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An English Translation of Georgius de Hungaria's *Treatise on the Customs, Living Conditions,
and Wickedness of the Turks* (1481)

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Abstract

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By David Ryan Stevenson

This work is the first English translation of the *Tractatus de moribus, conditionibus et nequicia Turcorum* by Georgius de Hungaria, originally published in Latin in 1481. Georgius was enslaved by the Turks for over twenty years, and had the rare opportunity to witness the Ottoman Empire firsthand. His *Treatise* discusses his observations on Islamic practices, early Sufism, and Ottoman culture, comparing it to the Christian world in Europe. Georgius was a young Byzantine living in the Transylvania region, then part of Hungary, when he was taken by the advancing Ottoman troops and enslaved. He later secured his freedom and came to Rome, where he became a Dominican monk and wrote about his life experiences. While the *Treatise* was originally overlooked, it achieved prominence when Martin Luther translated it into the German.

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Introduction on the Text

This English translation uses an edited text of the Latin from the *Tractatus de moribus, conditionibus et nequicia Turcorum – Traktat über die Sitten, die Lebensverhältnisse und die Arglist der Türken* by Georgius de Hungaria, edited, translated, and prefaced by Reinhard Klockow, published by Böhlau, Köln, 1994, in the *Schriften zur Landeskunde Siebenbürgens*, vol. 15, with copious notes and a translation into the German.

The Latin is an edited edition after an original 1481 copy of the text, with extensive textual and contextual notes that were referenced while translating the English. The German translation, which faced the Latin text on each page, was also referenced when there was confusion regarding the Latin text.

The edition prepared by Klockow was instrumental in facilitating this process, not only providing a clear text to translate, but also providing a small gloss to understand the text. Klockow provides alternate ways to read the text when the manuscripts are contradictory; this English translation uses the best interpretation of the text.

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Trans. Reinhard Klockow. 2nd ed. Vol. 15. Köln: Böhlau, 1994. Print. *Schriften Zur Landeskunde Siebenbürgens*.

Forward to the treatise on the customs, affairs, and wickedness of the Turks.

The most monstrous sort of persecutions, not so human as devilish, the tribulations, dire straits and terrors of the last days, which were predicted to the human race, and which are daily set forth in the course of the of the new and the old testaments, in the figures of dragons and beasts, in the strange actions and motions of heavenly spirits—such things up to now we have been reading only in books.

Now, however, there is no need of many books, since through visible experiences, clearer than light, we are learning that these things stand at our doors; without ceasing, without doubt they press upon our heads. Or by chance do we not see that most bloody beast, the enemy of the crucified Christ, that most cruel dragon—by which I mean the sect and crowd of the faithless Turks? All eastern parts were demolished and by his breath an infinite multitude of the people of Christ were corrupted with the poison of his unfaithfulness; the dragon nears the border of Italy and now longs, with open mouth, for the ruination of the Roman Church, which alone it has spared.

Oh, who would not grieve over the death of so many souls, which the dragon devours insatiably with open gullet, making them heirs of his own condemnation! O so destructive and cruel persecution! O crime, unheard of in any age! For it did not attack bodies, like other persecutors, but souls, and while externally it did not kill the bodies sustaining them under the pretense of piety, internally the beast intends to kill the souls through its diabolical cunning by carrying away their faith.

An innumerable multitude of the faithful is able to attest to this fact; many of whom would be eager to die for the faith of Christ and for the salvation of their souls in the faith of

Christ. Nevertheless, preserved from bodily death, over time the faithful are drawn into captivity and, stained by his poison, fously deny the faith of Christ.

I myself also learned the truth of this matter from my own experience, in which way I expected to undergo death with a joyful mind for the faith of Christ. Nevertheless, as I will make clear later, having been in due course snatched almost dead from the fire and restored to life, I was held back in their hands. Infected, so to speak, by the poison of their error, I wavered from the faith of Christ not immoderately and, if the mercy of God had not been present to me and had not guarded me, I would have fously denied the faith.

And so, it is my intention in this treatise to entrust to memory and writing the things that my ordeal taught me about the customs, affairs, behaviors, and wickedness of the Turks. I do so that if I, an old man, were to fall again into their hands, I would be strong enough to guard myself from their errors better than I did as a young man (may God prevent this, although I still fear it enough.) And I believe that it would be beneficial if each one of the faithful in these times tried to hear, study, and read such things about this, because, as is obvious, many Christians—in fact countless Christians—are denying the faith of Christ every day, not knowing, or rather not believing, the things that are said about the cunning of these people, until they are ensnared and learn from experience what they earlier neglected to understand.

Prologue

Now, however, I wish to put forth a history of my misfortune: how and when I was made a captive by the Turks and led into their bondage, so that through the things I am about to say,

everyone may make their faith more certain, provided that they grasp that I recount not fables or fictions, but the truth that I experienced myself.

In the year 1436, after the death of the Roman emperor Sigismund, a great quarrel had arisen among the Hungarians and Germans about choosing a king, because the emperor had not left behind a lawful successor. Into those regions came a Great Turk, called Moratbeg—who was the father of the one now ruling, namely Mechemetbeg—who entered into these lands with a great army (for he is said to have thirty thousand cavalrymen). His intention was to lay waste to all of Hungary, and he would have done so, unless the flood of a certain river—arranged by God—had not hindered him. And so frustrated by that intention, he steered the army to the province beyond the mountains, which was called ‘Seven Fortresses’, and he cruelly destroyed and laid waste to everything he encountered, with none giving him hindrance.

At that time I was a youth either fifteen or sixteen years old, born in the same province. The year before, I had gone away from the place of my birth and had come into a certain stronghold or village by the name of Schebesh, according to the Hungarians, or in German, Muelenbag, in order to study. The city was then populated enough to be sure, but was not well defended. When the Turk had come to the city and had begun to storm the established fortifications, the leader of the Vlachs, who had come with the Turk, arrived at the city wall. On account of their old friendship, which he had previously entered into with the citizens of that very city, he called them all together when the fighting had subsided. He persuaded them that they should consent to his plans and not fight with the Turk, because the fortifications of the city were by no means sufficient for resisting. And so this was his plan: that they give the city to the Turk in peace, and the leader of the Vlachs would himself seek to obtain the following concession from the Turk. He would then lead the nobles of the city with him to his lands and

afterwards, when it pleased them, they would be able to withdraw or stay. The Turk would lead the remaining crowd into his own land, without harm to anyone's person or property. There he would give land to the citizens to possess; then they would be able to leave in due course or dwell there peacefully, as they chose. We saw all these things fulfilled, as he had promised.

And so with this pact, a truce was procured to last until the following day, so that each about to leave could arrange for himself, his property, and his household in peace. However, a certain man of nobility, who was previously castellan and had fought the Turks many times, along with his brother, an equally strenuous man, would by no means submit to a plan or pact of this sort. He said that he would rather die one hundred times than give over his wife and sons to the hands of the Turks; with this statement he persuaded very many others. He entered one chosen turret and fortified it strongly through the entire night, bringing in weapons and provisions. And so I too entered the tower with these people and was expecting—with great longing—death rather than life. Thus, when it was morning, the Great Turk himself came to the gate of the city and ordered that all who came out be registered with their household, and, having appointed guards, that they be led to his country without any loss to their property or persons. He also granted to the duke of the Vlachs that his fellow citizens and elders be brought in the same fashion to his land. And so, since his entire army had been able to have no part in this booty, they, with the greatest force, ran together with intolerable fury up to the tower, where we were, in the hope of making some profit. However, there is no tongue that would suffice to express how great and what sort of storm this was. The thickness of arrows and stones was so great, that it seemed to exceed the density of rain or hail. The shout of the fighters, the crash of arms, the din of running was so great, that in that moment heaven and earth seemed to shake. And, because the tower was sloping greatly, they quickly crushed the roof with arrows and

stones, yet because of the strength of the walls none were able to prevail. And so since the hour was growling late, that is, the sun had sunk past noon, and they had accomplished nothing, they formed a plan. While some fought, others ran up to carry wood; the heap of wood reached almost as high as the tower itself. And placing fire beneath us, they cooked us, just as loaves bake in a furnace. And now, when nearly everyone was dead and they had seen that nobody in the turret was stirring any longer, pushing away the fire they dashed in through the door. If by chance they came upon someone half alive, they resuscitated them and dragged them out. In the same way the rescuers dragged me out, sold me, and handed me over to some merchants. Shackled with other captives, they crossed the Danube and brought me to Edrenopolis, where the residence of the Great Turk is. From the aforementioned year to the year 1458, I—imprisoned—sustained the gravest burdens of that most harsh captivity and unbearable deprivation, not without danger to my body and soul. And at last, with God helping me, I was freed and survived, as I will explain below.

How the Turks came to posses and inhabit the eastern land and region.

Chapter One

According to all the historical writings, it is clear that the rule of Mechomet and the sect of the Saracens began around the 7th century under the reign of Boniface V and Emperor Heraklios; it was in its prime in the 9th century under Pope Leo IV and Emperor Ludwig. For then, the Saracens' numbers and cruelty increased so much that they came against the Church, as already—having long since seized power in Jerusalem—they blockaded those going to Rome and beyond this, they cruelly burned everything that they found outside the fortifications. They

also made the church of Saint Peter a stable of horses and utterly demolished it; they returned to their lands, devastating Italy and Sicily. Around the year 1280, moreover, the sect began to bear the fruit of its malice and wickedness in false signs and prodigies in which it presently abounds. And so with the permission of God, the Great Sultan left the southern country and came up against the east, where he occupied all the regions and fortresses up to the sea. When he saw that the land was spacious and apt for many to inhabit, he dispatched there seven of his princes and entrusted one part to each, bequeathing it to be held according to the law of heredity. The first of these princes was named Othmanbeg, the second Ermenbeg, third Germenbeg, fourth Czarchanbeg, fifth Andinbeg, sixth Menthessebeg, and seventh Karamanbeg. And so as time went on each prince dwelled on his own land, he governed it, possessed it, and was the master in peace. Then one, called Othmanbeg, began to widen his land; he invaded the borders of a neighbor to the east that were near his land. When that neighbor was not able to resist, he left the land behind and fled, bringing himself to the one who was called Karamanbeg. Having obtained that neighbor's land, Othmanbeg turned his attention to invading the land of the neighbor who was near him on the other side. And having expelled him in the same way as before, he crossed to the third and the fourth and the fifth, and thus he alone obtained all the land with the sole exception of that one, who was called Caramanbeg. And the reason for this is that all those who had fled from the face of Othmanbeg were now helping Karamanbeg. Furthermore, his land was very difficult to assault. In addition, as one ought more to believe, it was pleasing to God: for as once God left some peoples in the desert in order to vex Israel, so also did he wish to do the same with Othmanbeg. For up to the present day Karamanbeg remains unconquered and presents Othmanbeg with many ambushes and obstacles. For unless Othmanbeg considered peace with Karamanbeg, Othmanbeg could not go to war against anyone else, because if he did so,

Karamanbeg would immediately invade his lands. For while I was still living there, three times Karamanbeg came down and invaded Othmanbeg's land, laying many things to waste—he reduced it to ash and tore it asunder. Othmanbeg also rose up many times against Karamanbeg and nevertheless only accomplished a little amount. On one occasion with such great fury and anger he proceeded to try to exterminate Karamanbeg with a great multitude of soldiers (it is said that among the forces were twenty thousand foot soldiers carrying battle axes and other tools). He gathered them with this intention: that deep inside Karamanbeg's territory, they would destroy it by cutting down the trees and vines, so that it would not be possible to live there at all. And nevertheless he returned once peace had been settled, leaving the land intact. From this it can be concluded with certainty (and as is the common saying among them) that Karamanbeg will stand firm in eternity. And so this Othmanbeg and his descendants, who took his name and are called Othmanogli, that is, 'sons of Othman,' up to this day is king and lord of all the Turks, and has made such advances, and continues to do so, that not only the east but also the west fears him. And although the Great Tartar, coming from the east, once overcame Othmanbeg (as my master was accustomed to tell), because he still had not obtained the land up to the sea and for that reason did not have the power to resist, nevertheless at that time his force was so great, that none more potent has been found or heard of in the east. Incidentally the entire overseas kingdom divided into seven kingdoms is still called by the names given by the first inhabitants, namely Othmaneli, Ermeneli, Germeneli, Czarchaneli, Andingeli, Mentescheli, and Karamenli.

How the sect of the Turks increased and received the name Turk.

Chapter Two

Concerning the sect of the Turks no one can doubt this fact, which was mentioned in the preceding chapter, namely that the sect could acquire the fruit of its wickedness through the fault of Christians who denied the faith of Christ; this happened back then in the same way that is plainly seen to happen every day. When, as was said before, the Saracens or Mechometistens had begun to persecute Christians and occupy their lands, many of the Christians, wishing to avoid their persecution, voluntarily handed over themselves. And this is well known, since to this day there are many strongholds and towns from those ancient Greeks in Turkey under Turkish dominion—for the Greeks voluntarily handed themselves over, and for this reason the towns remain intact. So it happened, that the Christians themselves became helpful to the Turks in persecuting the remaining or other Christians; thus the guilt of these Christians began to grow on account of the censures of the Church, which they did not fear to incur. And since they themselves were Christian, under a certain appearance of piety they began to spare the conquered Christians, and kept them as slaves and maidservants. And thence began the wicked desire of having slaves and maidservants; this practice endures in this very sect up to today. At last the guilt of their feigned piety grew to such an extent, that the malice of the Christians in persecuting other Christians exceeded the wickedness of the infidels. In addition, they became teachers and guides for the infidels, having as students in evil the same people who had been their teachers in the destruction of souls. But in that time entered that new and spiritual Mechomet, the messenger of the Antichrist, and they now became not Saracens in name, but “Theorici”, that is “Spirituals”, because they seemed to have an almost supernatural efficiency in attracting Christians to their wickedness and turning them aside from the faith of Christ and the community of the Church.

And so when the Church declared that she would chastise these wayward Christians through public censure, those Christians began to excuse their guilt and justify themselves,

saying that they served the Church in many ways through these deeds, because they guarded the Christians from an incursion of the Saracens. And to these they added a second evil, namely the feigned humility and their revolt against the Church under the guise of humility. The reward is the more outward appearance of modesty in behavior, an exemplary simulation, and the feigned display of religion. And from this behavior they are justly called hypocrites and so they are in fact.

And so as time went on their wickedness and guilt kept increasing. When the Church saw that they were obstinate, she proceeded against them with a force of secular arms. But those ones were not acknowledging their guilt, but defending their crime they stood firm against the Church, and after their victory over the Church they invaded the lands of the Christians and obtained the entire East, devastating everything, according to their tyrannical custom. And from that time becoming enemies of the Church and hostile to God, separated from the unity of the Church, they submitted themselves to the Enemy of the human race; finally, by the help and power of the Enemy, relying also on false powers and miracles, they began to become renowned, so that, attaining the reward of their loss of hope, and confirmed in stubborn adherence to all evil, they were all the more quickly and easily able to obey the power of the Devil and to work for the destruction of souls in accordance with his will. They have also received a third name as a consequence of this appearance of sanctity: they are and are called idols.

It is apparent in the image of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation that the beginning of this sect was as such. There, the form of the final persecution is placed in the figure of a beast ascending from the earth, having two horns like a lamb and speaking like a dragon. For that beast climbed from the earth, since it arose from the solid and firm catholic faith. It has two horns like a lamb, namely the malice of envy under the guise of piety and the wickedness of pride under the

guise of humility and obedience. The sect speaks like a dragon, since it shows that it makes works of false miracles with devilish virtue.

Finally, behold, how the Church of the Antichrist has in all details a similarity to the Church of Christ, though in a perverse way. For the Christian Church has the work of the most holy Trinity as its foundation, whereby each person is assigned an individual task. For the ecclesiastical authority is the work of the Trinity assigned to the Father. The exemplary function, which was through the incarnation and the obedience, is the work of the Trinity that belongs to the Son. However, the operation of miracles is the work of the Trinity assigned to the Holy Spirit. All things that pertain to the salvation of souls go back to these Three. All things, which by necessity are done for the condemnation of all mankind, are brought back to these Three, which we described above concerning the origin of the Antichrist's church.

How terrible the sect of the Turks is, and how much one must fear them.

Chapter Three

So many—no, nearly all—happenings and occurrences of this time persuade us to be worried and taught us to fear the end of the world, especially since we are certain that it is we, upon whom the end of time has come. Likewise the sacred scriptures of the Old and New Testaments persuade us, particularly Revelation and that terrible and horrible figure of Daniel and Ezekiel, which were handed down to us not so much for believing and understanding as fearing the dangers written about the end times. Though the material of these descriptions may be terrible, nevertheless without any doubt the effect must be believed to be even more terrible. Likewise the condition of this world, whose old age and near end are already apparent to us,

demonstrate the inclination to do evil, an unwillingness to do good, the greed of the authorities, the slowness of civic obedience, the fastidious elaborateness too of the arts, the varied excess of buildings, the presumptuous novelty in the sciences, and finally in all areas, a new vanity, affixed upon antiquity. But among all these evils, that cruel beast—I mean the sect of the Turks—ought to worry us greatly, whose continual growth, constant battles and persecutions, and long duration announce nothing other than some great crisis and scandal and tribulation and extreme misery. Nevertheless we care about these events as if they were nothing, for no other reason except that these things are concealed before our very eyes. The abbot Joachim confirms this in his comment on Revelation 13: “Who is like the beast and who is able to fight with the beast?” says Joachim, “Alas, alas, how many children do I imagine are in the world, who will not escape such difficulties of so great a misfortune that is now hidden from their eyes. Unfortunate are the mothers who brought forth such sons and the breasts that nourished them. Miserable are the parents, who hoarded treasure for them, not knowing what evil the Lord is planning for the rich people of the earth. Listen, listen, I entreat you, all who cherish your children! Listen all, you who nourish your little ones tenderly! Teach your sons to dwell in the forests, and to live in the desert on the root of plants, teach them to leave behind the overflowing luxuries and to avoid the feasts of the flesh, so that that may learn to remain with the beasts, until that anger of the Lord passes by.”

Thus said the abbot Joachim. I am of the firm opinion that just as in the time of Noah the waters of the flood suddenly overtook the unbelievers, so in these times the great vengeance and universal anger of God will do things unavoidable and eternal.

