

THE GREAT KAAAN SENDS AN ARMY TO ÇIPINGU ≈ MARCO POLO

VB palace which is all covered with *sheets* of fine gold. Just in such a way as we cover  
 our house with lead and our church, just in such a way is this palace covered with  
 FB FB fine gold, so that it is worth so much that it could hardly be told, *nor is there any*  
 FB *in the world who could redeem it.* And yet more, for again I tell you that all the pavements  
 VB of the hall of the said palace and of some<sup>1</sup> of his rooms, of which there are many, are  
 FB P likewise of fine gold all in great and large tiles, which golden tiles have a measurement of  
 more indeed than two fingers thick. And all the other parts of the palace and the  
 halls and the windows are likewise adorned with gold. I tell you that this palace  
 Z is of such unmeasured great wealth that it would be too vast a wonder if anyone  
 Z FB G could in any way count it, for none could tell its worth. And they have large white pearls  
 Z L L in this island in infinite abundance; and even if they are red, yet they are very beautiful and  
 FB P round and large and of great value. And they are of as great price & worth as the white  
 Z and more. And in this island some are buried when they are dead, some are burned; but in  
 the mouth of every one who is buried is put one of these pearls, and such custom is kept among  
 Z P them. They have also many other precious stones enough there. And for this cause  
 Z Z it is an island so rich that none could any way tell the riches of it. Moreover I  
 L tell you that because of the great nobility and wealth which one told the great Kaan,  
 VB FB that was this most valiant lord Cublai Kaan who now reigns,<sup>2</sup> that there was in this  
 FB Z said island, he says that he wished to have it taken and subjected to his rule. And then  
 VB FB he sends there two of his most famous great barons with a very great number of  
 FB Z ships with great plenty of men on horses and on foot to take the island. The one of  
 these barons had Abacan for name and the other Vonsamcin. These two barons  
 VB were wise and valiant. [72c] And what shall I tell you of them? They set themselves  
 on the road and reached the port of Çaiton named by us before, & having found & prepared great  
 quantity of ships with their furniture and all that they needed for war, they went on board and  
 Z VB sailed from Çaiton and from Quinsai and put to sea and go sailing many days as  
 Z far as to reach this island, and they went down on to the land and took plenty of  
 FB the plain and of the hamlets.<sup>3</sup> But they had not yet taken any city or town or castle  
 FB when there happened to them staying on that plain such a misadventure as I shall  
 L tell you. Now you may know that there was great jealousy arisen between these  
 TA FB two barons, and the one did nothing for the other. You must know that the wind from  
 tramontaine blows very hard and does great harm to that island because there are few ports.

<sup>1</sup> FB: toutes<sup>2</sup> FB: qui adonc Regnoit<sup>3</sup> casaus TA<sup>3</sup>: delle choste but other MSS. support casaus.