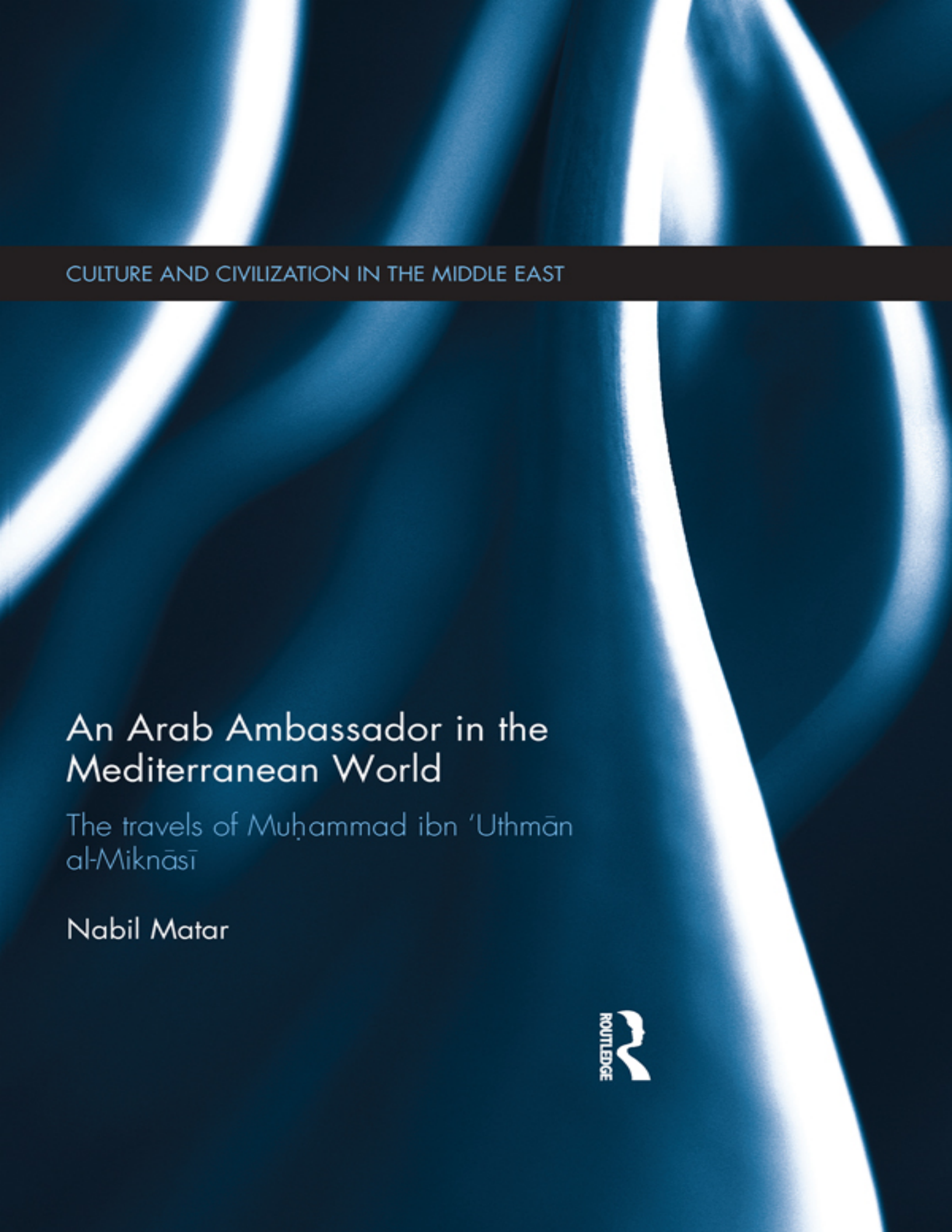
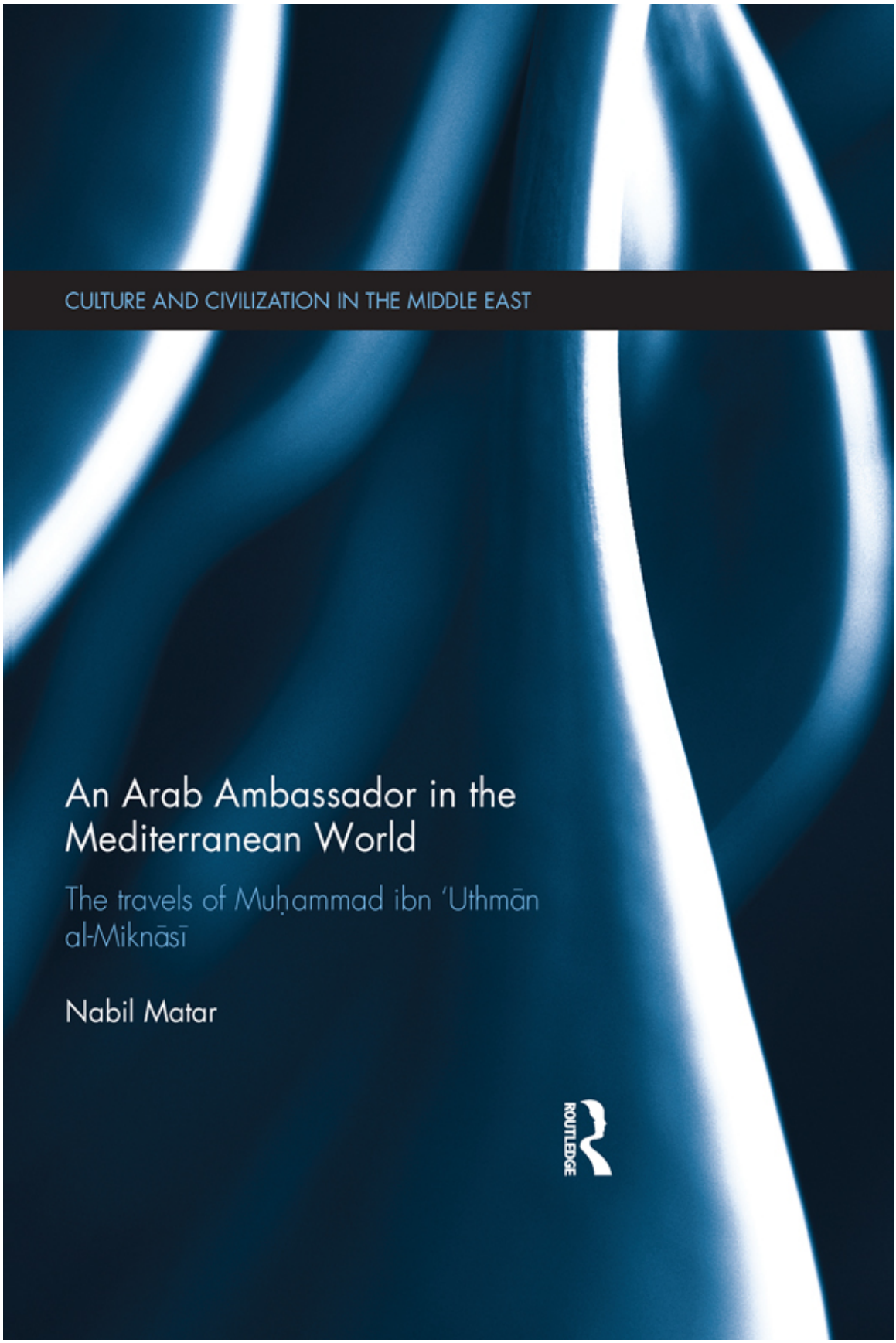

CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
An Arab Ambassador in the Mediterranean World
The travels of Muḥammad ibn ʻUthmān al-Miknāsī
Nabil Matar
ROUTLEDGE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An Arab Ambassador in the Mediterranean World

This book provides translated selections from the writings of Muḥammad Ibn ʻUthman al-Miknāsī (d. 1799). The only writings by an Arab-Muslim in the pre-modern period that present a comparative perspective, his travelogues offer unique insights into Christendom and Islam.

Translating excerpts from his three travelogues, this book tells the story of al-Miknāsī's travels from 1779–1788. As an ambassador, al-Miknāsī was privy to court life, government offices and religious buildings, and he provides detailed accounts of cities, people, customs, ransom negotiations, historical events and political institutions. Including descriptions of Europeans, Arabs, Turks, Christians (both European and Eastern), Muslims, Jews and (American) Indians in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, *An Arab Ambassador in the Mediterranean World* explores how the most travelled Muslim writer of the pre-modern period saw the world: from Spain to Arabia and from Morocco to Turkey, with detailed descriptions of Mecca and Jerusalem, and second-hand information about the New World.

Supplemented with extensive notes detailing the historical and political relevance of the translations, this book is of interest to researchers and scholars of Mediterranean history, Ottoman studies and Muslim–Christian relations.

Nabil Matar is Professor of English at the University of Minnesota. He is author of a trilogy on early modern Britain and the Islamic World, along with translations of Arabic sources and studies on the relationship between Europe and the Arab Mediterranean between 1550 and 1798.

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18

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Ibn al-Nafis, pulmonary transit and bodily resurrection
Nahyan Fancy

38 The Qur'an in Christian-Muslim Dialogue
Historical and modern interpretations
C. Jonn Block

39 Arabic and Hebrew Love Poems in al-Andalus
Shari L. Lowin

40 Religious Scholars and the Umayyads
Piety-minded supporters of the Marwanid caliphate
Steven C. Judd

41 Skepticism in Classical Islam
Moments of confusion
Paul L. Heck

42 Free Will and Predestination in Islamic Thought
Theoretical compromises in the works of Avicenna al-Ghazālī and Ibn ᶜ

Arabī
Maria de Cillis

43 Ibn al-Haytham, New Spherical Geometry and Astronomy
A history of Arabic Sciences and mathematics, Volume 4
Roshdi Rashed, translated by J. V. Field

44 Classical Mathematics from al-Khwārizmī to Descartes
Roshdi Rashed, translated by Michael H. Shank

45 Legal Authority in Premodern Islam
Yaḥyā b. Sharaf al-Nawawī in the Shāfi ʻī School of Law
Fachrizal A. Halim

46 Ethics in Islam
Friendship in the political thought of Al-Tawhīdī and his contemporaries
Nuha A. Alshaar

47 The City in the Muslim World
Depictions by Western travel writers
Edited by Mohammad Gharipour and Nilay Özlü

48 Moral Rationalism and Shari'a
Independent rationality in modern Shīʿī *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*
Ali-Reza Bhojani

49 An Arab Ambassador in the Mediterranean World
The travels of Muhammad ibn ʻUthmān al-Miknāsī
Nabil Matar

50 The Poetics of Ancient and Classical Arabic Literature
Orientology

Esad Duraković

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For Galina, and the journeys.

Contents

Illustrations

Figures

Maps

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In Jordan, I discussed the project with my former colleagues at the University of Jordan, Professors Muhammad Asfour and Muhammad Shaheen. Professor Adnan Bakhit, director of the Center for the Study of Bilad al-Sham, kindly pointed me to manuscripts in his microfilm library that included numerous Moroccan travelogues. He also introduced me to Dr Zaid Alrawadieh, who shared with me his edition-in-progress of Arabic travel accounts by Turkish authors. In England, I consulted the National Archives for state papers relating to Morocco and met with my friend of over forty years, Dr David Brooks of London University, to go over the history of North African–European relations in the eighteenth century. After coming back to Minnesota, I turned to Professor Wadad Kadi with

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This book is dedicated to Galina, who has led me on many a journey, from the churches of Armenia to the iconology of Tbilisi, and from the sanctity of Selimiye Mosque to the devotion of St Clemente and the mystery of per filium. Together, we climbed the mountain of Alhambra and delved into the manuscripts of the Bodleian, wandered between Tangier's Irish Tower and Herod's Baths in Jordan, the Escorial and the Rock of Tariq, ever changed, “from glory to glory.”

Notes on the text

I have remained as close to the text as possible, but when al-Miknāsī turned to rhetorical flourish and rhyming prose, I have summarized the meaning without providing a word-for-word translation.

The spelling of place names in the text below follows current usage except where the places are not identifiable. Where I was unable to determine the meaning of specific terms or identify certain place names, I have added a question mark in brackets.

On some occasions, al-Miknāsī used colloquialisms exclusive to Morocco: I have relied on the three editors of the accounts for their explanations of the meanings of those words. I have indicated the information taken from their works by their initials: MF, MZ and MB.

In the manuscripts that I consulted, there were very few paragraph divisions. I have followed the divisions introduced by the three editors, unless I felt that a different division would be better.

Except when indicated, all quotations from the Qur'ān are taken from the Penguin translation by Tarif Khalidi.

All photographs were taken by Galina Yermolenko.

Introduction

Before the Napoleonic invasion (1798) and the 1805 assumption to power of Muḥammad ʻAli in Egypt, Arabic writers in North Africa and the Middle East did not have a view of their place in an expanding world of commerce and navigation. Although travelers crossed regions extending from Morocco to Bosnia and India, their vis-à-vis remained divided between the Ottoman Turks, who dominated the whole Arabic-speaking world with the exception of Morocco, and Western Europeans, whose military and technological advances were both admired and feared. From the sixteenth century on, Spanish and French, British and Dutch polities adopted an exclusionary religious and nationalist ideology, and with limited exceptions in the Netherlands and in Britain (the admission of a small number of Jews in the 1650s), they kept out the non-Christian from their borders. At the same time, they needed the markets, resources, strategic harbors and the cooperation of the Muslim peoples of the Mediterranean basin. Such need led to the curious situation where a wide array of Euro-Christian immigrants, mercenaries, hired laborers, pirates, priests, converts, consuls and traders settled in regions extending from Salé to (Libya's) Tripoli, and from Tunis to Izmir and Aleppo. Because of Islam's protection of the Christians and the Jews as *dhimmis* or *musta'minīn*, more native (Arabic-speaking) and European Christians resided among Muslims than Muslims among Euro-Christians.

