

ARGON SENDS TO CUBLAI FOR A NEW BRIDE ≠ MARCO POLO  
*if he were alive. And so Master Nicolau one day, seeing that the great Kaan was very cheerful,*  
V took occasion to beg of him on his knees in the name of all three leave to depart to their home,  
R V at which word he was all disturbed and answered, *Why do you wish to go to die on the way?*  
R Tell me. *If you have need of gold I will give you much more of it than you have at home,*  
V R and likewise every other thing for which you shall ask; and he would advance them to whatever  
V honours they might wish. Then Master Nicolau answered, *O lord, that which I say is not*  
*for want of gold, but it is because in my land I have a wife and by the Christian law I cannot*  
*forsake her while she lives. Then for the great love which he bore them the lord answered,*  
*On no condition in the world am I willing that you depart from my realm, but I am well*  
LT *content that you go about it where you please. They ask leave [thus] of the great Kaan*  
LT *to return to their homes and families several times and pray him for it very sweetly;*  
LT *but the great Kaan loved them so much, was so much pleased with their deeds, and kept*  
*them so willingly about him that for nothing in the world did he give them leave.*  
V R Now it happened after a certain time that the great queen Bolgana who was wife of  
L Argon, the lord at that time of the Tartars of the sunrising, died. And that queen  
R LT at the point of death asks favour of the king, and so leaves by her last will that no lady  
R might sit on her throne nor be wife of Argon if she were not of her line, which  
FB R was found in Catai. So then Argon took three of his wise barons who had names  
FB FB like this, the first Oulatai, the second Apusca, and the third Coja. And he sends  
VA FB LT them very grandly as his messengers to the great Kaan with a very great [and] fair company  
LT FB in order to ask that he should send him a lady who was of the line of the [8c] queen  
FB LT Bolgana his wife who was dead,<sup>1</sup> to marry him; because she had so ordained, as was  
said above. And when the three barons were come to the great Kaan then they  
FB FB told him their message and the reason why they were come from Argon. The great  
P FB FB Kaan received them most honourably and made great joy and great feasting for them.  
VB Then since king Argon was his very great friend he sends for a lady who had Cocacin  
VA FB for name who was of the lineage which they desired of that queen Bolgana who was  
VB FB dead, who was a girl of seventeen<sup>2</sup> years, a noble lady very fair<sup>3</sup> and amiable. And  
when she was come he said to the three barons that this lady was the one of whom  
L they came in search, saying, *Take her to Argon your lord, for she is of the family he seeks,*  
VA *so that he may take her safely to wife. And when they had heard the word those said that it*  
R *pleases them well. And when all things necessary had been made ready and a great brigade*  
*to escort with honour this new bride to king Argon, the envoys, after taking leave of the great*

<sup>1</sup> LT: *de lignagio cotroco regine bolgarie defonte*

<sup>2</sup> FB: xv. VB: *hoto*

<sup>3</sup> *bien* but FB, etc.: *belle* VB: *nobille et beljssima dona*