In the Gospel, the savior also teaches that one should flee and shun this imminent necessity, saying: “Do not fear them, who kill the body” etc. And there follows: “Fear him, who,

after he has killed, has the power to cast into hell.” And, mind you, he says significantly “after he has killed” without clarifying. For that persecution does not kill in a human way, but a devilish one. For the common method of killing is to separate the body and soul from one another. The inhuman—no, devilish method—is to kill the soul and bury it like a putrid corpse in a living body, so that it might corrupt the others with its stink. For just as among the elect the external ability to exemplify virtue is the good scent of Christ dwelling in the body of a sanctified soul, so among utter reprobates an external imitation of virtue (for the purpose of deceiving souls) is the stench of a dead soul remaining within a living body. These are the whitened sepulchers, whose stench of faithlessness has infected the entire east and now begins to pour into the west. But what follows is indeed terrible: “It has the power to send into hell.” O unheard of wickedness! O evil that exceeds all devilish cunning! For who would believe that the devil is able to compel men to do evil? Nevertheless, that malicious sect removes the will for freedom not through violence, but with habit of long duration, it breaks the firmness of the soul, it conquers the steadiness of the heart and leads human reason into such blindness, that having been subdued and infected, the one who was originally prepared to die for the faith is compelled to foully deny it. Who is strong enough to avoid the wickedness of this power? For it is so vehement and cruel that, while the soul exists in the body, the power can both kill a man and send him into hell. For how can he be said to live, who exposed so often to the danger of death or sold so often for money, has lost all power over himself? Or how can he be said to live, he who so many times desired and sought death? Certainly, if you believe one who has experience, I died as many deaths as days I lived among the Turks. But I have not said enough. For if a sheep is not able to live for an hour in the hands of the wolf, between whom there is a natural enmity, how is a Christian able to live in the hands of the Turks, where the enmity is of the supernatural or spiritual kind? I urge each

Christian to turn away from this evil as much as possible. I counsel each faithful person to be far away from this stench. For the effort of the Turks is so great that it penetrates into the depths of the heart and does not leave the breast, protector of the soul, uninfected.

How the persecutions of the body and of the soul differ among themselves.

Chapter Four

In order to see how the first persecution of the Church and the most recent persecution differ, one can suitably apply the figures in Revelation 13. For there is the mention of two beasts, of which the first is said to have ascended from the sea, the other from the land. The appearance of the one that arose from the sea is terrible indeed, but is not so terrible in reality. But the beast that came from the land, although not particularly terrible in sight, is actually most terrible in reality. And just as the divine worship is considered in two ways, namely accidentally and essentially, so for its persecution a two-fold type of persecuting was needed, just as is evident in these two beasts.

First, the worship of the true God was assailed by idolatry in inconsequential things, and for that reason all of the writings about this first beast pertains to the outward appearance. For the divine worship consists nonessentially in the formation of morals, in humility, poverty, restraint, chastity, frugality, sobriety, piety, vigils, prayers, offerings, sacrifices, alms, pilgrimages, the building and protection of churches, and in similar matters, which are practiced in the flesh. Against such things the heathens armed themselves with external and material equipment. Therefore this first beast is described as having ten horns with ten crowns, and seven heads with the names of blasphemy. All the power can be attributed to these ten heads, which consists in

acquiring earthly property, governing it, managing it, and guarding it with all sufficient means, in all the ostentation that pertains to it.

However, this second persecution, because it had to fight against the essentials of the divine worship, armed itself with spiritual weapons. For the divine worship exists essentially in the soul and in its powers. And therefore it is not without merit that the two horns of the beast are described as being similar to a lamb's; the pretense of virtue and sanctity are expressed in the horns against the two powers of the soul. It speaks like a dragon, through which the workings of false miracles and virtues are designated against the third power of the soul. But as to the fact that the dragon made fire come down from the sky upon the earth, we can rightly understand that as the confused longing for supernatural experiences (which in these times are accustomed to find a home in the minds of the simple) and the curiosity to seek out the secrets of God. We can form the following interpretation about the image and seal of the beast: for whoever awaits or pursues revelations or spiritual visions on account of the good that he does, carries the mark of the beast in his right hand and on his forehead. And just as the first persecution made the entire world complicit in its guilt, as is well known in the case of the Romans who extended idolatry through the entire world, so the second persecution has left nearly no one uninfected by its plague of wickedness. For who of the simple folk or of the laity that feels any devotion, does not wish to immediately have revelations, visions or knowledge of God's secrets? But what shall I say about the disordered desire and appetite for church offices and honors? Can anyone be found, who would not immediately accept a church office bestowed upon him without any delay, or without any scruples about his own ignorance or insufficiency? About those, who tyrannically snatch such offices or buy them for money or are not afraid to usurp them through some other illicit means, I dare to say nothing except this: that they are set forth in the following figure, that

no one is able to buy or sell except those who have the mark of the beast; as if with a finger does such a person demonstrate the state of the Church, in which nothing can be found that is foreign to the crime of simony. But we can now conclude with the following point that not all of the Turks are personally condemned, but nevertheless are reprobate in spirit by being joined in the company of those who are guilty.

On the concern that the Turks have for seeking out and capturing Christians.

Chapter Five

And so, just as has been said in the preceding chapter, since those two persecutions are different—nay indeed opposite in type—it is necessary that the means through which they are performed are different and opposite. The persecutors from the first one did not exert much effort finding Christians because the Christians were offering themselves up voluntarily. For at that time those who were offering themselves up voluntarily were more meritorious than those whom the persecutors seized or sought out and found. But the Gospel teaches that it is certainly necessary for salvation to flee or avoid the persecutors of the soul when it says, referring to those persecutors: “But I will show you whom you should fear.” For it would not be without guilt to give oneself up voluntarily to the danger of one’s soul. Thus now we must examine the zeal, cunning, and wickedness to find and seize Christians that the persecutors were taught by the devil himself.

The Great Turk always has, beyond his regular army, one particular force of twenty or thirty thousand of the most clever (rather than brave) men, and he places in charge one of his most knowledgeable officers of all his men that he has in his army; they are like bandits,

operating better by night rather than by day. They go to plunder at least once every year without exception, but sometimes they hasten to go even twice or three times in one year, if the opportunity presents itself. They do this secretly and in such silence that the neighbors are scarcely able to notice them slipping away, as will be explained below. Because their entire operation is completed at a run, it is necessary that they know how to adapt and regulate their horses and their very own bodies with a determined zeal and discipline for this task, so that, even if it happens that they run day and night for an entire week, neither they nor their horses will suffer any trouble from the force of the march. And at the time when they are idle, they manage and nourish themselves and their horses in order to fatten them up and fortify them well. However when they intend to head off, seven or eight days before, they train themselves and their horses with a fixed discipline, namely, they restrict food and drink and do moderate exercise, so that the fat and bodily weight is removed and thus the nourishment remaining in the marrow remains ready and suitable for running. And before they depart, they divulge that they will go along a path or a place, where they do not intend to go, in order to deceive spies, if there are any.

And this company would not attack, unless they had one or two faithful guides who knew best the ways and paths of the land where they were about to travel. They run with such force and speed that they are able to cover the distance in one night that would normally take three or four days; and they do so for this reason, that even if anyone were to notice them, they would nevertheless be unable to forestall them and betray their imminent arrival. The riders have such zeal for understanding the conditions and nature of their horses that they seem to have attained the greatest possible amount of knowledge concerning physiology. For at one glance, they are able immediately to discern any defect or progress in a horse, or how useful, or how old or how

strong it is. However I shall omit how they do not care about the cold of winter, or the heat of summer, or any obstacle of weather or of the seasons. I shall also leave out how they do not disdain or shrink from the harshness of the locations or the length of their trips. And I shall pass over (what is more surprising) how they do not carry anything of food or drink or weapons or clothing that could be an impediment to them; they do not cease to be content with a moderate—no, the smallest amount—of equipment, they cross the longest distances. They do so until they attack some peoples unawares and finally return home, satisfied. But among these things I wish to briefly say that the deeds that are described here are utterly incredible. For, to tell the truth, I would have not been able to believe anything that I have heard about them unless I had been informed by my experience and had seen it with my very own eyes. Finally, I wish to conclude with this, that if the tricks and deeds of the Turks were to be written down, very many more books would have to be compiled.

Yet who would be able to understand the tremblings and stupor with which they are shaken, those whom the Turks attack unexpected and unawares! Certainly, even if their hearts were made of iron or diamond, they would be undone and bereft of all strength. For what shall he do or where should he turn, he who suddenly and unexpectedly sees his mortal enemy before him, unsheathed sword in hand? Certainly it is somewhat formidable to hear of this, but it is greatly terrible to experience it, as I have seen with my very own eyes. But to what end are such things done? Clearly it is not for any other reason, except to be able to seize the people unawares without any bloodshed or death, and to keep the survivors safe bodily, whom they intend to kill spiritually. For unless the devil acted as aid and counsel to them, they would not have dared to attempt nor would have been able to finish such things at all. For they reckon it to be a great loss if even one man is killed. So that is why the Great Turk, although he is the most powerful and is

able to seize many lands and islands with the force of arms, nevertheless so shies away from the killing of men because he wishes rather to have them living and paying tribute than possess them in captivity through bloodshed. And so in no way does he wish to kill men, unless compelled to do so in extreme circumstances, namely because they are defending themselves or are fleeing; he tries in every way possible to take them alive. And thus a two-fold seizure is performed on one man: for the Turk intends to satisfy his desire by selling bodies, but the devil intends to take away the man's faith and lead the soul miserably along with himself all the way into hell.

How the Turks maintain the captives, and how they buy and sell them.

Chapter Six

In order for it to be easier and more convenient to spare the conquered peoples as captives, the Turks have merchants assigned throughout all the cities to buy and sell men. The merchants, just like vendors of other goods, have their privileges from the king, and are able to buy, sell, pawn, and redeem any captive seized by anyone. They do so in accordance with the royal statutes decreed about this practice, and they can act without the impediment of anyone at all. For not only do the merchants conduct their trade in the cities, but they also come with chains onto the battlefield with the army, so that they can buy captives directly from the hands of the capturing soldiers. For the ones who seize the captives in the first place are not able to manage them, and so sell them at once, for a greater or lesser price, according to the abundance or dearth of captives. Sometimes they seize such a multitude, that one man alone—as I have heard from them—is sold for a mere felt cap. And so those merchants buy the captives and manage them by putting them in chains, ten or twelve in one chain. Indeed there is no doctor or natural scientist

that is comparable to these Turkish merchants in understanding the constitutions and attributes of humans. For one of the merchants is immediately able to know, when he glances upon some slave's face, what his value, trade or fortune is. For not only do they purchase grown slaves or those of older age, but they also buy the little ones and children still on their mother's milk—these are the ones the original seizers are accustomed to reject, as they are a burden to them. Nevertheless, the merchants carry the babes in sacks and nourish them with great diligence and amazing industry.

In addition, in every city there is a special forum, just like those for other goods, specifically for buying and selling men—it is a place lawfully assigned for this purpose. The poor captives, caught in chains and bound by ropes, are led to this place as if sheep to slaughter. There they are examined and stripped: there the creature of reason, made in the image of God, is sold and bought for the cheapest price just like an irrational animal. There (it is a shameful thing to say), the private parts of men and women are handled and openly shown before everyone. Naked, they are compelled to go before everyone, to run, walk, and jump, so that it may be plainly apparent whether they are sick or healthy, male or female, old or young, virgin or corrupt. If the crowd sees anyone blush, they press around them more, beating and striking them with rods, smacking them, so that they are forced to do what they would have blushed to do in front of everyone. But I have only said just a little about this. There the son is sold while the grieving mother looks on. There the mother is bought to the confusion and humiliation of the son. There the wife is mocked as a harlot and is handed over to another man, while her husband blushes. There a little one is snatched from the bosom of his mother while she is sold off, with every deep emotion shaken up. There is no deference to any rank or status. There the priest and plebeian are rated in terms of money alone. There the soldier and the farmer are weighed upon the same

scales. But this is only the beginning of the evils. See what follows: the cheapest possession—the slave—is sold and is led away to serve a common farmer and a nasty villein; he is condemned to perpetual imprisonment.

There is no further hope of freedom or rest, no solace or consolation at all. To the shame of even greater misery the burdens of the entire house, and all that is in it, are placed on the slaves' shoulders. And if the master were to find any failure, you will see the slaves undergo blows like donkeys, and among the blows you will see the reproach against the cross and the passion of Christ that is imposed upon them. I remain silent about these intolerable labors; I say nothing about the hunger and the thirst and the shame of nakedness. But I do wish to add this alone: so great and so bitter is affliction of the soul and spirit found in this servitude that it cannot be compared to death in any way. For what will the miserable soul do, when it sees that it is impeded from all good things and exposed to all bad things? It will see that the enemy of the cross of Christ rules over it; it will see that it is oppressed by great labors and various tasks; it considers that it is separated from the sheepfold of Christ and handed over into the hands and jaws of wolves. Thereupon it will see that it is enclosed in perpetual imprisonment and disappointed of all hope of freedom. Finally, it will see that it has been abandoned by God and given into the hands of the devil. Certainly, if the option were to present itself, the soul would rather choose to die than live. O how many people, unable to endure the hazard of this calamity, fall into the pit of despair! O how many people expose themselves to death in many ways, fleeing into the mountains and forests to die of hunger or thirst; or, what is by far the worst evil, they lay their hands upon themselves, either strangling away their life with a noose or hurling themselves into a river—for they kill the life of the body and the soul at the same time.

On the Turks' greed for possessing slaves and maidservants,
and on the flight and freeing of slaves.

Chapter Seven

So great is the greed among the Turks for possessing slaves and maidservants, that in all of Turkey there is one opinion held by all, namely, that whoever is able to possess one slave or maidservant will not see poverty anymore. Nor does this opinion deceive them. For I believe for certain, that for the following reason, the curse of God enters into the household of the owner, so that frustrated entirely by the hope of eternal happiness, he rejoices in earthly happiness. For from then on such insatiability occupies the Turk's heart, that when he has one slave or maidservant he immediately desires to have a second with the whole desire of his heart, and so in turn from the second to a third, from the third to a fourth. As his fault increasing in this way, his concupiscence extends into infinity. As a result, many Turks can be found who set up plantations for their slaves and maidservants and build them houses. They join slave and handmaid in marriage to satisfy their insatiable desire (to some extent at least) by the sons and daughters born of the slaves. For in all of Turkey, scarcely can a house be found that does not lack at least one slave or handmaid. Accordingly it happens that, however much the slaves multiply in number and abundance, nevertheless their value and price never decreases, but rather rises! As a result, the cleverness of the snatchers themselves and the merchants is put to the test, while they see the price of their wares not diminish in value and price, but rather increase.

And just as the greed of the masters for possessing slaves is great, so also is the desire of the slaves to escape their hands. For they discuss among themselves nothing else, they think and speak about no other thing, except how and where they could flee or how to escape. But when

their masters themselves weigh and consider this fact in consequence of the slaves' regular conversation, the masters at once begin to deny them an abundance of sustenance, lest they be able to prepare provisions from the excess supplies for the journey to escape.

And so the slaves flee in many ways, nevertheless they do not succeed at all. For scarcely is anyone able to escape, especially among the ones who are brought back from beyond the sea. For the Turks have found many and various ways to impede them, to get them back, and to find them. When therefore they have been found and brought back after running away, their misery is doubled. And so when the fugitives have been found and returned after a second escape attempt, there is no longer a place for pardon, but they are beaten, tortured, and afflicted without any mercy. If, however, they will have persevered in fleeing, they are sold or restrained from flight through various forms of compulsion. Some masters permit the slaves to die by denying them food, water, or clothing; others attach a lump of iron to their feet; others fetter their necks with chains; other rendered them lame by burning their sinews through; others rendered them deformed, conspicuous, and useless by cutting away their ears and nose; and still other cruelly kill and destroy them with swords.

But there is a certain solution to this problem that nevertheless not everyone, but only the wise and milder of the Turks observe. For in order to restrain the slaves from fleeing and to keep them in one place, they induce them to accept a pact of liberty. When they are happy to do so, the masters bring them to the ordinary judge of that place and come to an agreement with them on a certain period of time and quantity of money. And having formed the pact about this matter in front of the judge and witnesses and having drawn up a bond, they assured the slaves in having freedom. And so when the slave had done what was in the pact, the judge with his imperial authority gives the slave his perpetual freedom with a ceremonial deed, which no one is

able to infringe upon in any way. Through this way I was also freed. However, in past times this freedom was universal and extensive; one was able to stay in Turkey or return to the fatherland as one pleased. But in these times it is restricted; it is not permitted for a freedman to return to the fatherland, but only to remain in Turkey. And therefore when one has gained freedom, it is very difficult to leave, because in all places, whether in the ports of the sea or elsewhere, there is an interdict from the king: that no one given freedom is permitted to return to their native land.

There are very many other ways to escape, among which two are most used. The first option is that those who have the ability to acquire money are able to purchase letters of some kind from wandering foreign priests and in this way could secretly withdraw. The second is this: there are certain thieves under the appearance of those merchants who sell men, going from place to place. When they find slaves or maidservants who wish to flee, they furtively receive them and sell them to a more remote location; and if they find any more suitable, they make a pact with them, and after having sold them three or four times in this manner, they permit them to leave, as free men with letters. Out of these who are freed, however, very few return to their fatherland, either because they have formed ties in Turkey, or on account of the difficulties of withdrawing, as we have said above, etc.

About the ones who were not reluctant or compelled,
but who offered or threw themselves voluntarily into this danger.

Chapter Eight

But although that sect receives some support and increase from those slaves who are brought unwilling, through conquest and compulsion, nevertheless their crime is greatly

exceeded by that of those who do not cease to expose themselves, like dry wood, to the insatiable fire without opposition. But while everyday they rush in great numbers to deny the faith, they incite ruin not only for themselves, but even the others. Concerning the collaborators' origins, there are four or five great kingdoms situated towards the regions of the north. Although the Turk had possessed the lands long ago when he conquered them, nevertheless, up to now he was not able to fill up the lands with Turks due to their size and breadth. The names of the kingdoms are: Bosnia, Arnaut, Laz, Slavonia, and Albania. Up to this day the those peoples inhabit their own lands under the dominion of the Turk himself, but on account of the annual tributes, heavy burdens, and many tribulations that they suffer, they are so impoverished that they are scarcely able to feed themselves. So it happens that driven by need they arrive at the time of harvest and scatter throughout the cities of Turkey, in order to find an alleviation of their need through the sweat of work, just like day laborers. And these migrants, if they are not hindered by bad weather, come in such numbers, that they are content to work not for any wage, but only for food. And they are easily persuaded not to return, and it is for that reason that such a crowd of that language and origin rose up there in Turkey, and especially in the royal city, called Edrenopolis, where nearly all the men and women, the small and great, learned to speak this language. For the Turkish language is barely heard at the king's court, because the entire court and the greater part of the royal officials are gathered out of the renegades who speak that foreign language.

In addition, the Great Turk receives a tenth of all the spoils and plunder as a tithe, and when he notices that there is an abundance of captives, he orders that all youths aged twenty or less be offered to him as a part of the tribute that belongs to him. But there are still other foreigners from old Greece or other nations that live throughout his land. They live in very many

forts and towns and, being free and exempt from all statues or burdens of any other masters, they offer themselves to the service of the king himself and belong to his court. Every five years, the Turk orders his envoys to bring back the foreigners' sons aged twenty years or less. He orders that they be distributed throughout the courts of his royal officials, in order to be educated and trained in the customs, physical fitness, and weapons of the land. When the youths reach age twenty or more, the Turk brings them back to his own court and receives them into his military service, where they attend to him. Such troops are called in their language "gingitscheri," Janissaries, and number about thirty or forty thousand in service to the king's court. They bear a certain insignia on their clothes and especially on their heads. For they wear felt caps or white headdresses, which no one dares to use, unless they are from the royal court. Archers are chosen from these ones, five or six thousand, who draw a bow in their left hand and are called "czolaclar," that is, lefthanders. They have bows of such strength that their arrows penetrate every shield and coat of mail. These archers walk directly in front of the king, and while the king proceeds to the battlefield, he uses all of them as a protective wall. For he does not join the fight himself, and if it happens that his entire army breaks apart, nevertheless he would not lose the victory along with his own army, as we heard happened in that great conflict of three days and nights that he had with the king of Poland. There, although his entire common army had been totally dispersed and conquered, nevertheless he finally obtained victory with his personal army.