Catholic and Orthodox Christian Arabic writers had easier access to Western and Central Europe than did Muslim Arabs. As a result, the latter traveled exclusively within the Islamic world, as is shown in the biographies of the thousands of men (and one woman) that were compiled

by Muḥammad Amīn ibn Faḍlallah al-Muḥibbī at the end of the seventeenth century (d. 1699) and Muḥammad Khalīl al-Murādī at the end of the eighteenth century (d. 1791). Only a few Muslim Arabs traveled to Western Europe, or *bilād al-Naṣārā/* the lands of the Christians, all of whom, excepting the Lebanese prince Fakhr al-Dīn II, were from the Islamic West: Libyan, Tunisian, Algerian and Moroccan.[1] Sometimes few in number, at other times consisting of fifteen to twenty men (no women, except for slaves),[2] from the beginning of the seventeenth century, North African delegations visited and wrote about Spain, France, Holland, Italy and Malta. They went to negotiate commercial and peace treaties, ransom captives, and/or demand compensation for losses incurred at sea.[3]

Of all the early modern North African ambassadors and envoys who went on missions to Western Europe, only five left written accounts that have survived: Aḥmad ibn Qāsim about France and Holland (1612–1613);[4] Muḥammad ibn ʻAbd al-Wahāb al-Ghassānī about Spain (1690–1691);[5] Aḥmad ibn Mahdī al-Ghazāl about Spain (1767);[6] and Muḥammad ibn ʻUthmān al-Miknāsī about Spain (1779–1780),[7] and of Malta, Naples and Sicily (1781–1783).[8] Al-Miknāsī was unique in also traveling and writing about Ottoman regions: his third and last account describes his journey from Tetuan to Istanbul, continuing via Anatolia to the pilgrimage sites of Mecca and Medina, and then back to Damascus, Jerusalem and Acre, from where he sailed to Tunis, and then traveled on land back to his native Morocco (1785–1788).[9] His are the only writings about the Islamic and Christian Sea of the Rūm (the name Arabs used for the "Mediterranean") by an Arab writer until the *Nahḍa* in the nineteenth century.[10]

In *al-ʻArab wa-l-Barābira* (1991), ʻAzīz al-ʻAzmeh maintained that all cultures, including the medieval Arabic culture, constructed the Other in the manner that Edward Said described as the European construction of the Arabs and Muslims in *Orientalism* (1978). But as the writings of al-Miknāsī demonstrate, no "construction" of Europeans underpinned his accounts. Rather, he was empirical and precise in his descriptions, and although he denounced the Euro-Christians for their past depredations and what he saw as immoral activities, there was no deliberate misrepresentation and fantasy in his writings similar to that which marked many English, French, Spanish and Italian dramas, travelogues and epics about Muslims. Admittedly, he made mistakes: sometimes his descriptions of buildings did not match the

reality on the ground (Toledo, for instance), but such mistakes were due to memory failure and not to the desire of constructing the Other to justify and prepare for conquest – the crucial corollary in Said's argument that should not be ignored.[11] Despite the sometimes conflicted relationship with the Euro-Christians, al-Miknāsī and other North African diplomats saw themselves in a complicated context: First, there was the religious difference and they could not but always denounce what they saw as irreligious and non-Islamic. But, second, and after spending months as guests of the *Naṣārā*, they entered into numerous dialogues with them, and although the sense of rivalry and hostility remained, in the case of al-Miknāsī, he started using (as indeed his ruler had) the word *maḥabba*/love/amity in his accounts.[12] As a result, al-Miknāsī reflected in his descriptions historical interactions that went beyond the fixedness of belief: when the Europeans were seen to be hostile to Muslims, and to have expelled them from their lands or relentlessly attacked them at sea, al-Miknāsī poured on them his vituperation; but when they were helpful and generous, he praised them with sincere gratitude. In the presence of the European "wonders" that he witnessed, he could not but express admiration, although his envy, or his inability to understand the new inventions and social codes made him add the perfunctory denunciation or Qur'ānic condemnation. Still, his views were more often dictated by his own feelings and background rather than determined by theology.

Muḥammad ibn ʻUthmān al-Miknāsī

"Jurist, scholar, intelligent, handsome, poet"[13]

Abū ʻAbdallah Muḥammad ibn ʻAbd al-Wahāb ibn ʻUthmān al-Miknāsī was born in the first half of the eighteenth century in the royal city of Meknes and grew up in a house of learning, where his father was a jurist.[14] He lived not far from the Filālī School, which had been established by the Marinids and where the distinguished jurist al-Wansharīsī had taught (the school was also known as the School of the Judge).[15] His house was also within a short walking distance from the vast royal complex that had been built by Mulay Ismāʻīl (reg. 1672–1727), the grandfather of then ruler, Sidi Muḥammad ibn ʻAbdallah (reg. 1757–1789). Meknes still bore the marks of

its glory days under Ismā‘īl who had turned it into his capital and where he had built imposing structures such as the water cistern and the granaries (which have survived till today notwithstanding the 1755 earthquake), expanded the boundaries of the city and fortified it with forty kilometers of walls and numerous gates, including Bāb Manṣūr, the biggest in all North Africa. He brought European converts and captives to labor at building the rows of walls (the water turret was built by Aḥmad al-‘ilj al-inglīzī/the English convert), and he built the Ismā‘īliyya *qasbah* to serve as his seat of government and to house his court, guards and family.

Like every major jurist in the Islamic West, al-Miknāsī pursued his studies at the Qarawiyyīn Mosque-University in Fez,[16] where he studied Hadith, Tafsir and other religious sciences. On returning to Meknes, he followed his father's example in becoming a *warrāq*/scribe and a *khaṭīb*/preacher, keeping in touch with his old school and using the library of the Grand Mosque (and perhaps using the Bāb al-Kutub/Gate of the Books, very near to his house). He then joined the court of Sidi Muḥammad who had begun to rehabilitate the city of his birth; although he ruled from Marrakesh, Sidi Muḥammad still resided on various occasions in the city and oversaw the building of shrines and gates, the mosques of Lala ‘Awda and Lala Khaḍra, the schools of Shāwiyya and al-Ṣihrīj, and the palace of al-Dār al-Baydā’.[17] He respected the memory of his grandfather so much that when al-Miknāsī returned from his second mission with liberated captives, he sent him with the captives to the tomb of Ismā‘īl to recite the *Fātiḥa* before presenting themselves to him.

Sidi Muḥammad ascended the Moroccan throne after a period of internecine conflicts (1727–1757) and he began to consolidate his power by reinforcing doctrinal solidarity around his kingdom. Although he remained a firm Malikite in his practices, he adopted the educational and juridical teachings of the Hanbalite School. He urged a return of the “*umma* in its spirit from the century in which it lived to the best of centuries – the century in which the Prophet (PBUH) and his Righteous Caliphs lived.”[18] He became a scholar in his own right as well as a bibliophile: when al-Miknāsī traveled to Istanbul, he asked him to purchase for him the works of Abū Ḥanīfa and of Imam Shāfi‘ī.[19] At the same time, he sent more than 12,000 books/manuscripts that had been in his grandfather's library to the central mosques in Moroccan cities, “to help in instruction,” as the inscription

reads on one manuscript in the mosque of Tetuan.[20] He was also a reformer: in *al-Futūḥāt al-ṣughrā*, *al-Futūḥāt al-kubrā*, and *al-Jāmi‘ al-ṣaḥīḥ al-asanīd*, he urged the rejection of the Sufi orders and their influence, denounced *‘ilm al-kalām* and logic, which he viewed as post-Muḥammadan innovations, and insisted on firm adherence to the "foundations of Islam."[21] The chronicler, Abu al-Qāsim Aḥmad al-Zayānī (1734–1833), praised him for initiating a religious revival that emphasized a return to the days of the Righteous Caliphs.[22]

Sidi Muḥammad was a man of noble demeanor, as a captured English woman attested after being taken to his court and subsequently released unharmed. He was, Elizabeth Marsh wrote one year before he succeeded his father to the throne (on November 7, 1757),

> tall, finely shaped, of a good complexion, and appeared to be about Five and twenty. He was dressed in a loose Robe of fine Muslin, with a Train of at least two Yards on the Floor; and under that was a Pink Sattin Vest buttoned with Diamonds: He had a small Cap of the same Sattin as his Vest, with a Diamond Button: He wore Bracelets on his Legs, and Slippers wrought with Gold: His Figure, all together, was rather agreeable, and his Address polite and easy.[23]

In the early years of his reign, he fought rebels and secessionists, and dissolved the formidable Bukhari Army, which had been established by his grandfather as a kind of Praetorian Guard. At the same time, he recognized the need to develop foreign trade and to build diplomatic ties that could ensure him military supplies and modern equipment.[24] Notwithstanding a conservative religious stance, Sidi Muḥammad saw the importance of learning about his adversaries, and ordered his ambassadors to write down descriptions of everything they saw. He wanted to improve relations with Euro-Christian powers and to build up Morocco's naval strength by adding ships to the fleet.[25] He began a massive project of enlarging port cities, including, in 1765, the port of Essaouira, which became a hub for international trade. But, his most important goal was to abolish captivity and slavery in the whole region, and so he spent energy and wealth in negotiating freedom for all Muslim captives in European cities, Moroccan and non-Moroccan (chiefly Algerian).[26] Eager that all European slaves held

in North Africa be freed, too, he sent envoys all around the Mediterranean and as far north as England in order to effect the exchange of captives and to assure European powers that once they signed peace treaties with him, there would be no more seizure of ships and their crews at sea.

In 1753, he negotiated a treaty with Denmark, and in 1758, planned to free 350 British captives, whose ships had sunk in November near the Moroccan coast, if the British monarch would agree to a commercial and peace treaty. In 1760, the treaty was signed, with particular emphasis on trade in Gibraltar, and was followed in 1763 by an agreement with Sweden and in 1765 by an agreement with Venice. In 1767, he sent his ambassador, Aḥmad ibn Mahdī al-Ghazāl, to negotiate a treaty with Spain, the most difficult country because of the large number of Muslim captives held there.[27] In that same year, he signed a treaty with France and ten years later, in September 1777, he sent to Paris his ambassador, al-Ṭahir Fnaysh, to convince all the European representatives who resided there to an agreement on the treatment of captives, Christian and Muslim alike: that women, children and old men (above seventy years old) should not be enslaved; that captivity should not exceed one year; and that exchange should be based on equal numbers, *ra'san bi ra's/*head for head.[28] In a startling article demonstrating his humaneness, Sidi Muḥammad expressed hope that sea rovers intent on attacking merchant ships would seize the money on board the ships, but not the food supplies (oil, lard, honey and legumes) that were being sent to famine-stricken regions.[29] Such pillage would result in the deaths of innocent populations – which had been interdicted by the Prophet.[30] In that year, he also sent his ambassador, ‘Abd al-Mālik, to the Italian city states and effected the liberation of around sixty Moroccans.[31] In 1783, Sidi Muḥammad signed a treaty with Austria, and four years before he died, he signed a treaty of friendship and commerce with the United States (June 23–28, 1786).[32]

Spain, the Italian city states and Malta, however, continued to seize Muslim captives, both from Morocco as well as from the Ottoman regencies. At the same time, the crews of European ships that sank near the Moroccan coast were often captured by unruly tribesmen – whereupon Sidi Muḥammad ransomed them in order to return them to their home countries. Against this backdrop of ransoming captives, he sent Muḥammad ibn ‘Uthmān al-Miknāsī on two missions: first to Spain (1779–1780), then to

Malta and Naples (1781–1783); in his third journey to the Ottoman East (1785–1788), al-Miknāsī still negotiated with the Spanish and the Maltese to liberate captives. In 1787, Sidi Muḥammad sent food relief to Libya, where there was famine, but the ships were seized by the Neapolitans who were at war with Tripoli. He intervened and compensation was made for the loss.[33] When ʻAbdallah Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Kansūsi (1797–1877) wrote the biography of Sidi Muḥammad, he praised him for having ransomed all the captives from the lands of the infidels so thoroughly that not one captive was left, either from the Maghrib or the Mashriq.[34]

After the death of Sidi Muḥammad in 1790 (just two years after the death of King Carlos III to whom he had sent many ambassadorial missions), his son, Mulay Yazīd, whom al-Miknāsī had met a year before during the pilgrimage to Mecca, succeeded him to the throne and sent al-Miknāsī on what proved to be an unsuccessful ambassadorial mission to King Carlos IV. In 1792, Yazīd died and was succeeded by his brother, Mulay Sulaymān ibn Muḥammad (reg. 1792–1822), who continued to rely on al-Miknāsī in foreign and domestic negotiations. He appointed him governor of Tetuan and intermediary with all foreign consuls in the city and started negotiating with his counterpart in Spain for the return of Spanish traders and seamen to Morocco.[35] Al-Miknāsī negotiated a treaty with Spain in 1799, but he died of the plague soon after, in June 12–14, 1799.[36] Ironically, his archenemy, al-Zayānī, was appointed his executor.

Figure I.1 Al-Madrasa al-Filāliyya.

Figure I.2 Al-Madrasa al-Jadīda.

Figure I.3 Door of al-Miknāsī's house.

Figure I.4 Inside al-Miknāsī's house.

Al-Miknāsī's writings

From 1779 to 1788, al-Miknāsī wrote three accounts:

1 *Al-Iksīr fī iftikāk al-asīr* (1779–1780);
2 *Al-Badr al-sāfir li-hidāyat al-musāfir ila fikāk al-asārā min yad al-ʻaduww al-kāfir* (1781–1783);
3 *Iḥrāz al-maʻālī wa-l-raqīb fī ḥajj bayt Allah al-ḥarām wa ziyārat al-Quds al-Sharīf wa-l-Khalīl wa-l-tabarruk bi-qabr al-ḥabīb* (1785–1788).

