

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD^s THE KAAAN'S JOURNEYS

month of February he makes the great feast of their day of the year, which they call the White Feast, as I have told you further back all clearly in order. And then he leaves and goes off towards the Ocean sea, hunting¹ and hawking, as I have related to you, from the first day of March until mid-May when he returns to his chief city for three days, as I have told you above. In which three days he makes great feasting with his wives, and holds great court and great enjoyment. For I tell you that it is a wonderful thing to see the great ceremony which the great lord makes on these three days. Then he departs as I have told you. So that ^{FB} he dwells the whole year, thus divided: six months in his chief city of Cambaluc in his chief palace, that is September and October, November and December, January, February; and then he leaves to go to the great chase on the great sea, and remains there March, April, May (sometimes all), and then returns to his palace of Cambaluc; and then stays three days; and then goes off to his city of Ciandu which he caused to be made there, where is his palace of canes, and dwells there June, July, and August. And then returns thence to his chief city of Cambaluc again. Thus he spends the whole year: six months in his city, and three months in the chase, and three months in his palace of canes for the heat; so that he leads his life in very great enjoyment. Except that sometimes he goes elsewhere in his country this way and that, enjoying himself at his pleasure.² Moreover I tell you that in this city of Cambaluc there is so ^{VA} great a number of houses and of people, between inside the town and outside; for you may know that there are as many suburbs or districts, outside the city at each gate, ^R as gates (these are twelve), which are very large so that the suburb of each gate touches ^R the suburbs of the gates on either side, and they extend for a length of three and four miles; that there is no man who could tell the number. For there are many more people ^{FB} in those suburbs than in the town. And in each of these suburbs or districts for perhaps ^{R R} a mile distant from the city are many and fine factories in which stay and lodge the merchants and the travelling foreigners, of whom there are many from all parts to bring things as presents ^{FA} to the lord and to sell to the court, and all other men who come there for their business, who come there in very great quantity, between [those who come] for the court of the ^{VA}

¹ FA,FB: *chantant* PAUTHIER, presumably following FA²: *chaicent*

² The above two long additions are taken from FB with some additions or slight modifications from FA. They are easily condemned as an editorial addition; but they may equally well be Marco Polo's own, or Rustichello's, attempt to summarise the great Kaan's annual migrations. In any case the work is not very successfully done. Most texts say that the Spring hunt lasted till Easter; FB says till mid-May, or sometimes till the end of May (FA omits this), and yet makes the Kaan reach Shang-tu on the first day of May; and again makes him stay at Shang-tu three months, namely June, July, and August. The fact that Qubilai spent the summer at Shang-tu is abundantly proved by the *Yüan shih*, but the dates do not tally exactly with Marco's memory. cf. pp. 186,187,215 above and PN.