

CHAPITRE 14

CHANGING PILGRIMAGE ROUTES IN THE LATE QING AND EARLY REPUBLIC

Comparing the Itinerary Networks in *Knowing the Paths of Pilgrimage*
參學知津 and *Record of Travels to Famous Mountains* 名山遊訪記

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IN THE EARLY nineteenth century the Buddhist monk Ruhai Xiancheng 如海顯承 (fl. 1800-1826) wrote a route book describing itineraries to China's most popular pilgrimage sites. *Knowing the Paths of Pilgrimage* (*Canxue zhijin* 參學知津) is a rare source for the travel routes of Buddhist pilgrims in late imperial times as it describes, station by station, 56 itineraries all over China. What we do not learn from *Knowing the Paths* are the details: what travelers saw on the way, the difficulties they encountered, and what they talked about among themselves and with the masters they went to visit.

For such information one has to turn to another, somewhat better known, source. *Records of Travels to Famous Mountains* (*Mingshan youfang ji* 名山遊訪記) by Gao Henian 高鶴年 (1872-1962) describes a similar number of routes (53), but, written in the form of a travel diary, contains detailed information about the interactions Gao had with his monastic friends and preceptors. It also evinces, and this will be the focus of the present paper, how the new railway and shipping lines recast travel routes for Chinese pilgrims between 1890 and 1925. Comparing the itineraries of the two texts shows that, whereas the destinations of Buddhist pilgrims did not differ all that much between the early nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, some routes changed considerably with the arrival of new modes of transport.

Ruhai Xiancheng's *Canxue zhijin* outlines routes Buddhist pilgrims took through China c. 1790-1820.¹ Since Professor Ishino's chapter introduces this text and I myself have already published elsewhere on some of its features,² I wish to focus below on a comparison of Xiancheng's routes with those traversed by Gao Henian about hundred years later. The question I would like to answer is whether pilgrimage routes changed in the nineteenth century, and if so where and how.

Gao Henian and the *Mingshan youfang ji* 名山遊訪記

Gao Henian is one of the more interesting figures in late Qing and early Republican Buddhism.³ He has also been quite neglected by the scholarship on the period. A lay man who did not directly influence religious policy, he garnered less interest than the famous monks of the early Republic. His long life bridged the late Qing, the Republic and the People's Republic of China, and, among others, he escaped the attention of Holmes Welch, who does not mention him in any of his three major works (1967, 1968, 1972) on that period. Nor, as far as I see, is he mentioned in otherwise comprehensive overviews of Chinese lay Buddhism,⁴ or twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism.⁵

Nevertheless, Gao and his travels were relatively widely known in his time and he was deeply embedded in the Buddhist networks of

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1. The *zhijin* 知津 lit. "knowing the ford" is a term from the *Analects* (18:6).
 2. Marcus Bingenheimer, "'Knowing the Paths of Pilgrimage' – The Network of Pilgrimage Routes in 19th century China according to the *Canxue zhijin* 參學知津," *Review of Religion and Chinese Society* 3.2 (2016), p. 189-222, and "Traversing the 'Pilgrimage Square' of Northern China in the 19th Century," in *The Formation of Regional Religious Systems in Greater China*, Jiang Wu, ed., London: Routledge, forthcoming (2021).
 3. Gao was born in Liuzhuang 劉莊 village in the Xinghua 興化 District in Jiangsu Province (probably the 劉莊村 at 33.133465, 119.987908).
 4. Pan Guiming 潘桂明, *Zhongguo jushi fojiao shi* 中國居士佛教史. Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 2000.
 5. Chen Bing 陳兵, Deng Zimei 鄧子美, *Ershi shiji zhongguo fojiao* 二十世紀中國佛教. Taipei: Xiandai Chan, 2003. A biographic sketch of him is included in Yu Lingbo's most useful collection of biographies of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhists: Yu Lingbo 于凌波, *Zhongguo jindai fomen renwu zhi* 中國近代佛門人物誌. 5 vols. Taipei: Huiju, 1993-1999, vol. 1, p. 256-282.

eminent monks and lay people. Today he is mainly remembered as the author of the *Mingshan youfang ji* (below: *Records of Travels*) an account of fifty-three journeys to sacred sites all over China. *Records of Travels* is one of the most substantial sources for late Qing pilgrimage. Gao's account of his travels not only describes routes and scenery, but also the conversations that he and his fellow travelers had with the practitioners they encountered. In its panoramic breadth it is comparable to the famous travel diaries of Japanese travelers in China – especially that of Ennin 圓仁 (794-864), Jōjin 成尋 (1011-1081), and Sakugen 策彦 (1501-1579) – which provided unique insights into the everyday reality of Buddhism in Tang, Song and Ming China respectively.

