


["The Tao-sze," says M. Polo, "were looked upon as heretics by the other sects; that is, of course, by the Lamas and Ho-shangs; in fact in his time a passionate struggle was going on between Buddhists and Tao-sze, or rather a persecution of the latter by the former; the Buddhists attributed to the doctrine of the Tao-sze a pernicious tendency, and accused them of deceit; and in support of these assertions they pointed to some of their sacred books. Taking advantage of their influence at Court, they persuaded Kúblái to decree the burning of these books, and it was carried out in Peking." (*Palladius*, 30.)—H. C.]

The term which Polo writes as *Sensin* appears to have been that popularly applied to the Taossé sect at the Mongol Court. Thus we are told by Rashíduddín in his History of Cathay: "In the reign of Din-Wang, the 20th king of this (the 11th) Dynasty, TAI SHANG LÁI KÚN, was born. This person is stated to have been accounted a prophet by the people of Khitá; his father's name was Hán; like Shák-múni he is said to have been conceived by light, and it is related that his mother bore him in her womb no less a period than 80 years. The people who embraced his doctrine were called  (*Shān-shān* or *Shinshin*)." This is a correct epitome of the Chinese story of *Laokiun* or *Lao-tsé*, born in the reign of *Ting Wang* of the Cheu Dynasty. The whole title used by Rashíduddín, *Tai Shang Lao Kiun*, "The Great Supreme Venerable Ruler," is that formerly applied by the Chinese to this philosopher.

Further, in a Mongol [and Chinese] inscription of the year 1314 from the department of Si-ngan fu, which has been interpreted and published by Mr. Wylie, the Taossé priests are termed *Senshing*. [See *Devéria, Notes d'Épigraphie*, pp. 39-43, and Prince *R. Bonaparte's Recueil*, Pl. xii. No. 3.—H. C.]

Seeing then that the very term used by Polo is that applied by both Mongol and Persian authorities of the period to the Taossé, we can have no doubt that the latter are indicated, whether the facts stated about them be correct or not.

The word *Senshing-ud* (the Mongol plural) is represented in the Chinese version of Mr. Wylie's inscription by *Sin-sǎng*, a conventional title applied to literary men, and this perhaps is sufficient to determine the Chinese word which *Sensin* represents. I should otherwise have supposed it to be the *Shin-sian* alluded to by Baldelli, and mentioned in the quotations which follow; and indeed it seems highly probable that two terms so much alike should have been confounded by foreigners. Samedo says of the Taossé: "They pretend that by means of certain exercises and meditations one shall regain his youth, and others shall attain to be *Shien-sien*, i.e. 'Terrestrial Beati,' in whose state every desire is gratified, whilst they have the power to transport themselves from one place to another, however distant, with speed and facility." Schott, on the same subject, says: "By *Sian* or *Shin-sian* are understood in the old Chinese conception, and particularly in that of the Tao-Kiao [or Taossé] sect, persons who withdraw to the hills to lead the life of anchorites, and who have attained, either through their ascetic observances or by the power of charms and elixirs, to the possession of miraculous gifts and of terrestrial immortality." And M. Pauthier himself, in his translation of the Journey of Khieu, an eminent doctor of this sect, to the camp of the Great Chinghiz in Turkestan, has related how Chinghiz bestowed upon this personage "a seal with a tiger's head and a diploma" (surely a lion's head, *Paizah* and *Yarligh*; see *infra*, Bk. II. ch. vii. note 2), "wherein he was styled *Shin Sien* or Divine Anchorite." *Sian-jin* again is the word used by Hiuen Tsang as the equivalent to the name of the Indian *Rishis*, who attain to supernatural powers.

["*Sensin* is a sufficiently faithful transcription of *Sien-seng* (*Sien-shing* in Pekingese); the name given by the Mongols in conversation as well as in official documents, to the Tao-sze, in the sense of preceptors, just as Lamas were called by them *Bacshi*, which corresponds to the Chinese *Sien-seng*. M. Polo calls them fasters and ascetics. It was one of the sects of Taouism. There was another one which practised cabalistic and other mysteries. The Tao-sze had two monasteries in