

LONG LIFE FOOD & WORSHIP OF THE CIUGUI = MARCO POLO

VB VB Churches where their idols are, who are called ciugui, who¹ certainly live more than all
 VB VA VB the others of the world, for they commonly live from 150 years to 200 years, and yet
 TA they are all quite capable in their bodies so that they are well able to go and come
 wherever they wish and they do well all the service which is needed for their
 Z monastery and for their idols, and though they are so old they render it² as well as if
 TA L they were younger. And all this comes to pass, they say, through the great abstinence
 L FB which they practise of the eating and drinking. For they use little and very good food
 TA Z V always, for they are accustomed in their food to eat bread and rice and milk³ more
 than other things. And again I tell you that these ciugui who live so long time as
 I have told you eat also what I shall tell you; for it will seem indeed a great thing
 VA to you very strange to hear. For I tell you that they take quicksilver and sulphur and
 TA TA mix them together with water and make a drink of them. And then they drink it
 and say that it increases their life and they live more by it. And I tell you that they
 V do it twice in the week, and sometimes twice each month, and you may know that these
 people use this drink from their infancy to live longer, and without mistake those
 who live so long as I have told you use this drink of sulphur and of quicksilver.
 FB FB And again in this order of ciugui in this kingdom [84c] of Maabar there is another
 L Z sort of order who are themselves too called ciugui likewise, who are⁴ of so great abstinence
 VA as I shall tell you and of so strong and hard a life for love of their idols. For you may
 know truly that they go quite naked without wearing anything above so that their
 FB TA natural parts are not covered nor any member. And they are idolaters & have such
 TA³ hope in the ox that they worship⁵ the ox, and all the most part of them carry an ox-hide
 TA³ TA³ or a little ox cut out of leather or of copper or of bronze gilded or of something else in
 the middle of their foreheads; you understand that they are tied there. Again I
 FB tell you that they burn the dung⁶ of the ox and make powder of it, and of that powder

¹ le Z: qui V: i quali

² & lirent possibly "and read", as Z (p. lxxxii) and L: *necessaria facere possunt similiterque legere*
 But it is perhaps as likely that *lirent* is an early corruption of something like *li rendent* and
 was misunderstood by Z and L. B. (in a note) accepts the form *li rent* as it stands, so making
 an ancient mistranslation more probable.

³ FB: *lait char & Ris* V attaches *e piu che altra chosa* to the following sentence.

⁴ *en ceste reingne de mabar a une religion qe sapelent en ceste ciugui qe sunt* FB: *Et ya de ceste Religion*
de cuiguy vne autre mainere de Religion qui demainent la plus aspre vie du monde. V: *vna religion la*
quale auemo simelmente (without *ciugui*) L: *dicti et ipsi ciugui* Z: *religio que nuncupatur similiter*
cuigui (p. lxxxiii). Most of the texts omit. For the second *en ceste* B., supported by Z, L,
 reads *encore*.

⁵ *acirent* for *aorent*

⁶ *oisi* Many texts misunderstand this and say "bones".