Some servants of the Turk from those aforementioned are promoted to offices of the kingdom, in accordance with their virtue tested in these matters. From that it happens that all of the officers and chief men of the entire kingdom are constituted by the king as mere bureaucrats, not masters or possessors; consequently, the Turk himself is the sole lord, owner, lawful steward, distributor, and governor of the entire kingdom, while the others are the executive officers,

officials, and administrators, following his desire and power. He has, however, among the other lords two greater ones who are in charge of the others, one on this side of the sea and the other beyond the sea. Following the king's power and will, they handle all the affairs of the realm; they are called "beglerbegi", namely, lords of lords. And thence it appears, that in his kingdom, although there is a vast multitude, no objection or opposition is able to arise; they consider the king's power to be unparalleled, and they are united in and through all things as if one man; they are subordinate and serve him indefatigably, and no one dares to presume anything without the king's authority. However, if anyone attempts anything great or small, consequently he is deprived of all office and called back to the court, he is subjected to his prior servitude, unless a greater penalty is to be inflicted. If that is the case, the king kills him as he chooses, assigns him to jail, sells him and renders him into slavery without any respect to his rank or person.

But now one is able to understand from this, that the harmony of those reprobate and wicked ones does not proceed from any accidental or exterior advantage, since they are enslaved by such means and in such fear to the service and control of that most cruel tyrant. It proceeds instead from the certain essential and inward basis and cause, that is the despair of good and the stubbornness of evil. They arrive at this despair as if drunk, with their faults driving them, and they are bound by the certain devilish impulse and united by their wrath against the just judge; whose chalice of indignation they drink, so that they are able to run to the goal of evil and total perversity without any pause or obstacle and are able to prepare a place for their lord devil and Antichrist. When the devil has filled up the measure of their bad intention and received in himself the image of all the reprobates and wicked, when he has completed to the fullest extent the wickedness with which they fight against the Church of God, so that he makes them adore him in the place of God: then the lord Jesus will kill him with the breath of his mouth, so that the

devil will feel the severity of the punisher in his limbs, as will his people, who disdained the patience of God waiting a long time for them to come to repentance, etc.

About the reasons, through which Christians are persuaded and prefer this sect to the faith of Christ, and on the many types of reasons for doing so.

Chapter Nine

The reasons that make this sect and this error attractive are of two types, namely natural and supernatural. The natural is again twofold, namely universal and particular. The universal reasons are also twofold: some of conjecture, others of experience. Conjecture is that which happens from remote causes and only from hearsay; experience, however, is that which is perceived by sight and sense. The abbot Joachim speaks about these reasons of conjecture in his commentary on the thirteenth chapter of Revelation: “‘And the entire land wondered after the beast’: Although it is to be fulfilled in their day, nevertheless very many are not lacking, who are astonished and begin to totter about, saying: ‘what is this sign believed to be, since such a multitude opposes the faith, and since it is permitted to prevail against the Christian people? Do you suppose so many thousands of men are to be condemned as if one man? Do you suppose that God, without cause, permits them to grow without limit?’ The wretches who say these things have fallen from the faith, not knowing that which is written: ‘How magnificent are your works, Lord! Exceedingly profound are your thoughts! The foolish man will not know and the stupid man will not understand this: when the sinners spring up like grass, and all those who serve evil appear, they perish in eternity. But you are the most high, Lord.’ Indeed the stupid do not know this, those who wonder after the beast and desert the faith of Christ, bowing down to the bestial

power and deserting to his uncleanness. They make themselves heirs of his perfidy.” This is what the abbot Joachim says. Here he lays down four reasons of conjecture. The first is this: hearing the power of that Great Turk, his great victories against the Christians, and many other evil deeds that he does daily, they are surprised and say: how does such a multitude oppose the faith? As though they might say: since the truth always prevails over error, and is better loved and desired by everyone, it is not possible that so many assail the faith. Therefore, where there is a crowd, there is truth. The second reason is: how are they able to prevail over the truth, when god always helps the truth or those holding on to it? Therefore: whoever prevails, holds the truth. The third reason is this: How is it possible, that the faith of the Turks is able to multiply and grow, when all error is without foundation and is unable to multiply? Therefore etc. The fourth reason is this: how does God allow such a number of people to cross over to perdition, when he wishes that all men be saved? Therefore etc. The abbot Joachim answers these modes and concepts of reasoning through the words of the psalmist, saying “How magnificent are...” etc., as if he might say: when nature makes the chaff and the stubble grow to immense size, in order to save and nourish the small seed, nevertheless it does not err: why is it surprising if God endures and supports the many rejected peoples on account of the salvation of the just few? But the foolish do not consider this, who, on account their own fantasies and thoughts, wish to pass judgment on the incomprehensible works of God.

The reasons of experience are twofold, namely universal and particular. About the universal reasons of experience, it must be noted that the temptations, which are seen through experience, have a vastly greater impact than those that are perceived through hearsay and conjecture; I have already spoken briefly about those reasons. However, I must now more diligently pursue those reasons that happen through sight and experience. This topic must be

turned to on account of the basis of this material, that both good and bad things are in equal condition with regards to outward practices, but unequal with regard to intention, since, just as all things work together for good to good people, so by contrast all things work together for evil to evil people. As a result, if good people are strong when the practice of those around them are good, it serves as an example of good virtue; if however the practices of those around them are crooked, it causes them to guard their interior virtue and humility. For the reprobates use good practices in order to deceive, and use bad practices in order to corrupt the souls of the faithful. About the first it is said: “Soft are his works like oil, although they are really javelins.” But about the second: “Crooked conversation corrupts good character.”

For who—and I do not mean only the simple, but also the wise—who would not be moved at first glance to see such an emphasis on morality in even these infidels? They detest like fire and abhor like the plague all frivolousness in any of their actions or deeds whatever. For seeing the frivolousness of the Christians in their clothing and equestrian gear and other things, the Turks deride them and call them she-goats and monkeys. They have a most honest way—no, a most religiously scrupulous way—of doing things in their dress, as much the men as the women, the high and the low, the court officials as even the farmers and villagers. They have such an ordinary and simple manner that nothing at all of indecency or impropriety or excess or fussiness or frivolousness can be discovered or found among them. But about the ones who are considered more religious and devout, what shall I say? For they show such simplicity and uniformity—both singular in appearance and exemplarity—in their actions, deeds, movements, and gestures, that you would believe them to have taken some sort of religious vow. For in horse riding and in the trappings thereof, not only the simple folk but also even the lords avoid all noise and commotion, so that no one rides a horse that has not been gelded. Indeed, in one army

of a hundred thousand horsemen not even the smallest noise or sound of any horse could be heard. There is no fussiness at all in their saddles or bridles, they maintain no vanity or excess: they hold to a most simple manner in all their horse equipment. No one goes about armed, when they leave for the battlefield, but all their arms are carried in the saddlebags of camels and mules. No one runs around, and no one jumps or dances with his horse, as is habitual among the Christians. For even the lords and princes conduct themselves so simply in all things, that they are not able to be distinguished from everyone else. I saw the king going on the long path to mosque from his palace with only two youths, and I also saw him doing the same thing on his way to the baths; and when he returned from the mosque to the palace no one dared to accompany him, nor did anyone dare run up to him in the street and shout “long live the king!” or anything of the sort. I even saw him praying in the mosque, not in a throne or a regal chair, but sitting on a rug spread over the ground just like the others, and there were no ornaments hung or displayed or strung up around him. He uses no distinguishing features in his clothing or on his horse, by which he can be recognized by others. I saw him in the funeral procession of his mother, and I would have not been able to recognize him, unless he had been pointed out to me. It is strictly forbidden for anyone to attend him or go up to him in the street without special permission. I am omitting many things that I have heard about him, such as how affable he is in conversation, how prompt and benign in judgment, how generous in almsgiving, and benevolent in all other things. The brothers in Pera said that he once entered their church and sat in the choir in order to see the ceremonies and the manner of the offices. At his wish, they even celebrated the Mass before him and showed him a host (although not one consecrated in the elevation), wishing to satisfy his curiosity but nevertheless not showing pearls to swine. And when the king had a discussion with the brothers about the laws and rites of the Christians and heard that

bishops are in charge of the churches, he wished that some bishop be brought in as a comfort to the Christians; he promised to give the bishop all the necessary things of his office and would offer his goodwill and help without fail. But who in a distant land, hearing about the king's victories, wars, and the size of his army, his fame and glory, how could they suspect that there was such simplicity in him, and when they did hear, how could they not admire him?

About the particular reasons of experience.

Chapter Ten

The particular reasons are twofold, namely extrinsic and intrinsic. The extrinsic are those that pertain especially to cleanliness. For in all outward appearances the Turks show that they cherish cleanliness, so that just about everything they use, they suspect of being unclean. In their houses, where they eat, they do not at all permit chickens or dogs to enter, and if by chance a dog or chicken touches a dish or pot, no one is to eat from it any more. When they wish to eat a chicken, they first keep it bound for six or seven days and only feed it pure grain. If some animal dies, which had not had its throat cut with a sword or iron and had its blood totally drained, in no way is its meat considered fit for eating. They take such great care about the bodily cleanliness when they conduct prayers that they do not tolerate the smallest blemish on their clothing or their bodies. Their ablutions, however, which normally precede their prayers, are discussed later in chapter 13. They neither drink wine nor eat pig flesh, because, as they say, it renders a person unclean. In no way do they permit anyone even to speak with someone who is naturally unclean, nor are they allowed to even be seen by anyone, unless they have been previously bodily submerged and drenched with water. For this reason, in their cities they use the baths constantly.

However, where they do not have baths, they have private locations prepared for this use in their houses, so that they can be drenched with water at once before they leave the house. For they call anyone who is polluted “tschunup”, because it denotes uncleanness, which is considered highly detestable among them.

The intrinsic motives are those that pertain to appetite and desire. In the first instance their great simplicity comes to mind, which they have in their buildings. For they take no delight at all in erecting and constructing buildings or homes, and although they are very wealthy in gold, silver, and money, nevertheless they so detest luxury and excess that you might think that they have taken a vow of poverty. Rarely is there a house in the cities made from stone, except those of the great lords, the mosques, and the baths; they are commonly constructed from wood and earth. Actually the Turks are scandalized in a surprising way by the Christians on account of their buildings and luxury, at least those who have seen them. However when they describe these things to the ones who have not seen, they disdain the Christians, saying: Do these wicked pagans think that they will live forever? Indeed even the great lords, when they are not called onto the battlefield, go in the summer to more amenable places, and not caring about their houses, they live in pavilions and insist on continual hunting and recreation. In addition a certain class among them gives their effort to nothing else except to nourish and guard the flocks, in the manner of the patriarchs of old. And they are such an innumerable multitude that if they were dispersed through all of Turkey, the land would scarcely suffice to have room for them on account of the amounts of flocks and beasts. For in winter they descend to lower and warmer places, and in the summer they ascend to higher ground. They are so rich and powerful, that one Turk, with his household and his riches, could arm and equip an army; nevertheless they live in the cheapest tents and cottages, demonstrating that they are not inhabitants of this earth, but

pilgrims; and they do from a certain natural instinct, what Christians on account of Christ and his faith ought to do from a vow.

Now a second instance of simplicity comes to mind, which the Turks have: they so abhor and detest pictures or sculptures of all images that they say (and in truth believe) that Christians, who delight in all these things, are idolaters and devil worshipers. While I was in Chios with the Turkish ambassadors who had come to receive the tribute there, and when they were led into our church, I was wishing to persuade them with regards to the images. They did not agree at all, but against all my reasons affirmed their position, persevering in their obstinacy, by saying only this: “You worship idols.” Even playing for money in any way or in any type of gambling is so persecuted that they treat and punish anyone found doing so with many disgraces. But about that great superstition of Christians (especially among those in the regions of Italy) for painting and sculpting their arms and writing their names and seals, so far is the tribe of the Turks removed from such a practice that no trace of it is able to be discovered among them. They neither use seals on their letters—whether the king’s or anyone else—nor do they use any other type of seal, however small. But they immediately have trust upon hearing the only the name of letter’s sender or upon inspecting the handwriting of the sender. All these things and others like them, which have the mark of vanity or superstition, the Turks abhor, considering them vain, useless, and unnecessary. And so this is also the reason that they do not or allow the use of any bells, and do not permit the Christians living among them to use bells.

But about the simplicity they have in sitting, what shall I say? For not only do the farmers and common people, but even all the princes and court officials of whatever dignity and rank there are—even their emperor, whether for eating or doing anything else, does not require a bench or chair or some kind of prop for sitting, but sits in the manner of boys (nevertheless very

distinguished); and with a certain most fitting composure, the emperor reclines above the earth, thereby deferring to nature, which disposes all things equally. For the most part, their tables are made from common shorn leather or even unshorn deer hide, usually round, four or five hands wide, and having iron circles around the border, through which laces are threaded, and can be opened, closed, and carried in the manner of a purse. No one enters a house or mosque or other place in which they intend to sit, unless they have removed their shoes. It is considered improper among them to sit with shoes on. And that this might happen more conveniently, they use a certain type of sandal, which is called in their language “baschmag”, especially the females, which is easily taken off and again put on. And commonly in their houses or in mosques, the place where they sit is covered with rugs of wool, rushes, or reeds. Also, when necessity requires it, they have elevated platforms on top of the earth, on account of the humidity or uncleanness of the location.

But I will not be silent about this next thing, although I shall speak with modesty: how worthily they conduct themselves outside the house or in public view, just as is typical in the camps, regarding their satisfying the call of nature. For this purpose they use clothing on their legs that is very full and long, and open in the back part. As a result, one can squat to the ground in the middle of the army and, throwing back the undergarments away from his legs, he is able to satisfy the call of nature without any nudity, and no one can scarcely detect or suspect what he does. And among them they take great care, lest they anyone doing the deed of this sort turn themselves south, where they are accustomed to turn while praying. In addition, if anyone urinates or makes water while standing erect like a Christian, they are judged by everyone to be a heretic and excommunicated.

About these reasons, which attract others and greatly confirm the Turks in their error.

Chapter Eleven

There are also some reasons that not only attract other people, but very greatly strengthen and confirm the Turks in their error: there are four.

The first is the great fervor that they have for the protection and defense of that sect. Consequently, when there is a call to muster the army, they run together and convene with such promptness and haste that you would think they were invited to a wedding, not a war. In fact, they are scarcely able to wait for the time of departure, but anticipate it; if sometime it happens that they are free from war, they are beset by a great boredom. Not only do those who were already enlisted run and hurry to the muster, but also very many others on their own impulse; for this reason, the Great Turk does not make much effort in composing his army, but just designates a time and place, and sends messengers to his commanders, who immediately make the muster known in the cities and villages. And thus in the space of one month they convene in the order they were enlisted, infantry apart from the cavalry, each with his own commander in the same regular order in which they are accustomed in the field to make camp and proceed to battle. They do not use banners, but the officers of the camp have instead of a battle standard a tall lance with bits of colors hanging down from the top, by which all are able to recognize the officer that they belong to. And each of the officers uses one great drum with a pipe for convening, assembling, and when necessary, calling forth his troops to battle. These officers are called “czuubaschi”. And each of these officers are subordinate to the troop leader, more or less, according to the needs of the army, being at least four and at most ten; those troop leaders are called “tscheribaschi”. Each of the troop leaders is in charge of one hundred horsemen, which are called

“cingheri”. The same order is observed among the infantry. And so when they return from the fight, each—whether big or small—presents himself to the registrar, who is one of the lords, so that if anyone is missing, another can be enlisted in his place. But if the Great Turk sees that the war is going badly, he immediately sends messengers through the entire kingdom, and compels every fourth or fifth man to join up at the expense of the ones remaining at home. This auxiliary army is called “tscherihor”, and through this method the Turk is able to form an army of unlimited size. And the messengers undertake and perform these tasks with such fervor that a man offers himself in the place of another; those who remain believe that an injury has been done to them. In addition, they say that they would be lucky, if they could die not at home among the tears and spittle of the womenfolk, but on the battlefield among the spears and arrows of the enemy. Not only do they not mourn those who have died, but they also proclaim and extoll them as holy and victorious.

The second reason is their continuous victories against Christians, because it greatly moves some, as was written in chapter 8, but less wisely, as will be shown below in the interpretation of the reasons. This still does strengthen and confirm many in that sect. Consequently, they call themselves victors and boast as if they are conquerors of the entire world. They even pray specifically for the victors in all their congregations, especially with continual thanksgiving after the meal. In addition, they boast, and disdainfully say that the Christians are all women and that they are their husbands. And in order for them to incite themselves more and more, they describe, sing, praise, and proclaim the victories of their predecessors.

The third reason is their great and continual population growth, not only from those, who are led in unwilling and conquered or those who offer themselves voluntarily (as was written

above in chapter 7), but also from those, who are begotten among them. Each Turk is able lawfully to have twelve legitimate wives—but he can have female slaves however many and however much is pleasing to him, without number or count. And according to this law, they consider all sons and daughters of slaves equal heirs in all things with the children of their lawful wives. As a result, merchants and even some powerful and rich lords have a house, wife, daughters, and sons in whatever city they happen to have some business. In this way some reach the number of twelve wives. Nevertheless, few can be found, who keep two wives in the same home on account of their quarreling and troubles. In accordance with the law, a man has the right to take back, dismiss, have or not have a wife, whenever it pleases, without a backward glance. As a result they say that the bond of matrimony, which they call “kebin”, is in the power of the husband and not the wife. And although it is possible to dissolve this bond as it pleases, it is not possible to make a bond except through the power of a priest.

The fourth reason is the multitude of those converted to that sect, not only the simple, but also the wise, of all types and conditions and ranks of men. The Turks give a better provision to the Christian religious and priests who have converted to them, so that they serve as an example of conversion to the others. Indeed, I saw a certain Capuchin brother, who had a large pension from the royal treasury, because he had denied the faith. I also heard about a renegade Dominican friar, who, when he had crossed over on a certain ship with some Turks against the Christians, with fortune pressing upon him all the other ships were rescued from the storm, but only the ship he was on sank as the price of his perfidy: not without cause did he deserve to undergo eternal punishment. The Turks do not compel anyone at all to deny the faith, nor do they exert much pressure in persuading people to do so, nor do they place a great value on those who deny their faith. I once saw a certain man, who as a boy in the court of a certain great lord

devoted himself for getting an education, and later became an excellent clergyman and citizen, having a wife and sons. When the lord had died without freeing this man, he would not have been released, but would have been exposed to along with his sons by jealous people, had he not bought his own freedom at the pleasure of the lord's heir.

Concerning the virtuous conduct of the women of the Turks

Chapter Twelve

If anyone does not wish to believe that I will now say, let him (as the saying goes) examine himself according to the dictates of right reason, and so he will testify for me that what I say is by no means far from the truth. For if judgment proceeds in the manner of right reason from the beginning, how could it not be said that whatever was done physically, or whatever dishonesty or indecency there is in the customs of the wives proceeds from the shamelessness and lasciviousness of men, since man—with scripture as witness—is shown to be the head of the wife? Certainly a great admiration arises in me, when I think about the virtuous conduct that I saw in the feminine sex among the Turks, and now see the extremely lewd adornments and damned morals among Christian women. What I saw there was so universal, and held true in every place of Turkey, that without exception I was not able to see anything otherwise in all the cities or places through which I wandered. But what I see among the Christians is so uncommon and not universal that it requires universal reprehension. Those who do deserve blame are not men, certainly, but effeminate people. Their reason is so submerged in carnality, that they are not able to discern in any way what would benefit their neighbors. Instead, they merely pay attention to whatever satisfies their foulest hearts and eyes, all in the meretricious worship of their wives.

