

means to say in French¹ knights and [38d] trusted ones² of the lord; and he does it not for fear that he may have of any man, *but he does it for grandeur, excellence, and magnificence.* And they plan their watches thus. These twelve thousand men have four captains, for each of them is captain of three thousand, and one captain with his one company who are these three thousand stay and guard in the palace of the great lord continually for three days and for three nights, for neither by day nor by night do they go out of the palace, and eat and drink in it at the expense of the royal court, and sleep there. And so [it is] that when these three thousand have guarded three days and three nights then they go off, and next come the second captain with his three thousand and guard other three days and three nights, and then these leave and the other three thousand come back to guard; and so they do, always going on guard three by three up to twelve thousand, until they have all been on guard, and then they begin the guard from the beginning again, and so it goes by turns all the year. By day certainly the other nine thousand do not leave the palace, unless anyone goes for the business of the great Kaan, or for things necessary to them, granting however that it was allowed, and always with the leave of his captain. And if there were any serious happening, as if the father or the brother or some kin of his were at the point of death, or indeed if some great loss had overtaken him so that he could not quickly return, it would be necessary to ask leave of the lord. But at night the nine thousand do indeed go home.³

And when the great Kaan keeps his table in his hall for any great court & feast & rejoicing which he may wish to hold, he is seated⁴ in this way. For first the table of the great lord is set before his throne very high above all the others. He sits in the north part of the hall with the shoulders towards tramontaine so that his face looks towards midday, and his first wife sits beside him on the left side, and on the right side, but at another table which is rather lower, sit his sons in lordly fashion,⁵ and

¹ FA,FB: *en francois* V: *al modo nostro* VA: *in nostra lingua* Others have simply "that is".

² V: *chaulieri efedeli* Others: "trusted knights" omitting "and".

³ This passage of R is also, in a shortened and partly corrupt form, in V, fol. 49v^o: "And besides these 9000 stay there continually, who do not leave the palace except in the service of the great Kaan. And by night they do not go home." and (still shorter) in L, fol. 19r^o: "The other 9000 however themselves too are on guard all day with the others, even though they do not stay at night."

⁴ FA,FB: *il se siet* TA: *le tauole istanno* LT: *tabule stant* P: *curia tali ordine sedet* R: *gli huomini seggono* V: *fano apariar la sua mensa*

⁵ *sez filz au seingnorç* Other texts omit *au seingnorç*. B. prints *au seignors* without note, but omits from his translation. L: *filius eius depresius tamen domino* V: *i foli e neuodi del gran chan*. Perhaps read *les filz au seingnorç* and translate: "the sons of the lord".