

THE TRADE AND THE PEOPLE OF TAURIS / MARCO POLO

P
 LT G VA **H**ERE HE TELLS OF THE NOBLE CITY OF TAURIS.¹ *In those regions Tauris is*
 G FB a great city & very noble which is between *Armenie and Persie* in a great
 Z VB V province near by *Baudac* which is called *Yrac*, and so it has had such a
 TA TA name; in which also there are many other cities and many villages under it, very rich, but
 Z because Tauris is the most beautiful & the best & the most noble city of all that
 G TA province I will tell you about its affairs at present. It is true that the men of Tauris
 FB are subject to the Tartars and live by trade and by crafts, that is for the most by
 L working cloth, for there are made there many cloths with gold and of silk & of many
 FB L sorts very beautiful & of great value. And the city is set in so good a place that the
 FB L other merchandise comes there conveniently from *Indie* and from *Baudac* and from
 FB VA TA *Mosul [12a]* and from *Curmos* and from many other places, and therefore many
 TA FB L Latin merchants & specially *Genoese* come there often to buy of those foreign goods
 Z FB that come there from strange distant lands & to do their business. And especially precious
 G stones and pearls which are found there in very great abundance are also bought
 TA there. It is a city of great trade so that the travelling merchants make great profit
 VB there. They are people of small doings² and are much mixed with many sorts of
 TA people. For many Christians of every sect may be there; there are Armenians, Nestorians,
 R and Jacobites, and Giorgiens, and Persians, and there are also men who worship
 VA FB FB Mahomet, and these are the common people of the city³ who are called Taurisin,
 and they have different speech among them. The town is all enclosed round about with
 many beautiful gardens & delectable, full of many very fair fruits and good of many

the gates. The calif, seeing that that force consisted of few men and not making any count of it, thought to destroy it altogether trusting on the sign of Mahomet alone, and without delay issued from the city with his people. When this was seen by Ulau he pretended to fly and drew him beyond the trees and the barriers of the woods where the men were hidden, and here having hemmed them round in the middle he broke (*ruppe*) them, and the calif was taken together with the city."

¹ It is hard to be sure of the order of the next five chapters. In the original the headings follow the order of FG, Z, & V, placing Tauris after the miracle of the mountain, while the text follows the order of the TA & VA MSS.. It seems to be probable that the difference of order is due to deliberate editing rather than to accident, as the end of chapter 25 is transferred in FG to the end of chapter 29 so that it still forms the introduction to Tauris. Here the order of the original is followed without change, the rubric of chapter 30 being transferred to 26, and the rubrics of 26, 27, 28, 29 being moved down to 27, 28, 29, 30 respectively. The direct connexion of ch. 25 with 27 in VB supports the order of FG,Z,V.

² *de poch afer* TA: *piccholo* But FB: *poure* R: *poueri* LT: *modice bonitatis*

³ TA: *cioe il popolo minuto dela terra* VA: *lo puouolo della tera* VB: *segnorizata soto la leze de machomento*