1425), that is to say, lower than his rank before 1395. If we believe in the *Shih-lu*, the *Hsiang-fu wên-hsien-chih* is not correct. As to the *t'ung-shih shê-jên* of Ssü-i-kuan, I am not sure if this means that he served as an interpreter as Professor Morris Rossabi has identified. Cf. *China and Inner Asia from 1368 to the Present*, London, 1975, p. 27.

- (10) Yen Ts'ung-chien states that the emperor T'ai-tsu dispatched an embassy headed by K'uan Ch'è to Samarkand which sent tribute bearers with courtesy, but K'uan Ch'è was retained by Bishbalik (*Shih-yu chou-tz'ü-lu* 殊域周咨錄, Bk. 15, fol. 1 v.). See note (12).
- (11) The *T'ai-tsu Shih-lu*, Bk. 210, p. 3132.
- (12) In the imperial letter brought by K'uan Ch'è to Khijir Khwāja Khān of Bishbalik in 1391, recorded in the *T'ai-tsu Shih-lu* 太祖實錄, Bk. 212, p. 3142, it is stated that the emperor sent back to Samarkand these several hundred merchants under the escort of Chinese envoy(s) 遣使送歸本國 three years ago; that now the envoy(s) came back (to China) and the king of Bishbalik sent his ambassador(s): and that, in reply, the emperor is dispatching (Chinese) envoys (who are K'uan Ch'è and T'ang Ch'eng 唐鈺) to appreciate his faithfulness. And in the imperial letter of 1397 also addressed to Khijir Khwāja Khān, recorded in the *T'ai-tsu Shih-lu*, Bk. 249, p. 3612, it is stated that the emperor sent the (envoy) K'uan Ch'è to his countries in order to let his countries send envoys (to China) and to bestow them the benevolence (of the Chinese emperor). It is clear from these letters that the destination of K'uan Ch'è's mission was Bishbalik. It seems that Yen Ts'ung-chien mistook the second letter as meaning that K'uan Ch'è was destined to Samarkand.
- (13) Hiroshi Watanabe: *An Index of Embassies and Tribute Missions from Islamic Countries to Ming China as Recorded in the Ming Shih-lu classified according to Geographical Area*, in: *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko*, 33, p. 305 (18).
- (14) The *T'ai-tsu Shih-lu*, Bk. 199, p. 2983.
- (15) For example, see the *Khitay namēh* of Sayyid 'Alī Akhbār Khitāy at the end of the 15th century translated by Charles Schefer (*Mélanges orientaux, textes et traductions publiés par les professeurs de l'Ecole spéciale des langues orientales vivantes, etc.*, Paris, 1883, p. 62) or the record of Beneto de Goes reconstructed by Matteo Ricci (*Fonti Ficciane*, II, p. 413). A lot of Ming officials made complaint about these pseudo-tribute bearers.
- (16) E. Bretschneider, *Mediaeval Researches*, II, p. 146.
- (17) One of the poems of Ch'ên Tê-wên is reproduced in the *Shi-yu chou-tz'ü-lu*, Bk. 15, fol. 1 v.-2 r.). The biography of Ch'ên is available in the *Yung-ch'eng Kuang-tung t'ung-chih* 雍正廣東通志, Bk. 46, fol. 3 v.-4 r. I reproduce here the text just in Chinese. A very incomplete adaptation of this biography is made in the *Shih-tsu-tien* 氏族典, Bk. 125 of the *Ku-chin t'u-shu chi-ch'êng* and in the *Ming-ming-jên-chuan* 明名人傳, of which a manuscript copy is preserved in the National Central Library 國立中央圖書館 in Taipei and a photo copy available at the Toyo Bunko 東洋文庫.
陳德文，一名營中，字文石，保昌人，洪武十九年，舉文學，授臺州通判，居二年，左遷枝江令，又遷縉雲監稅，所至有聲，以兵部尚書唐鐸薦，拜北平道監察御史，明年擢按察使，三十年，使西番撒馬兒罕等國，居西域十二年，克舉使職，所歷國，采訪風俗，作為詩歌，比歸進之，永樂嘉賞，擢僉都御史，後修西域志，多據其言，八年二月，隨征，十月旋京，以久勞王事，進右都御史，賜錦綺十襲，名馬二匹，及校尉四人，護行還鄉，省墓，尋後召還，十二年三月，卒于位，賜左都御史，賜葬祭。
No farther information is available concerning the *Hsi-yu-chih* which is said to have been compiled mainly on Ch'ên's poems concerning Central Asia.
- (18) The *T'ai-tsung Shih-lu* 太宗實錄, Bk. 78, p. 1053.
- (19) The *T'ai-tsung Shih-lu*, Bk. 93, p. 1241.
- (20) The *T'ai-tsung Shih-lu*, Bk. 124, p. 1548.
- (21) The *T'ai-tsung Shih-lu*, Bk. 145, pp. 1717-1718.
- (22) The *T'ai-tsung Shih-lu*, Bk. 157, pp. 1798-1799.
- (23) The *T'ai-tsung Shih-lu*, Bk. 174, p. 1916.
- (24) She is stated as *ch'i-i* 期頤, that is to say, one hundred years old, in Wang Yue's 王淪 commemoration of Fu An's paying respect to the tombs of his ancestors, reproduced in the *Hsiang-fu wên-hsien-chih* (*Kuo-chao hsien-ch'eng-lu*, Bk. 80, fol. 4 v.) and in the biography of Fu An in the *Ming-shih-ch'ieh* 明史竊, Bk. 34, fol. 12 r.
- (25) As to the meaning of *ch'ih-ming* 勅命, see, for instance, the *Ming-shih*, Bk. 72, p. 730

