

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD^s THE NEW TRANSLATION

V. THE PRESENT TRANSLATION

The aim of the present translation is to give in the first place a complete and literal translation of F. The effort to do this has, it is feared, produced rather a rough and uncouth effect in some places, but the result is, it is hoped, generally intelligible and never intentionally archaic. Into this literal version of F have been inserted as far as possible the additional words, phrases, sentences, or whole chapters, which have been found in a selected number of other good representative texts, namely FO, FA¹, FB⁴, TA¹, TA³, LT, VA³, P¹⁸, VG³, Z, L¹, V¹, VB², I, VL, S, and R. The versions have been made direct from photographs of these manuscripts (or from the first edition of S, R, and VG); but in a few instances I am indebted to Signor BENEDETTO's great edition of Marco Polo for short extracts from other manuscripts. These additions and insertions have only been made when it was possible to do so without making any change in the translation of F, so that if the additions were to be removed the translation of F could be read without alteration.¹ There are, of course, additional words and sentences which could not be so fitted in. These, if they were clearly unimportant, have been omitted or, if they were important, have been given at the foot of the page or at the end of a chapter. And there are obviously some things which such a version will not do. It will give a complete version of F; and it will show the principal passages which are in other manuscripts but not in F; but it will not show at all what parts of F may be missing in any other manuscript; nor will it show whether an addition made from a given manuscript is peculiar to that manuscript or is common to two or more manuscripts, as is often the case.

The additions are printed in italics, and when two or more additions follow one another they are divided by the sign . . . The sources of the additions are shown in the margin by the index letters given above (in the simplified forms of O, FA, FB, TA (TA¹, TA³), LT, VA, P, G, Z, L, V, VB, I, VL, S, R),² corresponding in position from left to right to the order of the additions, when there are more than one in a line.

¹ The only exceptions to this rule are that some small changes in the punctuation and in the use of capital letters have been made in F to suit the additions. There are also a few cases in which *and* or some other small word has been supplied to enable an insertion to be made, and such words are printed in square brackets.

² In some of the footnotes it has been necessary to refer to two manuscripts of the same family, and in such cases the index letters (e.g. L, L¹; VB, VB²) must be understood to have their correct value, as in the List of Manuscripts, pp. 509-516.