The edition history of *Records of Travels* is complicated, I can only give an outline here. Gao Henian first published notes on his travels in the Buddhist journal *Foxue congbao* 佛學叢報 from 1912-1914. A second series of articles was published, mainly in *Foxue banyuekan* 佛學半月刊, between 1935 and 1948. These articles were collected, edited, and re-published in book form first in 1935, then expanded and revised in 1949. Reprints or re-editions of the latter were published in 1955, 1956, 1975, 2000, 2002, 2012, and 2015. Of these, the 2015 edition seems the most carefully edited version of the text available and will be used below. Besides the actual travel records, both Gao 2012 and 2015 contain additional material, such as letters written to Gao, poems in his praise, prefaces and comments by his contemporaries. The different edition dates notwithstanding it must be remembered that the major part of the travelogues were written in diary form between 1880 and 1925.

Gao Henian is often compared to Xu Xiake 徐霞客 (1587-1641) the eminent traveler and explorer of late Ming geography.⁶ But although both were indeed avid travelers the similarities between the two are quickly exhausted. Gao's *Records of Travels* bears some resemblance to the travel diary of *Xu Xiake youji* 徐霞客遊記 in that it presents the journeys in daily entries, their routes, however, and especially their motivation to travel differed greatly. It is clear from *Records of*

6. For the comparison see e.g. Gao Henian 高鶴年, *Wuzinian gaidingben Mingshan youfang ji* 戊子年改訂本 名山遊訪記, edited by Chen Yingning 陳櫻寧 and Pu Tuanzi 蒲團子. Hong Kong: Xinyitang, 2015, p. 33. For an introduction to Xu Xiake and translations of some routes see Xu Xiake; Jacques Dars (transl.), *Randonnées aux sites sublimes*. Paris: Gallimard, 1993.

Travels that Gao considered himself a Buddhist pilgrim. Whereas Xu traveled for travel's sake and out of geographic curiosity, Gao trekked around China to visit sacred sites. Like Xu he traveled on very little money, but he was also a committed Buddhist practitioner who often spend weeks in retreat at the sacred mountains he visited. While Xu was mainly interested in scenery and the diverse geography of famous as well as of less well known places, Gao traveled as a way of Buddhist practice and his journal is filled with teachings that he received from his learned interlocutors in temples and hermitages.⁷

Gao started his travels in 1890, when he was nineteen, and traversed fifty of the fifty-three routes described in *Records of Travels* between 1890 and 1925.⁸ Gao was widely respected by monks and fellow lay practitioners. Xuyun 虛雲 (1864?-1959), the eminent meditation master, was so delighted about his company that he did insist that Gao stayed with him, to the point of stashing away his bundle and travel money.⁹ Even the stern Yinguang 印光 (1861-1940), who did not easily receive people, accorded Gao an audience, wrote a poem in his praise, and sent him several letters.¹⁰

Beyond his travel exploits Gao was active in social welfare and disaster relief. Born into a well-off family in the heartland of Chinese Buddhism near Yangzhou, he took refuge with Dading 大定 (1824-1906) at the large and influential Jinshan 金山 monastery.¹¹ In 1921

7. Compare e.g. the very contrasting accounts of Gao's four visits to Mount Wutai (1891, 1903, 1912 and 1914) with the description of Xu, who visited Wutai in 1633. Xu makes only minimal remarks about the Buddhist institutions at this most Buddhist of all places. The one time he cites a monk it is to report the topology of Mount Wutai (Xu and Dars, *Randonnées aux sites sublimes*, p. 243).