Nor are the wives excusable (on account of the misdeeds of their husbands), since they know that this pleases their husbands, and they are not compelled to obey their husbands in doing what hurts the salvation of their souls. But because (as the common proverb goes) ‘every woman is a whore,’ the guilt of men exceeds the guilt of women without doubt, since the men do not steer women’s unrestrained lewdness with the bridle of discretion. O cursed—no, diabolical—unchasteness, which, since it is not able to place itself under the limbs of everyone to pollute itself, nevertheless strives to impose itself on the emotions and eyes of everyone! Certainly more blessed are the prostitutes lying in their brothels than those lewd women who go about the entire city to destroy souls! O most unlucky tribe of women: do you trust that you hold to the laws of matrimony, you who commit adultery whenever you show a bare chest and throat, glancing eyes, ingratiating face, straight neck, and flowing hair to our unchaste eyes? But you, the husband of this most lewd wife who is not your own, but everyone’s—you pimp of Satan!—who sustain and nourish such snares of the devil: do you not suppose that you will render an account of so many evils, when scripture says: “Whoever looks at a woman to lust after her, has already committed adultery in his heart”?

But let us now return to that which is the intent of our discussion. Certainly I would not incorrectly call the Turks men. Even though any of them is reportedly allowed to have twelve wives, he makes clear that he does not lavish his love inordinately upon any woman in particular. He uses all his wives equally to conceive and raise offspring as is necessary. While he teaches that one man is preferred to twelve women, he confirms the cheapness of the entire unlucky sex and the saying of the creator, who said about women: “you will be under the power of your husband.” He also confirms that those men, who allow themselves to be dominated by women on account of the ardor of their libido, are not men, but the worst ruffians. He also

confirms that they are to be considered helpers of the devil himself in his quest to ruin souls. Great infamy would be attributed to a Turkish man, if his wife were seen with her face exposed in the sight of men, in her own house or outside the house. Their women use a most simple manner in their clothing, without any trace of fussiness or luxury. On their heads they use turbans with overlaid veils, and with the headdress diligently and beautifully wrapped, the edge of the veil remains hanging down on the right of the face. If it happens that a woman leaves the house, or if inside the house she happens to be in the presence of men, she is able instantly to draw the veil across her face, covering everything except her eyes. But I say that this is also typical among even the villagers and the simple folk. In the cities it would be considered to be a grave violation, if the wife of a notable person was found outside the home, unless she veiled her entire face with fine silk through which she was able to see others, but not be seen by anyone. When a group of men is present, a woman never dares to come into their sight, and it is entirely forbidden among them for a woman to go to the market, to buy or sell anything. In the greater mosque, they have a place set apart far off from the men, a private place where no one would be able to look in or enter in any way. Not everyone is permitted to enter this place, but only the wives of the court officials, and not at any time except for the noontime prayer on Friday (which is their most solemn day). Conversation between men and women in public is so rare, that if you were to be among the Turks for a year, you would scarcely see it happen even once. Everyone also considers it unnatural for a woman to sit on a mule or horse. Even in their own homes, the smallest evidence of the lasciviousness or immodesty of men with their wives cannot be found, in their actions, habits, or discussion. So great is the men's maturity in their own homes that the fear and reverence shown to them by the entire household, and they never relax their strictness, especially towards their wives. The great lords, however, since they are not always able to be

with their wives, assign eunuchs to them as guardians. The eunuchs mind the women with such great diligence that the women seem utterly ignorant of the 'condition' of any man except her own husband. For the sake of brevity, I pass over the rest. But what I saw, having experienced it from the women (this was at the house of my last patron, in whose household I was for fifteen straight years), would be boring to narrate with all the details; nevertheless, the magnitude of the effort does not permit me to remain silent. For in this household, the wife of the son had already come into the same house twenty years ago and had sons and daughters. And for those twenty years she was never seen in the presence of her husband's father with an open mouth or exposed face, whether to speak or eat. From the first day she entered the house, she never relaxed the rigidity of her reverence, nor would she be allowed to do so in the future. And that is the one general experience of everyone who was in a similar situation among the Turks. There is actually another thing that they observe most strictly. When a betrothal pact had been made between the son of one family and the daughter of another, in no way does the bridegroom ever dare even to speak or be found with the parents or relatives of his betrothed until the day of the nuptials. Rather, he avoids and flees from them, blushing from those present, as much as is possible. And the bride observes the same thing out of respect for the parents and relatives of the bridegroom, etc.

About the supernatural and spiritual reasons, and first,
the profession of faith and law of the Turks.

Chapter Thirteen

The profession of faith, on which the law of the Turks is founded, is this: “Layllaha hillallah mehemmet ercullach.” According to the common opinion of those who explained it, it means: “There is one God, and Mechomet is his greater prophet.” In this profession of faith consists the difficulty of all opinions concerning the sect. For if someone was able to persuade himself that he was a worshiper of the one God, he would spread the poison of error under the guise of piety. This is the stone of offense onto which many dash, falling into the snare of the damnation of souls. This is the mule-drawn millstone that, hung on the necks of many, plunges them into the pit of despair. For while the simple among us hear that the Turks detest idols, and reject all depiction or image as if hellish fire, and that they constantly profess and preach the worship of the one God—no longer does any suspicion remain about them. But some of our wise ones also say that the cause of the endurance of that sect over all other sects and heresies is this: because they detest idols and worship the one God. But this will be seen to have been spoken very unwisely, if what is written about God’s endurance of the wicked is recalled and thoroughly examined. For this reason, God patiently awaits the wicked, so that he may punish them in the fullness of sin on judgment day. As for those whom he removes more quickly and does not permit to do as they choose, he does so for this reason: that they may be more mildly treated in their punishments. He certainly does this for this reason: so that they are punished more mildly in their revenge. And so what does the guilt of the reprobates—who disdain God’s mercy, while he waits—while their guilt stretches to infinity? What do the wicked do except await and receive the fury of the just judge advancing against them without cure or end, that punishment coming against them even more sternly in vengeance? How this profession should be interpreted will be discussed in chapter 17. But what the law of this profession contains will be seen here.

The common opinion of almost all the Turks about their law is as follows: they say that the first great prophet, to whom the law was originally given by God, was Missa, that is Moses, whom was given the book “tefrit,” which we call “Pentateuch”; and that all men who observed the law at that time were saved. When through the succession of time, however, human malice and negligence had corrupted this law, a second prophet, Daut (whom we call David), was chosen as a remedy for this transgression. He was given the book “czabur,” which we call “psalms”. When the law was first observed and then corrupted in a similar way to the first, the third great prophet Yesse was added, that is Jesus, to whom the third law was sent with the book “ingilis,” which we call “Gospels”; in his time it was the means of salvation. And finally, with that preceding law having become obsolete, a fourth prophet was chosen named Mechomet, who received the law from God with a book that is called “alcoranus”, that is the Koran. With all the other laws rendered obsolete, it alone is preached and declared, fully and without doubt, to be necessary for salvation, until another arrives.

And so the first precept of the law of the Koran is this: that every person of either sex, when they have reached a certain age, may not lead a life outside the bounds of marriage. Then the law places upon all the equal obligation of prayer, which is performed five times a day at the five hours and times assigned to the prayer. The first time of prayer is at sunrise, not a computed hour, but at a time measured in a rough way (because the Turks have no art of computation, but only mark time by their natural instinct). The first prayer is completed through four erket and two czalamat. “Erket” is bowing twice, with the same number of prostrations; “czalamat” is the secret prayer, which is done while sitting after any erket, accompanied by a greeting and sign of peace from the right and the left, which is done by drawing each hand over the face. The time of the second prayer is around midday, and contains ten erket and five czalamat. The third prayer

happens at evening as the sun goes down, and has eight erket and four czalamat. The fourth prayer, containing five erket and three czalamat, claims for itself the time around sunset. The fifth and final prayer, being more extensive, has fifteen erket and eight czalamat, and is celebrated at a later hour, after dinner. The first prayer is called “dangnamas” in their language, the second “oilenemas”, third “kyndinamas”, fourth “achsam namaz”, and fifth “iaczinamas”. Everyone is obligated to perform these prayers with his imam at his own mosque, unless a legitimate reason intervenes. If that is the case, he is lawfully able to perform them at any location. In observing the time of prayers there is the same dispensation, namely that an omitted prayer may be supplemented to another. But on Friday, which is the sacred day among them, they pray more attentively, but nevertheless do not fast or refrain from work. In the cities, one service is held at the solemn and principle mosque, which is called “enemesgit”; all convene there on Friday, including the king himself, when he is present, and all the court officials. When the noonday prayers have been solemnly finished, there is a sermon and the distribution of the royal alms. It would be tedious to detail the order, good conduct, and silence that they have in the mosque. Nonetheless I will say this briefly: when I consider the silence in a Turkish mosque and the uproar in a Christian church at the time of prayer, a great wonder arises in me about such a reversal of order, namely that there can be such devotion in the first, and such lack of devotion in the second, when cause and reason would require it to be the opposite.

They also have inquisitors, who treat those accused of omitting prayers with many disgraces. They lead them around with a sign and foxtails hanging from their neck, and release them with a monetary fine, especially if they committed the negligence of prayers during their month of fasting.

They have three types of ablutions, by which they prepare themselves for prayer. The first is the total perfusion of their entire bodies with water so diligently, that no place even the size of a needle prick remains untouched by water; otherwise the ablution is invalidated. And on account of this they are accustomed frequently and most diligently to shave the hair on all parts of their bodies, with the exception of beards in men and the head in women. They wash their hair with great care, often dividing it with combs, so that water can penetrate to the skin. In addition, they carefully trim the nails on their hands and feet, and, for the same reason I think, they use circumcision, as will be said below in chapter 21. And this ablution, as I said above in chapter 10, is necessary after any stain of pollution, and is called “czoagirmeg”. The second ablution is called “tachriat” and is necessary whenever the act of nature is done, or some wind is emitted. Then their private parts and rears must be washed in some secret place. The third ablution is called “anptaz” or “abdaz”, and is necessary for the five organs of the senses, beginning with the hands. When they have been washed, the cleansing continues with the arms up to the elbows and to the mouth and nostrils. Next the entire face is washed, from the eyes to the ears, and the head is drenched with handfuls of water. The cleansing then goes down from the head to the feet, and is completed with the legs washed up to the shins. This ablution may be completed in every place, and is not necessary to precede every prayer, unless by chance some uncleanness demands it. If, however, all uncleanness can be avoided after the first prayer, additional ablutions are not required before all the other prayers on the same day. Nevertheless, some people are accustomed to do so frequently out of devotion or because of greater caution against impurity.

They have one lunar month among their twelve common lunar months, in which they fast (that is, Ramadan); and because the solar year does not align in months with the lunar year

without intercalation, and since they are ignorant of computations, they calculate that there are twelve lunations per year. As a result, the month of fasting happens to be now in winter, now in summer. During the day of the fast, they abstain from all types of food or drink; but at night they use all sorts of food whenever they like.

They have one celebration at the end of Ramadan (Eid al-Fitr), during which they visit the memorials of their deceased. There they pray and eat what they have brought with them, and kiss each other in turn saying: “Baaram gutli oczong”, that is: “May a good Eid come to you”. And they also observe a second celebration (Eid al-Adha), which is celebrated 60 days after the first, because on the same day the pilgrims in Mekiie celebrate and complete the rite of their pilgrimage. For a great number from that sect, not only from the race of the Turks, but all groups who belong to the sect, namely Arabs, Saracens, and Tartars, visit the memorial and sepulcher of Mechomet in the place that is called Mekiie It is 60 days’ travel away from Jerusalem, and not reachable except by camel, because the road is sandy and arid. Consequently the sultan has camels prepared for the purpose to lead the pilgrims. The pilgrims who have visited the tomb of Mechomet are held in great reverence and reputation, are called “hatschilar”, and enjoy many privileges. As a result, in a courtroom, the testimony of one of them is accepted as that of three, and a special prayer is offered to them as if for victors. And on account of the travellers there are two types of guesthouses in each location, one in the roads, and one in the cities. The one that is in the roads is called “keuennczerey”, and is the greatest building in the area, where sufficient accommodations otherwise cannot be found to receive the travellers and pilgrims. The one that is in the cities is called “ymarat”, which are large mosques built by the king and princes. They are so richly endowed with many land holdings that there are two meals for the newcomers every day, the first for the pilgrims, the second for the students enrolled at that place. When everyone

has been fed, and there is some leftover, it is distributed evenly among those present, everyday both at lunch and dinner. But the priests and the students who are enrolled there are obliged to conduct special offices for their souls of those who built and dedicated the building, before they eat.

In addition, they have many great academies where civil law is taught, which the kings use for governing the kingdom. Those who are more proficient are promoted to official appointments, namely judging and ruling the people. There are two ranks: the lesser are called “minetschum,” and the greater “muderis.” The less learned are called “tanisman”; for them, it suffices that they know the Koran and the ceremonies that pertain to prayer and worship well, as set down in their laws. There are required duties that correspond to their status. But unless they are judges, secretaries, or jurists (whom they call “calife”), who are unable to be idle, they have no additional duties except that they are free and exempt from enslavement and the burdens of common people. Indeed, their ordinary clerics have nothing to do with the care of souls, in hearing confession, ministering sacraments, visiting the sick, or visiting the dead; nor do they have to undertake the great maintenance of churches with reliquaries, altar cloths, sacred vessels and altars, as the Turks do not have them. For their churches are unable to be polluted or receive any sanctity, as they are not consecrated. Their clerics are no different from ordinary people, nor are their mosques different from typical homes. They and others satisfy a number of their prayers without leaving their work. They do not devote themselves to meditation or the study of letters, but rather spend their time in the comfort of their wives, children, and their entire family, even mules and possessions. They busy themselves with business and lending, having fun and hunting, hawking and dogs—all of which are not at all forbidden or prohibited. For as the law, so are also the clerics, and of what sort the worship is, so is the ministry. The things that should be

said about what I have mentioned would exceed the length of my paper. But I have only briefly touched on these matters, so that I might present the opportunity to inquire after other things and investigate them more diligently. It shames and wearies me to say how I saw and heard these in particular.

About the supernatural and religious reasons.

Chapter Fourteen

Saint Augustine, in the City of God book 20 chapter 19, discussing mendacious signs and prodigies, said that signs and prodigies are said to be lying in two ways: in one way because they deceive the senses of man through diabolical power and skill, so that what does not happen in truth is believed to happen, as ghosts are; in the second way, because they lead believers into error, namely so that they believe something happens out of divine power, which the devil actually does, or they believe that it happens for their salvation, when it is agreed that it happens for their damnation. That fire descended from the sky and destroyed the family and flocks of Job was not false, although it happened through diabolical activity, with God allowing it.

In these ways, every one of the faithful must believe that the prodigies and innumerable signs happen deceitfully through the Turkish clerics as much in their life as even after their death. For such is the power of the devil in them, that they seem to be devils incarnate, rather than men. For in accordance with the differences, which they have in their outward appearance, a devilish power lurks in them. Certain renunciants among them demonstrate a great endurance, and do not carry anything clothes, but go about naked, with only their manhood covered. And in this type of religious practice, there are some of such perfection, they are as if insensitive and

unable to feel any exterior stimuli. They walk around in the greatest cold of winter, with their bodies completely naked, feeling nothing—they also do the same in the heat of summer. These renunciants show their method of self-testing and the truth of their endurance in various marks of burns and scars of cutting their bodies. For if any of them wishes to prove their zeal, they place fire to themselves or cut their flesh with a blade; and they feel only as much, as if you would place fire to a stone or cut wood with a blade. Other renunciants prefer the great virtue of fasting. It is said about these ones that some arrive at such great perfection that they take food and drink the most rarely. But other more perfect ones are able to live without any food or drink. Some have great poverty, so that it is said they do not think or care for any earthly thing at all, nor keep anything for tomorrow. Others maintain perpetual silence and, being mute, are called “czamutlar”. They make no conversation with anyone, lest they be provoked to speak; I—without any wonder—was only able to see one of them once. Others are endowed with visions, others with various revelations; some have raptures, others supernatural ecstasies. In accordance with this, there is no one among them who has not attained some spiritual experience, through which a certain evidence or sign is able to be had, that they are in the ranks and order of the “deruischler”. This is the name of all those in that state of being. In line with the variety of the experiences, spiritual or supernatural, they differ in their dress and their way of life: each carries the sign of his profession. For if you were to see someone wearing feathers on his head, it would denote that he had been given to meditation and revelations. If he wears clothes stitched with various colored patches, it signifies a vow of poverty. Those who wear gold rings in their ears signal that they are obedient in spirit, on account of the frequency of their raptures. Those wearing chains on their neck or on their arms denote the violence or vehemence, which they

have in ecstasies. This is what is said about those aforementioned ascetics who go around naked and about all those other sorts.

The renunciants also maintain various means of living. Those who are less entangled in spiritual things, namely raptures and other such things, lead an ordinary life and live among other men. Others live in groups, like a village, but away from common folk. Some even become hermits, leading their life in the woods and solitary places. Others perform hospitality in the cities—their houses are called “tekye”, they receive guests for the rest at least, if they have no other way of restoring themselves. Others live through continual begging. Others in the city carry water in skins (better than the water found in the city), and going around the city they give fresh water to everyone, seeking no price, except a voluntary offering. Others live around the tombs of those who are called saints, guarding them and living on the offerings of the people. Whether they all have wives, I was not able to tell—they do not especially care for the law of the Turks, which prescribes about marriage, but consider themselves followers of a different law; more will be said on this in chapter 20. They do not observe any rites of the law in their prayers, ablutions, or other similar things. For that reason, if the form of other virtues is managed in them supernaturally, as it has been said, one has to believe that they do not lack an incredible continence. There is a big rumor among them that this great omen happens in women not corrupted by carnal corruption: it is said that very many are conceived and born without male seed, who are called “nefes ogli” (and will be mentioned in the following chapter). Nevertheless it could be that the mothers of such offspring are the wives of the renunciants, and on account of their amazing continence are able to bear them children not in any natural way, but by some means granted by the devil and hidden from men. On account of this practice, it is not strange to the Turks when Christians say—and in fact they themselves say and concede—that Christ was

conceived and born of Mary without human seed. In whatever way this happens, though it is strange and wondrous to hear, it nevertheless will not seem impossible to the devil's power, if his other works that he does in them and through them are investigated.