Al-Miknāsī's three accounts are unique in the history of Arabic travel writing until the *Nahḍa* in that they reveal the character development of a Muslim traveler and the adaptations he had to make during his encounters in the Christian and the Islamic worlds. In no other early modern author did travel play such a dramatic role in broadening his horizon and in sharpening his critical and comparative views. Not only did al-Miknāsī describe in great detail both Muslim and Christian lands and communities, he also used his travel accounts to reflect on conditions in his homeland. He was always aware of the Moroccan court where his accounts would be read, and so he made appropriate concessions in order not to offend the ruler's sensibilities. He had to show that he had not been overwhelmed by the innovations and the opulence he had seen – even after describing them in great detail. While he evidently enjoyed himself in the lands of the Christians, he had to assert repeatedly that he had not been happy – that everything he had done had been for his master's honor: was he afraid that his master would be jealous that he had gone to the opera, had seen amazing palaces, interacted openly with women, and was the first Muslim ambassador to have cards printed with his name to serve as introductions?[37] Al-Miknāsī repeatedly inserted passages of praise to Sidi Muḥammad, even to the point of claiming that the Spaniards called out his name and hailed him for his leadership because they were fearful of his military power. Notwithstanding the *ʻajāʼib*/wonders of Christendom, he still wanted to show that Sidi Muḥammad was even more glorious, and that, of course, the religion of the Muslims under Alawite rule was the only true religion.

At the same time, and in obedience to his master and lord, al-Miknāsī wrote to inform Sidi Muḥammad about the regions he visited. He described the social, political and institutional infrastructures in Europe – which could not but have exposed failures in his own society. On his second journey, al-Miknāsī's delegation included an odious man who caused much

embarrassment. Al-Miknāsī was forced to contrast the generosity and decorum that his Christian hosts showed him with the abominable behavior of his Muslim companion.[38] He also reflected on the nature of cross-cultural relations, emphasizing the need for accommodation and adjustment, especially on the part of the guests. While al-Miknāsī remained faithful to his religious codes, ever performing his prayers, avoiding *ḥarām* foods (which is why, like other Muslim emissaries, he had a personal cook among his entourage), and fasting even when other Muslims did not (as in Tunis), he realized that there were social values that visitors had to learn when they were being hosted in the richer and more powerful countries of Europe.

Like Aḥmad ibn Mahdī al-Ghazāl, who had traveled in 1766, and al-Ghāssanī who had traveled in 1690, al-Miknāsī described both the Spain he saw and the negotiations he conducted. Like them, he wrote with a combination of anger and appreciation: the country evoked memories of past Muslim glory and subsequent humiliation and expulsion. Nor could he come to accept what he saw as falsities in Christian practices, always viewing himself as superior in his faith and denouncing the religious orders that he believed were to be blamed for the destruction of the Islamic Andalus. Still, he described the plight of the Muslim captives in order to highlight his efforts to ransom them and emphasized that the reigning Spanish dynasty was different from the one that had expelled the Muslims. Repeatedly, he tried to learn about the developments he was seeing – and not understanding – and to describe all the technical innovations and advances he saw. He asked for explanations, posed questions about history and wrote down everything he heard, even though, he warned sometimes, it was history according to the *Naṣārā*. He reported about institutions and social conventions, well-paved roads and royal charities: was he indirectly hoping for similar changes in his own country? About Spain, there had been the earlier descriptions by the ambassadors al-Ghassanī and al-Ghazāl; significantly, the Moroccan royal court kept a copy of the former account, which al-Miknāsī read and quoted extensively, even copying verbatim (without crediting the author although he mentioned him on one occasion); there were numerous copies of al-Ghazāl's account, too, but al-Miknāsī did not mention them.[39]

In Malta, Naples, and Sicily, al-Miknāsī admired and criticized, and again wrote with great detail, but then he lost the manuscript. Still, he

remembered a lot and quickly reassembled all the information into an account after his return. There was no information in Arabic about Sicily or Naples, and so al-Miknāsī wrote with an empiricist's language, often inadvertently revealing the difficulty of describing/naming novel institutions and objects – thus the numerous transliterations and neologisms. At the same time, he was eager to record not only the history of buildings and institutions but also social anxieties and internal tensions in the regions he visited: it is striking, for instance, how accurately he presented the hostility that the native population of Malta felt towards the Knights of St John: he could only have learned about such hostility through personal conversations with locals, demonstrating that he did not just report official views, but the sentiments and emotions of the "subalterns," too. And although he avoided religious disputations, which Aḥmad ibn Qāsim, two centuries earlier had relished, he still described some disagreements about theology: nonetheless, he was more interested in winning a game of chess or giving details about cathedrals or educational institutions than in defeating the "Other." It was more valuable to learn from the new societies than to continue disagreeing on matters of religion. Was that why he drew attention to how the king of Naples spent money on charities for his people, or that sometimes he took over their tasks to know how difficult the life of seamen or coachmen was?

During his mission to the Ottoman court and his pilgrimage to the holy sites in Palestine and Arabia, he could not but have felt religiously and culturally at ease, and so his text was in a higher form of Arabic than the earlier two accounts and included numerous poems (his own as well as those of others) in praise of men and places; at one time, his companions asked him to compose a poem describing the pilgrimage through the eyes of a Malikite jurist – which he did. This account is not just a travelogue, but a literary, historical and religious description of his experience: he added anecdotes, biographies and hagiographies, and on numerous occasions used rhymed prose. Most distinctive are the many allusions to earlier writers and texts: there was a rich Arabic tradition about the Islamic regions, chiefly by pilgrims and historians, on which he drew, and after his return he sat among all the chronicles, exegeses, poems, and histories that he owned and prepared his account, adding the appropriate passages and quotations. Al-Miknāsī wavered between being a litterateur, a diplomat, an ethnographer, a

chronicler and a travel writer – by far more than the other Moroccan writers before him who had visited European regions.

Al-Miknāsī returned to Morocco having realized that the *dunya*/world of the Europeans should not be ignored in a favor of the *dīn*/religion of the Muslims – that there were inventions and institutions that were admirable despite their foreignness. And although in the case of Europeans the encounter was inevitably confrontational because of the grim task of ransoming captives, and although in the case of the Ottomans he was deeply disturbed by governmental greed and tyranny, he still described the people and the sites with clarity, and sometimes with literary flourish, but always empirically and faithfully. In this respect, his three travelogues present not only a record of one man's triangulated encounter with Western Christendom, Ottoman Islam and Morocco, but also a narrative of al-Miknāsī's self-discovery as an Arab (among the Turks) and as a Muslim (among the Christians) during his journeys through a rapidly changing world.

A Spain (October 1779–June 1780): *Al-Iksīr fī iftikāk al-asīr*

By the time Sidi Muḥammad assumed the throne, there were a large number of Muslim captives from Morocco and the Ottoman regencies in Spain as well as in Malta and Italy/Naples. Sidi Muḥammad sent an ambassador to King Carlos III in 1765 informing him that he was going to free some Spaniards in his captivity in the hope that some Moroccans would be freed in return. He also asked that a jurist be permitted to live with the Muslim captives to assist them spiritually in the manner that Catholic priests were permitted to serve Christian captives in Morocco.[40] Although King Carlos did not agree to the latter request, arguing that he had not permitted Protestant clergy to serve British and Dutch captives either, the amicable exchange between the two monarchs inaugurated a period of cooperation, marked by the gradual liberation of all captives held in Morocco and in Segovia, the Escorial and Cartagena.

Al-Miknāsī recognized the importance of his mission and so before leaving for Spain, he prepared himself by reading the New Testament carefully: he needed to know the theological background of the community among which he would travel. He also consulted Arab-Islamic writings about al-Andalus/Spain, such as accounts about the Arab conquest in the

eighth century, geographical compendia, information about the Spanish Reconquista, and Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Maqqarī massive *Nafḥ al-tīb* about the history and civilization of al-Andalus. Al-Miknāsī wanted to present an up-to-date document about Spain for the Moroccan court, and so he measured distances and travel time between one location and another, recorded important years and Spanish accounts of their history, described churches and plazas, and inquired about customs and social and religious practices. Throughout, he referred to cities that were famous in Arab history by their Arabic names (after checking them, as he explained, in *Nafḥ al-tīb*); these were the names that Sidi Muḥammad and other readers recognized. For other cities, he relied on Spanish nomenclature and pronunciation. The words *sa'alt 'an dhālik*/I inquired about that, recur frequently, as do also the word *ta'mmalt*/I reflected/thought: he tried to learn about taxes and alliances, the manufacture of paper and the king's annual schedule of movement.[41]

The letter that he took with him to Carlos III (October 31, 1779) was friendly, expressing Sidi Muḥammad's openness to his Spanish counterpart and his desire for peace. The Moroccan praised King Carlos for being different from other European rulers, assuring him of the amity that he felt for him and that he was certain the Spaniard felt, too. He was sending money to the Muslim captives as charity, he wrote, along with six freed Maltese captives, liberated as a "token of *maḥabba*." Our desire, he concluded, is to free the *asāra*/captives, "for God frees them at our and your hands. So too your captives, we shall not forget them, God willing." The word *maḥabba* occurs five times in the short letter.[42] Whenever he was shown hospitality and welcome, and King Carlos allowed him (and paid for) a large retinue as he went for his audience with him,[43] al-Miknāsī responded with gratitude, wishing upon his Spanish hosts the highest hope that he could invoke: that they all be guided to Islam. And whenever he saw buildings, gardens, dignitaries or inventions that did not recall the usurped past of al-Andalus, he was fulsome in his "wonder," earnestly reminding his readers that Carlos III was not a descendent of Isabel and Ferdinand or of Felipe III, who had expelled the Muslims. Not all Spaniards were nefarious just because they were Christian.

No European country played a more arousing role in the imagination, poetry and memory of the early modern Moroccans than al-Andalus/Spain. In the Maghrib, al-Andalus was without a rival the most invoked of all

European countries. Historically, al-Andalus had nurtured one of the highest expressions of Arabic civilization, after which it had been lost to Hispano-Catholic domination, the "re-conquest."[44] From the very start of his journey, al-Miknāsī was aware that he was going into cities and regions that had once been Muslim but had since been conquered – from Ceuta on the Moroccan coast to Cordoba, and from Granada to Toledo. So eager was he to see the Islamic legacy that he sometimes changed his itinerary so he could pass near sites with historical associations (after receiving permission from the Spanish king to do so). While his mission was to ransom captives, his text was about bringing al-Andalus back to life to his Muslim readers. Whenever possible, al-Miknāsī confirmed Islamic continuity by describing *shay'an min āthār al-Muslimīn/*something of the monuments of the Muslims: city walls, bridges, minarets, mosques (transformed into churches), coinage, and tombstones with Arabic epitaphs and inscriptions (which he reproduced in the text) all assured him of an Islam that had once prevailed and was not completely obliterated. He wanted to sustain for readers the hope that God would return every city and village he visited to Islam: thus his refrain of *a'ādaha al-Lāhu dara-l-Islam*. He became excited when he had the opportunity to explain to his hosts the Arabic origin of place names: the Arabic legacy was still there, as the geographical nomenclature demonstrated. It was still there in the olive trees between Seville and Las Cabezas de San Juan, which had been planted by the Arabs, in the names of bridges and rivers, and in the Arabic manuscripts of the Escorial, the remnant of the collection that had once belonged to the library of Mulay Aḥmad al-Manṣūr and that had been stolen at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Even more, the Arabs were still there in the bloodline of numerous families: on a few occasions, men and women told him (in anxious whispers) that they were of the "remnants of the Muslims."[45] When he saw some coins that dated back to the Arab period, with the name of the Prophet stamped on them, he begged unsuccessfully to take them away (and preserve the Prophet from the sacrilege of the infidels' touch); when he saw a marble grave stone with Qur'ānic verses on the ground, he insisted that it be dug out and set above the footpath – so that none would tread on God's name. At the end of his journey, al-Miknāsī gleefully took the stone back with him to Tetuan.[46]

In writing about the Islamic past of Spain, al-Miknāsī became bitter especially when he saw mosques that had been turned into cathedrals, and

his bitterness translated into imprecations for God "to destroy" his hosts and "to humiliate them." He could not forget the violence committed in the 1490s and in 1609 – the acts of Spanish purification of national blood and the destruction of Islam, the seizure of Muslim libraries and the expulsion of the Andalusians (he did not use the derisive term, "Moriscos"). On entering the Ghiralda in Seville, which had been the minaret to the mosque of *Ishbīliya* (and built at the same time that its sister minaret was built in Rabat), he denounced the Spaniards for having defiled it with their urine and garbage. On visiting the Great Mosque in Cordoba, again, he could not restrain his anger at Christian usurpation.[47]

But while expressing anger, he also admired the Spain he saw, which he did not view to be in decline, as al-Ghassānī had claimed a century before. He was impressed and recorded information about everything that was different or absent from his own country: from Spanish agricultural innovation to machines for drawing water out of wells, to new olive presses, to magnificent buildings including the Reales Alcazares in Seville, to the king's social engineering by which new regions were populated.[48] The words *gharā'ib* and *'ajā'ib* (marvels and wonders) recur, sometimes at the beginning of consecutive paragraphs – about water parks and mechanized fountains, gardens, roads and bridges, sculptures and museums, the postal service and the Escorial, "one of the wonders of the world."[49] It is interesting that at the outset of the account, al-Miknāsī did not hesitate to draw favorable comparisons between Spain and Morocco, trying to show that there were some similarities between the two sides of the Mediterranean. But as the "wonders" grew more amazing, such comparisons declined: the European world had advanced so much that neither al-Miknāsī nor his language could keep up; there were many new objects and institutions for which he had no Arabic equivalent. Nor could he keep up with developments in interpersonal relations. The appearance of women among the welcoming parties proved deeply perplexing to al-Miknāsī – which is why he used the transliteration of "dames" – *ḍamāt.* He was shocked to see the intermingling of men and women, not only in the streets, but also on dance floors, and, at first, he did not know how to respond as women came up to him to chat or to sing before him. Nor did he know how to react to plays or operas, musicals or *comedias*. But he certainly enjoyed them.

