

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD THE HUNTING WITH DOGS

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when the great lord goes hunting then one of these brothers with his ten thousand men of one colour and with quite five thousand dogs (*for there are few who have not dogs*) goes on one side of him to the right hand,¹ and the other brother with his own ten thousand of the other colour and with their dogs goes on the other side, to the left of him. The lord & his barons stay in the middle on the great plain where this hunt is made. They go all and form a long line and place themselves through the breadth of the fields the one beside the other at some distance so that they are so far extended that in breadth they hold more than a days march of country, they are so many; and then when they are ranged in the aforesaid order they come drawing themselves together one towards the other, all coming towards the lord, and so go forward with the hunt, and loose the dogs which they hold at the wild beasts, of which there is a very great number. They find no wild beast [41d] which is not taken, and if some escape they are few. It is too beautiful a thing and very delightful to those who take pleasure in these hunts, to see the chase and the way of those dogs and of those hunters, for I tell you that when the great lord rides with his barons through the midst of the open lands hawking, then you may see some of these great dogs come chasing after bears, boars, and after stags and after other beasts and taking them here and there both on one side and on other, so that it is a very beautiful sight to see that chase with so many dogs, and the great Kaan takes great delight in it. And these two brothers are bound by contract to give to the court of the great Kaan every day, beginning from the month of October until the whole of the month of March, a thousand head between beasts and birds, excepting quails, and also fishes as well as they can, reckoning to a head such quantity of fish as three persons could eat at a meal and be satisfied. And then I have told you of the hunting with dogs and of those who keep the hunting dogs. Now we shall tell you how the great lord goes the other three months.

HERE HE TELLS HOW THE KAAH GOES HUNTING TO TAKE BEASTS AND BIRDS. And when the great lord has stayed in such manner as I have told you three months in this city of Catai, the city of Cambaluc which I have named to you above, and that was December and January and February, then he leaves this city the first day in the month of March and goes into the country towards midday² as far as the Ocean sea which is two days journeys distant from the city. And he takes with him quite ten thousand falconers riding, and carries³ quite five hundred

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¹ P, which differs somewhat in form, as often, makes the total number of dogs on both sides "more than 5000", agreeing more or less with 2000 above. V: *quatro milia chani* on each side.

² R: *Greco* P omits Others "south".

³ *por ce* FA,FB: *porte* TA: *porta* VA: *portano* L as F LT: *portat* TA³: 12000 falconers LT: 5000 gerfalcons VA: 600 gerfalcons