The renunciants make their own festivities, either on account of the vows of the people offered to them or on account of the memories of their ancestors or even on account of the common need of the people, namely, for obtaining rain or good weather or something of the sort. So then they convene and gather everyone together, who happen to be nearby, and first have a common dinner. They kill animals, if they have any; if, however, they have none, they make rations out of beans or rice, as is within their means. And when they have finished the meal, whoever is the leader among takes up a small drum and makes a beat. Others get up and begin to dance in order. Their festivity is called "machia" and the dance "czamach". It is done by a certain movement of the entire body, and a well-measured agitation with honorable, fitting, and very decent movements of all the limbs, following the modulation of the musical instruments prepared for this purpose. At the end there is a certain most swift circular motion and rotation or revolution in the manner of whirling, of which the entire force of the dance consists. For the more fervent among them turn about with such speed, that observers cannot discern whether they are man or statue. And they show that they have nearly supernatural agility in this. And although someone might be able to imitate them in other manner of dance, nevertheless in that act of whirling about there is no one as adept and agile who is able to imitate them in any way. After they have danced individually, all rise at once and dance in a confused order, shouting certain sounds of invoking for their salvation of those who give out vows or alms to them.

They use certain poems handed down to them from their predecessors, who spoke them in the spirit, when they were in rapture or ecstasy. They are sweet, eloquent, rhyming, and easily

remembered, and according to the subject matter that they are handling, they are longer or shorter. Some are six verses, others eight or ten, some more, some less. They bring all the ceremonies of the law and rites of the Turks to a spiritual sense. I had so great an abundance of these written down or in my head and I delighted in them, because they more greatly confirm the Christian religion than the Turkish. As a result their priests do not accept the poems as authoritative, saying that those who told them to the priests did not understand what they were saying, because they were in rapture or placed in ecstasy and were out of their senses, when they said these things.

When the renunciants live among men, each tries to show a sign of his perfection and zeal. Among others acts of display none so demonstrates their devotion and fervor as the dance that was spoken about earlier. Nor does it lack mystery. For even the holy prophets of old used dances of this sort in the rites of festivals, as is reported about David, who danced before the ark of the Lord, and about many others in the Old Testament. For when a certain one of them was a guest at our house, after dinner he rose and, girding himself, began to dance; and when he turned himself around, certain voices were heard sounding from him, so that all who were in the house were thunderstruck out of wonder, and were scarcely able to hold back tears. On another occasion another of them suddenly incurred a state of rapture while we were eating dinner. He was totally outside himself, and devoid of the use of all his senses. He was sitting as if dead, not moved by or feeling anything. But more often those hosted at our house were presenting encouragement from the aforementioned sermons to those listening. For these renunciants are so exemplary in all their sayings and deeds, and also show such devotion in their habits and actions that they seem to be not men, but angels. They have a certain spiritual presence apparent on their faces, so that, if you had never before seen one of them, you would be able to recognize him

immediately just with a glance at his face. But because we have spoken enough about their exterior appearances, now let us see, if we can, the fruits through which, the savior says in Matthew chapter eight, they will be known. For if anyone wished to search their sayings and deeds privately or in particular, they would find in these renunciants such ambition for their own reputation and such poison of spiritual pride, that the following statement can be understood about them, as it is said: the angels of Satan transform themselves into the angels of light. For they say that God chose them before all others, and that, as friends of God, they ought to be honored by everyone else. They say that they attained the grace of God especially from the others and before the others; as a result, no one can be saved unless by their intercession. And on account of this, they say that the entire population owes them gifts and alms. Therefore, if anyone offends them in the slightest way, they punish him, calling down the indignation of God upon him. A certain renunciant once came as a guest to the house of a certain wealthy man in those parts where I was—the estate of this rich man was not far from ours. When the host, who, along with his household was busy with the family and the flocks, had not attended to his guest according to his wishes because it was the rainy season, that one immediately withdrew, leaving the house while shouting and calling down the indignation of God. In that same year the revenge of God followed so much, that nothing of men or beasts remained in that house, since they had all died. I heard that this happened from many others. As a result, great care is taken by the common folk, lest they offend the renunciants in some way. And so if one looks at them in the light of faith, these are not the characteristics of friends of God, who wishes that all men be saved, but of the devil, who seeks nothing but the destruction of souls. But about this topic, which will be discussed in following chapters, I wish to only add this: that all the malice and

cunning of devilish fraud, and finally all the wickedness of his skill for destroying souls—I do not at all doubt that they can be found very fully in those reprobate Turks.

Further discussion on the supernatural reasons and prodigies and deceitful signs.

Chapter Fifteen

Among others of these sects, who after their death have become famous in signs and false prodigies and are still famous to this day, there is one principle man, who is held in great regard and veneration in all of Turkey. His name is Sedichasi, which is translated “holy victor” or “victorious among the holy”. His tomb and shrine are between the borders of Othman and Charaman, and although the two frequently have feuds between themselves, when one invades the lands of the other, nevertheless no one ever dares to approach or Sedichasi’s tomb or inflict harm on the land around it, because, as has often been found, whoever dared to do this has a great retribution come upon them. And this is the common opinion among them all: that never has anyone who employs Sedichasi’s aid, especially in deeds of war and the business of battles, been cheated of his desire. This is demonstrated by the great number of votive offerings of all types of animals and other things and money, which is annually brought to the tomb by the king and princes and all the common folk. For his reputation and esteem is considered great not only among the Turks, but also in all nations of this sect. About his signs and prodigies I wish to say this: that he is held in greater renown among all the Mechometistans, than Saint Anthony is among all the Christians.

Another is called Hatschi Pettesch, which translates as helper of pilgrims, and who is greatly invoked and venerated, especially by the pilgrims, who frequently say that they have

experienced his help. Another is called Ascik Passa, who has his name from love and is called the patron of love; he is said to bring aid to married people, e.g. in the danger of labor or the desire for having children or the discords between husband and spouse and very many similar needs. Alivan Passa confers the defense of harmony to those who are quarreling. About him it is said that he appears to those who call upon him now as a youth, now as an old man. Scheych Passa is accustomed to be a solace to those disturbed or in tribulation.

However, in those parts where I lived, there were once upon a time many who were considered as saints, whose names are unknown; nevertheless their tombs are held in great veneration. For if an anxiety afflicts people for having rain or good weather or whatever else is needed, they come together on top of the tombs, and making offerings they bring back a great hope of their being heard. I was often present among them to get a share in the good things that they brought there to eat.

Among these nameless saints there are in fact two whose names are known, of which one is Goivelmirtschin, and the other is called Barthschun Passa. Their wondrous deeds are told in the same region, especially about their guarding and watching over the flocks and other animals, notably the one who is called Goivelmirtschin. The mistress of the house was always telling me stories about him, how she obtained his great favors for the guarding of her calves. Therefore, she annually vowed a certain amount of butter to him—and fulfilled her vow. She added this, saying: “If at some point I forget or neglect to give my offering, at once I incur some loss.” But she also tried to persuade me to invoke him too, since I was having a hostile wolf amongst my pastured flocks. Nor do I think that I should pass over in silence a story that my master was accustomed to tell me all the time. He said that one day, when a certain bull of his was missing from the herd of cattle, when the other cattle were late in coming back one day, he at once

convened all the neighbors in the manner of a hunt (as is customary in those parts). They set out that very evening, each equipped with a quiver, bow, and dogs, but finding not trace at all around the nearby forest, they returned. The next day, in the same manner as before, they searched all the grazing places and accomplished nothing at all. On the third day, when it was coming towards evening and they were tired and all hope was exhausted, on the return suddenly and unexpectedly my master turned to his own mind and came up with a certain vow: namely, that for the love of holy Goivelmirtschin, if the bull was found, he would be willing to eat one hot cake with butter on top—which they call “paslama”—with pilgrims. Just as he had this thought a clamor erupted with a shout, and behold, the bull was found clinging by its horns on a certain forked tree. It is more miraculous because they had crossed that same place three times looking for it, and it was not possible for it to remain there safe from the wild beasts. And when my master reported to everyone the vow that he had make, everyone turned to astonishment giving thanks to god and extolling the merits and name of Goivelmirtschin, returning with happiness and praise not only about the bull that was found, but also the miracle that they experienced.

There is another, whose name is Chidirelles, who is accustomed to be an aid to travellers, especially those suffering need. His esteem is so great in all of Turkey, that scarcely can anyone be found, who has not felt his help in some need or heard tell from someone who has experienced it. Chidirelles is accustomed to appear in the form of a traveller sitting on a grey horse and immediately coming to the aid of the need of the suffering traveller, whether the traveller called to him by name or, being ignorant of the name, entrusted himself to God as has been learned by the stories of very many.

But the clear truth compels me to tell the prodigy of one other saint; his relatives that are still live tell this story. For at a certain time, there were clerics of a place that was near us

notorious through the suspicion of having made treason against the king, on account of which the enraged king ordered that they all be burned up with fire. But that one, who was first among them, when he was unable to placate the king by defending and justifying himself and his companions, and having protested the innocence of himself and his companions before the king, he about to be burned up entered the fiery furnace first and remained there until the entire blaze cooled around him, entirely uninjured by the fire. He softened the fury of the king and saved himself from mortal danger and left behind a solemn example to posterity and also the entire group of that sect. His sandals, which remained with him in the furnace entirely intact, are kept stored in the same parts as a testament of truth up to today.

I am silent about innumerable deeds, which I heard from one, who was still alive in the flesh not far from those parts where I was. He was of such fame, that in nearly every place, where there was a convening or congregation of people, there was a report about him of the following sort: that he was giving information about all hidden things so accurately—especially things that were lost or secretly stolen—that all the robbers and bandits of that territory had been expelled on account of him and none dared appear. And although they had laid many ambushes against him, nevertheless they were entirely unable to harm him. And this is even more wondrous: to those very many people who came to him, he declared all things hidden in their minds before they had related them to him. On account of the magnitude of his fame I too decided to see him after I had gained my freedom. Nonetheless I was hindered by the anxiety about my departure, which was then pressing upon me, and in the worry of the difficulty in leaving and escaping these and other things that I had heard and I neglected to see him. And thus by chance it happened with God having arranged it—which I believe more—because to see such things and to explore more curiously without doubt could bring a great detriment to my faith. But

about these ones, who are called “neffes ogli”, as I said above, there are always two or three in that great city, which is called Bruscia, and there it is said that anything recovered from their hair or clothing can drive out all sickness—I omit to say more for the sake of brevity. For they say that they are miraculously born, that is without male seed, and consequently their entire life and action must be believed to be supernatural and miraculous. A bit was already said about this in the preceding chapter.

Whether any reasons are sufficient for carrying the faith away from Christians.

Chapter Sixteen

If anyone were to say to me: “What moved you, that you would doubt and maybe deny the faith of Christ, unless the mercy of God had saved you?”, I would briefly add what seems to suit this question from my response to the history of my misfortune, which I began to tell in the prologue. In a certain city, which is called Bergama, merchants from beyond the sea bought me from my original purchasers, and sold me to a certain common villager. His cruelty benefited me in this way: that I more quickly sought my freedom. The cruelty instilled the horror of this sect in me, and strengthened me in the faith of Christ. And although I noticed that I had been taken far away, nevertheless I never despaired of the help of God, nor did I delay to undertake an escape. And so when I was found after my first flight, and when I was led back to the house, he spared me—repressing his fury that I imagined. He threatened that if I were to flee a second time, I should expect the pain of a twofold vengeance. Not only did he not terrify me, who desired to die rather than live, but he also provoked me to making my second flight more quickly. After this second attempt, I say only this: that without mercy he carried through everything he had

threatened and everything that was possible short of killing me. He would not have freed me from the fetters, unless two of his sisters had intervened for me and vouched that I would not flee again. Scorning all these things and not doubting a most cruel death if I was found after the third escape attempt, not long after I voluntarily handed myself over a certain one of those fake merchants that I mentioned above. Having been freed from that cruel villager, for four months I was sold three times from place to place, and at last sent into the most remote location. Meanwhile five years passed. While I had tested all the methods of fleeing with great danger and immense labor, after the last escape (which was the eighth in the order of the attempts I made) I was in the house of the final master. Almost frustrated by all hope of freedom and neglected by God, I began to think within myself, and wearied and broken I began to hesitate in a certain way in my mind, saying: “Truly, if that religion, which you have held thus far, had pleased God, he would certainly have not abandoned you in this way, but would be a help to you, so that you would be able to be free and return to him. But because he has blocked up every avenue of escape to you, perhaps it will please him more that having left that religion behind, you cleave to this sect and find salvation in it. And from that time I neglected the prayers and psalms that I had written for myself there and repeated often, and began to learn in addition their prayers and ceremonies. I performed them diligently, as much as I was able and as much as the burden of servitude allowed me, more often secretly by night than by day. Among other things, I began to ruminate over the doctrines of the clerics more diligently, about whom I mentioned above. The ceremony and rite of their law dragged me in a spiritual way, and in a certain way approved and confirmed the religion of Christ. And so pondering on these things for six or seven months in this vacillation, suddenly one day—with God helping me—it changed my mind, so that having left all the rites of that sect behind, I began to resume my former prayers. I began to more strongly

love, more constantly hold, and more diligently guard than ever before the Catholic faith as if a coin that had been lost and found. For those fifteen years, which I completed there afterwards up to my freedom, I remained so steadfast, that no reasons—whether external or internal—were able to perturb me. I interpreted everything that I heard or saw after this period as nothing more than the delusion and illusions of the devil. I benefited from that modest vacillation inasmuch that if I had to remain among them for a hundred years, I would not be moved in any way, nor allow any doubt concerning the Christian faith, while divine mercy was aiding me.

And so each is able to assess carefully the conclusion of our question: that all the reasons are indeed able to perturb the soul of a faith Christian to some extent, with God permitting it for his own benefit. Nevertheless they are entirely unable to avert a soul from the faith of Christ or take away the hope of salvation. For my disturbance was not on account of the desperation for salvation, but freedom. I was thinking that it was pleasing to God, that I embrace this law as a cure for salvation, from the time when he separated me from the law of Christ. As a result, because I sent away the faith of Christ, I began to embrace that other law and began to seek salvation in it. Not so those impious renegades—they did not do so! For they were not seduced by some deceitful reason, but were in fact induced to deny the faith of Christ on account of their own wickedness and malice. They did not cast away that sect having observed the other, but just as they do not hold onto the faith unless falsely, they do not intend to observe that sect. The Christian renegades feel that in faith of Christ, which is stricter in its observance, the remorse of conscience hinders their perpetrating wickedness more than that other sect, which is more generous. They take themselves to hold a veil over their condemned conscience—now having the freedom to do wicked things—and lead a life in every type of vice possible. It is the goal of all devilish wickedness, to which the error of that sect most abundantly leads the renegades. For

by no means does God, the founder of truth, permit anyone having the hope of salvation to adhere to error, having abandoned the way of truth. For if anyone has been induced by the reasons or tribulation and compelled by dire straits to deny the faith of Christ, I would have denied him much more, because I experienced it as much as is possible for anyone to undergo. Nor is it ever possible for someone to be found who has denied the Christian faith, since we hear it read and preached daily that not only those who are strong and of mature age, but even tender virgins and boys subjected to the most scrutinizing torments constantly profess the faith of Christ up to death. Having seen this example, let us now hear what the authority has to say. The abbot Joachim on Revelation chapter 13, specifically “Who is similar to the beast” etc. says, “Many who live on earth, on that day will be broken and dissolved from the bond of faith, shaking with fear. For it will not appear that they are able to sustain those whips, those who in the peaceful conditions of the Church are unable to endure even the lightest indignity. And so they will say: ‘Who is similar to the beast’ etc. They will sooner despair about the victory than go to war, and terrified by the voice of the beast they will lose their faith, which they held vainly and falsely in the time of peace.” And John writes in his canonical letter: “Many went from us, but not all belonged to us. For if they had been part of us, they would have endured with us at any rate,” showing manifestly, that they felt the faith of Christ for sure, but they did not fulfill it with works. In the same vein is the apostle Paul, who says: “Who will separate us from the love of God” etc.

About the interpretation of the reasons.

Chapter Seventeen

It having been seen since that some reasons are not at all sufficient for taking away the faith, let us now see how they must be interpreted by any faithful Christian, in the best way we can. For the church of the Antichrist has been set up as a certain building; if a faithful person would see how its fundament is free of truth, they would be ready to see the ruin of the entire structure.

For the Turks profess, as was say above, saying: “ilaylach hillaylach mehemet ercullach.” First of all it must be noted that they do not substitute or place anything before this profession, but say absolutely in their reciting: “God is one.” In this manner of profession they usurp the worship of God to the advantage of others, but to their own ruin. For this profession of faith, which pertains to true and sufficient religion, is entirely deficient here. The faithful Christians show that they truly have the worship of God, when they say in their profession “I believe,” in which the possession of faith is shown. In this creed, they announce that they are subject to God, whom they cherish. But in this creed, which continues “in God” etc., the possession of charity and love is shown. In it, the faithful declare that they are made one body with God, united with him whom they love. In all the other things that follow in the creed, namely the mysteries of the trinity, creation, and redemption, the possession of hope is grasped, through which the faithful demonstrate that they are able to perfectly attain the accomplishment of complete salvation. But what do those most impious ones wish for themselves, when they say “God is one,” except this claim of their father Lucifer, when he said “I will ascend above the heavens and will be like the most high.” The impious hope that the mystery of malice is put into action.

But perhaps the Turks say that this profession must be understood with an addition, namely that “God is one, whom I love, whom I adore” etc. But then let us see how many

detestable blasphemies will result from the same statement. Firstly their princes and clerics say that they worship God. Not only do they attack God's real worship (that is, Christianity), as much as possible, but they also wish to be worshiped in the place of God by men, when they subdue others by enslaving. Thus they not unjustly blaspheme God the father, when they turned the benefits of power—accepted from hi—into enmity and wickedness. Truly, do their priests not blaspheme, when they pretend that they have the give of wisdom and secretly lie in wait for the souls of the faithful, do they not blaspheme the Son of God, who is the wisdom of God, when they say that they love God? Do they not lead the souls of the faithful with themselves into perdition, when they attack the worship of the true God and teach the doctrine of complete perversity? But perhaps might the derivischler—their pretend clerics—be any less wicked, promoting the devilish spirit with the fake display of virtue? While they say that they love God, do they not blaspheme the Holy Spirit, who is the inspirer of and teacher of truth, and dare to pant after the extirpation of the worship of the true god with the whole spirit of malice?

Now the true worshiper of God may see how the devilish sect exists, founded on the base of total malice. Some of the earlier persecutors assailed the church of God, while the remaining labored to conquer it, and others gave effort to extirpating the worship of God. But thanks to all the prayers of the church, they persecutors were not able to arrive at the completion of their malice, and on account of this intervention, up to now the devil has been hindered—described in Revelation as tied—by the prayers of the church. But this sect, as if the head of all the previous persecutors, has arrive to effect wickedness to this extent: that the prayers of the church, already given as a help in the things that pertain to salvation, are no longer able to help in this matter. Consequently, the devil, loosed from chains and set free with out any impediment, turns himself to every skill of his wickedness so much, that he now makes himself adored and worshiped in the

form of the reprobate. With not much time having passed, it is not doubtful that he does this in his very own person.

And so we must consider the three indications of divine hatred, which is directed towards that sect above all the rest. The first is that God allows the sect to dare to usurp the title of worshiper of God. How much God hates them is apparent in this: since he rather wishes that they would worship idols than the reprobate, who are ignorant of his mysteries, worship God. Many idolaters receive the faith of Christ, but out of the number of those falsely worshiping God, as is said above, never has anyone been found who converted to the faith of Christ. And if any would be found converted, it ought to be considered a greater miracle than an incident on the normal course of things—especially in these times.

