

of Ministers usually to have consisted of twelve high officials, viz. : two *Ch'ing-siang* [丞相] or (chief) ministers of state, one styled, "of the Right," and the other "of the Left"; four called *P'ing-chang ching-ssé*, which seems to mean something like ministers in charge of special departments; four assistant ministers; two Counsellors.

Rashiduddin, however, limits the Council to the first two classes: "Strictly speaking, the Council of State is composed of four *Ch'ing-sang* (*Ch'ing-siang*) or great officers (*Wazirs* he afterwards terms them), and four *Fanchán* (*P'ing-chang*) or associated members, taken from the nations of the Tajiks, Cathayans, Ighurs, and Arkaun" (*i.e.* Nestorian Christians). (Compare p. 418, *supra*.)

[A Samarkand man, Seyyd Tadj Eddin Hassan ben el Khallal, quoted in the *Masálak al Absár*, says: "Near the Khan are two amírs who are his ministers; they are called *Djing San* چينكسان (*Ch'ing-siang*). After them come the two *Bidjan*

بجان (*P'ing Chang*), then the two *Zoudjin* زوجين (*Tso Chen*), then the two *Yudjin* يوجين (*Yu Chen*), and at last the *Landjun* لنجون (*Lang Chang*), head of the scribes, and secretary of the sovereign. The Khan holds a sitting every day in the middle of a large building called *Chen* شن (*Sheng*), which is very like our Palace of Justice." (*C. Schefer, Cent. Ec. Langues Or.*, pp. 18-19.)—H. C.]

In a later age we find the twelve Barons reappearing in the pages of Mendoza: "The King hath in this city of Tabin (Peking), where he is resident, a royal council of twelve counsellors and a president, chosen men throughout all the kingdom, and such as have had experience in government many years." And also in the early centuries of the Christian era we hear that the Khan of the Turks had his twelve grandees, divided into those of the Right and those of the Left, probably a copy from a Chinese order then also existing.

But to return to Rashiduddin: "As the Kaan generally resides at the capital, he has erected a place for the sittings of the Great Council, called *Sing*. . . . The dignitaries mentioned above are expected to attend daily at the *Sing*, and to make themselves acquainted with all that passes there."

The *Sing* of Rashid is evidently the *Shieng* or *Sheng* (*Scieng*) of Polo. M. Pauthier is on this point somewhat contemptuous towards Neumann, who, he says, confounds Marco Polo's twelve Barons or Ministers of State with the chiefs of the twelve great provincial governments called *Sing*, who had their residence at the chief cities of those governments; whilst in fact Polo's *Scieng* (he asserts) has nothing to do with the *Sing*, but represents the Chinese word *Siang* "a minister," and "the office of a minister." [There was no doubt a confusion between *Siang* 相 and *Sheng* 省.—H. C.]

It is very probable that two different words, *Siang* and *Sing*, got confounded by the non-Chinese attachés of the Imperial Court; but it seems to me quite certain that they applied the same word, *Sing* or *Sheng*, to both institutions, viz. to the High Council of State, and to the provincial governments. It also looks as if Marco Polo himself had made that very confusion with which Pauthier charges Neumann. For whilst here he represents the twelve Barons as forming a Council of State at the capital, we find further on, when speaking of the city of Yangchau, he says: "*Et si siet en ceste cité uns des xii Barons du Grant Kaan; car elle est esleue pour un des xii sieges,*" where the last word is probably a mistranscription of *Sciengs*, or *Sings*, and in any case the reference is to a distribution of the empire into twelve governments.

To be convinced that *Sing* was used by foreigners in the double sense that I have said, we have only to proceed with Rashiduddin's account of the administration. After what we have already quoted, he goes on: "The *Sing* of Khanbaligh is the most eminent, and the building is very large. . . . *Sings* do not exist in all the cities, but only in the capitals of great provinces. . . . In the whole empire of the Kaan there are twelve of these *Sings*; but that of Khanbaligh is the only one which has *Ching-sangs* amongst its members." Wassáf again, after describing the greatness of Khanzai (Kinsay of Polo) says: "These circumstances characterize the capital