On many occasions, al-Miknāsī revisited themes that earlier travelers had discussed, and wrote about the Inquisition and its treatment of Jews, repeating the myth of Jewish child-killing. Not knowing Spanish, he relied on his translator, and on Miguel Casiri/Mīkhāīl al-Ghazīrī, a Maronite priest from Ghazīr near Tripoli in Lebanon, who was fluent in multiple languages and served as the official interpreter at the Madrid court. From him, he learnt much about the internal dynamics of the Spanish court, the customs of the land, and the practices of (Catholic) Christians; also the Arabic names of Christian feasts – *fiṣḥ*, *sha'nīn*, (*usbū'*) *al-ālām*, and *qiyāma* – terms that do not belong in the Qur'ānic lexicon and that he used in his account. Al-Miknāsī saw himself as a chronicler of regions that had not been adequately described by other Arab writers, and so he gave precise information about how and what the Spanish monarch did for his people: whether he intended such information to inspire his own ruler toward imitating the Spaniard is not clear. Was he jealous as he described the ranks of the military and the difference in pay that soldiers and commanders received on a regular basis?[50] When he wrote about the artificial lake, El Mar, with its magnificent fountains, "the like of which none exists in all the world, as it was confirmed to me by one who had traveled widely in the lands of Christians and Muslims," he mentioned that it had been built by the father of the present Spanish king.[51] Was he praising a continuity of heritage the like of which did not occur in his own country, where Mulay Ismā'īl had destroyed in 1707 the magnificent palace of al-Badī', built by his Sa'dian predecessor in 1591 in Marrakesh? But unlike Ottoman travelers to Christendom in the eighteenth century, al-Miknāsī did not take back with him ideas and plans for change to be implemented in Morocco in the manner that some Turkish envoys suggested for their country.[52]

This journey opened up for al-Miknāsī the world of America, confirming for his Arab readers the aspersions about Indian laziness and brutishness that dominated European writings.[53] Al-Miknāsī realized that he was writing to a ruler who had developed an international vision – given the numerous peace treaties he had signed with European countries. Al-Miknāsī therefore tried to add up-to-date information about the newly formed United States (although it is a term he did not use) and the wars that had been taking place over the previous decade. It is quite likely that such information helped Sidi Muḥammad in his decision to seek a peace and commerce treaty with the United States in June 1786 – the first between an

Arab/Islamic country and the United States. Sidi Muḥammad had kept track of the war in the mid-1770s through the French consul in Marrakesh but first-hand information such as al-Miknāsī's was valuable. Later, when Sidi Muḥammad met Thomas Barclay, the Irish-American who negotiated the treaty, he asked him about the "religion of the white Inhabitants and of the Indians." As Barclay reported, Sidi Muḥammad also wrote "down the latitudes of the Coasts of America, desiring to know which were the best ports, and said he wou'd probably send a vessel there."[54] Article XIII in the treaty stated that if a war ship from either the United States or Morocco entered the harbor of the other country, it would be welcomed. Did Moroccan Muslim ships reach the coast of North America as early as the eighteenth century?

Be that as it may, the good relations that Sidi Muḥammad established with Spain through al-Miknāsī continued for years. In 1785, the Algerians captured a relative of the Spanish king, who was on her way to Naples. After the Algerians refused to have her ransomed, King Carlos wrote to Sidi Muḥammad asking for his assistance. The latter promptly wrote to the Algerians, but they refused to release her. So he wrote to the Ottoman sultan, ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd, and because of the good relations between the two Muslim rulers, the latter demanded of the Algerians her release, saying:

> You should send her back without demanding a ransom whatever her monetary value might be. If the Moroccan sultan asked me for a thousand Christian women, I would send them to him. We command you to send this Christian woman back, and even if she were a queen, you will not demand any payment.

The Algerians did.[55]

B Malta, Naples and Sicily (December 16, 1781–March 21, 1783): *Al-Badr al-sāfir li-hidāyat al-musāfir ila fikāk al-asārā min yad al-ʻaduww al-kāfir*[56]

Al-Miknāsī returned from his journey to Spain in June 1780. The journey had been a success and was concluded by a treaty of peace (May 31, 1780).

As with later treaties, it opened up avenues of trade and so the articles confirmed the safety of Spaniards in all Moroccan harbors, and the safety of Moroccans in Spanish harbors. Interestingly, and while Spaniards were encouraged to settle in Morocco to trade, there was no similar article in the treaty for the Moroccans, although hope was expressed that should the Spaniards regain Gibraltar, the Moroccan ruler would treat it as Spanish territory and would join the Spanish king in its defense should it come under attack. In the letter that Sidi Muḥammad sent to King Carols after the return of al-Miknāsī, he expressed gratitude for the *maḥabba* that the king and his son, the "sultan" of Naples, had shown and assured them that he shared with them their antipathy towards the English: already, he wrote, he had expelled all English traders from Tangier and Tetuan so that only Spaniards would trade there.[57]

During his negotiations in Spain, however, al-Miknāsī had learned about Muslim captives in Genoa, Naples and Malta. Eager to ransom them, Sidi Muḥammad sent an envoy, Muḥammad al-Ḥāfī, to verify their number and soon after, he sent al-Miknāsī to negotiate their ransom.[58] The mission took him to Malta and Naples, but on his return, and as a result of bad weather, his ship had to seek shelter in Sicily. Al-Miknāsī explained that he regularly wrote his impressions about the journey but lost his draft at sea; the version that was reconstituted after his return bears the date November 13, 1783.[59] The regions he visited had close connections with Spain because the son of Carlos III, Fernando IV, was king of Naples and Sicily (reg. 1759–1799).[60] And so al-Miknāsī used Spanish ships, and throughout his mission sought assurance from the Spaniards that the Maltese would not kidnap him. Malta was, as he wrote, an island whose danger the (Muslim) traveler always feared,[61] and so he kept in constant correspondence with the Spanish court while Sidi Muḥammad wrote to the grand master in Malta assuring him of the peaceful goal of the mission. Accompanied by a translator, ʻAbd al-Karīm ibn Quraysh, and twenty-two other scribes and cooks and servants, al-Miknāsī took with him 89,000 riyals to pay the ransom of the captives held in Malta.[62] Of the 1,500 captives on the island, he succeeded in ransoming a first batch of around 250. Later, he ransomed a further 613, who sailed back on ships furnished to him by the grand master and he agreed on the price to be paid for the 719 remaining captives.

Al-Miknāsī left Marrakesh on November 19, 1781, went to Tangier and from there sailed to Cadiz, was forced to stop in Syracuse, and then sailed to Malta. As always, North African emissaries and ambassadors used European ships, believing them strong at sea and impervious to (Christian) pirates. In this second account, *Al-Badr al-sāfir li-hidāyat al-musāfir ila fikāk al-asāra min yad al-'aduww al-kāfir*/The shining of the moon for the guidance of the traveler seeking to release the captives from the hands of the infidel enemy, al-Miknāsī viewed himself as a guide for future diplomatic emissaries: thus his title. (In 1783, Muḥammad Sarrāj was sent to Genoa where he liberated some captives. Did he read al-Miknāsī's account before he left?) After describing his negotiations on behalf of the captives, al-Miknāsī wrote about the different cities he saw and the countries about which he had heard. It is at this stage in his travels that we can see for the first time the Arab-Muslim traveler as a teacher of foreign/European history, culture and wonder. For as he was re-writing his account and reflecting on his journey, he treated his memoir not only as a diplomatic record and a source of information about foreign lands, but also as a document with a message of transformation. That transformation could only come through the knowledge that al-Miknāsī wanted to impart: on various occasions, he turned from describing his travels to furnishing a summary of European history, focusing on dynasties, rivalries and wars, religious divisions, geographical expansion, and technological and artistic development. As he explained, "It is better to know something than to be ignorant of it,"[63] and although he did not reach the Baconian point of combining knowledge with power, he realized that information was necessary in international relations. After spending a month in Malta, and rousing the suspicion of the inhabitants by his constant inquiries and questions, he admitted that he would have liked to stay longer to "learn about the open and secret affairs of the country."[64]

Al-Miknāsī's tone in *al-Badr al-Sāfir* is different from the previous ransom account. During the Spanish visit, there was the constant memory of a defeated Islam – where the ruins of Muslim history, achievement and civilization still stared al-Miknāsī in the face. Not so on this journey: although Muslims had once ruled in Malta and Sicily, and much as he noted the few ruins of the past, the islands did not evoke in al-Miknāsī a nostalgia similar to that in Spain – a nostalgia that was enforced by the Andalusian/Morisco exiles in North Africa who still recalled their Spanish

villages and held keys to the homes from which they had been expelled. At no point in the whole account did al-Miknāsī invoke God to "return" a building or a city "to Islam," as he had in Spain. The historical distance between the Islamic past and the Christian present, and the absence of men and women with a bloodline to the past, may have helped al-Miknāsī to accept change. The earth, he quoted piously from the Qur'ān "belongs to God who bequeaths it to whomever He chooses."[65]

Only when he recalled the violence of the Crusaders or of other Christians (chiefly Spanish under Charles V) did al-Miknāsī unleash his anger on those "devils." In Malta, he gave a lengthy description of the formation of the Knights of the Order of St John, noting how the "monks" had been *murabiṭīn* (garrisoned) on the island to attack Muslims.[66] The long section on the military history of the knights included angry execrations, especially after al-Miknāsī contrasted present Maltese hostility to Muslims with past Muslim toleration: in Jerusalem, the Knights had been permitted to set up their order and build "a church for *al-sayyida Maryam*/Lady Mary".[67] Muslims had treated Christians better than the Maltese treated the Muslims, whom they regularly captured and enslaved.[68] But hostile as the Maltese had been in the past, they showed him hospitality and welcome, and so, having spent months in Spain, al-Miknāsī by then had developed some knowledge of European ways and some understanding of their mores and customs. He no longer found the presence of women and wives among the welcoming parties embarrassing; and when he was informed that the wife of the Neapolitan prince was the real power behind the throne,[69] he did not react to what could have appeared to him as European female agency and male delinquency. Indeed, al-Miknāsī became so relaxed about his view of women that he found himself coming up against a temptation that other ambassadors before him had also confronted: falling in love. Aḥmad ibn Qāsim, who went to Holland and France between 1611 and 1613, fell in love with a French woman; and at the end of the seventeenth century, ʿAbdallah ibn ʿĀisha, too. Al-Miknāsī became infatuated with an opera singer whom he saw one evening in Naples. She appeared on the stage "in a white dress, like a halo around the moon." Bewildered, he sublimated his emotions by reciting poetry to her, some lines recalled from al-Maqqarī, others of his own composition, reflecting his pain and despair. When he realized that he had fallen for her, he called on God to help him find an

escape. He left the opera "before tripping and becoming entangled in the snares of love."[70]

The role of ambassador in early modern Moroccan diplomacy was temporary, governed by one single goal: signing a treaty or ransoming captives. There were no institutions in North Africa that prepared future emissaries for negotiating social and cultural differences in the "lands of the Christians." Such lack of preparedness weakened al-Miknāsī's ability to maneuver, and the famines of 1776, 1778, 1779, 1782 and others had so destabilized the country that people "nearly ate each other."[71] In Spain, al-Miknāsī felt vulnerable as he observed power and "wonders" at the same time that he saw his countrymen in suffering and humiliation. He reacted with anger and vitriol at the Christian 'Other', not unlike European writers who excoriated Muslims in equally abusive terns when they reached North African shores to ransom their own. Both Christian and Muslim captives were seized in the Mediterranean basin (and elsewhere) for political and economic reasons: al-Miknāsī, could not but show anger against the "infidels," but he pursued his mission with equanimity, respectfully negotiating with the *Naṣārā*, who were, as he emphasized, quite different from their anti-Muslim ancestors.

In the treaty that al-Miknāsī signed on October 19, 1782, there was assurance to the king of Naples and Sicily that the latter's subjects would be welcome not only to rent but also to build residences and settle in Morocco, at the same time that Moroccans were to be allowed into all the ports over which the Neapolitans had control.[72] Reflecting the openness of Sidi Muḥammad, al-Miknāsī became amenable to interaction with his hosts and tolerant of their difference. When he finished a disputation with an Arabic-speaking monk in Sicily, he left him, not with an imprecation on his false belief, as previous ambassadors always did (Aḥmad ibn Qāsim's account, as well as al-Ghassānī's, is full of post-disputation anger), but with a resigned acceptance of Qur'ānic assurance that God had not planned humanity to be one single and undifferentiated *umma*/community (Hūd: 118–119);[73] accepting variety in religious belief was part of submission to the will of God. When he visited one of the churches in Palermo, St Martino, he admired its architecture and did not fulminate against its "infidelity," even though he saw some Arabic manuscripts there.[74] In Naples, he referred to the dissolution of the monastic orders under the Protestant Reformation –

although in the Catholic countries he visited, it was unlikely that he would have been told much, if anything, about the Lutheran protest and its impact on European history. (Actually, only Aḥmad ibn Qāsim, of all the travelers, knew something about the Protestant Reformation, because of his visit to Holland). Perhaps unaware, al-Miknāsī constantly tried to adapt, to the point where he started using the Christian instead of the Hijri calendar.

