THE TA-MING SHIH-LU
(CAMBRIDGE AND PRINCETON)

BY
A. C. MOULE AND CHUNG KEI-WON
EDITED BY J. J. L. D.

[It has seemed useful to collect and publish some information about the various copies of the 明實錄 Ming Shih-lu or "Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty" which are now available in Europe and the U.S.A. The best-known set is that at the University of Cambridge 1), but some years ago an incomplete set was acquired for the Gest Oriental Library, at present at Princeton University 2). There is also an interesting defective set at the Bibliothèque nationale at Paris, which, as Professor Pelliot tells me, was acquired by him several years ago.

Circumstances have unfortunately made it impossible to have the last-named copy collated, but both Dr. A. C. Moule of Cambridge


2) The Gest Oriental Library which had been on deposit for the preceding ten years at McGill University, Montreal, Canada, was acquired in July 1936 by The Institute for Advanced Study with the cooperation of the Rockefeller Foundation. It is now at Princeton, New Jersey, U.S.A., where, under an arrangement between The Institute and Princeton University, the collection is administered as a part of the University Library.

Formerly called The Gest Chinese Research Library, it was founded by Mr. Guion M. Gest, an engineer and contractor of New York City, who, being attracted to Far Eastern culture through an interest in Buddhist philosophy, conceived the idea of establishing a Chinese library in a western university. With the collaboration of a personal friend, Mr. I. V. Gillis, Commander U.S.N. (retired), of Peking, China, the collection has been assembled as an organized working library, from its initial holdings of 8,000 Chinese stitched volumes to its present number of more than 135,000. (Note by Dr. Nancy Lee Swann).
University and Dr. Nancy Lee Swann, Curator of the Gest Library, most obligingly furnished me with an inventory of their respective sets. Of these, the Cambridge set is by far the more complete, and Dr. Moule's collation being at the same time the more detailed, I have taken this as basis for the following comparative inventory. Heavy type indicates that the chapters named only occur in the Cambridge set and not in the Princeton one. Special features mentioned in the text only refer to the Cambridge set; details of the Princeton set are given in footnotes, where they are clearly indicated as such, and marked by my initials.

The inventory of the Princeton copy was prepared by the assistant in the Library, the Korean Dr. Chung Kei-won. The following description is due to the Curator, Dr. Nancy Lee Swann:

Edition: manuscript, apparently a draft copy of the Ming period, written by several different scribes. The set was secured from the family of the late Viceroy Chang Chih-tung.

Defective pages: Hung-wu, chüan 38; on p. 1 of Hsüan-tê ch. 19 and T'ien-shun ch. 1 fingerprints have slightly worn the edges.

Size: manuscript average circa 145/150 by 210 mm; each half-page 11/12 columns; each column 23/24 characters.


Bound in 173 ts'ê, 28 han; each ts'ê has old brown paper binding recovered with dark blue silk having light blue silk corners; each han of dark blue cotton cloth, butterfly style, has an inner t'ao of polychromatic brocade.

1) I have added some notes about the Peking copies of the Ming Shih-Je; for the three copies preserved in Tokyö and the one in Seoul (cf. Walter Fuchs in Pacific Affairs IX, 1936, p. 83) my data are insufficient.