

THE ANCIENT CAMBALUC NEW BUILT AS TAIDU = MARCO POLO

FB town of Catai which is called Cambaluc, the place where these palaces are, why it
 VA VA was made where it is, and how it is made.¹
 P VA It is true that there was an ancient city standing on a great river in the province of
 Catai, which in time past was very great and noble there, which had Cambaluc for name,
 which means to say in our language the city of the lord. And the great Kaan
 found from his astrologers that this city was bound to rebel & to make great
 V opposition against the government. And for this reason the great Kaan had it
 VA FB VA destroyed and ruined & had this other city of Cambaluc made by the side of that, beyond
 L a great river which is there, where the said palaces are, so that there is only a river between,
 R and made them take all the Cataians (that is those who were natives of the province of
 R R Catai), the people from that old city, and put[them] into the new town which he
 R had founded, which is called Taidu. And those of whom he was not afraid that they would
 rebel he left in the old, because the new would not contain so many people as lived in the old,
 which was very large. And yet it is so great as I shall tell you. It is twenty-four miles
 FB L VA round, that is that on every quarter it has a face of six miles, and is exactly square by line,
 R R so that it is no more or no longer on the one side of the square than on the other.
 FB L It is all walled with walls of earth which are about ten paces thick below, and
 FB more than twenty high. But I tell you that they are not so thick above as below,
 because all the way from the foundations upwards they came tapering so that at
 P L FB top they are only about three² paces thick. They are all entirely embattled and the
 L P battlements white. There are moreover twelve principal gates, and above each gate is
 VA a very large palace and fair, so that on each side of the walls are three principal
 FB gates and five palaces, because there is yet another palace very fair and large for each
 L L VA R corner of the city. In all these palaces are many very great and wide halls in which the
 R armies of those [38c] who guard the city dwell.³ Moreover I tell you that the whole
 R L city is set out by line; for the main streets from one side to the other of the town are drawn
 VA R out straight as a thread, & are so straight and so broad that if anyone mount on the wall
 R at one gate and look straight one sees from the one side to the other the gate of the other
 side, opposite to that, and they are so planned that each gate is seen as the others⁴

¹ FB,TA,LT,P,R all begin a new chapter at this point. FA follows F in making no break.

² FB,LT: "four" Others "three"

³ les armes . . cite demorent FA: les armes . . cite sont FB: les armes . . palais demeurent TA: jstanno gli uomenj . . la terra and so LT But P: seruant arma . . ciuitatis R: stanno l'armi . . citta V: sono larme . . zitade L: sunt stant(sic) armamenta pro custodia VA: le arme de cholor che guardano VL has both gente and arme.

⁴ se uoit con les autres FB: comme lautre FA: delautre The idea seems to be that one could see down the great straight streets across the city from one gate to another, but by confusing part