

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD^s THEIR RETURN TO ACRE that Barac began his reign in 1266.¹ Marco Polo was not there himself, and it is possible that the name of the ruler whom the travellers saw in 1267 was transferred by mistake to the earlier visit. There is one other small point which is clear. Not the year, but the time of year at which the brothers reached the Mongol court the second time is shown by the fact that they found it in the Summer Palace at Shang-tu, and Marco Polo himself is careful to give the approximate dates of the annual migrations to and from Shang-tu in chapter 95.

That the two brothers returned to Acre in April 1269 and thence went on to Venice is probably true, but the story is not without difficulty. For, having learnt at Acre that "the Apostle who had Clement III for name was lately (29 November 1268) dead, . . . they went to a learned clerk who . . . was named Theobald of the Visconti of Placentia" (p. 80). But as long ago as 1651 P. M. CAMPI remarked that contemporary writers agree in declaring that Theobald was not in Syria at all in 1269, and did not indeed leave Brindisi for the Holy Land until after he had heard of the death on 25 August 1270, of St Louis, nor reach Acre till after the arrival there near the end of April 1271 of Prince Edward, to whose retinue he was attached. The authorities quoted in the note below, including those on whom CAMPI seems to have relied, do not really say where Theobald was in April 1269, nor that he was not in Syria; but yet they must be allowed to make it unlikely that he was there when the two brothers came.²

¹ S. L. POOLE *The Mohammadan Dynasties*, 1894, p. 242. Baraq seems to have reigned from 1266 to 1270. The war between Bärkä and Hülägü began in August 1262, and was continued in 1263 (when there was a massacre in Bukhara) and 1264. Hülägü died on 8 February 1265. cf. d'OHSSON *Hist. des Mongols* III. pp. 380 sqq..

² P. M. CAMPI *Dell'Historia Ecclesiastica di Piacenza* Part II. 1651, p. 233, referring to CIACCONE and to the *Vita di Gregorio X.* The latter, written c. 1290, is found in MURATORI *Rerum Ital. Script.* tom. III. 1723, p. 601a: Denique instante ultramarini passagii termino (Theobald seems to have taken the Cross early in 1265), cum dictus Rex Franciæ jam se parasset ad iter, ipse Archidiaconus per Italiam pervenit Brundisium; & cum ex itinere fatigatus moram quietis ibi contraheret, de mor[t]e ejusdem Regis, in obsidione tunc civitatis Tunicii persistentis certitudine habita, & veritate comperta; infremuit spiritu, & vehementer turbatus est in se ipso. Ne tamen propter hoc divinis subduceretur obsequiis, & votum ejus existeret non completum; discedens de Brundisio, & maris periculis intrepidus se exponens, cum omni prosperitate, & gaudio Achon applicuit, ubi tam dictus Odoardus, quàm soror ejus Beatrix, Comitissa Britannia, de ipsius desiderato adventu non modicum sunt gavisii.

A. G. TONONI *Relazioni di Tedaldo Visconti coll'Inghilterra 1259-1271*, 1904, p. 6: Tra lui e il santo re di Francia Luigi IX ci fu la più grande intrinsechezza a segno che Tedaldo Visconti