8. Accounts of three more routes, traveled in 1947-1948, were added later.

9. Gao Henian, *Wuzinian gaidingben Mingshan youfang ji*, p. 354.

10. For an early meeting in 1898 between Gao and Yinguang see Gao Henian, *Wuzinian gaidingben Mingshan youfang ji*, p. 128. The eulogy is at Gao Henian 高鹤年, *Gao Henian dade wenhui* 高鹤年大德文汇. Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 2012 (in the series *Bainian fojiao dade congshu* 百年佛教高僧大德丛书, Wang Zhiyuan 王志远, ed.), p. 451 (image of Yinguang's calligraphy in *Wuzinian gaidingben Mingshan youfang ji*, p. 4). The eighteen extant letters from Yinguang to Gao, a comparatively large corpus, were written between 1912 and 1936 and attest to a lasting friendship (*Gao Henian dade wenhua*, p. 421-450).

11. Jinshan was at the time considered an exemplary monastery, where the Vinaya rules were strictly applied. A failed attempt to turn the traditionalist Jinshan into a modern school for monks was staged by Taixu and his friend Renshan in 1912. The ensuing fracas damaged Taixu's reputation and hampered his modernizing

he donated his own land to found a Buddhist retirement community for women, then resumed his travels. In the period between 1925 and 1940 he was active in disaster relief and went into flood and drought stricken regions to organize food supplies, at times even taking out private loans to finance soup kitchens.¹²

***Mingshan youfang ji* 名山遊訪記 and *Canxue zhijin* 參學知津**

Comparing the *Records of Travels* to *Knowing the Paths* there is first the difference in genre. *Knowing the Paths* is a route book, basically a list of place names and distances, with occasional short remarks about what is to be seen or done at a site. It was written as a travel guide for monastic pilgrims. Only very rarely does Ruhai Xiancheng speak in the first person.¹³

Records of Travels, on the other hand, is a travel diary. It is here, not in *Knowing the Paths*, that we find detailed accounts of *canxue* encounters with senior monks. There is perhaps no other work that collects as many voices of late Qing / early Republican Buddhists. In his daily entries Gao records not only the places and description of travels, but also the teachings he received. To write these down made much sense, after all, they were the reason he traveled. *Knowing the Paths*, on the other hand, eschews all dialog. As a route book it does not contain one single date that relates to Xiancheng's journey, whereas most events in *Records of Travels* can be dated to the day.¹⁴

efforts for years (Holmes Welch, *The Buddhist Revival in China*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968, chap. 2).

12. See the wide acknowledgement of his efforts in the prefaces collected in Gao Henian, *Wuzinian gaidingben Mingshan youfang ji*, p. 24-29.
13. Xiancheng also wrote an essay about the spiritual aspects of pilgrimage, which, however, did not survive (Bingenheimer, "Knowing the Paths of Pilgrimage," p. 195-197).
14. Judging from the fact that Xiancheng was already retired in 1827, possibly in his sixties, I put the window for the journeys in *Knowing the Paths* between 1780 and 1820. Future, more detailed, studies of the contents of *Knowing the Paths* might yield a more precise date for the journeys. Regarding the dating of Gao Henian's entries it is always possible to know the year, but months or days are sometimes given only as "some month" or "some day" 某月 / 某日 (e.g. *Wuzinian gaidingben Mingshan youfang ji*, p. 165). In 1911, Gao follows the

Thus we learn that on the 6th of April 1898 Gao and some ten travel companions set out on a small boat from the main island of Mount Putuo for a trip to the small island of Luojia nearby:

[Luojia island] was 40 *li* across the sea. [During the journey] we all recited the [Bodhisattva's] name with utmost sincerity and because of that we were not afraid. The winds were up that day and we arrived after about an hour. Because of the surge of the waves it was not easy to go ashore, actually, it was quite dangerous. Going up on the island for about one *li* we could see the endless ocean on three sides. The island is only about three *li* in circumference and the ocean winds blow so violently that nothing can grow here. There are four huts. One of the hermits living there taught us: "The way to strive is like drowning water in water, merging emptiness with emptiness." Another said: "Before you can awaken *bodhicitta* [and aim for enlightenment], you have to keep the precepts and acquire merit." A third hermit said: "After your return do not forget the true and sincere quality of your experiences here. Remember it all, remember it all!"

