

HOW NICOLAU MAFEU & MARC WERE TRUSTED \neq MARCO POLO

R said in their legends that *in the strength of the eternal God the name of the great Kaan must be honoured and praised for ever, and that every one who shall not obey be put to death and his goods confiscated*; & then that these three messengers should be honoured & L served through all his land as his own person, and that horses *if they were needed* L and all expenses and all escort should be given them *in full through any dangerous* LT *places, for themselves and their whole company.* And indeed it was so done, for they have through all his land horses and expenses and all things necessary well and liberally; for I tell you without fail that many times there were given them two hundred¹ horsemen, and more and less according as was necessary for their escort VA and to go safely from one land to another. And this was very necessary *many* R *times, for they found many dangerous places,* because Quiacatu *had no authority and was* VA *not natural nor liege lord and therefore the people did not refrain from doing evil* R R *as they would have done if they had [9b] a true and liege lord. And while Masters Nicolau, Mafeu, and Marc were making this journey they learnt how the great Kaan was cut off from this life, and this took away from them all hope of being able to return any more to those parts.*² And again I tell you another thing which does well to mention for the honour of these three messengers. For I tell you quite truly that Master Mafeu and Master Nicolau and Master Marc have so great authority as I shall tell you. For you may know that the great Kaan trusts so much in them and TA was so fond of them that *out of reverence for these three messengers he trusts to them the queen Cocacin and also trusts the daughter of the king of Mangi*³ that they should take them to Argon the lord of all the Sunrising. And they did so, for they take them by the sea just as I have told you before with so many people and with so great expense. Moreover I tell you that these two great ladies were in the care of these three messengers, for they caused them to be saved and protected as if they were their daughters, and the ladies who were very young and fair took these three for their father and obeyed them so. And these three placed them in the hands of their lord. Moreover I tell you with all truth that the queen Cocacin who is wife to Caçan who now reigns, her lord Caçan and herself, wishes so great good to the three messengers that there is not a thing that she would not do for them as her own father himself. For you may know that when these three messengers

¹ TA,LT: 400 TA³: *iiij^c charri*

² This sentence, peculiar to R, is rather difficult to reconcile with the places where Qubilai is spoken of as still living. See below, pp.102,167,185,192,193, and p.43 above. It is worthy of notice that R omits the specially awkward reference to the year 1298 in c. 77 below.

³ TA¹: *la reina/caciese/figliuola de Re de mangi* TA³: *aghatu affido loro la reyna chaciesi figliuola derre de mangi*