

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD & MOURNING IN CURMOS

up to the chin; where with certain lattices they make roofs over the waters, and these they Z R
fasten on one side with stakes planted in the waters and on the other side on the bank, and they
cover them over with leaves to protect themselves from the sun; and so stay until the wind Z
ceases; and in this way they escape from that hot wind. And as evidence of the heat of R
the said wind Master Marc said that he was in those parts when an accident happened in this
way. For when the ruler of Curmos had not paid the tribute to the king of Cherman, [this last,
planning to have him at the season when the men of Curmos were staying outside the city on
the mainland, made ready a thousand & six hundred horse and five thousand foot, whom he
sent through the region of Reobar to take them at unawares. And so one day being unable,
through being badly guided, to reach their destination before night overtook them they rested in
a wood not very far from Curmos. And when they wished to set out in the morning, the said
wind attacked them and suffocated them all, so that none was found to carry the news to their
lord. And when the men of Curmos knew this they went to bury them that those dead bodies
should not infect the air. And when they took them by the arm to put them in the trenches
they were so much dried by the very great heat that the arms left the body, for which reason
it was necessary to make the trenches near to the bodies and to throw them into them. And
again I tell you that in the said country they sow their wheat and the barley and the V
other grains in the month of November and have reaped them completely everywhere L
in the whole month of March. And so it happens with all the [17b] fruits, for they are L
finished and done in the month of March, & then all the grass & leaves dry up, nor VA
after that will you find any living or green plant surviving on the land except in a wet L LT Z Z
place, except by chance the dates which last until the middle¹ of the month of May. L
And this comes about by the exceedingly great heat of the said wind which is there Z VB FA
which burns & dries up everything. And about the ships I shall tell you that they VB
are not pitched with pitch for protection from rot, because they have no pitch; but they L R VB
grease them with an oil made from the fat of a certain fish, and caulk them with oakum. R L R
And I tell you that there is a custom in this country that when the men die or women, V
they make great mourning for them. Moreover I tell you that when the man dies the VA
ladies weep and wail continually over each of their dead quite four years² after he is Z
dead, at least once every day. For they continue for the said term to assemble themselves Z
in the house of the dead with all their kinsfolk and with their friends and neighbours VA V FB
and make great weeping and great crying aloud and great mourning for the dead. VA
And since they very often die, they are in this way never without mourning. And women are Z
found there much trained in wailing who agree for a price to weep on any day you please for the
dead of other men and other women. Now let us leave you this city. And we shall not

¹ aun perhaps for a mi B. prefers au

² P: menses