

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD^s SHADOWS & TARANTULAS

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of half-terce, on Tuesday the hour of terce, on Wednesday the hour of nones, and so with regard to the separate days through the whole year; all which things they have written and defined in their books. And they know the hours of the day by the measurement of feet of the shadow, namely, of a man when he stands upright; as, when on such a day the shadow of a man shall be lengthened to the measure of seven feet away from the sun, then it will be the banned hour, that is coiach. And when that measurement shall be passed either increasing or decreasing (for when the sun is rising the shadow is shortened, when it descends it is lengthened), then it is not coiach. And when on another day the shadow shall be of twelve feet, then it will be coiach, and that measure being past, past will be also coiach. And all these things they have in writings. And you must know that in these hours they guard themselves against trading and anything to be done. For while two men are in the act of trading something together, someone will go up to the light or ray of the sun and will measure the shadow, and if it shall be on the limit of the hour of that day, according to what it ought to be that day, then immediately he will say to these men, It is coiach, do not anything; and they will stop. Then he will measure again and they will find that hour is past and he will say, Coiach is past, do whatever you wish. And they have that reckoning thoroughly at hand; for they say that if anyone completes any bargain in those hours he will never prosper in it, but it will turn out badly for him. Again in their houses live certain animals by the name of tarantula which are like lizards which climb up by the walls. These tarantulas have a poisonous bite and hurt a man very much if they touch him with a bite. They have a sound as if they shall be called cis, and in this way they cry. In these tarantulas they have an omen like this, namely that when some people were trading together in a house where these tarantulas are, and a tarantula may cry to the merchants there above them, they will see from what side of the merchant, whether of the buyer or of the seller, namely whether [it cries] from the left side or from the right, from the front or back, or over the head, and according to whatever direction [it may be] they know whether it means good or ill; and if good, they finish the dealing, if it mean ill that dealing is never begun. And sometimes it means good for the seller and bad for the buyer, sometimes bad for the seller and

passage, left the word out. B. (with the corrupt Milan text—*infelicem que uciacham . . . hora uciach et coiach*) did the same. In the true text the word is treated as a Latin adjective while the foreign word *coiach* is undeclined, and it seems to me that *uciacha* must be a colloquial Italian word which the writer thought would be more intelligible than *infelix*. I have with many misgivings translated it as the past participle of *bucciare* "to proclaim" (cf. *Ducange* s.v.), although no example of *bucciare* or of the French *buichier* seems to be recorded with the sense, familiar in the case of the English "proclaim" or the Italian "bandire", of "to proclaim as forbidden". The transformation of *bucciata* to *uciacha* would present no difficulty. The version "banned" would do as well if, according to the interesting suggestion kindly sent me by Professor F. SALOMON, the word proved to be *bruciata*. *Ora bruciata* is used in just the right sense, "strange", "awkward", "unlucky"; but the loss of *br* is hard to explain. See pl. 35,37. For *coiach* see PN.