

THE THIRD BOOK OF THE ISLANDS OF INDIE ≠ MARCO POLO

FB Z Z FB *But they are true things, with no fable.* And the master will put them there all skilfully just as *the said* Master Marc Pol saw and describes them and speaks in order, and Z *because he knows them well.* Moreover I tell you quite truly that Master Marc Pol FB stays there in Indie so long and went and came there so often and inquired and asked so much, Z *that both by hearing and by sight he was able fully to learn and to see and knows so much of them, of their affairs and of their customs and of their trade, that there was scarcely¹* FB a man who ever knew or saw so much of them, as he did, who would know better how to tell the truth about them. And yet it is true that there are some so wonderful Z things there that the people who should hear them would indeed be *much* wondering. Z But nevertheless we shall put them in writing one after the other just so as the Z *oft-mentioned* Master Marc Pol told them for truth; and we shall begin all immediately R just as you will be able to hear in this book forward, of the countries, cities, & provinces of Indie Greater, Less, and Middle, where he was when he found himself on the service of the great Kaan, sent by him for various duties; and afterwards when he came with the queen of king Argon, with his father and uncle, and returned home; therefore he will speak of the wonderful things which he saw in those parts, not leaving behind the others which he heard told by persons of repute and worthy of trust, and also that which was shown him on charts of the P *sailors of the said Indies.* The second book ends. [71c]

FB **H**ERE HE BEGINS THE BOOK OF INDIE AND HE WILL DESCRIBE ALL THE MARVELS WHICH ARE THERE AND THE MANNERS OF THE PEOPLE.² Now LT since we have told you of so many provinces, kingdoms, and countries Z of the firm land as you have heard above, then we shall leave all that matter and shall begin to enter into Indie to tell all the wonderful things which are there, and we Z P shall begin first of all to tell about the great ships in which the merchants go and come P into Indie through the Indian sea. Now you may know that those ships are made in P Z such a way as I shall describe to you. I tell you that they are mostly built of the wood P which is called fir and of pine.³ They have one floor, which with us is called a deck, Z P one for each, and on⁴ this deck there are commonly in all the greater number quite VB P V Z sixty little rooms or cabins, and in some more, and in some fewer, according as the ships are larger and smaller, where, in each, a merchant can stay comfortably. They have R P one good sweep or helm, which in the vulgar tongue is called a rudder, and four masts

¹ *apiertemes* B. corrects to *a piece mes*

² *de iors* Ft: *des jors* FB: *des gens* V: *dele zente* Z: *habitantium in ea* Chapter 161 (*des maineres des ydres*) might suggest *des idres* as a possible correction here, but the MSS. favour *iens*.

³ VB: *in sua lingua fu(?) chiamato beta el qual e como zapin*

⁴ VB,R: "under"