

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD^s AND TO THE GREAT KAAAN

.5.

HOW THE TWO BROTHERS TRUSTED THE MESSENGERS TO THE GREAT KAAAN.
 Now when the two brothers have heard what this messenger had said to ^v
 them it pleased them much and seeing that they could not return home without con- ^{v p}
 tinual difficulty like men of great spirit not counting the long journey they had to make, they ^{vb}
 made them ready and said that they go gladly with him to the presence of the great lord ^{vb}
 of the Tartars; wherewith he was well content. And when it was time then they left the said ^{v v v}
 city and, commending themselves to the care of God, set themselves [5b] on the road with ^p
 this messenger, having Christian servants as companions whom they had brought with them ^p
 from Venese, and went a whole year of marches toward sunrising and then, turning to the ^{fb vb s}
 left hand,¹ by tramontaine and by the Greek wind before they were come there where ^{fb}
 the lord was. And the reason why they were so long time in going was this, because for the ^p
 snows and for the overflowing of the rivers and torrents it was necessary that they should wait
 on the way until the snows which had exceeded and the waters which had overflowed were
 decreased. And as they ride they find great wonders and strange things which we will ^{fb}
 not tell you here, because Master Marc, son of Master Nicolau aforesaid, who saw ^{vb}
 all these things also will tell you clearly in the course of this book below. ^{vb}

HOW THE TWO BROTHERS CAME TO THE GREAT KAAAN. And when the said two ^{vb} .6.
 brothers Master Nicolau and Master Mafeu were come and had been pre- ^v
 sented to the great lord of the Tartars named Cublai, who beamed with the ^{vb lt}
 greatest kindness, he received them with great honour and makes them great joy and very ^{fb fb}
 great festival. He has very great delight at their coming as one who had never seen any ^{ta}
 Latin, because in his days men of the sunsetting had not been in those parts. And he asks them ^{vb fb}
 of many things of the lands of the sunset; first of the emperors of the Romans and how ^{p p fb}
 they maintain their lordships and their land in justice, and how they go when they have a ^{va}
 great affair, and how they go to battle, and of embassies, and of all their other doing and ^{va fb va va}
 estate. And afterward he asks them of the other kings and of the Christian princes and ^{r p}
 of all the other barons, and of their greatness, customs, and power. ^{v fb r}

HOW THE GREAT KAAAN ASKS OF THE TWO BROTHERS OF THE AFFAIRS OF THE ^{va} .7.
 CHRISTIANS. And afterwards he asks them with great care of Master the ^{va}
 Apostle & of the Cardinals and of the faith and of all the doings of the ^{vl}
 Roman Church, and of all the manner and customs of the Latins. And the two brothers ^{vb fb}
 Master Nicolau and Master Mafeu told him step by step all the truth of each by ^v
 itself well and orderly and wisely, like wise men that they were who knew well the
 tongue of the Tartars and the Tartaresque,² so that they are very dear to the lord, and he ^{vb}

¹ VL: verso garbino passa per greco poi

² & la tartaresce FB: la langue tartaresse VA: la lengua tartarescha but V: de tartari e de turchi B. conjectures ce est la tartaresce.