It must be noted, that divine offense has three steps. The first is of injury, and it is of everything standing outside the grace of God, e.g. infidels and those guilty of mortal sin, who incur the loathing of God. And they are able to acquire conversion to god by means of their own free will through penitence. The second step is of the offense of those, who, adding sins to sins, fall into contempt for God. They are the heretics, hypocrites, those worshiping God falsely, and others of the sort, who, diminishing divine honor, deserve the anger of God. This anger is not able to be placated by ones self; intercessors are necessary for these people. The third grade is of those, who add disdain to the contempt for God. This is the type of the hopeless, who, aspiring to the glory of God, boast when they do evil things. The devil, accepting invincible power over their souls, leads them up to anger at God. Such people cannot be converted to God, not in the typical way, nor by themselves, nor through any intercessor. Nevertheless, the absolute power of divine piety, which is infinite, is able to do this. In previous times, very many wicked ones from this sect received the faith of Christ, as is read about Saint Vincent of our order, who converted

very many Saracens. Nevertheless in modern times, according to my conjecture, I believe that their guilt grew to such an extent, that they have gone from the second step of divine offense to the third. Through the invincible power of the devil, they so provoked the anger of God against themselves, that now they are not able to regain the state of salvation through themselves or any intercession. And if this will have happened in some way, I will consider it as a miracle, just as will also be said in chapter twenty.

The second sign of divine hatred is the simulation of sanctity and the display of deceitful prodigies and signs. For since those who are just in offering the honors that they owe know that the generosity of all good things comes from God, they do not desire, seek after, or pursue any type of supernatural experiences. I believe it is not unjustly called the sign of divine indignation and hatred, when the reprobates become famous from such signs and false prodigies. These are attained from an inordinate desire and appetite for false praise and glory that distorts the true signs and prodigies of the saints, diminishes divine honor, extinguishes the mysteries and sacraments of divine worship, and makes a heap out of the damnation of the infidels and others.

The third reason is the Turks' long endurance over other sects, about which I spoke above in chapter 13 and a little before in this chapter. For none of the other sects were allowed to go from divine injury to contempt, and then from contempt to disdain for God—as this sect is believed to have done. But this sect has not yet reached the end. For although they were advanced enough in contempt, they have begun to make inroads into disdain for God, as I said above. Nonetheless, having seen the beginnings of this shift, something can be conjectured about their advancement, as will be discussed in the following chapter. Although God patiently allows the three prior indications to be fully seen, nevertheless it must firmly be believed that they are hateful to him and that God would finally come to judge them on account of their latest

wickedness, as if compelled and bound. For when the worship of God, on account of which everything was created, will have been extirpated, not unreasonably will all creation be awakened and will summon the just judge to punish the foes. But when you hear about the extirpation of the divine worship, realize that it was foretold about incidental—not essential—things. This will come to pass because although no place will be found for conducting the ceremonies of the celebrating the divine worship, nevertheless God permits and the wickedness of the reprobates demands it. Though the Turks believe that they have already prevailed against God and have extirpated his entire worship, nevertheless the worship of God will never fail, even up to the end of time. No—the divine worship will continue in the essentials; the chosen ones of this time will attain the perfection of all the past saints combined. Although only a few will remain in hiding in grottos and caves, nevertheless they will display a worship most worthy of the living and true God.

As I laid out above, however, there are some things that must be noted: namely, how the prayers of the Church cannot help the reprobates; that martyrdom is a type of penitence, which is voluntarily taken up and endure; and it is performed through regular training just like the other works of penitence. Consequently many saints, although they do not feel the sword of the persecutor, nevertheless are not deprived of the martyr's crown on account of their will to suffer and the harshness of their penitence. The persecutors of martyrs actually do their victims a great service, and prove to be almost helpers or even the cause of their arriving at such glory. As a result, the divine worship has been brought to such a great height through the persecutors' help. The universal Church, as if indebted, has been heard to make prayers for their persecutors just like for all their other debtors. Indeed, most of the persecutors of history were converted to the faith of Christ; the whole pagan world was finally made a true worshiper of God. The work of

justification, however, is not accomplished through regular, but heavenly, exercises, because it does not pertain to human justice, but divine. Nor is anyone's punishment voluntarily taken up or tolerated; it is inflicted according to the method and will of God, who alone justifies. But the persecutor and the vindicated soul both serve in the manner of an instrument—not in the manner of a doer or sufferer. When a debt happens to occur, however small, it receives compensation through the benefit of temporal servitude; the persecutors who have been vindicated demonstrate this transaction. The Church, praying, "Forgive us our debts, just as we forgive our debtors," is unable to be any benefit to those who owe the Church nothing. The persecutors' guilt is not increased by the justified, who were not able to do any harm or to gain any benefit, but by the deniers, whom they drag with themselves into error and damnation. And having thus removed this obstacle, which the Church was making with its prayers, the devil intends to vindicate himself, as if loosed from chains and having accepted power over human nature. He conspicuously does this in the reprobates, among who he makes so great progress daily in destroying the souls of that sect.

But how is the work of justification meritorious, since it is not voluntary, will be made clear in chapter 13, where the condition and virtue of heavenly training is discussed, which make natural things almost supernatural through artificial means.

About the great future progress of this sect, which is considered from their foundation.

Chapter Eighteen

As was said in the preceding chapter, that sect began to move towards disdain of God and provoked the indignation of God against himself, as if he were an oven set on fire to burn them

up. The devil, the administrator of divine vengeance, is girded and readied with all the power of his wickedness, as if a lion loosed from a cage: who will be able to stand to see the eternal fire of that fury or to withstand the tyranny of the punisher? Certainly the vision of that fury will be so intolerable and the storm of that punisher so horrible, that sky above and earth below will quake, all the stars tottering about will grow pale, and the foundations of the ocean and sea will be shaken. Once God threw the world into confusion with an immense tremor, all creation was shaken and perceived that the cruelest punisher had gained such power over all things, and that there was not any means or place by which to escape. Driven up by the unaccustomed motions, all creation will soon fail, melting down upon itself.

O faithful soul, let those things not move you, which up to now you have heard and seen and experienced at the outset of such evils. But prepare your soul in all hope and trust, drill your mind in all the works of charity, and confirm your heart in the faith of Christ, so that these terrible things, which are about to happen, may not trouble you. What you have thought to be great up to now, will seem as a relief in comparison to the things that are about to come.

Perhaps you have heard and learned from experience the great battles and victories of the Turks, and maybe you were astonished. Know that these are just the beginning of the evils. Wait a little bit: you will see in this sect such tyranny and great number of victories about to happen, that the victories of Alexander the Great or the Romans, who subjugated the entire world, will not be able to be compared to these. For the slaughter will not only be of bodies, as it was in the wars of those tyrants, but there will also be a universal destruction of souls just as eternal bodies, throughout the four directions of the world.

Likewise you see—not without admiration—the great fervor of the Turks for propagating and enlarging their sect; but you will see even greater things. For their audacity and presumption

shall extended into the future so much, that the Turks, kindled by the flame of that devilish spirit, will astonish the entire human race, even sending the entire celestial court into admiration.

Likewise you wonder at their growth; but if you consider how much growth there will be, their current increase will become meaningless. For their future number will seem to exceed the amount of atoms in the air, dust on the earth, and even sand on the sea; they will cover the surface of the entire earth like locusts.

Likewise you say: for how are so many converted to them? Wait, and you will see so many people from every tribe, people, nation, and tongue universally clinging to them, that scarcely a few Christians will remain in grottos and caverns of the earth to celebrate and preserve the worship of the living God.

The deceitful miracles and prodigies, which are now among them, are nothing except the seeds of wickedness, showing what kind of harvest the devilish works will be. When Satan, transformed into human form, shall show that he is ready for all works of iniquity (which he was invited to do by the reprobates), zeal filled to the brim with wickedness will remain. You will see the dead resurrected; all types of sicknesses cured; secrets of the heart revealed; locations of treasure concealed for centuries brought to light; and no crime will remain that will not be accomplished at the whim of the reprobates. In addition, there will be such a display of simulated sanctity and religiosity that their sanctity will seem to exceed that of the holy fathers and the apostles themselves.

I will only say this about the simulation of their customs and other virtues that will happen in the future: their fame and reputation will be so great among all peoples, that it is not considered possible to find anyone similar to them from the beginning of the world up to the end. For what kind of fake virtue could be lacking in them, that the evil spirit, in possessing them,

will show them to be marvelous in appearance and wondrous in deed, so that they will be worshiped by everyone as gods?

And so I have thus interpreted a few things about the terrible future fruit of this evil tree through conjecture; I have tested it by tasting the bitterness in its roots, on which the tree is so firmly fixed. And I have found this out: without a doubt I believe that not only will such things proceed from this tree, which I discussed, but also very many other things without end, which no tongue is able to express, nor mind able to grasp. But any wise person, who is willing to diligently and faithfully consider the daily weakening of Christianity and the continual growth of that sect, would not suppose that the aforementioned things would happen. For in such speed we now see that the diligence of divine worship continually decreasing among Christians, and that all the emptiness and tepidness of faith, sluggishness of charity, and wickedness of vices increase. It is not doubtful to anyone considering it well, that the power of the devil has already begun, and with not much time having gone by, it will so pour and extend itself into the minds of humans that scarcely any true Christian will be found to remain in any condition. And although some appearance of faith may outwardly remain in name only, nevertheless inwardly it is already not Christ, but Satan, who will seize everything. They will reasonably not be able to be called Christians any longer, but rather Antichristians. And then our wise observer will deny that the Turks need reason with which to attract Christians, when he will have seen that the Christians themselves have denied Christ out of their own wickedness, even before the Turk came. Therefore who may not see of what sort the power and potential of this ancient enemy in practice will be, if in such a small space of time he accomplished all these things? These things, which we see, convince us about the things that we said would happen. They make us fear that we will incautiously fall into the hands of the Turks, from which there will remain no means of escape.

About the interpretation of the remaining reasons.

Chapter Nineteen

Having seen the interpretation of the foundation above, which is that profession of faith, now we must consequently discuss the remaining interpretation of the remaining reasons. As an introduction, this material must note that everything, which has been and ought to be said about the interpretation of reasons, pertains only to the simple folk who are moved by and judge only from outer appearances. The spiritual man, however, who judges everything and is judged by no one, does not need interpretations of this kind. For everything, which is worn outwardly, is common to both good and bad things—the judgment and difference exists in intention. Having realized this, it is easy to judge to which end each one tends. And if we wish to judge according to intention, we will see that God and the devil are fighting each other in the Christians and Turks. But from the beginning of the world, God flung back his own malice onto the devil's head, and so much as the devil more bitterly and cruelly persecuted God's Church, so much did God advance the Church through the devil's wickedness to the summit of greater glory and merit. But because, from the beginning of the world, there has never been a persecution similar to this one in wickedness and devilish cunning, it must certainly be believe beyond all doubt that the Church of God never brought back such fruits of merit from another persecution, as it did from the one of this sect.

And so let us come to another sort of practice, and let us see what difference there is between the intentions that God and the devil have in the victories of this sect. For the devil intends to entirely extirpate the worship of God by persecuting, capturing, and troubling the Christians among the Turks; sending them into various anxieties and calamities; imprisoning,

exposing them to being bought and sold; and afflicting them with innumerable confusions and distresses, punishments and miseries. The devil strains to impede the salvation of the human race, and on account of the great power that he now accepts, he believes that he is even able to avenge himself on God. God, on the other hand, does not intend to extinguish his own worship, but increase it. God aims now to add the merit of glory to the merit of grace, with which he previously adorned his Church, and he seeks to dress his own Church like a bride, and present her for himself without wrinkle or trace of any transgression, so that she is worthy for the marriage bed and his embraces. And God does this in this way: he intends to mortify human will; change the carnal disposition into spiritual; and remove all inclination of sinning from human hearts.

Let us see still greater things in particular etc. First, the sinner is punished in the intention of sinning, and through this penitence all guilt of sin is erased. Second, he is punished in impulse and the punishments of sin are removed. But third, why is he punished in inclination, unless in order that virtue take the place of vice? And so fourth, how could the act itself not be more meritorious in the place of penitence, when it proceeds not from guilt or from penalties, but from virtue? Who does not marvel, how in one and the same deed the guilt and penalty of the sinner is erased, and virtue is brought in with merit. But this will not be surprising, if the virtue of heavenly discipline is diligently inspected, which will be discussed a little later. But how many and what kind of necessities are to do this, only the highest artisan himself knows, he who fabricated so wondrous an instrument for so wondrous work. And so the Turks boast about victories: let the Christians boast much more, who through this victory are snatched by their devilish power and are conveyed into the liberty of the children of God, through which the Turk himself is sold into devilish servitude, not about to gain any more freedom in eternity.

On the interpretation of the Turks' zeal it must be noted, that the enemy of the human race excites the fire of hatred and envy in the hearts of the reprobates, and troubles them to persecute the faithful without pause. On the contrary, God kindles the flames of most holy charity in his chosen ones, with which the enemy will be loved, so that the elect serve, honor, and obey their enemies with diligence, managing their houses, raising their sons and daughters, and dedicate themselves as their servants without prejudice. In addition, God's chosen ones reckon the injuries inflicted on themselves as nothing, mixing their bread with tears and drink with weeping by day and night. Almost abandoned by God, they bow their heads to the reprobates, and wearied by the injuries they entreat them. No rest is allowed to them in their weariness, but the work of the vine is assigned to the one returning from the field. When he has accomplished everything without omitting anything, he is offered dry bread better used as fuel than food, and given water like a dog, either outside the house or behind the door. And when he is angrily ordered that he quickly free himself, and not idly pass the time, he quickly is not so sent to the forgotten work, as driven out. The faithful Christians, kindled by the zeal of the Holy Spirit, endure in serving their enemies, so that they are finally able to arrive at the merit of eternal of glory.

About the interpretation of the increase it must be noted that the reprobates increase in number and decrease in merit. The elect, however, are dwindling in number as much as they increase in merit, that like the stars in the sky they cannot be counted. For as many individual types there are in body and soul, so many ought to be deserving of their merits. The heavenly order is not narrowed by place or time, but embraces all things at once, joining the beginning, middle, and end in one and the same operation setting up the present, past, and future in one moment. It ascends from the valley to the summit and descends to the valley from the summit—

not wandering, but perceptive—without any delay arising. It does not divide the intention, impulse, inclination, and act in the same operation; thus God has joined to be and not to be in substance; to know and not to know in memory; to be able and not be able in power; to wish and not wish in will; that what is lacking in one, he supplies in another, abandoning nothing fading or incomplete. Successes and adversities, happiness and sadness, bitterness and sweetness, and finally good and bad and whatever of human suffering is allowed to occur—all these things contribute to merit. What comparison can there be between the growth of the number of the reprobates and the increase of so much merit? None at all.

But now let us see something about the interpretation of deceitful miracles and prodigies. It should be noted that the devil is unable to ensnare some people with exterior and material reasons, because they are wise and perceptive; it is then necessary for him to place snares of deceitful prodigies to get them. Like a studious hunter, he places the bait of deception in accordance with each one's appetite. But in vain the net of that devilish temptation is cast before the eyes of the winged ones. The reprobates' arrow rebound off the shield of faith and penetrate the hearts of the throwers, and blind the eyes of their minds so much, that they believe the devilish illusions to be divine encouragement. And when they regard themselves on account of this, they set themselves above others: they show themselves to be the advance troops and leaders of the army of the old enemy, towards a single struggle against the Church of God. But when the just escape such wickedness of devilish fraud with divine help, they consider the victories great, and as if having attained the summit of individual combat, gaining the first crown of the entire Church both militant and triumphant, of glorious victory, and of external reward. In addition how many wretched circumstances of eternal damnation will the reprobates receive as a temporary consolation, they will see when they experience it. That which is taken away from the

just here in this world, will be given back to them one hundred fold as the price of eternal consolation.

Let us now see the method of these wretched circumstances. In so much as the just Christians are removed from all consolation in all the means of desolation of their present life, that the just do not seem to lead a life below nature, but one that goes against nature. And all type of reputation is thus removed from them, that they can be derided and disdained and reproached by everyone. They are no longer counted among the living, but the dead. Despised and cast down, they are cursed as if clay and filth, and considered by all the Turks to be like the earth on which they trample with their feet. These captive Christians are so defeated not only by men, but also by their own sufferings, that they think themselves to not be human, but beasts; they are so confused in themselves, that they do not dare to appear in front of people, but demure as much as possible while blushing profusely, lest anyone see them. In truth, they do not believe that they are worthy of the sight of humans. In addition, to their greater shame, it happens more often—with God permitting it—that they are unwillingly place in the presence of the Turks, before whose sight they blush. And if the Turks allow the captives to have any bit of self-esteem, it is not to comfort them, but only so they do not fall into the pit of despair. A slight relief is all that is granted to them in their time of extreme distress. Therefore, who would be able to worthily judge the nature of such desolation, in contrast to the consolation of a tenfold reward in the future? No one at all.

Concerning the simulation of sanctity and religiosity of those hypocrites it must be noted that the devil hides their sins under the veneer of sanctity and devotion, lest they come to light and be disclosed. By living in them, the devil makes them reputed to be holy and good by themselves and others, to the ruin of themselves and others. But this is added to the heap of their

damnation, namely that while they justify themselves by reflecting and judging others in front of the crowd, they condemn themselves before God and others by passing judgment. When they exaggerate the smallest sins of others without end and measure, they show of what kind of penalty they are worthy in front of the just judge. On the other hand, the just are marked as vile and of the lowest condition by all of creation, that not only their actions, but also thoughts are pillories and blamed. Even the instinct of nature itself seems to persecute them in particular, when those things, which are common to everyone, are taken away from the just. Often, when they wish to be awake, sleep comes upon them, and when they want to sleep, it escapes them, and so on. Thus natural influence has marked them as unworthy as the bread that they eat, when gives harsher circumstances to them. Other necessities too—the use of all these is taken away from them, as if they were worse than the reprobate and sinners. Even the four elements, which serve both good and bad, say that they do not have to serve the just. All the vital spirits and abstract substances and solidified despair and confusion seem to mock them. For the just are beyond others as sick, debilitated, of low birth, deformed, timid, fainthearted, greedy, idiotic, and having defects from all these things. And so having found and detected their sins, they are manifested to every creature, being blamed and accuse; at the judgment of God, the just rightly ought be sent into forgetfulness and receive a reprieve. Having demanded divine justice, those who are filled with reproach and confusion in this time, ought to be inebriated on the torrent of pleasure and freedom at the house of God in the time to come.

Wishing to speak about the appearance of simplicity and the maturity of Turkish habits, and to make an interpretation about them, we will note that all exterior things are accustomed to arise out of the efficacy and virtue of the inner part of a person. For the outward habits, if they had from a vice-filled, foul, and carnal disposition—however much it is in order—will bring

forth a stumbling block. If, however, they proceed from a clean and virtuous disposition—however unorganized and vice-filled the habits are—it will have an edifying effect on those nearby. And so, the habits of the reprobates—although they seem pleasing to an observer’s eyes, a hidden poison lies in their disposition—will send them and all those nearby into the pit of despair, like a millstone. On the contrary, although the customs of the elect are vice-filled and deformed by troubles and suffering, heavenly discipline (because the disposition of the elect is pure) makes their habits attenuated and lighten as if wings, on which the elect are carried aloft like eagles. Because of this, the elect are able to pass beyond all the vanities and errors of this life, the troubles and dangers of living, without any stumbling, and are able to not fail up to the very end.

