

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD= GIRLS IN THE TEMPLES
 thing which does well to tell. For you may know that they give their horses cooked
 flesh to eat with rice, and *on that they live, with many other cooked things, and this* VB FB
is why they all die in this country. And again I tell you that they have many idols in
 their monasteries male and women, to *serve* which idols many girls are offered in VB
 this way. For their mother and their father offer them to the idols, to those which
 please¹ them most, *and yet they live in their fathers houses.* And when they have offered L
 them, every time that the monks of the monastery of the idol require those girls
 who have been offered to the idol to come to the monastery to make amusement for
 the idol, they come there immediately and sing *and sound music* and dance and make v
 great festival. And there are great numbers of *these girls, for they make great companies.* Z Z
 And again those girls bring food to their idols where they are offered many times
 in the week and the month; [81b] and I tell you in what way they bring food there
 and say that the idol has eaten. I tell you that many of these maidens of whom I
 have told you would prepare indeed for food both flesh and other good things, and
 go off to monastery to their idol and set the table before him with *very white cloths* VB
upon which they make ready all the viands which they have brought, and leave them
 there a great space. And always² in the mean time all these girls sing and dance & v
sound music and make the greatest entertainment in the world. And when they have
 made this entertainment, *always as I have said playing & singing,* for so great a space VB
 that it seems to them that a great baron could have eaten *at his ease,* then the girls say VB Z
 that the spirit of the idol has eaten *all* the substance of the food and they take it Z
 for themselves and eat it all together *with the priests round the idols* with great feasting VB Z
 and with great joy. Then each returns to her house. *Those lands are full of these monks* VB
and priests. And these girls do thus *together with the priests* until they take husbands. VB
And why do they make these entertainments for the idols? Because the priests of the idols often Z
say that the god is vexed with the goddess, nor is one united with the other nor do they talk
together. And since they are angry and vexed, unless they are reconciled and make peace together
all our affairs will be contrary and will go from bad to worse because they will not bestow their
 blessing and grace. And so the aforesaid damsels go in the way said above to the monastery,
and they are all naked except that they are covered in the natural parts, and sing before the god
and goddess. For the god stays by himself on one altar under one canopy and the goddess stays
on another altar by herself under another canopy, and those people say that the god often takes
his pleasure with her and they are united together, so that when they are vexed they do not join
themselves together. And then these damsels abovesaid come there to pacify them, and when
they are there[they begin]to sing, dance, leap, tumble, and make different entertainments to

¹ prestre TA (for "many girls"): molti gharzoni effanciugli ² toutes faies