

THE WORSHIP OF CUBLAI AT THE WHITE FEAST = MARCO POLO

VA R lands and of armies *all* come into the great hall before the great lord, and those
 P FB who by reason of the multitude do not achieve this stay outside the palace[and]worship
 P P outside in the halls at the side, in such place that the great lord who sits on a throne can
 LT R L see them all well. And I tell you that they are all arranged in this way. For first
 R LT of all are his sons and his grandsons and all those of his direct imperial line. Next
 V V VA to these are the kings and next to the kings the dukes, then the barons & knights, and then
 P all the orders the one after the other so as it was suitable according to their ranks and
 R FB dignity of office. And when they are all seated each in his proper place, then a great
 L R P wise ancient man, as one might say a great prelate, stands up in the middle and says in
 P V V a very loud voice, Now all soever bow down and worship at once your lord. And as
 P P soon as he has so said they all rise up and bow themselves immediately and bend the knee
 and put their foreheads on the ground and make their [40c] prayer towards the lord
 V R and worship him just as if he were their God. Then the prelate says, God save and keep
 our lord long with joy and gladness. And all answer, God do so. And the prelate says a second
 time, God increase and multiply his empire from good to better, and preserve all the people
 subject to him in tranquil peace and goodwill, and in all his lands may all things prosperous
 continue. And all answer, God do so. And in such a way they worship him four¹ times.
 FB R V P R And then, this done, they stand up and go² all in their order to an altar which is there
 VL very well adorned, and on that altar is a red tablet on which is written with letters
 VL of gold and of precious stones of great value the proper name of the great Kaan. And
 FB LT P there is also a beautiful golden thurifer or censer made ready, in which is sweet incense,
 R L and they—the prelate on behalf of all—go up to this altar, & taking the censer incense
 L LT R that tablet of the great Kaan and the altar with great reverence to the great Kaan. And
 FB then all do great reverence to the said tablet on the altar. Then each one goes back to his
 P L place. And when they have all done this wicked censuring then the presents to the great
 Kaan are made, of which I have told you, which are of so very great value and so rich.
 And when the presents are all made and the great lord has seen all these things,
 V once more they worship the abovesaid great Kaan, and then the tables are set. And when
 FB LT the tables are set then the people sit down each in his place to eat, in such order as
 V R I have told you before, and in the same way all the women as well as the men. For the
 L great lord sits at his high table on the north side of the hall, & turning his face toward
 the midday is easily able to see all who are feasting together in the hall, and with him on
 L L the left side sits the empress, that is his first wife, and no one else sits there. But under
 the lord, that is lower, sit the sons & all who proceed from the imperial[line]. Then sit all

¹ VA: "three"² R: detto Prelato và