But at the same time, al-Miknāsī vituperated against European institutions that he could not understand or that he associated with the legacy of anti-Muslim expulsion. Monks and nuns, whom he met in both Naples and Palermo, could never be acceptable to him, coming as he did from a religious culture where there was no monasticism. In Naples, al-Miknāsī denounced the Rome-based pope for supporting the piracy of the Maltese and for viewing himself as possessor of what "Christ, peace be upon him," had possessed.[75] Despite his verbal violence and envious confusion, he was eager to explain to his Arabic reader/s the importance of the new European discoveries and technologies that had nothing to do with religion. On learning how a bank operated, and about the interest it paid to customers who deposited money, al-Miknāsī was more admiring than angry at the usury that would have provoked the ire of a pious jurist.[76] By the time he was about to leave Sicily, he had become so accustomed to the cultural relaxedness of his hosts that he indulged the playful children who chased after him by imploring their teacher to give them a holiday that day. The teacher did.[77] Al-Miknāsī conversed and observed, bantered and played chess (and won), asked questions and took notes. In Cadiz, he translated a Spanish saying into Arabic (and even made it rhyme): "he who claims to be a sea *rayyis*/captain – let him navigate the [dangerous] port of Cadiz."[78] He also picked up European fables and passed them on as facts to his readers: the elephant most feared the mouse, which could kill it if it went into its ear. Consider, he somberly added, "the wisdom, power and glory of almighty God who defeats such an animal, one of the greatest and most violent, with the smallest creature, a mouse."[79] To himself and his readers, he raised questions that he did not know how to answer: after visiting Pompeii and seeing the excavations that had been ongoing since 1748, and the museum that had been opened in 1777, he wondered why there was so much interest among his hosts in "the ancients and their histories."[80] Two lines later, he repeated how the Neapolitans carefully preserved old ruins. Not fully able

to comprehend what he saw, he still seemed to have learned something about the value of the study and preservation of the past, and although he did not recognize how history consolidated national identity in a people, he urged his readers to consider: "Look how this people preserves the remains of those who had gone before them."[81] Nor did he understand why the Neapolitans collected Hebrew and Arabic manuscripts, whose "laws and languages" they did not accept. The answer was that they liked to own them in order to show them to visitors: "in doing so," he commented, "they take great pride."[82]

There is little doubt that al-Miknāsī was changed after this journey. He returned to his country having realized that the Europeans possessed "wonders" that were not an exclusive product of an (objectionable) religious civilization: nothing in the microscope or the maritime school or in the hospital reflected the different, and "false," theology of Christendom. Rather they exhibited developments that were increasing national wealth, improving social conditions, intensifying historical belonging (through the study of the past), and consolidating political institutions. As a result of his exposure, al-Miknāsī urged Muslim travelers to adapt to the customs of their hosts and to come to terms with their cultural and even gender codes. Visitors should not forgo civility just because they were traveling among a people with a different religion. "The intelligent person," he emphasized, "who travels in countries, and meets various peoples, ought to abide by their codes; otherwise, he will be blamed and held in derision."[83] That is why al-Miknāsī became very disappointed with some of his delegation members who behaved in the most odious manner: showing no table manners, falling like "flies" on food,[84] stealing candles from halls and parlors, and draining oil from lanterns.[85] Such behavior brought obloquy on their ruler and country, for the ruler was known by his messengers, he reminded them.[86] Indeed, such was the scandal caused by that thief of wax and oil that his picture was posted on the city walls of Naples. Whoever visited "the lands of the Christians," urged al-Miknāsī, "should have a noble personality, and should not be impoverished, but exhibit dignity and honor."[87] Al-Miknāsī could not but admit that sometimes the failure in international affairs was not a result of the falsity of the religion of the European hosts, but of the antisocial and appalling behavior of the Arab-Muslim visitors. The onus of adaptation in a new country fell on the guest

not the host: to travel, al-Miknāsī now realized, was to adapt, because only by adaptation could the guest create the best impression about his country and religion.

On losing his manuscript of the journey, al-Miknāsī prepared a fresh version for Sidi Muḥammad, but then he added a unit of *maqāmāt* in which he reflected on the few unpleasant episodes. In these *maqāmāt*, he denounced the behavior of some of his compatriots: as a traditional literary genre of humor and satire, the *maqāmāt* were most suitable for ridicule and criticism.[88] He denounced al-Ḥāfī, the Moroccan ambassador in Malta, for wandering around stores, lying and cheating. And when al-Ḥāfī retorted that such behavior was permissible because he was among Christians, al-Miknāsī reminded him that many Muslim merchants traded in Malta, and both religious communities respected each other, accepting oaths to seal agreements.[89] That the visitor was among Christians did not mean that he should forget his Islamic dictates. Al-Miknāsī also became disappointed with some of his delegation members who wanted bribes and kickbacks for every captive they ransomed – and told them so openly. He satirized his three corrupt companions – and on one occasion assumed the role of detective as he tried to expose the culprit who stole oil from lanterns: he detected al-Ṭayyib Ibn Jallūl al-Rabāṭī from the smell of oil on his clothes. Al-Miknāsī also described how he had warned him earlier against interfering with the Maltese while they were celebrating one of their festivals. Claiming that his religious conviction could not but compel him to denounce their idolatry, Ibn Jallūl insulted them as they raised the cross and then ran away. They caught him and in order to escape punishment, he went down on his knees before the cross pleading for mercy. "I do not know whether he remained a *muwaḥid* [monotheist] or a *mushrik* [polytheist]," scoffed al-Miknāsī. Most embarrassing was the following episode:

> Being such a lowly creature, and governed by ill luck, he used to sit on the window sill in tattered clothes, exposing his private parts. People used to assemble there and look at him, and so a painter painted him on a canvas and hung it on the wall in the market place. It was in a high corner so that every buyer and seller saw it. Everybody in the city learned about it and the Christians started coming to look at it, making merry as if they had a feast day. It was so strange for them to see the circumcised object – so disgusting. I grew anxious that news

> would spread all around the country and Muslims would be scandalized among God's people, so I used a trick to bring it down and destroy it: I gave the painter a gift and he swore to me not to paint another, in secret or in public.[90]

It was because of his uncouth behavior, explained al-Miknāsī, that the Maltese cursed Islam and the Muslims.[91] On another occasion, Ibn Jallūl joined a crowd to watch the garroting of a criminal. He was detected by the Maltese mob, captured and beaten, but being a good runner, he managed to escape into "some church," where a priest covered him with a donkey's saddle and sat on top of him to protect him.[92] There could be no more humiliating irony than that, laughed al-Miknāsī: to be protected by the church whose religion he denounced and to be saved by a monk whose vocation he despised. On yet another occasion, Ibn Jallūl was accused by a Christian of ogling his wife. Actually, Ibn Jallūl explained, he had seen her urinating and stopped to stare at her privates/*farj*. The Christian denounced him and so notorious did he become around Valletta that people came from far and wide to glare at him.[93] Worse, however, was his incivility toward the Maltese, who in order to welcome their Muslim guests had agreed to serve dinner without wine. In order to honor their guests, the Maltese poured food in silver platters, which although objectionable in principle to Muslims, al-Miknāsī agreed to in order to facilitate the release of the captives held on the island. But Ibn Jallūl refused to sit at the table, asserting that such excess was *ḥarām* – his sanctimony making him indifferent to the plight of the captives whom they were there to ransom. Al-Miknāsī was furious and compared him with those who asked ʻAbdallah ibn ʻUmar whether it was lawful to kill lice and fleas. So ʻAbdallah asked them who they were and where they came from. They answered they were from Kufa. He replied: "You kill al-Ḥusayn ibn ʻAli and inquire whether it is lawful to shed the blood of fleas!"[94]

At the outset, al-Miknāsī could not but have viewed himself as a man on a mission among the enemies of his religion – and the Maltese were, of course, the worst of those enemies, with their relentless piracy and marauding. His journey was a jihad for the sake of the enslaved Muslims. But curiously, at the end of this second account, al-Miknāsī had been chastened by the misbehavior of his companions; only in this account did

he mention others by name so frequently. In his writings, he used "I" or "we" as if interchangeably: he was the delegation and the delegation was he. (In the translation below, I have, on occasion, kept this ambivalence). But after the embarrassment caused by his companions, he separated himself from them by identifying them individually and, towards the end of his account, he used a word that he must have heard from his hosts about visitors who did not make the necessary adjustments to the rules of civility and decorum: "barbarian." It is very unlikely that al-Miknāsī saw the irony (or humor) of a "Barbary" ambassador applying to the uncouth and the crass among his delegation what the Europeans often applied to the inhabitants of the region from where he came.[95] Al-Miknāsī concluded that the man who traveled the lands of the Christians should be noble, uphold high moral values, and denounce corruption so as to leave every mouth and tongue praising him after his departure. He should act in accordance with the laws of the land (al-Miknāsī using, significantly, the word *qawānīn*, and not *sharī'ah*), be respectful of rank and status, and be heedful of his interlocutors. Otherwise, let him not leave his homeland.[96]

C The Ottoman Dominions (November 1785–1788): *Iḥrāz al-ma'ālī wa-l-raqīb fī ḥajj bayt Allah al-ḥarām wa ziyārat al-Quds al-Sharīf wa-l-Khalīl wa-l-tabarruk bi-qabr al-ḥabīb*

Three years after returning from his second journey, al-Miknāsī was sent on his final journey between November 1785 and July 1788, this time to the Sublime Porte and Anatolia. He then continued to perform the pilgrimage in Mecca and Medina, which was the most important part of his journey. Sidi Muḥammad had given him permission to fulfill his religious duties: thus al-Miknāsī's title, which mentions nothing about the Ottoman experience and emphasizes instead that it was a pilgrimage for *Attaining the heights by going on pilgrimage to God's Holy Sanctuary and visiting Noble Jerusalem and Hebron and seeking the blessing of the tomb of the dearly beloved* [Prophet Muḥammad]. Although there was a diplomatic component in this journey, the account belongs to the long tradition of the Hijazi journeys/*raḥalāt ḥijāziyya*, of which the Moroccans produced a very high number.

Al-Miknāsī went to Sultan ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd I (1725–1789) in order to extend Sidi Muḥammad's financial support in the Ottoman war against the Russians. As with his earlier journeys, al-Miknāsī relied on Spanish/European ships for travel. Thus his journey started with a stopover in Cartagena and then Sicily. By this stage in his life, having spent so many years in Christian lands, al-Miknāsī knew that European men and women/*al-ḍamāt* danced together, and so when Sicilian celebrants boarded the ship in Syracuse, he simply enjoyed watching them. When his slave died, he became very distressed but was gratified that the Christians around him commiserated with him, unlike one of his Muslim delegation.[97] Al-Miknāsī was starting to feel comfortable among Euro-Christians, but after reaching Istanbul, he forgot all about them, being absorbed by the different world of Islam that he encountered. Istanbul stunned him,[98] not by its innovations and *gharā'ib*, but also by its magnificent mosques, libraries, opulence, commercial wealth, and safety. Al-Miknāsī included some transliterations from Turkish and, since he was writing a report for his ruler, who was a supporter of the sultan, he described the city in great detail, focusing on means of transport, food supplies, harbor trade, souks, and merchandise; and while in the previous journeys he described all the towns he saw, in the case of Anatolia, there was little to describe, suggesting that the Ottoman world he admired remained exclusively that of Istanbul.

Al-Miknāsī praised the Ottoman ruler and his metropolis, but on a number of occasions, he was confused at finding himself in the midst of a Muslim society that was quite different from his own, especially in language. Ottoman jurists knew Arabic, but officials did not, forcing al-Miknāsī to rely on translators – just as in his previous two journeys. His sense of "Arabicity" may have underpinned his critical attitude toward the Turks: they were stingy, he noted, toward visitors, having shown him and his delegation little hospitality during festivities; the sultan was dissociated from his people and those who ran the affairs of the state were greedy, haughty, and ethnocentric. "Between them and the Arab *jins*/race, there is difference and opposition in word and deed."[99] Later, as he went on the pilgrimage and traveled in the Arab regions of Ottoman rule, he criticized the corruption of governors and their abuse of the local/Arab population. Near Jerusalem, the people complained to him about the yoke of the Ottoman administrators and their *tadhallum*/tyranny;[100] in Algeria, on his way back to Morocco, he lamented how the Turks had allowed the famous

city of Tlemcen to fall into *kharāb/*ruin, while the prince of Algiers (a Turk) did not bother to ransom North African Arab captives, of whom there were thousands among the Spaniards.[101]

In the tradition of Arabic travel writing, al-Miknāsī supplemented his account with long passages taken from earlier Arab authors. As he continued on the pilgrimage to the holy sites in Mecca and Medina, and later on his return to his homeland, he found himself on a journey into the literary, intellectual and theological history of the regions he was visiting. He turned to the early seventeenth-century Syrian historian, Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Qaramānī (d. 1611), and copied pages about the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople, along with the story about Dido's ox hide in Carthage, confusedly applied to the Ottoman sultan.[102] He ranged from the sixteenth-century author about Jerusalem, Mujīr al-Dīn al-Ḥanbalī, to the seventeenth-century Damascene Sufi, ʻAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, to Hadith commentators and exegetes, especially when he wrote about the Mahdi. The pilgrimage from Istanbul to Mecca and Medina took al-Miknāsī on the same road that many others had used, although no other Moroccan had described it before in the course of performing the pilgrimage.[103] It also led him to a vast array of texts: historical, geographical and religious; it became a journey to the beginnings of Islam and to the heroes of conquest. Everywhere he went in Syria and Palestine, he found a tomb or a mosque or a shrine to visit where a warrior or a jurist or a Sufi or a *ṣaḥābī* [companion of the Prophet] was remembered. Al-Miknāsī paid special attention to Sufis, showing how the Islamic world was united by Sufi masters and their orders, creating thereby a vast multi-ethnic republic of piety. Before holy sites, he read the *Fātiḥa*, and recalled historians or chroniclers whose works he summarized or copied, sometimes correcting mistakes about dates and places. As European pilgrims and travelers in the early modern period always tried to correct and augment earlier accounts, so did al-Miknāsī compare current with past information; and as Europeans discredited false sites and superstitions (especially Protestants in regard to Catholic "idolatry" in the Holy Land), so did al-Miknāsī challenge guides who deceived visitors "to make money."[104] In praise of great Sufis such as Arslān al-Dimashqī and Ibn al-ʻArabī, he composed and copied earlier poems, including a long poem by the famous Damascene Sufi al-Nābulusī about Ibn al-ʻArabī; both men had been buried in Damascus, and he read

the *Fātiḥa* before their tombs.[105] He also added dozens of pages about Ibn al-ʿArabī's discussions of heaven and hell, and reward and punishment. He showed also how much the Qur'ān had a geographical relevance in the East: on visiting Jerusalem, he repeated the belief that Mary's *miḥrāb*/oratory and Jesus's *mahd*/cradle were there,[106] views that had been promulgated since the ninth century. For him, as for other pilgrims in the region from Mecca to Damascus via Jerusalem, every prophet (and sometimes apocryphal prophets, too) had sites associated with him: and although there were sometimes different tombs for the same prophet, al-Miknāsī was not perturbed, for "God knows best."[107]