海道四十里，眾心至誠念名號，由至誠而生恐怖也。是日順風，約一小時即到。唯海浪低昂，不易登岸，危險之至。上山約里許遠眺三面海，一望無極。島周約三里，海風狂大，草木不生，上有茅蓬四處。一蓬師示云：「用功之法，如水投水，以空合空。」又一蓬師云：「如等發心，先須持戒修福。」第三蓬師云：「歸去勿忘在此處所發真誠之念，切記切記。」¹⁵

In this way *Records of Travels* conveys a detailed picture of the conversations between pilgrims and resident monks. Apart from his many encounters with anonymous practitioners like the monks on Luojia island, Gao also repeatedly sought out famous monks such as Xuyun, Yinguang, Faren 法忍 (1844-1905), Dixian 諦閑 (1858-1932), and Xingci 興慈 (1881-1950).

The connection to Yinguang is remarkable, as Yinguang seemed to have disliked travel, and for more than forty years, mainly stayed

calendar change to the Gregorian Calendar. Earlier dates have been mapped to the Gregorian calendar (here with the help of <http://authority.dila.edu.tw/time/>).

15. Gao Henian, *Wuzinian gaidingben Mingshan youfang ji*, p. 129.

on Mount Putuo, with only occasional trips to the Jiangnan region. Although fond of Gao Henian he did not mind telling him what he thought about modern day Buddhist lay folk who travel too much. When the two met again in August 1911, after a hiatus of several years, he said:

We have not seen each other for some years, today we meet again. In the old days after Master Zibo¹⁶ had attained his great enlightenment, he traveled far and wide to the famous mountains, teaching wherever he went and broadening his knowledge. No sacred site or famous temple that he not visited. As he was healthy and strong he would cover 300 *li* in one day. No later traveler can compare to him. Nowadays there are a lot of fellows who, relying on Buddhist institutions for their idle life, scramble about north and south, peddling trifles for little profit. Although they reach famous mountains and sacred sites, their heart is devoid of reverence.

幾年不見，今日相逢。昔紫柏大師大悟以後，遊歷名山大川，隨方設化，以廣見聞。聖地道場，無不親歷其境。以其色力建強，日行三百里。以後遊者未聞其人。近來賴佛偷生之徒，奔南走北，販賣零碎，以求微利。雖到名山聖地，絕無一點景仰之心。¹⁷

This Buddhist critique of Buddhist pilgrimage is rare, but not unprecedented. Steven Heine and Timothy Barrett have commented on a certain ambivalence towards pilgrimage, especially among Chan Buddhists.¹⁸

16. Zibo Zhenke 紫柏真可 (1544-1604) was an eminent monk in the late Ming. The practice of travel in order to improve one's understanding by visiting different masters was considered normal for a Chan monk. Ruhai Xiancheng mentions the early patriarchs Zhaozhou Congshen 趙州從諗 (778-897) and Xuefeng Yicun 雪峰義存 (822-908) as his models (*Canxue zhijin*, 卷首.5b).

17. Gao Henian, *Wuzinian gaidingben Mingshan youfang ji*, p. 221.

18. Steven Heine, "Visions, Divisions, Revisions: The Encounter between Iconoclasm and Supernaturalism in Kōan cases about Mount Wu-t'ai," in *The Kōan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism*, Steven Heine and Dale Wright, eds., New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 137-167; Timothy Barrett, "How Important is Mount Wutai? Sacred Space in a Zen Mirror," in *The Transnational Cult of Mount Wutai: Historical and Comparative Perspectives*, Susan Andrews, Jinhua Chen, and Kuan Guang, eds., Leiden: Brill, 2020, p. 236-251.

Gao's account includes many observations about the difficulties of pilgrimage travel. In a rare glimpse of nuns on pilgrimage his entry on a day in May 1903 he writes:

After twenty *li* in the region of Fuping 阜平: Some days earlier a group of three nuns passed by here and met with bandits. One old nun got killed. People say "The retribution for our actions in past lives arrives in the present. It is hard to escape one's karma." Karmic retribution is indeed difficult to avoid, understanding cause and effect being thus, how can one hope to escape by sheer luck? A *sūtra* says "The karma one creates does not vanish even after hundred-thousand eons. When causes and conditions meet, one is bound to receive retribution."

