

Ejercicios resueltos > Synonims

The Travels of Marco Polo - Synonims

The Travels of Marco Polo was a book conceived in a prison cell in Genoa (Italy) in 1298. A few years earlier, in 1292, after a twenty-four year journey, Polo had returned to the West from Kublai Khan's Eastern empire. Polo's book was an account of this vast empire having a stage of civilization far more advanced than anything Europeans could imagine.

In medieval times Europe was plagued by inept and corrupt leaders, misguided Crusades, the Black Death, hunger and lack of hygiene. To this grim reality, Polo introduced Kublai Khan, a model statesman who presided wisely over a huge empire with fantastic cities, advanced technology and transportation systems. This was a place where everything that Europe did not have and greedily desired could be found. However, many people questioned the authenticity of Polo's accounts and even took them to be fairytales. But much of what Polo wrote, regarded with suspicion in medieval times, was confirmed by travellers of the 18th and 19th centuries, and most of the detail has since been corroborated by historians and geographers.

Fiction or not, Polo's book has captured readers for centuries. Although its author received little recognition in life, he was capable of comprehending cultures completely alien to his own. Today no one can fail to appreciate the book's celebration of the heterogeneity of nature, geography and, above all, people. Races are differentiated but not denigrated and the customs of different cultures are met with enthusiastic curiosity, not with the prejudice prevalent in Europe at that time.

Find the words in the text that mean: (?)

a) *description*: account (relato)

Ayuda: *description* es un sustantivo. Su sinónimo tiene que ser otro sustantivo. En este caso, *account* es el que más se aproxima en significado. Significa, "relato, explicación o versión"...

b) *terrible* : grim (cruda)

Ayuda: *terrible* es un adjetivo que significa "espantosa, horrible". Su sinónimo es otro adjetivo, *grim*, que modifica a *reality* en el texto: "cruda realidad".

c) *foreign*: alien (ajeno)

Ayuda: la expresión *to be foreign to something* significa lo mismo que *to be alien to something*: "ser ajeno a algo". En el texto, se refiere a las culturas que Marco Polo conoció en sus viajes.

d) *common*: prevalent (extendido)

Ayuda: el adjetivo *common* significa "común, corriente". *Prevalent* significa también "corriente" aunque en varios contextos como en la frase del texto en la que aparece siguiendo al sustantivo en vez de precediéndolo, lo traduciremos por "extendido".