

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD<sup>s</sup> THE GREAT KAAAN'S NAVY

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notes. And *then* at the end of these two<sup>1</sup> days journeys one finds the noble and great river of Caramoran which *passes through*[and] comes from the land of Zafu under the rule of that king who is called Prester Johan, the oft-mentioned Uncan, which is very great and deep and broad. For you may know that in my judgement it is a mile<sup>2</sup> broad, and it is very deep so that very large ships of no less size than our trawlers,<sup>3</sup> but made in the manner of ships of their manner, can go there well with their cargoes. There are fish enough and large found in it. You may know that there are [61c] on this river quite fifteen thousand<sup>4</sup> ships which all belong to the great Kaan—and not only in this place, but in many others, wherever cities are built by the aforesaid river—which ships are to carry his armies to the islands of Indie of the Ocean sea whenever there is need, if they rebel; or to any remote and distant region. For I tell you that the sea is there near to this place where we are at present, one days journey. And I tell you that these ships, one with another, are so large that they need twenty<sup>5</sup> sailors each and more, and carry each about fifteen horses with the necessary men and with their food and their trappings. And where those ships are kept on the said river, that is at the mouth, are two cities; there is one city on this side and one on that, that is opposite the one to the other. The one has the name Coigangiu and the other has the name Caguy, which the one is a great city and the other is small. And henceforth when one crosses this river then he enters into the great & noble province of Mangi, and I will tell you how the great Kaan conquers this province of Mangi as you will be able to hear below. But do not believe that we have treated of the whole province of Catai in order, not indeed of a twentieth part; but only as I Marc used to cross through the province, so the cities which are on the way across are described, passing by those which are at the sides and through the middle, to tell of which would be too long.

**H**OW THE GREAT KAAAN CONQUERS THE GREAT PROVINCE OF MANGI. It was true that the great province of Mangi is the noblest and most rich in all the East; and in 1269 master and lord of it was a king who was named Facfur, who was a very great king and powerful in treasure and in people and in lands, so that there was hardly a greater for a century of years past known to have been in the world, and certainly there was none more rich and more strong if it was not the great Kaan. But yet you may know that they were not men at arms; for all their delight was in women, and especially the king above all the others, so that he was not a valiant man

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<sup>1</sup> FA,FB: iii agreeing with "three" above. V,LT,Z "two" TA omits.

<sup>2</sup> VA: *bem sete meglio* TA<sup>3</sup>: *questo fiume ellagho fu chiamato illagho uermiglo*

<sup>3</sup> *choche*

<sup>4</sup> Z: *tot naues quod timeo dicere numerum ne dicar mendax* and so V. VA: *vintimilia*

<sup>5</sup> VA: *bem trenta*