In Medina and then Mecca, al-Miknāsī was overwhelmed and visited the tombs of caliphs, warriors, companions and members of the family of the Prophet. The journey from Damascus was harrowing, and a large number of pilgrims died; but for him, he had realized his goal and sat for days just looking at the Kaʿba. On his journey back to Morocco, al-Miknāsī sailed from Acre via Cyprus toward Marseilles. But because of bad weather, his ship went to Tunis where he and his companions were welcomed by the prince – who oddly offered them coffee during the Ramadan fast.[108] Al-Miknāsī described the city and the hospitality of the Tunisians and then continued on land to Constantine, where he described the dangers that the city faced from Euro-Christian attacks – and one of the Algerians' successful counterattacks.[109] In the regions of North African Islam, he expatiated, versified, and was conscious of being seen not just as an ambassador but also as a learned jurist from the Maghrib who had fulfilled his duty of pilgrimage. And so, on his arrival before Sidi Muḥammad, he reported "the news about the two holy cities [Mecca and Medina] and the Mashriq and Constantinople and other regions which we saw."[110] He recognized that while his journey served his personal religious need, he still had to report to his ruler on the state of the world.

Conclusion

By the time al-Miknāsī finished writing about his final journey, June 4, 1788, he was a changed man. He had seen both the societies of Europe and of the Ottomans, of Christians and Muslims, in a manner that no other contemporaneous Arab Muslim had. The Europeans presented him with a

common civilization and culture: many "wonders" that he saw in one location were present in another. There was a kind of unity to the Christendom he visited – for indeed, there was political unity since all the regions were affiliated with the Spanish crown. Much as there had been royal rivalries and dynastic conflicts among the various European rulers, their Christian world still conveyed a sense of commonality of practices and beliefs and extraordinary marvels. But al-Miknāsī did not formulate a "worldview" into which he fitted the Europeans, in the manner that British, French, and Dutch scholar-travelers did about the world of Islam. Europe was completely alien from his religious and cultural history: it was also full of technological and innovative wonders that Morocco could never have. Much as he tried to find similarities with his own Morocco, he was overwhelmed by the advancements that were completely beyond his ken or language: the Europeans remained part of the Rūmī Sea/Byzantine Sea – with a separate coastline and geography.

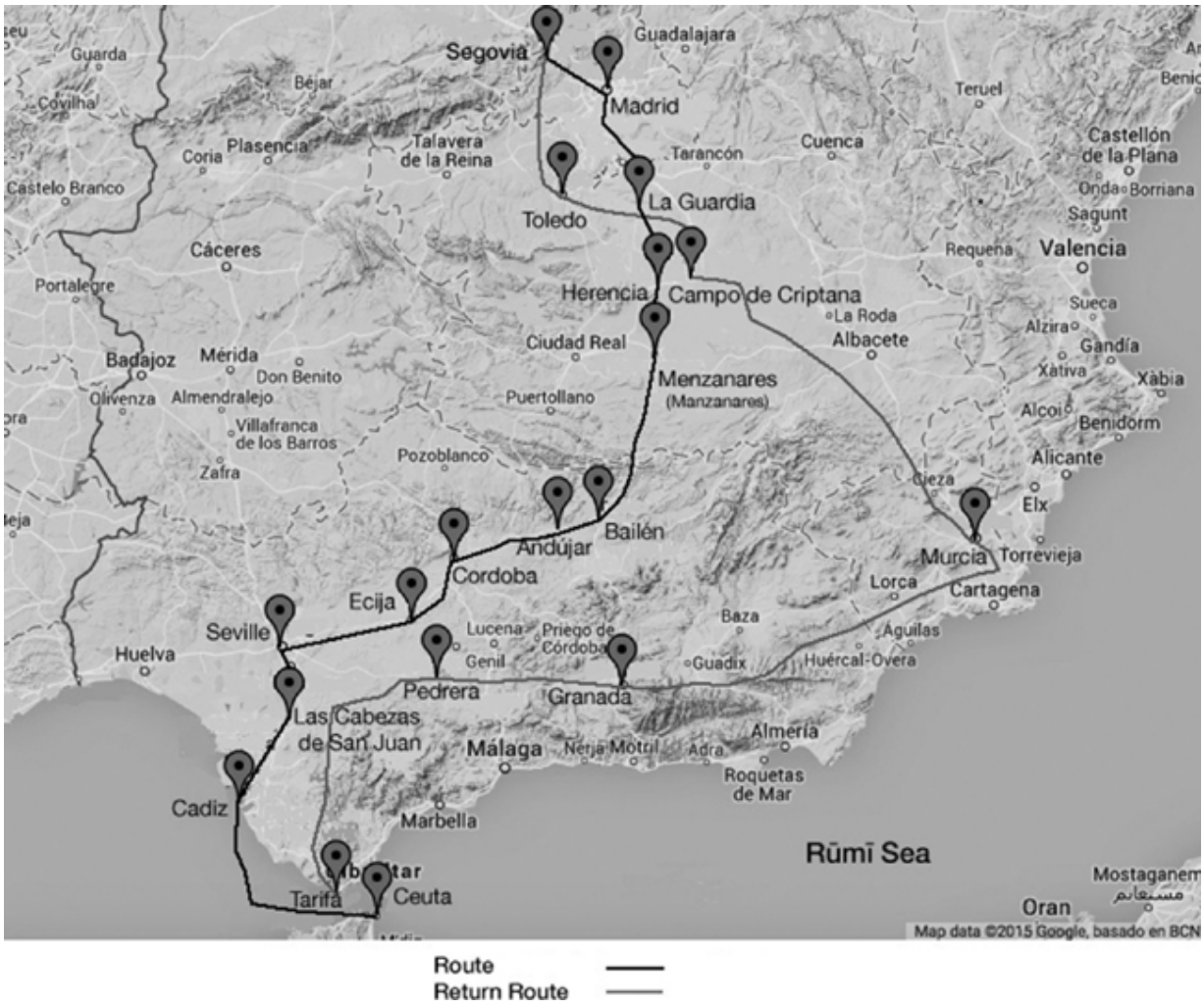
Surprisingly, so too did the Turks appear to him. Much as they were Muslims to be admired for upholding the cause of Islam, they were culturally different. He found much to admire in Constantinople, the wonder of the world (although he had said that, too, about a number of European cities), and although there were some cultural similarities with Morocco, perhaps in the all-maleness of society, the Ottomans had protocols that were "non-Arabic," drank coffee, which he had never tasted in Morocco, looked superciliously at non-Turks, but most importantly, spoke in a language that he did not understand. They were Islamic but not Arabic, and al-Miknāsī realized that much as religion could unite people, cultural and linguistic differences could separate them. After traveling through the Turkish-speaking dominions, al-Miknāsī was relieved to cross into regions where Arabic was spoken: he always praised the Ottoman sultan, but he was not unwilling to record the anger of the Arabic-speaking population at the cruelty of the Turks. Still not all who spoke Arabic were good: al-Miknāsī became fearful of Bedouin marauders on the road to Mecca, and criticized greedy shaykhs who abused their powers and extorted money from pilgrims on their way to the House of God. But he did not lash out as frequently or as vehemently against the Turks or the Bedouins as he had at the Christians of Europe. Whether a sense of "pan Arabism" survived from the late sixteenth century in his mind is not clear: but what does come

across bluntly is his alienation from the Turks, and his sense of familiarity and friendliness with speakers of Arabic.

As the three accounts reveal, al-Miknāsī's views changed in regard to the *Naṣārā*: there were responses and reactions to actions and deeds, and to historical events and memories – which were ever changing and adjusting. But he could not forget that the *Naṣārā* had a history of expelling and enslaving Muslims, and since he was writing to his ruler, he had to show commitment and religious zeal. Repeatedly, he denounced them, but on many occasions, the text shows these denunciations to be perfunctory – as if added because al-Miknāsī felt he should include them. Nor was he able to understand the complexity of Christian/Catholic rituals or local customs – and so he rejected them as idolatrous in the same breath that he denounced similar customs in his own society (the *sha'bāna* celebrations, for instance, which he viewed as imitations of the Christian celebrations). There is little doubt that during his travels, al-Miknāsī grew extremely envious at the opulence and development that he saw among the *Naṣārā*: theirs was a world beyond his or his countrymen's reach, from palaces to acrobats and from hospitals to museums, and from ship-building to scientific experimentation. In the face of such "wonders" produced by the followers of a "false" religion, the only thing he possessed that was, in his view, "superior" was his religion of truth: he had nothing else to put forward to rival the achievements he saw. As he traveled in the midst of wonders, from the Escorial to Naples and from orphanages to palaces, he realized how much his own society had failed in developing anything similarly organized, altruistic, or militarily and culturally powerful. At such times, envy was replaced by admiration and gratitude befitting a guest to his host. Later, as he traveled in Islamic regions, the wonders of the Christians faded from his memory: the only time he mentioned the *Naṣārā* was in regard to the piratical danger they posed to North African travelers, their war with the Ottoman sultan, and their expulsion of Muslims from Spain. What he had admired about the Spaniards or the Maltese or the Sicilians, even what he had admired about the Turks, had no place in his journey to the Arabic center of Islam: Mecca.

That is why, perhaps, al-Miknāsī conceived of no "Mediterranean World" or a *mare nostrum* of "connectivity." There were contacts and exchanges, negotiations and treaties, but the wonders of the *Naṣārā* remained confined to the shores of the Rūmī Sea, which was dominated by

the *ʻajamī* language/s. After his journeys in Spain, Malta, Sicily, and Naples, al-Miknāsī realized that the Christians were stunning in their innovations and inventions, but they were not part of a Moroccan patrimony, either culturally or religiously; actually, and on many occasions, he seemed afraid of what he saw, and thus sought shelter in Qur'ānic exclamations or denunciations. Meanwhile, the Ottoman world, Islamic as it was, was confined to the shores of the *Shāmī* Sea with its linguistically and ethnically different Turks. And al-Miknāsī could not forget how frequently he heard complaints about their *jūr*/tyranny or how the governors in Algiers were so indifferent to Arab captives that they ignored them and ransomed only their own. And so, as he traveled back to his native Meknes, he felt a strong sense of belonging to the Arabic-speaking Maghrib that was quite different from the lands of the Christians or the *barr* of the Turks. Perhaps that was why he quoted and composed so much poetry in his last travelogue, as if to celebrate his cultural, linguistic, and Sufi legacy. Ever fearing the pirates and the tempests of the *Rūmī* and the *Shāmī* seas – there was not a single word of joy associated with the Mediterranean – he was happy to return to the Morocco of Sidi Muḥammad, the one and only commander of the faithful and the sole descendant of the Arab Prophet.



Map 1 First journey: Spain, 1779–1780.

1 See my *Europe through Arab Eyes* for a discussion of ambassadors/"elite" travelers (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), ch. 2.

2 See, however, the curious reference to the "four Moors, subjects of the Emperor of Morocco, one woman said to be the wife of one of them." *CSPD Charles II, January 1 to June 30, 1683*, 25: 19 (January 19, 1683).

3 See my "The Last Moors: Maghariba in Britain, 1700–1750," *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 14 (2003): 37–58.

4 See the editions of the text by Muḥammad Razzūq (al-Dār al-Bayḍā': Kulliyat al-ādāb wa-l-'ulūm al-insāninyya, 1987) and the translation and edition by P. S. Van Koningsveld, Q. Al-Samarrai, and G. A. Wiegers (Madrid: al-Majlis al-a'lā li-l-abḥāth al-'ilmiyya, 1997). This text by Ibn Qāsim is a short version of the original, which was lost.

5 See my translation of the travelogue, "Riḥlat al-wazīr fī iftikāk al-asīr" (MS National Library of Madrid, Gg. 192 and MS National Library, Rabat, 11329) in *In the Lands of the Christians* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 113–195; the Arabic edition by 'Abd al-Raḥīm Binhādah (Tokyo:

Manshūrāt ma‘had al-abḥāth, 2005); and my entry on al-Ghassānī in *Literature of Travel and Exploration: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Jennifer Speake (Fitzroy Dearborn: New York and London, 2003).