After thirty *li* [I arrived at] Wangkuai Town 王快鎮 and after twenty more *li* at Wangliukou 王柳口. There I happened to meet the Elder Jinan 濟南 and some monks as they were returning from Mount Wutai. The Elder Jinan said: "Be very careful [in the mountains]. Make sure to find shelter for the night. Rise with the cockcrow and look at the sky." Then they quickly went on their way. After ten *li* [I arrived at] Changshou Village 長壽莊 where I stayed at an inn.

二十里，阜平屬。數日前有尼僧三人朝山經此，遇盜，斃老尼一人。或云：「宿冤現前，定業難跳。」冤深難解，因果歷然，豈能幸免？故經云：「假使百千劫，所作業不忘。因緣會遇時，果報還自受。」三十里，王快鎮。二十里，王柳口。忽遇濟南長者及諸大師，從台山來。濟公曰：「小心為要。投宿須防夜，雞鳴早看天。」忽然而別。十里，長壽莊，住店。¹⁹

Thus, between tragedy and commonplace advice, Gao spend his time on the road.

The itineraries

For the 1949 publication of *Records of Travel* the co-editor Chen Yingning 陳櫻寧 added helpful summaries of the fifty-three routes.

19. Gao Henian, *Wuzinian gaidingben Mingshan youfang ji*, p. 165-166.

Based on these outlines and consulting the actual routes where necessary we geo-referenced 411 places that result in the network shown in Figure 1.²⁰

For Map 1, p. 469, it should be noted that the straight lines leading from Shanghai to Beijing, and via Shantou (Swatow) to Hong Kong etc. do not indicate straight routes. They rather represent Gao's ship voyages along the coast. As the map illustrates, Gao traveled – often repeatedly – to all major Buddhist mountains, the traditional five Chinese marchmounts, and a number of Daoist centers.

Like Xiancheng some hundred years earlier, Gao did not venture to visit Mount Longhu 龍虎山, the seat of the Zhengyi order of Daoism.²¹ Neither did he stop at the Daoist sites of Mount Qingcheng 青城山 and Mount Heming 鶴鳴山, when he passed close by on his way to Mount Emei in Sichuan.²² Both Xiancheng and Gao, however, visited Mount Wudang, Mount Luofu, Mount Mao and the Qiyun Temple, sites that were mainly associated with Daoism.

To the West (Lanzhou and Mount Jizu) and the East (Mount Putuo) the reach of Gao's pilgrimage network is identical with that of Xiancheng's. But to the south Gao ventured as far as Hanoi, whereas Xiancheng never went further south than Guangzhou. Gao also expanded the network of routes to the north by venturing beyond the Great Wall at Badaling and visiting Zhangjia kou.

In Map 2, p. 469, the itineraries of Gao Henian in red are overlaid on the grey itineraries of Ruhai Xiancheng.²³

Some of the differences are because of a lack of data-points and merely apparent. Below we will concern ourselves with four discrepancies between the itineraries of Gao and Xiancheng (green ellipses

20. The geo-referenced data for both travelers is made available at <http://mbingenheimer.net/tools/histgis>.

21. As Vincent Goossaert explains in his introduction to this volume the prominence of Mount Longhu was due to its role as an ordination site for Daoist clergy. It was not a general pilgrimage site.

22. Other travelers to Mount Emei did stop at Mount Qingcheng in the past, e.g. Fan Chengda 范成大 (1126-1193): James Hargett, *Stairway to Heaven: A Journey to the Summit of Mount Emei*, Albany: SUNY Press, 2007, p. 54.

23. For more detailed maps on Xiancheng see Bingenheimer, "Knowing the Paths of Pilgrimage" and "Traversing the "Pilgrimage Square" of Northern China in the 19th Century."

on Map 3, p. 470) which are not due to incomplete data, but indeed show something about how pilgrimage travel has changed in the nineteenth century.

