

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD & THE DAUGHTER OF CAIDU

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the hands of the great Kaan & was not killed by him. Now then we shall leave you
this matter and shall tell you in front a great [98c] marvel about the prowess of the
daughter to the said king Caidu so as you will be able to understand it.

HERE HE TELLS OF THE DAUGHTER OF THE KING CAIDU HOW SHE IS STRONG
AND VALIANT. Now you may know quite truly that the said king
Caidu had a very beautiful daughter who was called Aigiaruc in Tartarese,
which means to say in French Bright Moon.¹ And this damsel was so strong that
there was no young man nor squire in all the realm of her father who could vanquish
her at wrestling, but I tell you that she vanquished them all. And many times her
father the king wished to marry her to a great baron and to give her a lord, but she
was unwilling and said that she would never take a lord so long as she could not
find some fine young gentleman who should vanquish her by main force or by other
proof, and him she would take. And the king her father seeing her wish had made her
a privilege that she could be married as she pleased, and when she pleased. But first it
is to be known that such a custom is observed among the Tartars, namely that if some king,
prince, or other noble whatever wish to take a wife, he does not indeed look for a noble woman
or one equal to himself, but provided only she is pretty and comely he takes her to wife though
she is not noble. For they say that no stock or family takes its name from a woman, but from
the man alone, that it may be said [not] he was son of Bertha or of Mary but son of Peter
or of Martin. And this is the reason why in taking of wives they look not at the nobility of
the women but only at their delicacy and beauty. And when the kings daughter had had
from her father the grant and the privilege that she can be married as she pleases
she had great joy of it. And immediately she makes it known through several parts
of the world that if any gentle youth should wish to come to try his strength with
her in wrestling and should be able to vanquish her by might he should come to the
court, knowing whoever he might be who conquered her that she would take him for lord.
And when this news was known through many lands and kingdoms, I tell you
that many young gentlemen from many sides came there and were tried with her,
but all were vanquished. And the proof was made in such a way as I shall tell you.
For when the contest was held the king² & the queen with many people men and women

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¹ TA: in latino *luciente luna* The appearance of *latino* in this place is of interest in relation to the considerable evidence that French was the original language, and especially that TA was translated from French. V: in *latin luna luxente* cf. p. 325 n. 4 above, and Y. I. 82,83.

² *E la prouence fasoit en tel mainere con ie uoç dirai. sachies qelle qele spreue se fasoit car le roi* It seems to be simplest to omit *sachies . . . se fasoit* and to insert the words from LT which reads: *per talem modum. quia quando ista lucta fiebat rex & . . .*, but the words omitted are not at all a repetition of the clause above. It might be possible to translate, "Know that that trial was made [on the plain], for the king with . . ."