

TOCTAI & NOGAI BEAR THEMSELVES VALIANTLY ≠ MARCO POLO

z VB the ground dead and wounded to death. They attacked with such slaughter and cruelty that in a very short space all that plain was covered with bodies dead and wounded, and the blood ran over the plain in great torrents. The shouting and the noise and the clashing of the swords was so great there that one did not hear God thundering. There are so many dead there that so many scarcely ever died in any battle. But without mistake many more of Toctai's men died there than did those of Nogai. For those of Nogai were better enough men at arms than those of Toctai were. Moreover I tell you all truly that the two sons of Tolobuga do very well in that battle and show great prowess in arms; for they exert themselves with all their might to avenge the death of their father. But this was in vain; for it would have been too great a thing to put the king Nogai to death. And what shall I tell you about it? The battle was so cruel and evil that in an evil hour was it begun. For very great numbers were sound and hearty in the morning who were killed in that battle; and many ladies were married who in that battle were widows. And this was no wonder because it was too evil a battle. And the king Toctai exerts himself with all his might to keep up his [111b] people and his honour, and he shows very great prowess there in arms. And truly he does so well that it does well to praise through all the world.

z For he flings himself among the enemy in such a way as if he should care nothing for his death. He strikes to right and to left. He goes scattering the people and takes them.¹ He acts in such a way that there was great loss to many that day,

z both to friends and to enemies. There was loss to the enemy because he killed many of them with his own hand, and there was also loss to the friends because when they see him do so well he gave them heart and courage to run upon the enemy, and they set themselves to do things by which they were dead and slain.

z **H**OW THE KING NOGAI BEHAVES HIMSELF VALIANTLY. And of the king Nogai I tell you just other such. For you may know quite truly that he did so well in his own person *that day* that he saw² none there either on the one side or on the other who did so well, and without fail he had thereby the prize and the praise of all the battle. He put himself among the enemy as bravely as the lion does among the *other* wild beasts; he goes beating down and killing them; he does too great harm to them. He put himself into the greatest presses that he saw; he goes scattering them now here now there as if they were

¹ *il uait deportent les rens & les pris* Z p. cxxviii: *separando acies* So probably correct (as 1824 and B.) to *departent*. B. corrects *pris* to *preses*, which he translates as *calca* "crowd, press". *rens* does not occur elsewhere in F, but B. considers the change to *jens* (1824) as unnecessary.

² *auoit* carefully changed to *ueoit* B. prints *avoit*, which indeed makes better sense.