

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD<sup>s</sup> THE CUSTOMS OF MAABAR

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from it a *very* little horse which has the feet *and* legs all twisted; and *it is so contemptible* VB LT VB  
 & ugly that it is worth [80c] nothing, nor can it be ridden. Again I tell you that  
 when these people go into battle<sup>1</sup> they go only with lance and shield and they go VB VB  
 quite naked. And they are not at all valiant nor proved men, but are mean people  
 and cowards.<sup>2</sup> They kill no beasts nor any animals *for anything in the world for their* VB VL  
*food*, but when they wish to eat flesh of sheep or of any other beasts or birds they  
 have them killed by Saracens and other people who are not of their religion nor of  
 their customs. And again I tell you that they have also such a custom that all,  
 both males and women, wash themselves each day twice in water, their whole bodies,  
 that is morning and evening; nor otherwise *for anything in the world* would they eat VB  
 or drink until they were all washed, and he who should not wash himself twice a VB  
 day is held among them as a heretic as we hold the patarin. Their washing is this. VA Z VI.  
 As I have said above, all go naked; and so naked they go to the river & take water & throw it over  
 the head, & then they rub one another. And you must know that in eating they use only the z  
 right hand, nor with the left hand do they touch anything of food. And all clean and beautiful  
 things they do and touch with the right hand, for the office of the left is only about unpleasant  
 and unclean necessities like cleansing the nostrils, anus, and things like these. Again they  
 drink with cups only, and each with his own; nor would anyone drink with the cup of another.  
 And when they drink they do not put the cup to the mouth, but holding it raised up pour the  
 drink into the mouth. Nor in any way would they touch the cup with the mouth, nor with those  
 cups would they give to drink to any strangers. But if a stranger shall not have a vessel of his  
 own with him, if he shall wish to drink they will pour him drink or wine into the hands and  
 he will drink from the hands, so that his own hands will be a cup. Moreover I tell you that  
 too great and careful justice is done in this kingdom on those who do murder and z  
 on those who rob and on all other malefactors. And with regard to debts such an order z  
 and statute is observed among them, that if any debtor being asked many times by the creditor  
 for the payment of a debt goes from day to day continually putting off with promises, and the  
 creditor is able to catch the debtor in such a way that he is able to mark a circle round him,  
 the debtor will not leave that circle unless he shall first have satisfied the creditor or shall  
 make him a proper pledge and bond that he shall be wholly satisfied the same day. But otherwise,  
 if the debtor were rashly to attempt to leave the circle with the debt unpaid or without having  
 offered a pledge that the creditor would be paid the same day, he would be punished with the  
 punishment of death as a transgressor of right and of the justice established by the lord. And  
 this the aforesaid Master Marc saw in the king, being in the said kingdom on his way home. R Z R  
 For when the king himself was bound to satisfy a certain foreign merchant for certain things z

<sup>1</sup> *cantaille* FB: *bataille* B. prints *bataille* without comment, but the corruption is strange.

<sup>2</sup> S reads oddly: *Son buenos en las armas* for VL, *i sono vili* . . .