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SPICERY & BEASTS & TATTOOING IN CAUGIGU = MARCO POLO
nothing else which does to mention, and therefore we will leave it you and will
tell you of a province which is toward sunrising and is called Caugigu.¹

·127·

VB P **H**ERE HE TELLS OF THE PROVINCE OF CAUGIGU. Caugigu is a province
VB toward sunrising *near to the aforesaid*. It has a king *to itself*. The people
are all idolaters and have a tongue for themselves. They gave themselves
up however to the great Kaan and pay him great tribute each year. Moreover I tell
you that this king of *this province* is so self-indulgent that he has quite three hundred
women for wives; for when *he knows that* they have any fair woman in the country,
he takes her *immediately* to wife. Gold enough is found in this province *and precious*
stones. They have *also much* dear spicery of many makes in great abundance, but they
are *inland and* very far from the sea, and so their goods are of no value but are sold
very cheap there. They have elephants enough *in this province* & wild asses & many
other *wild* beasts of many kinds. They have hunting enough. *There grows much rice*;
they live on flesh & on milk & on rice. They have no wine from vines, but they
make it very well from rice & from *many delicate* spices *mixed together*, *which is very*
good. The people all in common, men and women, of *that province* are painted or
pricked with the needle all over their flesh in such way as I shall tell you. For they
make themselves pictures with needles *in a colour of blood* on their faces and all over their
flesh of *cranes and of eagles*, of lions and of dragons and of birds and of many other
likenesses *different and strange*, so that *nothing is seen not drawn upon and not scratched*.
And they are made with the needles *very cunningly* & in such a way that they never
go off *by washing nor by other way*. They also make them on the face² and on the
neck and on the belly *and on the breast and on the arms and on the hands and on the feet*,

¹ This little chapter is surprisingly full of corruption and difficulty. After telling us, as of a thing which he had forgotten, of the great battle between Nesoradin and the king (or kings) of Mien and Bangala in 1272 (? 1277 or 1279) as the result of which "both the kingdoms which I have named" (in R Mien & Bangala, but in F perhaps Caragian & Çardandan) were added to the Mongol empire, he proceeds to tell us of Mien and then of Bangala, saying that in 1290 it had not yet been conquered. But a careful comparison of the valuable texts Z and VB with the standard text of F makes it seem to be possible that the original said that Bangala had not yet been conquered when Marco Polo was first at the court, but that the Kaan's armies were already there, and that after a long time it was (or ? had been) conquered in 1290. The date 1290 is given without variation by F, FA, FB, TA', TA³, LT: and omitted by Z, P, VA, L, V, VB, R. V omits mention of Marco; L omits the whole sentence; VB (followed by R) omits "not"; Z alone adds "first" (*primitus*). See also PN.

² *ne ne uont Ge ausi le (l written over c) font au uix* FB: *ne sen va. et si ont ceste oeuvre par la chiert* So B. reads: *ne s'en vont. Ce ausi se font.* For the last words *Et ausi ce (or le) font* is perhaps as good.