6 See the edition by Ismā‘īl al-‘Arabī (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1980).

7 See the edition by Muḥammad al-Fāsi (Rabat: al-Markaz al-jami‘iyy li-l-baḥth al-‘ilmī, 1965).

8 See the edition by Malīka al-Zāhidī (Muḥammadiyya: Jāmi‘at al-Ḥasan II, 2005).

9 See the edition by Muḥammad Būkabbūt (Beirut: al-Mu'assasa al-‘arabiyya li-l-dirāsāt wa-l-nashr, 2003).

10 For a survey of Arab travelers see Daniel Newman, “Arab Travellers to Europe until the End of the 18th Century and their Accounts: Historical Overview and Themes,” *Chronos* 4 (2001) and “Myths and Realities in Muslim Alterist Discourse: Arab Travellers in Europe in the Age of the Nahda (19th C.),” *Chronos* 6 (2002). For a study of Moroccan ambassadors, see ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn ‘Abdallah, *Al-Safāra wa-l-sufarā’ bi-l-Maghrib ‘bra al-tārīkh* (Rabat: al-Ma‘had al-waṭanī li-l-dirāsāt, 1985); ‘Abd al-Majīd Qaddūrī, *Sufarā’ Maghāriba fī Urubbā, 1610–1922* (Rabat: Jāmi‘at Muḥammad V, 1995).

11 For a different view, see ‘Abd al-Nabī Dhākir, a*l-Wāqi‘iyy wa-l-mutakhayyal fī al-riḥla al-Urubiyya ilā al-Maghrib* (Aghadir: Kuliyyat al-ādāb, 1997).

12 Al-Ghazāl had also used it, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-‘Arabī, 126, 128.

13 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Zaydān, *Itḥāf a‘lām al-nās bi-jamāli ḥāḍirat Miknās*, 5 vols. (Rabat: al-Maṭba‘a al-malakiyya, 1990), 4: 159.

14 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Zaydān, *Al-Manza’ al-laṭīf fī mafākhīr al-Mawlā Ismā‘īl ibn al-Sharīf,* ed. ‘Abd al-Hādi al-Tāzī (Al-Dār al-Bayḍā’, 1993), 276.

15 See the study of this and other Marinid schools in Morocco in Riyaz Latif, “Ornate Visions of Knowledge and Power: Formation of Marinid Madrasas in Maghrib al-Aqsā,” PhD dissertation, University of Minnesota, 2011. Al-Miknāsī studied the works of this Fezzan jurist (d. 1508) and mentioned him in his last travelogue, 125.

16 “You were considered uneducated if you had not graduated/*ijāza* from al-Qarawiyyīn,” Professor Benfaida, June 28, 2013.

17 See the description of the city in al-Muṣṭafa Benfaida, *Miknās, Jawla fī-l-tārīkh wa-l-ma‘ālīm*, second edition (Meknes, 2008), 63–122.

18 Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdallah, *al-Futūḥāt al-ilāhiyya*, ed. Muḥammad Rashīd Malīn (Rabat, 1980), introduction.

19 One book by Lisān-ul-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb (catalogue no. 607) bears the date AH 1156, “*taḥbīs min al-khalīfa al-‘Alawiyy Mulay* [sic] *Abdallah*,” Qarawiyyīn Library.

20 Muḥammad Dawūd, *Tarīkh Teṭwān* (Teṭwān, 1977, second edition), 2: 1, 272.

21 For a study of Sidi Muḥammad's religious thought, see ‘Abd al-Salām al-Ṭāhirī, *al-Fikr al-iṣlāḥī bi-l-Maghrib: al-khiṭāb al-salafī al-makhzanī numūdhajan, min 1757–1894* (Rabat: Top Press, 2008), 116ff.

22 Abū al-Qāsim al-Zayānī, “Al-Rawḍa al-Sulaymāniyya,” Rabat Public Library, MS DAL 1275, fo. 158.

23 Elizabeth Marsh, *The Female Captive* (London, 1769), ed. Khalid Bekkaoui (Fez: Moroccan Cultural Studies Centre, 2003), 87. As Bekkaoui notes, she was captured on July 8, 1756 and released in November of that year, 10.

24 But he also fought to liberate foreign-occupied outposts in his land, as shown in his conquest of Brayja/Mahdūma in 1768: see Muḥammad ibn abī al-Qāsimī al-Murrākishī, *al-Ḥullal al-sundusiyya fī fatḥ al-Brayja,* ed. ‘Abd al-Karīm Karīm (Rabat: 1986); “Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdallah wa-l-irāda al-ṣultāniyya,” in ‘Abd al-Majīd Qaddurī, *Al-Maghrib wa Urubbā* (al-Dār al-Baydā’: al-Markiz al-thaqāfī al-‘Arabī, 2000), ch. 3; and Sa‘īd Binsa‘īd al-‘Alawī, *Urubbā fī mir'āt al-riḥla* (Rabat: Jāmi‘at Muḥammad al-khāmis, 1995), ch. 2. See also al-Ghazāl, who

wrote that Muslims proudly used "sword, spear, and arrows," rather than "cannon and bomb," *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 146.

25 For a contemporaneous history of Sidi Muḥammad by a European: see Georg Høst, *Histoire de l'Empereur du Maroc Mohamed Ben Abdallah* (Copenhagen, 1791), trans. E. Damgaard and P. Gailhanou (Rabat: Editions La Porte, 1998).

26 On his role in ransoming captives, see Mālika al-Zahīdī, "al-Riḥla al-safāriyya al-Mahgribiyya ila Urubbā: Kitāb "al-Badr al-Sāfir" numūdhajan," in *al-Riḥla bayn al-sharq wa-l-gharb*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥamām (Rabat: Kuliyyat al-ādab wa-l-ʻulūm al-insāniyya, 2003), 159–177.

27 Al-Ghazāl succeeded in liberating 1,600 Algerian captives, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 13.

28 Quoted in ʻAbd al-Ḥāfiz Ḥamān, *al-Maghrib wa-l-thawra al-Faransiyya* (Al-Dār al-Bayḍā': Maṭbaʻat al-najāḥ al-jadīda, 2002), 17. For the journey and some letters, see also Jacques Caillé, "Les naufragés de la "Louise" au Maroc et l'ambassade de Tahar Fennich a la cour de France en 1777–1778), 243–264.

29 Jacques Caillé, *Les Accords internationaux du Sultan Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdallah (1757–1790)* (Paris: Librarie genénérale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1960), 221–222. See also the more detailed "declaration" of September 27, 1778, 228–230. For an English translation of the latter, see appendix C in Priscilla H. Roberts and James N. Tull, *Thomas Barclay (1728–1793): Consul in France, Diplomat in Barbary* (Bethlehem, PA: Leghigh University, 2008).

30 Dawūd, *Tarīkh Teṭwān*, 2: 1, 271.

31 Ramon Lourido Diaz, *Marruecos y el Mundo Exterior en la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII* (Madrid: Instituto de Cooperación con el Mundo Arabe, 1989), Arabic translation by Mulay Aḥmad al-Kamūn and Badīʻa al-Kharazī (al-Dār al-Bayḍā', 2012), 127.

32 For the texts of all these treaties, see Caillé, *Les accords*, 147–266. See also 55–59 for a list of all international accords.

33 See copies of the letters describing this event in ʻAbd al-Hādī al-Tāzī, *Amīr Maghribī fī Tarāblus, 1731* (n.p., n.d.), 22–24.

34 ʻAbdallah Muḥammad ibn al-Kansūsī, *Al-jaysh al-ʻaramram al-khumāsī*, ed. Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Kansūsī (Rabat, 1994?), 264.

35 The letter is dated 7 Rabi' II 1207 and reproduced in al-Fasi, ed., *Riḥlat*, introduction.

36 Muḥammad al-Fāsī, "Al-kātib al-wazīr Muḥammad ibn ʻUthmān al-Miknāsī," *Teṭwān*, 5 (1960), 26–31 in 7–31 and his longer study, *Muḥammad ibn ʻUthman al-Miknāsī: ṣafaḥāt min tārīkh al-Maghrib al-diblomāsī fī al-qarn al-thāmin ʻashar* (Casablanca: Dār al-kitāb, 1961).

37 Al-Miknāsī would have remembered what had happened to al-Ghazāl a decade earlier: humiliation and dismissal for an alleged error in the treaty with Spain, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 14. Al-Miknāsī was therefore much more circumspect and did not report, for instance, on his admiration of the women in the open and flattering manner that al-Ghazāl had (*Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 56 and passim).

38 Al-Ghazāl too had had to contend with incompetent companions, but he was able to get rid of them at the start of his journey, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 9.

39 There are six manuscripts in Rabat, and the other six are in Tunis, Paris, and London, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 22–25.

40 Diaz, *Marruecos y el Mundo Exterior,* Arabic translation by al-Kamūn and al-Kharazī, 114. See also Vicente Rodriguez Casado, "Le Empajada del Talbe Sidi Mohamed ben Otoman en 1780," *Hispania* 3 (1943): 598–611.

41 Diaz, *Marruecos*, trnas. al-Kamūn and al-Kharazī, 87.

42 Mariano Arribas Palau, "Cartas Árabes de Mawlāy Muḥammad B. ʻAbd Allāh, Relativas a la Embajada de Ibn ʻUtmān de 1780," *Hespaeris Tamuda*, 2 (1961), 327–328 in 327–335.

43 See the list in Mariano Arribas Palau, "Un embajador marroqui de finales del siglo XVIII: Muḥammad B. ʻUṯmān," *Awraq*, 2 (1980), 127 in 118–130.

44 See my study of earlier Arabic accounts about Spain: "Spain through Arab Eyes, *c*.1573–1691," in *Europe Observed*, eds. Kumkum Chatterjee and Clement Hawes (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2008): 123–143. Two Moroccan ambassadors had visited Spain in 1586 and 1614, but neither left a written account of his journey.
45 Fāsī, ed., *al-Iksīr*, 70–71. See another episode, 184–185.
46 Dawūd, *Tarīkh Teṭwān*, 2: 1, 279.
47 Even a hundred years later, the Moroccan ambassador to Spain, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Kardūdī expressed similar anger: *al-Tuḥfa al-saniyya li-l-ḥaḍra al-Ḥusniyya bi-l-mamlaka al-Isbānoliyya* (Rabat: Royal Library, 1963), 65–66.
48 Fāsī, ed., *al-Iksīr*, 29, 32, 34, 67, 54, 72–73.
49 Ibid., 123.
50 Ibid., 120.
51 Ibid., 137.
52 For Turkish travelers to Europe, see Mehmed Efendi, *Le paradis des infidels*, trans. Gilles Veinstein (Paris: François Maspero, 1981), and the study by Fatma Müge Göçek, *East Encounters West: France and the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987). See also Khālid Ziyādeh, *Taṭawwur al-nadhra al-islāmiyya ila Urubbā* (Beirut: Ma'had al-inmā' al-'Arabī, 1983, republished 2010); the account by Ratip Effendi about Austria in 1792: J. M. Stein, "An Eighteenth Century Ottoman Ambassador observes the West: Ebu Bekir Ratip Effendi reports on the Hapsburg System of Roads and Posts," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 10 (1985): 219–312. I am grateful to Dr Zaid Alrawadieh for sharing with me his edition-in-progress of the travel account by Muḥammad Chelebi (d. 1732) to France. See also the comparison between al-Miknāsī's account about Spain and another by the Ottoman ambassador, Wāṣif Effendi, in 'Abd al-Raḥīm Binhādah, "Safīrān Muslimān fī Madrid," in *al-Safar fi-l-'ālam al-'Arabī al-Islāmī*, eds. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mowden and 'Abd al-Raḥīm Binhādah (Rabat: Jāmi'at Muḥammad V, 2003), 53 in 47–66.
53 The first Arabic account about a journey to America was written by the Iraqi priest, Ḥannā al-Mūṣallī, after his journey in 1668. He too repeated those myths: see my translation in *In the Lands of the Christians*, 45–111. For later Arabic knowledge of America, see Ami Ayalon, "The Arab Discovery of America in the Nineteenth Century," *Middle Eastern Studies* 20 (1984): 5–17. For the first Arabic full account by a visitor, see Muḥammad 'Ali Pasha, *al-Riḥla al-amerikiyya*, ed. 'Ali Aḥmad Kan'ān (Abu Dhabi: Dār al-Suwaydī li-l-nashr, 2004). But the author made no mention of al-Miknāsī.
54 Priscilla H. Roberts and James N. Tull, "Emissary to Barbary," *Aramco World*, September/October 1998, 33–34 in 28–35 and ch. 12 in *Thomas Barclay*.
55 Al-Kansūsī, *Al-jaysh al-'aramram*, 257–258; see also 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Zaydān, *Itḥāf a'lām al-nās*, 3: 320.
56 The section on Sicily was published by 'Abd al-Hādī al-Tāzī, *Ṣiqilliya fī mudhakarāt al-safīr Ibn 'Uthmān* (n.p., 1978).
57 The letter is reproduced in 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Sa'ūd, *Teṭwān fī-l-qarn al-thāmin 'ashar*, 168–170.
58 For al-Ḥāfī's mission, see Mariano Arribas Palau, "El Marroqui Muḥammad B. 'Abd al-Hādī al-Ḥāfī y sus misiones en Malta (1781–1789)," *Al-Qantara*, 5 (1984): 203–233.
59 Zāhidī, *al-Badr*, 355.
60 While al-Miknāsī used the Spanish form of the names for most of the people he met, he frequently wrote down "Ferdinand."
61 Zāhidī, *al-Badr*, 142.
62 For a study of the ransom negotiations, see Thomas Freller, "'The Shining of the Moon' – The Mediterranean Tour of Muḥammad ibn 'Uthman, Envoy of Morocco, in 1782," *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 12 (2002): 307–326.
63 Zāhidī, *al-Badr*, 181.

