

.1.

NICOLAU AND MAFEU SET OUT FROM VENICE ~~✓~~MARCO POLO
FB LT all these things¹ to be recounted *in order* by Master Rustaciaus *citizen* of Pise who
LT LT was *with him* in that same dungeon at Jene, at the time when it was 1298² years since
VB LT the birth of *our Lord Master Jesus Christ*; *dividing this work into three parts*.

.2.

HOW MASTER NICOLAU AND MASTER MAFEU SET OUT FROM CONSTANTINOPLE
FB TO SEARCH OUT THE WORLD. It was true that at the time when one named
V Baudoin was Emperor of Constantinople *and in the time of Master Ponte of*
P P FB VB *Venese who then ruled Constantinople in the name of the ducal power of Venese, namely in the*
LT thousand two hundred[&]fifty-second year from the incarnation of the Lord Christ, two noble
citizens of Venese, namely Master Nicolau Pol who was father to Master Marc & Master
LT Mafeu Pol who was brother to Master Nicolau, *being in the harbour of Venese agreed to*
go on board one of their ships which was loaded with various and valuable merchandise and
P LT *setting sail went out into the deep sea and, with a fair wind blowing, by God's guidance safely*
reached the city of Constantinople with their said ship and merchandise. These two brothers
were in the city of Constantinople, who were gone there from [4c] Venese with
P their merchandise. Noble & wise & prudent they were without mistake. *And when*
they had been a short time in the city of Constantinople with good success they consulted
VB R together & said that they would go *with their wares* on the Greater Sea to see if they
P R *could make more gain & to make their profits.* And then they bought many jewels very
VB L beautiful & of great value & set out with them from Constantinople in a ship & entering
P into the Greater Sea went off to the harbour of a city of Armenie which is called Soldanie.

.3.

HOW MASTER NICOLAU & MASTER MAFEU SET OUT FROM SOLDANIE. And when
V they had stayed in Soldanie awhile & saw after many days in that land that
FB there was nothing for them, they thought & said that they would go still farther
V VB forward. And what shall I tell you about it? They set out from the said Soldanie and
LT LT arrived in Armenie and mounting their horses set themselves on the way and rode so far day
P after day without finding adventure worthy of mention that they were come to the court
LT of a great king of the Tartars who was called Berca Kaan, who was king and lord of a part of
LT VB Tartary, who was at that moment at Bolgara and at Saray.³ This Berca Kaan having
learned of the coming of the said two Latins wished to see them, and when they had heard, seeing
them men of good value he did great honour to Master Nicolau and to Master Mafeu and
LT R had very great joy at their coming. The said two brothers gave him freely, seeing that
LT they pleased him, all the jewels which they had brought with them from Constantinople,

¹ FA: *Le quel liure*

² VB: *e per dar prinzipio ne in piuj longo parlare non mi estendere vignero a narazion dela chossa chome per il dito messer marchio nele prisson de zenoa fu notade esscrjte ne ianj . . . M ij^llxxxviiij. V: 1299*

³ That is, probably, "between Bolgara and Saray". See p. 105, *entre baudac & mosul*, where TA has *a baudac e a mosul*.