

THE SANDY DESERTS OF CIARCIAN AND OF LOP \neq MARCO POLO

VA are enemies,¹ all the men of that province who are in a place where the army passes they fly
 FB LT with all their wives and with children and with their beasts and all their things
 LT P among the sands two days marches or three from Ciarcian into other places where
 LT L they know that there is pasture to be found and good water and that they could live
 V LT with their beasts, & that their enemy does not find them; and there they stay and wait until
 the army is passed. Moreover I tell you that none can see where they are gone
 V LT because the wind from the south west, which prevails in those places, destroys their footsteps.
 L LT made in the sand immediately and covers the ways by which they are gone with sand,
 VB so that when the army comes & does not find anybody, they do not know where they are &
 it is not seen where they are gone and it does not seem that man or beast had
 VA LT ever gone that way, & they know not what to do. After the departure [of the enemy] they
 return to their proper place. In that way they escape from their enemies as I have [23b]
 LT told you. And if it happens that an army of the Tartars to whom they are subject, who
 LT V are friends, pass that way, then the men do not fly but the beasts only fly, & they do
 this because they do not wish them to be taken from them and eaten; for the
 LT VA armies of the Tartars do not pay for things which they take from the people where
 R they pass. And know that when they reap their corn they store it far from the dwellings in
 those sands, in certain caves, for fear of the armies, and thence they bring back home what is
 necessary from month to month, nor do others than themselves know those places, nor can any
 ever know where they go, because the wind when it blows immediately covers their footprints
 with sand. And when one departs from Ciarcian he goes quite five days marches
 V VA VB still through sand where there is some very bad water and some very bitter, and in
 VA some places there is found some good and sweet. And there is nothing which does
 FB to mention in our book; so we will go forward and will tell you of a province which
 V FB has Lop to name. And at end of these five days marches one finds a city also, which
 FB is named Lop, which is at the end of the great desert, where the men rest themselves
 [and] take food to cross the desert. And therefore let us leave it and we will tell
 you further.

FB Z L **H**ERE HE TELLS OF THE CITY OF LOP. Lop is a great city which is at the
 end of the desert, from which when one departs one enters into the very
 V VA V great desert which is called the desert of Lop, and it is between sun-
 rising and the Greek wind. And this city belongs to the rule of the great Kaan, and
 Z P the people of it worship Mahomet. All things needful for travellers who wish to cross
 the desert are made ready in this city. And I tell you that those who wish to cross the
 VA V V great desert must rest in this town at the least a week to refresh themselves and their

¹ il que soient enesus cf. B. p. 42.