The first is the obvious change in the role of Shanghai for long distance travel. Whereas Xiancheng had no reason to visit what in his day was a minor harbor town, for Gao Henian the treaty port of Shanghai was a major city from which steamships took him to nearby Ningbo and Mount Putuo, but also far afield to Tianjin, Hong Kong, and even Haiphong. Gao passed through Shanghai many times, drawn not by a desire to see the temples, but to access ships and trains. And indeed it is the developing transport system, not a change in religious motivation or the organization of sacred sites, that is responsible for the three other discrepancies as well. In the main, they are all due to the expansion of the railway system in China between 1890 and 1925, a momentous change that happened during the time of Gao's travels.

Thus we see Gao traverse a vertical North-South connection between Hankou and Beijing. Although this route followed an ancient courier way, it was not often used by earlier pilgrims (including Xiancheng), because it did not pass by major pilgrimage sites in the "pilgrimage square of the north."²⁴ As Map 4, p. 470²⁵ shows, what we see is simply the course of the Beijing-Hankou Railway (*Jing-Han tielu* 京漢鐵路) which was built between 1897 and 1906. This line created a direct connection between the capital and the upper Yangzi reaches, obviating the need to bring goods all the way east to the coastal regions before shipping them north along the coast or via the Grand Canal. Cutting through the "pilgrimage square of the north" the Beijing-Hankou train made it possible to travel from Central China to the North more quickly and more safely, than taking a cabin on a ship along the Grand Canal, or hiking, which is what most pilgrims did. Gao first took the Jing-Han Railway in July 1911 from Hankou to Dingzhou.²⁶ During the journey he hears: "Two days earlier a train

24. Bingenheimer, "Traversing the "Pilgrimage Square" of Northern China in the 19th Century."

25. Reproduced as found in Wikimedia Commons (Author: Mosr, Title: KCRC_early_railway_network_of_China.jpg, Date: 2008). It is available under a CC 3.0 Attribution-Share Alike license at: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:KCRC_early_railway_network_of_China.jpg (accessed August 2017).

26. According to the China Railway Timetables of July 1921, ten years after Gao's journey, there was a daily train that covered the route from Hankou to Beijing in

went off its tracks in this stretch, the drivers were burned to cinders, and dozens of the passengers died or were hurt. Those to sit in the front of the train survived, those in the back died.”²⁷

A third discrepancy between the itinerary networks of Gao and Xiancheng is due to the Qingdao-Jinan Railway. This line was constructed from 1899-1904, and owned and operated, as most early railways, by a foreign company, in this case the German Schantung Eisenbahn Gesellschaft.²⁸ Part of global “Railway Imperialism” the railway rights were an extension of the German colonial infestation of Shandong.²⁹ As a contemporary observer stated: “German control within the German sphere [of influence in China] is based upon the railroad concession in Shantung.”³⁰ Gao arrived in Qingdao by boat from south China in November 1918, by which time the Qingdao-Jinan Railway was under Japanese control. The Japanese had taken control of the city and railway at the beginning of World War I and only in 1922 – as a result of the Washington Naval Treaty – was Qingdao restored to China. During his visit Gao and his friends spend a month

c. 41 hours, the express train (only Mondays and Thursdays) made the journey in only 35 hours (*Chinese Railways Time Table – July 1921*. Beijing: La Librairie Française, 1921, p. 1).

27. Gao Henian, *Wuzinian gaidingben Mingshan youfang ji*, p. 238.

28. According to Clarence Davis, “Railway Imperialism in China, 1895-1939,” in *Railway Imperialism*, Clarence Davis, Kenneth Wilburn, eds., New York: Greenwood Praeger, 1991, p. 160, more than ninety percent of Chinese railways were managed and controlled by foreign entities. For a translation of the concession to build the Shandong railway see Theodore W. Overlach, *Foreign Financial Control in China*, New York: Macmillan, 1911, p. 141-146. The promise of Chinese partial ownership was never realized (Klaus Mühlhahn, “Deutsche Vorposten im Hinterland: Die infrastrukturelle Durchdringung der Provinz Schantung,” in *Tsingtau: Ein Kapitel deutscher Kolonialgeschichte in China 1897-1914*, Hans-Martin Hinz, Christoph Lind, eds., Berlin: Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1998, p. 146-158). A comprehensive history of the Shandong railway is Vera Schmidt, *Die deutsche Eisenbahnpolitik in Shantung 1898-1914. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Imperialismus in China*, Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1976. The Shandong Railway company was backed by Adolph von Hansemann’s Disconto-Gesellschaft. Von Hansemann was one of the richest men in Germany at the time and also financed railways in other German colonies, among them the notorious Otavi Railway in German South-West Africa.