About the reasons that draw one back from the error of the Turks.

Chapter Twenty

In the captivity of the Turks, three types of Christians can be found. The first is the people who lead a life of pure simplicity, neither caring nor understanding anything about the Turks’ deeds. They simply know that they are infidels, and as a result avoid and reject the Turks and their rites, as much as captivity and the yoke of servitude allow. These simple Christians fear lest they be deceived by those errors, and try to observe the religion of Christ, as much as they know how and are able. And that manner of life is more secure, as I saw among them, who firmly remain in their simplicity and the Christian faith, while cursing the habits and acts of the Turks. After many escape attempts and having patiently tolerated the labors, they at last die in

the faith of Christ—which I estimate makes them martyrs—while others go home, having gained freedom.

The second type is the people who, curious about understanding and scrutinizing the deeds of the Turks, throw themselves into it, although they take no notice of the dangers that can crop up. Although they expose themselves to great danger, nevertheless, if God is willing and there is sufficient time to searching for the Turks' secrets, intellect for investigating them, and reason for interpreting them, they would bring back a greater harvest of security not only for themselves, but also for posterity. I am also of this group, and I labored a little not without danger, so that I could explore and discover the error that lurks in this type of religion. Nor did divine grace deceive my intention, but all things worked together for my good.

The third type is the people who hold the middle, who, while they incautiously consider the Turks' deeds, cannot penetrate or interpret them. They are duped, believing their error to be truth. They lose their Christian faith, which they falsely hold, and are an example of the danger of adhering to this error—not only for themselves, but also for everyone else. Infinite is their number; I have discussed more above in chapter seven, how great their growth is in that sect, and in what sort of way they have acquired leadership and control and governance of the entire kingdom.

If there were some constancy of mind in those who deny, and if they would not so quickly believe the reasons that persuade one to that sect, but insisted on investigating them more diligently, they would undoubtedly find many things sufficient to bring them back and a sufficient argument of their present infidelity. There are three principles that could do this.

The first is the division or discord of minds among the Turks. Although they seem to have a great harmony and unity on the outside, and they do in fact have it for persecuting the

worship of Christ and broadening their sect and perpetrating every evil, nevertheless there is such a diversity of opinion and division of minds and perversity of will about the things that pertain to salvation and the recognition of truth. It is not doubtful to anyone, that this sect has its origin not from God, but from the devil. For all the things they use as law are nothing except certain inventions found arbitrarily or introduced through habit—there is nothing of mystery, nothing containing truth. No—it is full of blasphemies and superstitions and effects of devilish fraud. They use—no, rather, abuse—the Koran for perpetrating all sorts of crimes, namely theft, homicide, fornication, adultery, illicit sex, banditry, and things similar to those. If I were to tell you all the things I heard, saw, and experienced, it would generate boredom and nausea to those listening. They are so infected, befouled, and corrupted by soothsayers and spells and divinations, that there is scarcely an old woman, who does not have some or knowledge about them. Concerning their law, the Koran, or Mechomet, there is so great a discrepancy of speeches and diversity of stories among them, that if a hundred of them were interrogated about these things, none of them would correspond to the response of another. Their clerics, although they show great devotion in the presence of the people, in secret are full of all wickedness. They involve themselves in crimes and write letters for money, for whatever reason or business they have been asked. They write letters of freedom for many people, as I said above in chapter five, for money, so that slaves are able to flee and escape the hands of their masters. They also write these other letters, like amulets, for those who do battle, so that neither sword nor arrow is able to wound them, and many others of the sort. These letters are called “haymayly.” And although everyone commonly does it, many are deceived, and those who wander around especially do it; having taken the money, the itinerant clerics flee from place to place, so that their wickedness cannot be detected. They are full of these and many other methods of fictions and tricks, so that

however many devilish frauds they are able to think up, they are found to be involved in all parts of error. Among other things, there are particular divisions, which are about the ceremonies and rite of the law, the institutions, and the worship and observances that are held among them. There are four solemn opinions about the question of salvation that are distinct among them. However much one group of that sect holds firmly and follows one tenet, not only does one not consent to another, but also one follows the other with the force of arms and fortified camps. As a result, the entire kingdom was thrown into confusion many times, and unless the king laid his hand down, they were unable to be calmed.

The first group is the clerics, who are held in great reverence among them, as the guides of the people and the administrators and dispensators of the law, doctors and judges and presiders in the spiritual offices, mosques, and schools. Their opinion is that no one is able to be except through the law of Mechomet, and they teach this and persuade everyone. And although they are unable to prove this with any reason or authority or example, nevertheless they try to assert themselves against all naysayers, as much as possible. They have many people who agree closely with them, especially among the princes and aristocrats.

The second group is those who are called “deruischler.” They are renunciants, who are truly held in great veneration, as if heirs and successors of the saints, and almost as the defenders of the entire kingdom, friends of God and Mechomet. More was said about them in chapter thirteen. Their opinion is that the law is not useful, but the grace of God is. Grace is required for every human to be saved; it is sufficient for salvation without merit and law. They call this “rachmatallah.” The renunciants establish their opinion with no reason or authority, but try to prove it with prodigies and signs, as will be shown in chapter 20. And they have many disciples and many supporters, especially among those who become more spiritual and devout.

The third group is those who are called “czofilar,” who have given themselves over to meditation and spiritual exercises. They are held in great regard like the successors of the prophets and the fathers, who founded this sect. They say that they have greater authority than the others. Nor do they have any basis of their opinion, except that which they say is handed down from antiquity. And their opinion is that each ought to be saved by merit, and this suffices for salvation without grace or the law. They call this “pereketallach.” They are greatly concerned with particular prayers and spiritual exercises in vigils and meditations. Never do they stop their continuous prayer, which they call “czikir aitmach.” By night they gather and sitting in a circle begin to say “Laylachillalach” in repetition, with an agitation of the head in a certain space of time. And after this they say “Lahu” again and again, repeating in the same way. Finally they say “Hu hu” again, repeating it so much, they fall down exhausted and go to sleep. And they also have many disciples, especially from those who boast about the antiquity or nobility of their tribe, and are called “Eflieler embieler.” They are considered authentic, because their tribe does not accept mixing with other nations, nor does it go back to the origin of the first founders of that sect.

And so these are the groups with their own opinions that are evident among all the people. There are many more dissenters who manage themselves in private rather than in public. Notwithstanding, all the people value them all equally, and no group is able to prevail over another, but they are continually forced to peace and harmony.

The fourth group, however, is called in their tongue “horife,” which sounds like heresy. Their belief is that everyone is saved by their own law, and each tribe or nation was given a law by God, by which they are to be saved. All laws are equally good for those observing them, and one is not to be preferred as better than the others. These people are considered suspicious and

schismatics by the Turks, and if any of them are found, they are burned. Therefore, they do not hold their belief openly, but secretly. I found a member of this group when I was in Chios. He was entering a Christian church, crossed himself, and sprinkled himself with holy water, and was openly saying: “Your law is just as good as ours.” If a Turk of another opinion were to do this, it would be his life.

So many divisions have been learned, experienced, and found in truth in this sect: who in right reason would not estimate and deservedly condemn it to be entirely empty from all truth—no, not devilish and full of all superstition and without any basis?

About the second and third reasons that bring Christians back from the error of the Turks,
which are ignorance and obstinacy.

Chapter Twenty-One

The second reason, in which there is a clear argument for the unfaithfulness of this sect, is ignorance. Although the Turks especially have the cunning for doing evil and have great and nearly supernatural practice and experience in natural matters, nevertheless, in the things that pertain to salvation or recognizing spiritual things, they are so dull and foolish that they seem to lack the use of reasons, like beasts. Hardened like rocks, they are unable to grasp anything of spiritual intelligence. For none of the liberal arts appear to be taught in their schools. They are so foreign from all other sciences, that the names of different disciplines are not found or recognized by them. For what about the deeds of God, what about the mysteries and sacraments, what about the nobility of the soul or its salvation will they be able to understand, they who do not know how to give any account about the ceremonies of their law and institution? If one of

them was asked: “Why do you not drink wine?” or: “Why do you not eat pork?” and likewise, he would be entirely silent or respond with some lie or fiction or give uncleanness as a reason, as was said in chapter nine. They have such a valuation about the ablutions they use, as was said in chapter thirteen, the prostrations, and other ceremonies, that they believe them to be able to confer grace, remit sins, and as the reward of eternal life. No trace of thinking or knowledge is found among them in the least about sins and doubtful cases of conscience; how the soul is polluted through sin; how it is purged again through penitence; and finally how God is offended and how he is placated. They praise humility and other virtues, reproach pride and other vices—not guilt or merit. They only consider vice as a natural condition, not as a fault. For they only condemn and punish them in court as crimes, by which the harmony of the community or the convenience of private behavior is disturbed, just like theft, homicide and others. No mention is made about the remaining crimes, whether evident or hidden, great or small, nor confession, penance, absolution, correction, or the final removal of errors. They also use circumcision not as a cure of some fault or sin, but only as a certain superstition, because they are entirely ignorant of original sin. It is considered a grave insult, when someone is called “czunetsz”, namely uncircumcised. In the same way some frequently go around reproaching others saying “you uncircumcised”. But it seems to me that they use circumcision on account of this reason: so that the ablution, which they pour with water, is not invalidated by having some dry spot remain under the foreskin, as was discussed above in chapter thirteen. For that reason, they also cut their nails and shave their hair. But for whatever reason that happens, it is certain, that they do not use it for anything except out of superstition. For their sons often die without circumcision, and it causes them no trouble that they are not circumcised. If they believed that circumcision hurt or helped their salvation, they would certainly not allow this to happen. When they are asked about

this and other things, lest their ignorance be able to be noted, they cover their opinions and, speaking in a certain obscure way, draw a veil of excuses over their words. Even the clerics do this, when they are asked about spiritual matters and about eternal life. But the laity, when the topic arises among them, is provoked to mock and joke about it with various trifles and inanities. Some say: "Perhaps we will have beautiful wives," but others: "perhaps we will have nice things to eat and drink," and things of that sort. If, by chance, anyone wished to say something seriously on this matter, they would be entirely unable to say anything worthwhile, because nothing can be found among them or in their books that is harmonious with reason. And so each other them, whether clerics or laity, blasphemes and verbally abuses the idea of heaven with their own fantasies. They tell stories and chatter about, saying many frivolous, absurd, and arbitrarily invented things about the Antichrist, whom they call "tetschel", and about the resurrection of the dead, the last judgment, Hell, and Purgatory, among them being: "After the judgment, Mechomet will free everyone from Hell, of every sect and religion, leaving no one behind, on account of the great power and authority that he has before God." For the sake of brevity, I do not wish to say much more about other innumerable stories and lies, which spread among them about spiritual matters. I do want to add this, however, that their wickedness covers up and conceals everything like a veil of deceit; the ignorance of their clerics is hidden just as gilded copper is concealed under the dignity of the name and value of gold. For whatever they say or instruct, they desire that everyone observe it as if it was received from God, so that no one may dare in the least to contradict or resist them.

The third reason, in which there is a clear argument for the unfaithfulness of this sect, is obstinacy. For who doubts that a true faith would increase and not diminish free will? In the Gospel, the faithful are called teachable, because they do not scorn reason, but approve it; they

disprove evil by testing it through reason, and they do not reject good things, having tested it all. They also draw out good things from evil, and twist adverse things around to their own use. All these things happen in the freedom of faith, through which all things cooperate for their good, which are called holy for this purpose. But the treachery of the Turks acts in this way: they strive to defend their sect not with reason or arguments, but in the manner of beasts with swords and weapons, because this is the teaching in their law. They have such determination and obstinacy for clinging to that sect, that they seem to have lost the use of reason, showing that they are unable to be moved or persuaded to any other opinion out of obligation. Whatever they see, hear or feel that goes against their sect, they abhor and flee from it as if mad, insane, and cursing as if it were lethal poison. Nor are they capable of any spiritual impression, nor is any type of truth able to offer them a reason to leave that sect. And although it happens universally among them, nevertheless those renegade and hopeless Christians have a conscience that is so blinded to their errors beyond anyone else, that they seem bound by the fiery chains of the devil, which they are entirely unable to break free from. In friendly conversation, I asked one of them, "why, for God's sake, did you do this, or what moved you?" He was not able to respond with anything but this: "it was a cursed day, when I did that." And I: "So why do you not return to the faith of Christ?" And with bent neck and face turned away said, "I am not able, I am not able," and nothing more.

There is one other and not so small thing that should be noted about their obstinacy. It is believed for certain, that there is no nation, in which some converts have not been found. But from this perverse group, it is considered as almost impossible for anyone of mature age to be converted to the faith of Christ. Nevertheless, as was said above in chapter sixteen, if it were to happen, it would have to be considered as greater than a miracle. For in the first years of the papacy of Sixtus IV, an embassy that had been sent across the sea to the Turks brought back very

Turks to Rome. The better Turks were presented to the Pope, with the remaining ones assigned to the courts of some other prelates—nearly all were baptized. I had friendship with some of them, who showed great devotion to the faith of Christ, such as asking me to translate their confession and communion. Indeed I accepted the confession of one, but I still persuaded him to delay the communion to the priest in whose court he was. It seemed difficult for me to believe that their conversion was real, as the outcome of the matter proved later: for after a few years, all of them—even the ones who were in the court of the Pope, where they had a good pension—had found the opportunity and convenience to escape. Thus they clearly showed that they had falsely approached baptism. Now I am able to show that my opinion, which I already had before, is now indisputable: that it is entirely impossible for any Turk to receive the faith of Christ.

About a certain notable event that happened in Turkey, to confirm what was said above.

Chapter Twenty-Two

Now to more clearly illustrate and confirm the things I said above, I do not believe I can pass over a certain notable event that happened while I was in Turkey. It has come to be believed very certainly because it was secret, but made known through out all of Turkey. It is said that it happened not to a private citizen, but to the king of the lands himself, and to his kingdom. At the time of that one, who was called Mirathbeg (the father of the one who currently reigns), and not long after they led us into captivity, a certain dispute arose among the clerics, who were called “tanismani,” and the renunciants, who are named “dervischler.” The topic of the dispute was whether the gifts, alms, and offerings of the common people were rightly owed to the clerics or the renunciants. For the clerics were saying: “We have the care of the people in counseling,

judging, ruling and teaching, handing down and maintaining the law, and bearing the burden of all the people. Because our ministry is more necessary to the people and the entire kingdom, the gifts of the people are rightly owed to us.” On the other hand the renunciants were saying: “we are the successors and have taken the place of those who are the foundation of the law and grace, and who, for the people and before God, attend all their needs, and entreat with their merits and our intercession. We avert all the evils and dangers of the entire kingdom. We unite the good things with every ability and zeal that help and aid humanity, whenever it flounders. Therefore, the alms and gifts of the people are rather rightly owed to us.” And when they had so contested and the dispute had reached no resolution, all of them agreed in this: that the case should be entrusted to the arbitration of the king, and that whatever comes from his determination and judgment will be accepted as valid without any contradiction. When the king very diligently heard the case and the reasoning of both sides, he thought it over, and began to estimate that the ministry of the clerics was of greater necessity to the kingdom, according to the aforementioned reasons. Thus the gifts of the people pertain more to them as compensation for their ministry. But when this conception of the king’s opinion reached the notice of the renunciants, they immediately approached the king and entreated him. They asked that he not proclaim his opinion definitively, until they were able to very studiously discuss this matter among themselves, lest the anticipation of his opinion in such a difficult case generate a future perplexity in the minds of people. The king nodded his assent to them and set up a seven-day truce. One night, several days later, the king was lying in his bed when suddenly there was a great agitation in his bowels, as if the necessity of nature was pressing him. When he had thrown himself onto the seat with certain force, suddenly a plank breaks beneath him. Falling in, the king was caught above a certain part of the wall or, as some say, hung on a beam, did not descend to the bottom. While he shouts, no

one is able to help him, because all the doors were bolted shut. At last, wearied by struggling for about an hour and accomplishing nothing, a sudden thought came into his mind, that he should invoke one of the saints. When he had done this, a light soon appeared in that place, and something appearing in the form of a renunciant addressed him thus: “O lord king, where are those, who you valued so necessary for you and your kingdom? Why do they not help you in your time of need?” But as the king was unable to respond on account of his fear and the terror of the vision, it added: “O king, do not be afraid! I wish you to know that the ones who are able to offer help in times of extreme necessity are the ones who are more necessary for you and your kingdom. When human power fails, then the renunciants’ power especially shows itself to those who invoke it and helps everyone.” And when it had said this, it vanished from the king’s eyes, with the king having been returned to his very own bed without any trouble. The king came to, pondering what had happened to him. Although he was hung up with wonder about the prodigy, nevertheless he was very content, because he was informed and instructed about the difficulty of the dispute. In the morning he called everyone together and explained the matter in order. He ordered that all the renunciants, who could be found at that time, be quickly brought into his presence. When this was accomplished, he was on his throne with a jar full of money next to him. He made everyone one of the renunciants approach him alone and studies each of them very carefully, wishing to recognize the one that had appeared to him while distributing to each of them as much money as a fistful could hold. And when every one of them had gone by, and there was no notice of the one previously spoken about, the king marveled at this. The one who was the greater among the renunciants approached him and said: “You know, king, that the one who appeared to you and seemed to you as one person—do not doubt that it was done in the person of all of us, because the cause was being handled in the community of all of us.” And so from such

a vision—no on the contrary—should I better say, from a devilish illusion, the king was induced into such madness and was so out of his mind, that he did this: having left behind his scarcely ten year old son on the royal throne, he withdrew to a certain city, called Manissa, and decided to lead his life with a great number of renunciants there. Having accomplished his purpose after a little time and with his son on the throne, a great tumult arose among his courtiers, not without blood being spilt. It was so great, that some feared that the disturbance would occur throughout the entire kingdom, if a cure were not applied very quickly. For those called “gingitscheri”, of whom there were many in the royal court, scorned the boy king. They chose one person to be in charge of them, so that they could fight against everyone who did not consent. When the princes and lords assessed this carefully, they persuaded the father of the boy to return, not so much as with requests than threats. They did so to avert the danger that was threatening the entire kingdom and to oppose the future evil, before it grew in strength. Thus they returned the king to his original seat, although he was reluctant, and forced him to reign up to his death. This event was so rumored through all of Turkey, that nearly nothing else was discussed among individuals. Even I, although I had heard it from many people in common conversation, nevertheless I carefully learned specific and private details from one of the renunciants who was personally involved. He told me how much money he had accepted then from the hand of the king, how much grace and favor each had obtained from the king, and many other things that happened to him, etc.

