

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD<sup>s</sup> THE REBELLION OF NAIAN

·77·

and in that year he begins to reign, *at the age of twenty-seven years*.<sup>1</sup> And you may know VB  
 that he had the rule by his valour and by his prowess and by his great knowledge  
*as was just and right*; for his kindred and his brothers *and many other barons, who* FB VB R  
*were unwilling, wished to take it to themselves and kept it from him*. But he by great LT  
 prowess *snatched it from their hands and had it against the will of the brothers*. And L VB  
 you may know that *the succession to the rule which he has come to him directly by* R LT  
 right. There are forty-two years since he begins to reign until this current moment  
*of the present day in the course of the year of the Lord·Christ, 1298*. He can well have about LT FB L  
 fourscore [34b] and five years of age, *so that he might well have been about forty-three years* FB  
*of age when he was enthroned*.<sup>2</sup> And before he was lord he used almost always to go  
 to war *several times in the year, and wished to be found in every enterprise, because, besides* FB R  
*the fact that he was an expert man of arms and valiant and brave with weapons in hand,* R  
*he had come to be reckoned a good captain, the wisest and boldest in counsel and strategy* R  
*that the Tartars ever had*. But after he was lord he does not ever go to any war in person, L L VB  
*but sends his sons and captains on the expeditions as he pleases, except once only, and that* R VA V  
 was in the 1286 year of the Lord·Christ, and I will tell you why. It was true that L FB  
*there was a great Tartar lord, one that had Naian for name, who was uncle of the said* FB FB  
 lord Cublai Kaan; who is a young gentleman of thirty<sup>3</sup> years, ruler and lord of V  
 many lands and of many people & of several provinces so that he can well make up VA  
 400000<sup>4</sup> horses, that is horsemen. His ancestors have formerly been under the great V  
 Kaan, and this man himself was also under *his nephew* the great Kaan who was named FB FA  
 Cublai; and was rightly bound to be so. But so as I have told you, this was a young  
 gentleman of thirty years. So that when he saw himself so great a lord that he can FA  
 well put 400000 horsemen in the field, *he grew proud because of his youth and because* FA  
*he had great power*. He says that he would not be under the dominion of the great Kaan VA  
 any longer, *because he feared that the great Kaan would take away from him his rule, but* V  
 says that he will rebel against Cublai & take away all the land<sup>5</sup> and the rule from him VB TA  
 if ever he can with all his might. Then this Naian that he might be able to do this sends V VB

<sup>1</sup> Qubilai was actually enthroned on 5 May 1260, in the forty-fifth year of his age, his predecessor having died on 11 August 1259. See PN.

<sup>2</sup> The variants in the dates and ages seem to be simple slips. FB: 40 since he began to reign, but treated as 42 in the subsequent calculation. FA,LT,V,VA: 1288. Of more interest is the reading of FD(B.p.lx): *jusques a ore mccc et viii de crist* though this by no means proves that the FG version may have been made in or before 1308. cf. p.62 above.

<sup>3</sup> TA: xx

<sup>4</sup> TA<sup>3</sup>: Mcccc<sup>o</sup>

<sup>5</sup> LT: & accepit sibi totam terram