

BOOK OF THE KNOWLEDGE

Chapter 4: Greece, Turkey, Armenia, and Cyprus

A Modern English Translation — Exhaustive Version

I departed from the kingdom of Hungary and went along the coast to a city called Durazo. There I took ship and proceeded to the island of the Morea. In it there are seven great cities, to wit Trareoza, Patras, Coranto, Neapoli, Marbaxa, Colon, Mutam.

I left the island of the Morea and went to the island of Rodas where there is a rich city called Creta. This island belongs to the order of St John.

I left the island of Rhodes and went to the island of Candia, and thence to another island they call Negropont which the Venetians conquered. I left the entrance to the greater sea and Constantinople, which I will describe further on, to my left, and went to the city they call Satalia of Greek Christians. This Satalia is part of the province of Naturia. The King of this Satalia has for his device a flag with bars wavy argent and purpure and over all the sign of Solomon's seal.

The city of Satalia and Sinbichon, and others as far as the lesser Armenia, are all in the province of Turquia which was called, in ancient times, Asia Minor. In it there are many lordships and provinces which it would be hard to enumerate, for this Turquia extends to the greater sea, and be it known that it is a very rich land, well supplied with all goods. The King of this province has this flag for a device.

I went along the coast of this Turquia to a city they call Candebor and thence to another called Antroçeta and thence to Corincho. And this Turquia is divided into many provinces, Capadoçia, Felicia, Boescia, Vitilia, Gala, Çialidia, Frigia where is Troya, Panfilia, Isauria. The King of this land has a black flag with five white crosses.

I departed from this Corincho and went to the city they call Feradelfia or Feradelfin which marches on that of Troy which, in ancient times, King Menelaus of Greece destroyed. Troy was the head of all that Asia Minor which they now call Turquia, and its device is a flag half white, with a red cross, the other half yellow with a red square.

In this Turquio there is another province they call Cunio in which there is a rich city called Cunyo with much territory, and the King has a flag with bars wavy argent and gules.

There is also another province called Sauasto anciently Sauasco from a city of that name which was the head of all the cities. This city of Sauasco was the ancient Samaria, though now it is Sauasco head of the kingdom with a white flag having five red crosses.

In this Turquia there are two cities in the parts of Armenia the less, the one called Chontay and the other Silia. I left them and entered Armenia the less, which is all surrounded by very high mountains, called the mountains of Armenia, and within the mountains there is a plain country in which there are 360 towns and villages and castles. On the shores of the Mediterranean Sea in the place where it ends, you must know that anciently this Armenia was called the island of Colcos. For in this Armenia an arm of the sea enters, in which there is a small island called Porto Bonel, and here was the temple to the enchanted golden sheep, which bewitched Jason the Greek. Within Armenia there are four great cities, to wit Laiso, Curquo, Airso

and Suçia.

After this Armenia is the island Chipre and in this Chipre there are four great cities, Famagosta, Nycroxia, Lamiss, and Bafa. The King of Chipre has for his design a flag parted per pale argent five crosses gules and purple two fleurs de lys palewise, because he is of the House of France.

I left Chipre at a point they call the point of Santander, and arrived at Alixandrete and thence to Antiocha a very noble city of Syria. The French took it when they conquered Syria. In ancient times it was called Repeleta. Thence I went to Solin and Tortosa and the Syrian Tripul. It was Solin that was taken by Don Remondo Count of Tolosa, father of Don Alfonso Emperor of Spain. Thence I went to Eborut, and thence to the city of Acre, which was held by the Friars of St John. I then went to Çesaria and to Escalona. They say that in ancient times it was called Palestina. Thence I went to the port of Jafa where are the pilgrims for Jerusalem.

Know that there are these cities in Syria and many other towns and villages, and five high mountains. The first is called the mountain of Libano where rise two rivers, one called Jor and the other Dan, and they unite to form the Jordan. This land where the Jordan flows was anciently called Tiberia and afterwards Siria. It flows through the centre of Suria and forms two large lakes, one called the Dead Sea, and the other the Sea of Galilee. They affirm that in these two lakes there were two cities called Sodoma and Gomorra, and in these two lakes the river sinks underground and does not appear again. The mountains are Ermon, Galat, Abraren and Seyr.

Know that in this Suria is the city of Iherusalem which was sanctified by the holy temple which Salamon built there, and was consecrated by the blood of Ihesu Christo. This land of Iherusalem was anciently called Cananea after Can son of Noe. Afterwards it had the name of Judea after Juda son of Jaco. Know that this province was taken by the French when they made the conquests beyond seas. The device of this province is a white flag with red crosses.

Suria marches with the land of Jafet and this Jafet borders on the very rich city of Damasco, well supplied with all things. Near this Damasco flows the river Eufrates and formerly it was called Lairag. The King has a yellow flag with a white moon.

Notes on this Chapter

This chapter covers the author's travels through Greece (the Morea/Peloponnese), Rhodes, Crete, Negropont, Satalia (Antalya) in Anatolia, the many provinces of Turkey/Asia Minor (including Troy, Iconium, Sebastia), Lesser Armenia (with the Colchis/Jason legend), Cyprus, and then into Syria (Antioch, Tripoli, Acre, Jaffa/Jerusalem area) with detailed descriptions of Mount Lebanon, the Jordan River, the Dead Sea, Sea of Galilee, and Damascus. It includes important legendary and historical references (Jason and the Golden Fleece, Troy, the French conquests in Syria, the sanctity of Jerusalem).