(ed. Small Po-na-pên).

- (26) Wang Yüeh's 王淪 statement (in the *Hsiang-fu wên-hsien-chih* quoted in the *Kuo-chao hsien-chêng-lu*, Bk. 80, fol. 5 r.).
- (27) Actually, *an-jên* 安人 is the eighth of nine degrees given to women. See the *Ming-shih*, Bk. 72, p. 730.
- (28) The *Hsüan-tsung Shih-lu* 宣宗實錄, Bk. 4, p. 0117, which runs as follows:
 行在吏部言, 行在禮科給事中傅安, 使撒馬兒罕, 留二十餘年, 始歸, 請給勅命, 雖其歷年久, 未經考覈, 例難給授, 上曰, 安爲朝廷使遠夷, 艱苦多矣, 可拘常例乎, 其即授之.
- (29) The *Ming-shih-ch'ieh*, Bk. 34, also gives a detail why Timûr retained Fu An from 1396/7 up to 1407 and let him travel in almost all the part of his territory. So, I copy here the whole of Fu An's biography: 傅安, 字志道, 太康人也, 洪武中, 爲都督府吏, 起歷四夷館通事舍人, 鴻臚序班, 授兵科給事中, 二十八年, 改禮科都給事中, 奉使西域, 通貢道, 安至撒馬兒罕, 國王帖木兒, 自以遠中國, 負固不守外藩禮, 且欲安稱臣, 安曰, 我天朝命使, 誰爲汝臣耶, 具陳國家威德, 薄海內外, 罔不臣服, 汝敢與我中國敵也, 王曰, 我國土何渠不及中國, 令人導安, 從西行南還, 所至地方萬千餘里, 六年始返其國, 以安始終弗爲屈, 遂不遣歸, 永樂五年, 王死, 頭目哈里令虎歹達乃送安還朝, 因獻名馬珠玉謝罪, 安初同行太監劉帷, 御史姚臣, 皆物故, 官軍千五百人, 生還者十有七人而已, 上以安羈西域十三年, 不屈節, 賜第免朝, 十三年, 奉使往封別失別里納里 (黑?) 失罕爲王, 見羈北虜, 復留九年, 洪熙九年, 始歸, 時安母且期頤矣, 安自念老病不復任事, 上書乞骸骨, 言, 臣離母膝下使絕域先後二十二年, 今幸生還, 願得以白首餘生承歡旦夕, 請賜勅命榮養, 吏部言, 安歷年雖久, 未經部考, 例不得授, 上曰, 安使遠夷, 留滯廿餘載, 良苦, 何例爲, 予安勅命歸養, 令有司歲給月米一十二石與夫二名, 宣德四年卒, 上特遣官祭, 予霖以賢良方正, 薦授通政司知事, 遷錦衣衛經歷, 改六安州判官,
- (29) 洪熙元年, 傅安始還國, 請勅命.
- (30) The *kao-shên* here means the same thing as *kao-chung-yang* 告終養, that is to say, an official's retirement from the governmental service in order to serve his old parents.
- (31) 給行在禮科給事中傅安告身, 時還撒馬兒罕, 出使殆二十餘年, 未及考績, 特優之. The statement to the same effect is available in the *Ssü-i-kuan kao* 四夷館考 (ed. Tung-fang hsüeh-hui 東方學會. Now reproduced in the *Complete Works of Lo chên-jü* 羅振玉, 4th Series, Vol. II, p. 789) and in the *Wai-kuo-chuan* 外國傳 by Yu Tung 尤侗, Bk. 6, fol. 3 v.-4 r.