29. For “railway imperialism” in China see Davis, “Railway Imperialism in China, 1895-1939” and Bruce A. Elleman, Stephen Kotkin, *Manchurian Railways and the Opening of China: an International History*, New York: Sharpe, 2010.

30. Overlach, *Foreign Financial Control in China*, p. 146.

in and around Qingdao. It being Shandong, Buddhist sites were few and they hardly visited any temples or monks. In early December they took the train to Jinan, where they arrived on the same day.³¹ Gao: “At that time the railway too was managed by the Japanese. People bought tickets and boarded the train one by one. It was all very orderly.”³²

The fourth and perhaps most surprising discrepancy between the travels of Gao and Xiancheng is Gao’s detour through northern Vietnam on his way to Kunming in 1920. The detour was not occasioned by a desire to see the religious sights of Hanoi, but because Gao felt that “transport in our country is so difficult and congested that for whoever wants to go to Yunnan the best way is via British Hong Kong and French Annam.”³³ Accordingly, he took a boat from Hong Kong, arrived in the port of Haiphong three days later, where he and his fellow travelers’ had their luggage thoroughly searched at customs.³⁴ The following day he took the train to Tonkin/Hanoi, where he and his friends rested for a day before continuing their journey. The train ride from Hanoi to Kunming took only three days, passing through the mountains of Yunnan, a scenery that pleased Gao: “We are meandering up along the steep mountains. Next to the line there are many cliffs and caves, waterfalls plunge a thousand feet. We pass through tunnels, next to a brook we see monkeys play, and on a slope a herd of deer rushes away. The scenery along the railway line is like a landscape painting.”³⁵ The group arrived in Kunming only eight days after they had left Hong Kong; days that had been spend mostly on board a ship or train, more comfortably, one imagines, than walking. The Indochina-Yunnan Railway was built at great cost between 1904 and 1910 by the French in order to develop trade between their colonies in Indochina and Southwest China.³⁶

31. The train from Qingdao probably left at 8:00 and arrived in Jinan at 18:00 (*Chinese Railways Time Table – July 1921*, p. 8). We do not know whether Gao Henian traveled first, second or third class. In 1921 a passenger would have paid \$14.30, \$7.20, or \$4.00 silver dollar respectively.

32. Gao Henian, *Wuzinian gaidingben Mingshan youfang ji*, p. 318.

33. Gao Henian, *Wuzinian gaidingben Mingshan youfang ji*, p. 352.

34. Haiphong was developed in the late 1880s and by the time Gao and his friends passed through, had become the main naval base in French Indochina.

35. Gao Henian, *Wuzinian gaidingben Mingshan youfang ji*, p. 353.

36. One of the most ambitious engineering projects of French colonial rule, the railway of course also was driven by economic as well as strategic interests. Already in 1903 a colonial administrator wrote candidly: “Le chemin de fer a

The pleasant ease of Gao's journey contrasts with the horrendous conditions for the workers during the railway's construction.³⁷

Conclusion

Above we have seen that all four major discrepancies between the pilgrimage routes of Ruhai Xiancheng in the early nineteenth and Gao Henian in the early twentieth century were due to changes in the transport system.³⁸ Comparing the routes of the two Buddhist pilgrims it has become obvious that the differences between their itineraries were not due to a different religious emphasis, or changes in the organization of the sites, but simply the result of Western imperialism. By introducing, or rather forcing, new modes of transport onto China the colonial enterprise left a trace in the itinerary network of Buddhist pilgrims and Gao Henian makes his way to the ancient sacred sites of China via the British treaty ports of Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Shantou, the German/Japanese Qingdao, and French Hanoi.