There is another not so average event that I thought not superfluous to add to the aforementioned thing: what happened in the time of this king who now reigns (the son of the one I just spoke about). For there is in the eastern parts a certain Great Tartar, who is called Demirleng, about whom I made mention above. At a certain time, aspiring for the death of the

king of the Turks and aroused by hate, he brought in certain members of his tribe who were famous and skilled in every wickedness of the devilish arts. He induced them with entreaties and rewards, pouring many things on them, but promising much more if they brought back to him the head of his Turkish enemy. On many occasions this band sought the opportunity and means of committing this crime, but every time the difficult of the matter resisted them. Because they were skilled in the devilish arts, as well as magic and some necromancy, they imagined this plan: that under the pretext of offering something novel, when they presented it to the curious king, they would say that it was not possible to perform their novelty's art and entertainment unless everyone else was shut out, so that they could the opportunity to execute their plan. But others who considered this band as suspect advised the king; having been cautioned, he prevented their machinations. For when they were invited by the king the band was outwardly dressed in the habit and form of the renunciants, but underneath they were well defended with weapons. They were captured before they could reach the king's presence, and were subjected to the same evil that they had planned to do to the king: they experienced it when they were killed by the king.

Thereafter anyone who wished to perform nearly any wrong publicly in the cities, in the streets, woods, and public squares, lying in wait for the common good and peace, all those criminals and those pursuing every type of disgrace—at that time all were said to conceal themselves in the appearance and form of the renunciants. The king was agitated by all these people and especially affected by the abovementioned wickedness. In a public edict, he made that all the renunciants be expelled and thrown out from his kingdom, and he mandated that anyone openly dressed in the attire of the renunciants pay a penalty and be subjected to imprisonment with all his property and livelihood taken away. Such a curse and hatred for that group occupied the soul of the king then, that not only was he not able to hear that name, but

even those, who in the habit of the poor happened to encounter him, he was entirely unable to gaze upon them without agitation. As a result, the ones who accompanied him or preceded him would not allow any poor person to appear in the places where he was about to go. And if one incautiously did appear, he would experience the ferocity of his agitation in insults and blows. I am able to offer such a safe witness about this matter, as I learned this in my own experience truly and not without any fear or danger to myself. For one day around dawn, after the rising of the sun, we incautiously stayed beyond the sixth hour, sitting in the sun (on account of the cold) across from the hall of the king. I was sitting with poor people and many others of diverse races and attire to see the spectacle of the court and the princes, many of whom had come to the king (for what reason I do not know). When the entire court had withdrawn, we unexpectedly saw horsemen coming out from the court of the king, with a herald preceding with a scepter, after him two youths, and the king, all about to go to the bath, which was behind us. Soon after he saw us, the king himself hurled his voice with a great shout. Then the herald came at a fast run to expel us from the presence of the king. And indeed I believe that those, who fled down the road that the king was about to take, were not able to evade his blows. I, on the other hand, fled to another part. Although I was barely able to evade him that one time, nevertheless the magnitude of fear made me more cautious in the future: I would no longer appear in his sight along a road he was about to cross, especially among other poor people.

And so from these examples, whoever faithfully considers will be able to examine everything that has been said about this sect, and see its truth, especially about their division, obstinacy, and ignorance.

About the advantage of the Christian religion.

Chapter Twenty-Three

Below is a brief summarization of what was previously said about the sect of the Turks: how one it clearly lack any foundation of truth; also about the wickedness and malice of the Turks, with which they attack Christians; about the reasons that persuade that this sect is true; those who draw people away; and about my explanation and interpretation of all their reasons with certain examples. Now in this final chapter I think that I ought to say in a few words something about the advantage of the most holy religion of the Christians, so that every believer can compare the truth of this faith with with the errors of that sect, and very clearly understand, which faith they ought to choose and which to detest. No tongue can suffice to extoll and praise, as it ought, the holiness and worthiness of the religion of Christian law. On account of the urgency of the present matter, however, I intend to recommend the faith of Christ primarily in seven reasons: namely, in the firmness and necessity of its foundation, in the dignity of its worship, in the sanctity of its sacraments, in the nobility of its virtue, in the sublimity of its knowledge, in the quality of its merits, and the amount of its rewards.

The most holy Christian religion has the mystery of the holy and indivisible trinity as its basis, which was so necessary from the beginning of the world, that without the knowledge of it, there would be no cause of salvation and no way or method for placating the wrath of God. Just as in the Old Testament, the hope of God's pardon or clemency was given to no one at all, unless the mystery of the holy trinity was demonstrated to them either in an enigma or in another sign or figure. So also in the New Testament, the hope of God's friendship was given to no one, unless they were truthfully instructed in the mystery of the holy trinity and substantially formed to it

through the imposition of the seal. From the beginning this foundation of the holy trinity had such an efficacy of strength in the minds of the faithful, that the ancient enemy of the human race, with all his arts of deceit and allurements of the flesh and dishonest treachery of the world, was never able to overthrow the structure of faith, hope, and love built on this foundation. Nor will he be able to do this or anything of the sort until the end. However, in the most recent time—namely our present and the future—the power of the devil will at its greatest etc. And so Mechomet roars among the reprobates as the devil rages in the Antichrist, as much as he is able: he will reap no harvest of his wickedness, but whatever wickedness he will be able to contrive will overflow to the glory of the chosen ones of God, but an increase of eternal damnation for himself and his accomplices.

The worship of the most holy Christian religion is of such dignity that in its principal act it can, in a certain way, make mortal men equal to heavenly citizens. For although they tirelessly give ineffable praises and divine services to the eternal God, nevertheless the dutiful offices, the free obedience, and the sacrifices of praise that true worshipers offer everyday in the Church militant from the gifts in spirit and truth bestowed upon them—their gifts are no less pleasing to the sight of divine majesty. All other things that are done in the Church exceeds the worth of all human acts, however great they may be in worth and excellence. Consider the seriousness of the sacred doctrine that proceeds from it: the maturity of those who handle it; the agreement of its components; the solidity of its foundations; the authority of its teachers; the sublimity of its mysteries; the holiness of its sacraments; the firmness of its opinions; the captivating nature of its words; the unshaken truth of its arguments; the security of its reasons; its clear explanation of doubts; its refutation of all errors; its contemplation of divine things; the devotion of its offices; the nobility of its ministers; the dignity of its prelates; the simplicity of its subjects; the efficacy

of its teachings; its sufficiency for all things pertaining to salvation; in addition, its abundance of grace; its fragrance of virtue; finally, its teaching of all matters divine and human; and its unique comfort of faithful souls; an abundance and fullness of all its spiritual gifts; and the highest peak and infinite excellence of its other things: I believe that if all the excellence of human acts were shown, they would be unable to compare to the least part of this worship.

The holiness of the sacraments of this holy religion is so great, that in a rational creature, it is not only able to restore the substance suited to divine use of the interior man, but also suffices to pour an overflowing of such great grace on him, so that it can also perform the fruit of salvation according to the skill of the outward man, to the advantage of those nearby from the outpouring of grace in speaking, conversation, teaching and encouraging, looking out for and assisting in the spiritual and temporal necessities, and serving in the other works of piety. It is also able to provoke the souls of each of the faithful to the love of God. If, however, the perfume of greater desire will have found their hearts, the sanctity of most holy Eucharist especially has such efficacy and power, that when it is thus able to confer a taste of enjoyment of the heavenly fatherland to those placed on the earth, with their burden vices and earthly things removed. And furthermore, it was able to restore the dignity and nobility of the four elements, likewise the sun and moon, as well as restore the embellished glory and adornment to its prior worth, which was ruined and lost in the growth of the other creations of idolaters and demons. This also, which was neglected or deformed in the wicked obedience shown by the reprobates to do various insensate things from the beginning of the world, was able to most fully renew the use of true worshipers to honor and praise the creator and the glory of the most high God, and reintegrate their efficacy. The sanctity is able to show this also, which in the use of certain blasphemers has been cursed or

has to be cursed up to the end of the world, for the heaping up of the damnation of those wicked ones, but what the elect finally work for in increasing the harvest of their merits.

The nobility of the virtues, with which the holy souls are trained in the Christian religion to the advancement of spiritual life, are regulated according to the method and form of natural virtues for the perfection of a sensible life. The sensible spirit spreads out from the head into the limbs of the body, and performs its action according to the layout of the organs. In the same way, divine grace, settled in a rational soul, creates the effects of spiritual life in accordance with the disposition of human will and state of mind. See, what noble fruit of faith did divine grace bring out so well from the condition and disposition of the holy patriarch Abraham. On account of the faith he had from God, Abraham did not think to spare his own son, who was not so beloved as rare—no, his first and only begotten son! What fruit of hope was in the condition of holy Noah, who, when the entire world was corrupted, was the only one that did not scorn the work of building an ark for such a long time! What fruit of charity was there in holy Moses, who, burning with heavenly love, denied that he was the son of Pharaoh's daughter, struck the Egyptian, freed the Hebrews, and did not fear to incur the wrath of Pharaoh! But he who wishes to know and understand these things shall come across them like seeds scattered among the holy fathers of the Old Testament, and will approach the fullest harvest of the saints in the New Testament. If someone wants to know what of fruit divine grace has brought in the disposition of each one's purified mind, from the theological, cardinal, and moral virtues, let him hasten to the libraries of the Christians and, when he has examined the nearly infinite number of things to read of this material, he will beyond doubt learn that the nobility of this religion's virtue is more to be admired than investigated. But this is not so wondrous as ineffable, but what comes to be done by the chosen ones of this time in the spiritual condition, I leave it to more diligent and devout

study. I wish to conclude in this: whatever order, perfection and propriety, or whatever dignity and excellence can be found on earth, from the beginning up to the end, has proceeded from the nobility of the virtues of this most holy religion. When these are taken away, no order but rather eternal horror and error shall remain.

To understand the grandeur of the knowledge of this religion, I find no more fitting comparison than this: just as four streams come out of paradise to water the entire world, evidently the knowledge and teachings of the four Gospels come forth from the Christian religion as if it was heavenly paradise, makes fertile all human nature that for a long time was dry and sterile with the seed of salvation. For that heavenly master, who said: “You call me master and lord, and say well: for indeed I am,” came down to earth and taught lessons, instituted the holy Catholic church, and left behind the grandeur of knowledge, which he taught and is to be taught to posterity in this, openly showing it, when he said: “Everything that I have heard from my father, I have made known to you.” O wondrous mystery! Those things that are managed in the celestial court and council of the Holy Trinity are shown to human beings on earth! O great dignity of the Christian religion, which exceeds the angels, archangels, and remaining ranks of the blessed spirits in knowledge, and approaches the secret discussions of the Cherubim and Seraphim! And what wonder, if this knowledge is able to make gods from men, immortals from mortals, which had such and so great a teacher. No human mind can understand, nor tongue express, the loftiness, depth, length, and width of this most holy knowledge—but it is perceived by faith, upheld by hope, and brought about by charity. Whoever enters the school of this knowledge, however ignorant, leaves most learned. But whoever neglects or scorns to enter this school, however learned, nevertheless will mourn the blindness of his ignorance in eternity.

I leave it to the infidels and the heretics to argue or doubt about the quality of the merits of this most holy Christian religion. Some of them blaspheme, saying that Christ was not truly God, others that he was not truly human, and the rest that he was only a prophet. But none of the faithful blaspheme: they believe and confess that Christ is the son of God and true son of man and conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, lived among men for thirty-three years, and after endless struggles, after signs of miracles and teachings, he was captured by the Jews, bound, flogged, spit on, mocked, ridiculed, crowned with thorns, and overwhelmed with endless anguishes and confusions, taunts and injuries and blasphemies, at last fixed on a cross between two bandits, and finished with a most bitter death for the salvation of the human race. None of those who beseechingly worship Christ is allowed to doubt his boundless merit. What is endless cannot be increased. Nevertheless, it is not superfluous, if I want to add the merits of the glorious Virgin Mary, of all the saints, the apostles, martyrs, confessors, and virgins, to whom the Christian religion was endowed.

What do we think must be said about the amount of rewards? Is it not just, that rest is repaid for labor, sorrows for joy, and glory for confusion? And so let us firmly believe and not at all doubt that the comfort of this most holy religion is a respite from endless labor; as a cooling of eternal delight for the sorrows of such sufferings; as a consolation of great glory for the confusion and disgraces without end—all of these rewards will be granted by the just and eternal judge in his severe and final judgment. And so happy—no, more blessed and happiest is the soul, which is firmly established on the foundation of this most holy religion, freed by the dignity of his worship, consecrated by its sacraments and holiness, adorned with the nobility of virtues and so faithfully and excellently imbued with the sublimity of its knowledge, that through its infinite merits the soul will finally be able to arrive at the so sublime peak of its reward. May this be

granted to us by Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

You who wish to know great and wondrous things about the sect of the Turks, I ask that you not scorn the few things that were said here in uncouth speech and scattered words. But if you examine and understand the details well, they will not deny you the material of a search that is appropriate concerning many and great things, and will provide an account of the truth of this matter.

THE END

An account that testifies to the truth of the things that have been said.

If, in the cases of doubts of human affairs, a better authority of greater experience is made known, I think that there ought to be no less faith in me speaking about the condition and custom of the Turks. For I endured twenty whole years of their savage captivity and horrible persecution, the terrible whirlwinds of spiritual storms, and the immense dangers to my body and soul. And so that I might particularly escape the danger to my soul and preserve the faith of Christ within me, I made eight serious attempts at flight. Each of them would have been sufficient to not only send a man into confusion, but also to cast him into the pit of despair. Four times I was bought back after my escape, seven times I was sold for money and just as many times bought. Besides, I was bound to such an extent by their close company that I forgot my mother tongue, and learned the speech of their barbaric dialect. I was also thoroughly taught in their so foreign and perverse letters, to such an extent that one of their greater clerics bestowed on me an office of his

mosque endowed with considerable compensation, because he considered me so sufficient and suitable. Further on I so trained myself in the habits and rites of their renunciants, so that I, by experiencing and copying down in memory and writing the spiritual poems that they use while eating or in addresses to the people, could relate these things not only our neighbors who frequently heard me in their congregations, but also people from other places who wished to hear me. Very many also of the renunciants learned sermons from me, which they then would relate to the people. Finally, I was so dear to my master that he often asserted in conversation with many people that he cherished me much more than the one son he had. Because of this, after I had gained my freedom, he attempted to keep me back with every method of promises and rewards. But because he knew that I was very eager to further my studies, he was deceived by my excuse, in which I pretended that I was going only to study and would then return. He let me go, to the sadness of the entire household, and asked that I swear by the name of God and Mechomet that I would return as soon as possible. And perhaps he still expects me to return from my studies, so that I could increase the twofold joys he so very desired, namely my priesthood and the fulfillment of his longing for me. In the end, what is able to happen to only few of those taken into Turkish captivity, was granted to me: with a letter prepared with imperial authority and validated by the solemn testimony of authentic witnesses, with God granting me help and mercy, and not only freed from the grip of that harshest captivity, but also absolved from the devilish infection of that cruelest sect, I walked out a free man. Should testimony of greater experience with clear reason be given, I would put aside my own and, along with others, undoubtedly place my faith in their assertions.

These are two poems in the common tongue of the Turks

Translation of the aforementioned poems into Latin

Do not be incautious! Open you eyes and consider your works, because you are mortal. And do not act unfairly in this age, but see to it that you find forgiveness for your sins. Consider the number of those dying, their condition and decay in the grave: how full of vermin and snakes they are, faces disfigured by phlegm, full of every putrefaction and stink. The righteous ones do not appear, having lived with fear in this age and having died with pain. The wretched ones mock their own sins and are consoled, believing that they can escape death. Therefore do not seek an argument or reason from anyone, nor believe those declaring the opposite. The daily experience and condition of those dying can give you certainty about this. Where is Mehemet Mustafa, who was of such authority that he seemed to rule over sky and earth? If death did not spare him, whom could worldly vanity not lead astray? Let not temporary and futile things delude you, but train yourself in the divine worship and unite with spiritual things, which can be a refuge for you until the end.

Yonos joins these verses and sells them to the people as spiritual goods; for the veracity of his hymn, better deeds can be the testimony.

On the outside, the fear of death disquiets me, but on the inside, the memory of it upsets me even more. But because I know that all die equally, I have some relief of mind. It is certain, that we all die, but only then at the hour of death will experience it, when, placed on the bier, we begin to be washed in the sight of everyone. I do not know what to do or where to turn, when all who were dear to me before leave me alone. Then, out of everyone, only the cloth, in which I am

wrapped, and the plank, with which I was brought out, will remain for me. But perhaps my friends and close companions will be close to my tomb. Indeed, whom will I have as a companion, when I rest alone, buried in the earth? Only my merits and my fulfilled desires will remain with me then, when those who had sadly gathered, will happily return to their own business. But I say to you, dear brother, consider what sort of difference there is among those who die. For some will boil in fiery heat, others will rejoice, enjoying cooling relief. At last with the final test approaching, all have to rise up again. Then grace of the spirit will darken some, and fire will burn up others in the eternal flames. There, they will respond not to words, but merits. Those who do not have merits will have a great need for them. But they will be carefree, who have departed from this life free and without impediment.

Yonus, lead your life now with such foreknowledge, so that then you can appear with confusion, when everyone's names and deeds will be manifested and known to the whole world.

This is the opinion of the abbot Joachim about the sect of Mechomet.

How much the sect of Mechomet should endure is in Daniel chapter 7, where the angel revealed to Daniel about the great beast, which was different from the others, in this way: "These great beasts are the four reigns that will rise up from the earth; but the highest ones will receive the reign of holy God and will obtain dominion up to the end of the ages." Discussing this, the abbot Yoachym commented about that verse in chapter 12 of Revelation, "And the dragon was angered at the woman," by saying, "If we diligently observe church histories, we see these things: when the Arrian persecution was already controlled and even in some ways was erased, the Persian king Cosdroe was established, who preceded Mechomet and his successors in

persecuting the east. The persecution of the sect that followed was so great, that in fact it did not seem to be of humans, but of a terrible beast, especially since its error seemed to be fortified not by any human reason, but was defended only by the detestable zeal of lies and tyrannical force of arms. As much as it strengthened in a short time and what it quickly accomplished in its malice, not at all doubtful on account of its sins, the desolation of the churches of Syria and Phoenicia are testified, together with Palestine and Egypt, and Africa and Mauritania and islands of the sea: there the name of Christ was abolished, and the detestable tradition of that Mechomet is preached as if he were a great prophet and herald of the most high Lord. Alas, if the Antichrist were to do such evil things, how much have they done in their lies! For as Moses the lawgiver long before preceded Christ, so also has that proposer of lies prepared the way for the Antichrist. And lest anyone think that the brutality of this beast seems similar to other beasts: indeed the Jews fought against the faith of Christ, but nevertheless despite them being resistant and unwilling, churches were built in Jerusalem, and not a few days later they were overwhelmed by the Romans, so as a result, both their persecution of the churches and their empire came to an end. The pagans fought against Christ, but his soldiers conquered them every day, so that in the time of Pope Sylvester they almost laid down their arms and assigned the scepter of the kingdom to Christ the victor. The Goths and Vandals and Longobards and other heretics were for the most part wiped out by the army of the Romans, and for the most part converted to the Catholic faith. But these four beasts were so untamable that, although at that time they appeared humiliated and nearly dead, they should again be esteemed greatly, as they are still prepared to devour—it is more to fear than to express. And so that beast, which holy Daniel named the fourth, is exceedingly terrible. But Johannes included this beast with the three others, having seven heads and one with ten horns.” And a little bit further he says: “Through this beast, the devil assails the solitary

inhabitants of the southern wilderness, and through this he would do such things and has already done some, a sort of thing that he should not have been permitted to do in other times, nor even when he was allowed to mangle the holy martyrs with various blows.