

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE LESSER ARMENIE = MARCO POLO

V V is lord of it who holds all the lands and maintains the land well in the greatest justice  
 I VB in all things, & no malefactor can any how escape; and is subject to the lord great Kan, the  
 V I Tartar king, though they are Christians, for they are not rightly in the true faith as the  
 Romans are; and this is for want of teachers, for they were formerly good Christians. This  
 lesser Armenie would be quickly placed in the true Christian faith if good and faithful  
 VB R preachers remained there. And under him there are many towns, fortresses, & many  
 L villages; and there are of all things in great abundance. And it is a very fertile land.  
 P VA and pleasant. It is also a land of great enjoyment, and the people of the land make much  
 L practice of all beautiful hunting both of beasts and of birds. But yet I tell you that  
 I it is not a healthy province but mightily unhealthy, nor has it good air. And long ago the  
 TA VB V gentlemen were very valiant and expert men at the business of arms, each of them as  
 L TA R VB good as two, and of good manners, but now they are all become very slavish and mean  
 Z L O and have no goodness except that they are very good gluttons and drinkers. They have  
 VB plenty of wine white and red; and give themselves much to the lust of drinking in which they  
 TA V greatly delight. Again you may know that there is also on the [9d] sea of the said province<sup>1</sup>  
 P VA I a town with a harbour which is called Laias, which is a city good & great & of great  
 FB trade; for you may know quite truly that all the spicery and the cloths of silk and  
 R of gold and of wool from inland are carried to this town, and all other dear things.  
 O LT There is cotton in plenty.<sup>2</sup> And the merchants<sup>3</sup> from Venese, from Pise, and from Jene  
 L FB and from all inland parts come there and buy them and sell there their own things,  
 VL and keep their warehouses in that city. And all men and merchants who wish to go  
 R L R farther inland through the regions of the east, come first to the said port of Laias [ & ] take  
 Z their way from this town. And these are the boundaries of this kingdom of the Lesser  
 Armenie: on one side towards midday is the Land of Promise which the Saracens hold; on the side  
 V Z of tramontaine are people named Turcomains, who are called Caramani; to the sunrising and the  
 Greek wind is Turquie, Caiserie, and Sevasto, and many other cities which are all subject to  
 the Tartars; toward the sunsetting is the sea through which one sails to the lands of the Christians.

speak of what we saw; and first we shall speak of the Lesser Hermenia. Wherefore you must know that there are two Hermenias . . ."

VB: "To give a beginning to the story of the provinces which I Marco Polo saw in Asia and of the things found in them worthy of notice, I say that there are two Armenias . . ."

VA: "Since we have written the story of our life & how we went, stayed, & returned, so we wish to tell you in order of the things which we saw & found. We will begin. In the name of God; & about the province of Armenia."

FG,TA follow F exactly; R follows VB.

<sup>1</sup> L: surrie      <sup>2</sup> See PN.

<sup>3</sup> merciandies      But FB: marcheans      TA: merchatanti      LT,P: mercatores