un intérêt stratégique de premier ordre. Cet intérêt ne saurait jamais être perdu de vue dans un pays protégé..." (Louis Salaun, *L'Indochine*, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1903, p. 228). The building of the Yunnan railway and life on the construction site is well documented. Next to the letters of the Albert Marie, and Georges-Auguste Morbotte there is a rich photographic record of the project. The accountant and amateur photographer Morbotte took hundreds of photos. The letters and many of the photos are now published in Odile Bernard, Elisabeth Locard, Pierre Marbotte, *Le chemin de fer du Yunnan*, Bordeaux: Elytis, 2016.

37. It was built at great loss of (Chinese and Vietnamese) life. Estimates range from 12,000 to 84,000 workers who lost their lives in the project between 1903 and 1910. The mortality was so high that the company had difficulties hiring replacements: Jean-François Rousseau, "An imperial railway failure: the Indochina-Yunnan railway, 1898-1941," *The Journal of Transport History* 35.1 (2014), p. 10. Bernard *et al.* estimate that 12,000 out of the 60,000 recruited workers perished. Considering the line was 465 km long this means some 26 men lost their lives for every kilometer, one for every 40 meter. Against that 81 of the 1000 Europeans involved in the construction died (Bernard *et al.*, *Le chemin de fer du Yunnan*, p. 10).
38. A fifth might be added: Gao's northernmost excursion to Zhangjiakou and Datong in April 1914 too was facilitated by a famous railway. The Beijing-Zhangjiakou line (*Jing-Zhang tielu* 京張鐵路) was the first railway built by a Chinese enterprise. Constructed 1905 to 1909 it connected Beijing with Zhangjiakou and was later extended into Inner Mongolia.

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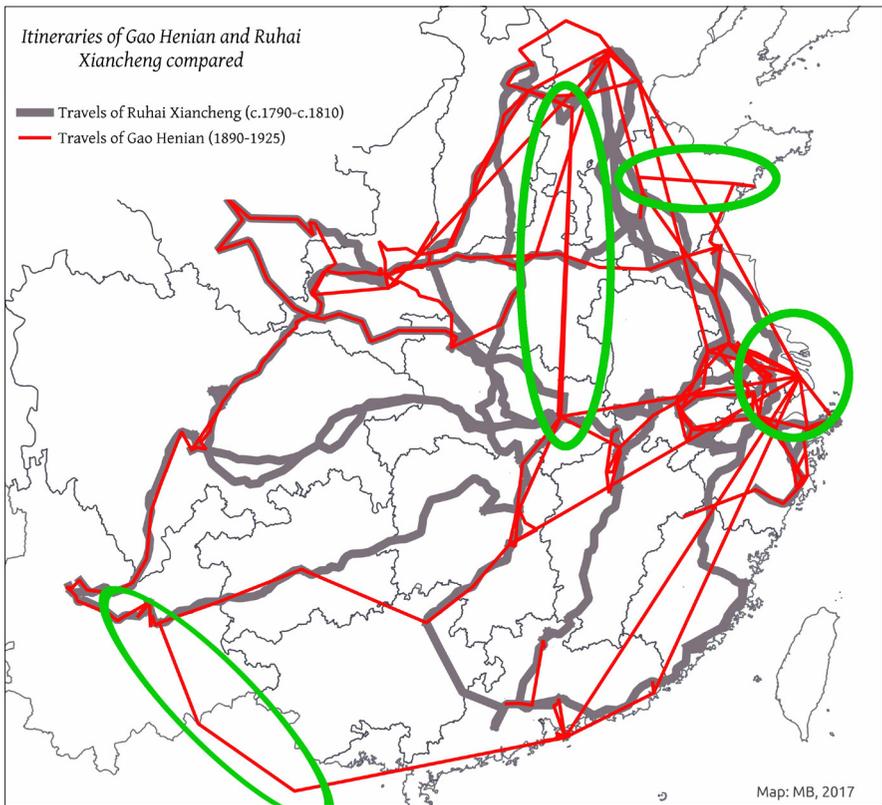
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Chapitre 14, map 3



Chapitre 14, map 4