

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD<sup>s</sup> AND ITS GREAT TRADE

Cambaluc *from all sides* than into any city of the world, and greater quantity of all things, and I will tell you what. First of all [I shall tell] you that all the dear things that come from Indie, these are precious stones and pearls, and silk and all the spicery, and all other dear things, are brought to this town. And again all the beautiful things and all the dear which are in the province of Catai & from Mangi and from all other provinces round about are brought there also. And this happens because everyone from everywhere brings there for the lord who lives there and for his court and for the city which is so great and for the ladies and for the barons and the knights of whom there are so many and for the great abundance of the multitude of the people of the armies of the lord, which stay round about as well for the court as for the city, and of other people who come there by reason of the court which [44a] the great lord holds there, and for one and for another; & because the city is in too good a position & is in the middle of many provinces. And for this reason which I have told you more dear things and of greater value come to this town and greater quantities than into any town in the world, and more goods are sold and bought there than in any other city, so that so much of everything comes there that it is without end. For you may know in truth that among the rest, almost each day in the year there come into this town more than a thousand carts<sup>1</sup> loaded with silk alone, for many cloths of gold and of silk are made there and many other things. And it is no wonder, for in all the provinces round there is no flax, so that it is convenient to make everything of silk. And yet it is true that they have cotton and hemp in some places, but not enough to satisfy them; but they do not make much of it, because of the great quantity which they have of silk, and cheap, which is better than flax or cotton. And again this city of Cambaluc has round it infinite villages and more than two hundred other cities both far and near which come, the people of these towns, from a distance of 200 miles to buy many things in this city, and from there they have the things which are needed for them, and live for the most part while the court is here by selling the things needful to the city. And so it is not a great thing if as many things as I have told you come into this city of Cambaluc so that it is a city of very great trade. And since I have told you of this wonder well and skilfully and have shown you the nobility of this city and of the lord, now I shall tell you of the government of the lord and of the doings of the mint and of the money which is made in this same city of Cambaluc, and we shall show you clearly how the great lord can do much more and spend more than I have told you; nor shall I tell you of it in this book, for it could not be that you will be satisfied that I am speaking truth and reason.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> FB: cent mille R: piu di mille fra carrette, & some di seda,

<sup>2</sup> ne ne uoç dirai en ce liure Raison comant FB: ne ne diray en cest liure car il ne pourroit estre si que vous