64 Ibid., 155.
65 Ibid., 252, Q 7:128.
66 Ibid., 142–143.
67 Ibid., 146–147.
68 For Maltese piracy and enslavement, see Jacques Godechot, "La Course Maltaise le long des côtes Barbaresques à la fin du XVII siècle," *Revue Africaine*, first and second trimester, Algiers (1952): 105–113 and the magisterial work by Godfrey Wettinger, *Slavery in the Islands of Malta and Gozo, ca. 1000–1812* (San Gwann: Publishers Enterprises Group, 2002).
69 Zāhidī, *al-Badr*, I146–147.
70 Ibid., 186–190. Sulaymān al-Qarshī states that al-Miknāsī's favorable attitude towards a European woman was not common ("Ṣūrat al-mar'a al-gharbiyya fī-l-riḥla al-Maghribiyya ilā Urubbā," in *al-Raḥḥala al-'Arab wa-l-Muslimūn* (Rabat: Wizārat al-thaqāfa, 2003), 75.
71 Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Salām al-Ḍa'īf, *Tarīkh al-Ḍa'īf*, ed. Aḥmad al-'Amārī (Rabat, 1986), 172.
72 Caillé, *Accords*, 243. Interestingly, and as in the earlier treaty with Spain, there was no reference to Moroccans settling as traders in Naples or elsewhere. See the reproduction of the Arabic version of the treaty in Zāhidī's edition of *al-Badr al-sāfir*, 404
73 Zāhidī, *al-Badr*, 255.
74 Ibid., 240–241.
75 Ibid., 174.
76 Ibid., 191.
77 Ibid., 244–245.
78 Ibid., 118.
79 Ibid., 194.
80 Ibid., 197.
81 Ibid., 202.
82 Ibid., 218.
83 Ibid., 223.
84 Ibid., 265.
85 Ibid., 272.
86 Ibid.
87 Ibid., 266.
88 See Muḥammad al-Sulamī's study of the *maqāmāt* in this period, *Fann al-maqāmāt bi-l-Maghrib fī al-'aṣr al-'Alawī: dirāsa wa nuṣūṣ* (Rabat: Manshūrāt 'Ukāz, 1992), 265–274.
89 Zāhidī, *al-Badr*, 260.
90 Ibid., 273. This passage and the information that follows are derived from the *maqāmāt*, which use internal rhyme. I have translated the general sense, not word for word.
91 Ibid., 274.
92 Ibid., 275.
93 Ibid., 275–277.
94 Ibid., 311.
95 He had used the same term in his first journey, too, *al-Iksīr*, 144.
96 Zāhidī, *al-Badr*, 266.
97 Ibid., 58–59.
98 See Muḥammad Menouni and M'hammad Benabout, "A Moroccan Account of Constantinople," in *Les provinces arabes à l'époque ottoman*, ed. Abdeljelil Temimi (Zaghouan: Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches, 1987), 39–76.
99 Zāhidī, *al-Badr*, 104.
100 Ibid, 319.
101 Ibid., 331, 333.

102 Būkabbūt, ed., *Iḥrāz*, 77.
103 In 1629, Muḥammad ibn ʻAbdallah al-Ḥusaynī traveled from Medina to Istanbul and back. His route in Anatolia and Syria was exactly the same as al-Miknāsī's followed. See *Riḥlat al-shitā' wa-l-ṣayf*, ed. Samir al-Shanwānī (Abu Dhabi: Dār al-Suwaydī li-l-nashr, 2004).
104 Ibid., 311.
105 The poem that al-Miknāsī saw by al-Nābulusī appears in the latter's travelogue, *al-Ḥaqīqa wa-l-majāz*, 76–77. For the Sufi importance of Ibn al-ʻArabi and al-Nābulusī, see Bruce Masters, *The Arabs of the Ottoman Empire*, 1516–1918 (Cambridge UP, 1913) 112–119.
106 Ibid., 294.
107 **For a discussion of this characteristic among Muslim pilgrims, see my "The Sufi and the Chaplain**: ʻAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī and Henry Maundrell," in *Through the Eyes of the Beholder: The Holy Land, 1517–1713*, eds. Judy Hayden and Nabil Matar (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 171 in 165–184.
108 Ibid., 320.
109 Ibid., 331.
110 Ibid., 333.

1 First journey

Spain, 1779–1780[1]

In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate, and the prayers and peace of God on *sayyidnā*/our master Muḥammad and on his family and companions.

Prologue (5–6)[2]

The poorest of men, pleading for the mercy of the Merciful, His servant, Muḥammad ibn ʻUthmān, may almighty God forgive him and with His kindness lead him to the house of forbearance.

Thanks be to God, who opens doors, and endows happiness and is the cause of causes. The almighty urged His creatures to walk in the world and to enjoy His gifts. We thank Him for His multiple graces, which are signs of His benevolence, and we pray and hail our master and lord Muḥammad, who is the best of whom we should seek and repair to, and his most worthy family and noble companions: it is he who said, "travel and you will find gain."

Thus, our *mawlānā*/lord, the lion-like warrior, protector of the pale of Islam, shadow of God on the high and the low, born for deeds of charity and for consoling those in need and necessity, he whose dedication supersedes all others, past and to come, whose heroic actions cannot be described by pen or ink, ever fearless and feared in every corner, our glorious master and lord, like abundant rain, he is a sea of courage and magnanimity, limitless in his favors, commander of the faithful, warrior in the cause of God, Lord of the Worlds [Q 1:1], victorious by God, Sidi Muḥammad ibn ʻAbdallah, may God ever make him triumphant, protect and advance his kingdom, may He lengthen his days so he can demonstrate his goodness and his judgment, for he is earnest to reconstitute in religion what has been eroded and to follow in the path of the Righteous Caliphs, may almighty God's favor be on all of them.

It was he whom God almighty chose to show pity for His worshippers, and to bring righteousness in his lands and dominions by searching for Muslim captives in the hands of infidels. The Spanish Christians had had multitudes of Muslim captives, all taken from the eastern regions of Tripoli, Tunis and Algiers and their provinces. God freed them by his [Sidi Muḥammad's] benevolent hand, and I was one whom he favored to be enrolled in his service, and to shelter in his felicity, and so he sent me, God lengthen his days and make victorious his flags, to the lands of the Spaniards and to their *ʻadhīmuhum*/great one. He also gave me, may God perpetuate his felicity and destroy his enemies, 10,000 misqals from his

treasury, to give to the captives, may God immortalize this act of charity in His record of deeds.[3]

I was to bring back all the Muslim captives I could find, and so I left, trusting in God as my helper. Sidi Muḥammad urged me to write what you have before you, which I have called: *al-Iksīr fī iftikāk al-asīir* in which I recorded descriptions of the villages and cities I saw in my travels, although I had never been a writer before. But I hereby present the account, admitting to my shortcomings, seeking help from God almighty.

"Cetua, may God return it to Dār al-Islām."

(12–16)

Ceuta (12–16)

[On November 29, 1770, al-Miknāsī and his delegation traveled to Ceuta to board a Spanish ship to Cadiz. During their stay, they wandered around the Spanish bastion.[4]] Inside the *qasbah*, there was a tall building, at the top of which was a mirror in the shape of crossed beams. A man lived there on the lookout for both ships at sea and Muslims on land. Whenever he spotted a ship, he informed the governor.

The common people claimed that the building at the top of the mountain was the cell of Sidi Abu al-ʻAbbās al-Sabtī: but that was not true because there was no cell there. For, with their picks, the Spaniards had dug roads in that mountain, where coaches travelled easily as if on a plain.

All their fortifications did not calm their spirits because of the fear that God had instilled into their hearts. May He, with His kindness and generosity, strengthen Muslims to vanquish these fears.[5] As the *qasbah* was fortified against land attacks, so it was fortified in the direction of the sea: they had built a wall around the mountain where it faced the sea, except where the mountain was very steep. When we were there, there were three *regmintiṣ*/regiments, which meant three *arḥīya*, each of 1,500 men, and so altogether 4,500 men, and at sea, there were 300 men. There were 250 *milisiāt urbanāt*/urban militias who were not part of the army: rather, they were there by order of their great one to be used in battle after which they were remunerated. There were also 2,000 criminals and law-breakers from Spain: the custom of the Spaniards was to exile to Ceuta, Melilla, Oran, or *Ḥajrat al-Nukūr*/Alhucemas all the thieves, highway robbers and others

who did not deserve the death penalty. The length of their punishment depended on their crimes: some were kept there for ten years, others for more or less. These criminals did not carry weapons and were put to labor, and at night, they were locked up in a big building at the foot of the mountain, where they were kept under guard because they could not be trusted. Old Christians from among them, whose crimes were minor, were given weapons and were remunerated like other soldiers, but their black uniforms carried the badge that marked them as prisoners. There were 570 married men and their children, along with 300 *ṭubjiyya*/gunners,[6] also paid like soldiers. Altogether, there were 948 houses, eight churches, and four *balāṣat*/plazas (which means open spaces), one of which served as a market place and three for military parades (may God defeat them). There were also seven depots for storing food and a large building with 350 cannons, fifty mounted mortars, and building material for use in fortification.

At night, the guards kept on calling out to each other, because of the fear in their hearts: may God silence them and cleanse the land of them.

There were twenty-three Muslim captives there, and during our stay in Ceuta, they came to see us, proclaiming victory for our master and lord. They found comfort in us and asked us to intercede for them before the [Spanish] despot.[7] I answered: "Our master and lord, commander of the faithful, has not forgotten you and is eager to effect your and other captives' liberation. We are here to do exactly that, so ask for the blessing of our master and lord."

Of the Muslims' ancient monuments in Ceuta, I saw only a minaret, which the enemies of God had turned into a belfry, used only at times of war. The church door was also the work of Muslims, God have mercy on their souls, and near it a small minaret with an inscription of the name of Muḥammad.[8] They asked me about it but I refrained from telling them, fearing they would desecrate the noble name. There was also a large marble slab with the following writing in Kufic script:

> In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate, and the prayers and manifold salutations of God on Muḥammad and on his family. God is witness that there is no god but He, and both angels and "men of knowledge upholding justice" [Q 3:18] confirm that there is no God but He, the Wise, the Dear. Those who believe in Him are led to

> paradise whereupon its gates open to welcome them. He says: Peace and blessings be upon you, enter into immortality. This is the tomb of Imam ʻAbdallah al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allah, commander of the faithful: may God pour His benediction, mercy, and blessings on him and on the offspring of the chosen prophet, son of Fāṭima al-Zahrā', best of humanity through his father and mother. He lived righteously and died a martyr, may God bless his soul and lift him to the highest heaven and bind him to his grandfather, Muḥammad, seal of the prophets. [He died] two nights earlier in Dhū-l-Qaʻda, 408 [March 23, 1018]. God have mercy on him and on his parents. Amen, Oh Lord of the Worlds, the prayer of God on Muḥammad.

I lifted and cleaned it and asked the governor to give it to me, but he held back when he learned it had been on the tomb of one of the kings of Islam. For when I read the inscription, their translator heard me and so told him. I argued with him until he promised to send it to Tangier and so I wrote to the governor there to expect it.

Who knows if he will keep his promise.

"Our entry into the city of Cadiz, may God return it to Dār al-Islām"[9] (21–25)

[After staying twenty-seven days, they tried to sail out but the wind pushed them back until they finally reached Cadiz after five days.] When we approached the harbor, the overseer came out in his small boat to inspect the ship, as is the custom regarding all incoming ships. We introduced ourselves to him as emissaries from our lord, victorious by God, for he, the overseer, had been a captive whom our master had kindly freed. He was an important dignitary and brother to one of the ministers, and he welcomed us on behalf of the governor, showing great joy. He then went back and informed the governor of Cadiz of our evening arrival and said on his behalf:

> We want you to spend the night on your ship and tomorrow morning we will send our boats to transport you to the city. The governor wants to prepare to meet you, having been so ordered by his great one.

Realizing how difficult it was to disembark, we agreed, and so my companions and I spent the night on board the ship. The next morning, the overseer arrived in decorated boats and we got into them as the ship captain drew up all his cannons. When we reached the docks, we saw that the city had a very large harbor, with around 500 ships, but, I was told, they were fewer than usual because of the war between the English and the Spanish. Meanwhile, men had climbed on the ropes and masts, calling out the name of our lord and wishing him victory from God, may God almighty protect him. I learned about what they were saying by a member of my delegation who understood Spanish.[10]

On shore, we found the governor, the judge, and all officials in the service of their sultan, men and women, standing to welcome us. We could barely move because of the crowds, but the governor could do nothing about that, and so he led us to a place at the mouth of the harbor, overlooking the sea. He brought the coaches there and we climbed and proceeded forth, he riding ahead, until we reached the house designated for our residence by their great one. It was a spacious and elegant house, very well decorated and with much festivity in it, and we entered accompanied by the governor and all the city dignitaries. The military commander arrived with fifty *shuldhādh/*soldiers whom he stationed at the entrance of the building for our protection from the mobs, again by order of their great one.

The governor greeted us, profusely delighted at our arrival, and said: "We have waited a long time for you, and the messengers of the king are here to ensure that all your needs are met."[11] Then people started coming in droves to welcome us, and the governor introduced them to me until I got tired. He said: "You must be tired from your journey and so we shall leave you to rest." But I decided to indulge him and did not prevent him from spending the rest of the day with us. The next morning, the *khazandār*/treasurer came to us,[12] the man who is in charge of the treasury, and greeted us saying that he had orders from his great one to be at our beck and call. All were happy to see us and insisted that they wanted to do much more to welcome us in order to honor our master and lord, commander of the faithful. I answered the *khazandār:*

> God almighty has blessed us with our master and lord so that we do not need anything from anyone. What I need is for you to expedite our

> travel to meet your great one so I can fulfill the orders of our master and lord. For I have no interest in anything else but that.

The deputy governor of Santa Maria arrived. The distance between it and Cadiz was three hours and a quarter. He greeted us on behalf of his superior and apologized that the latter could not come because of ague in his fingers. So he was sent as his deputy with orders to the governor of Cadiz to ensure that everything be done for us in honor and glory of our master, God support him. The governor of Cadiz, whose authority extended to many cities, had power over the governor of Santa Maria because he had a higher rank, that of *qubtān*/captain, and he did all he could to welcome us, while constantly praising our master and lord.

Among the things he did was to prepare a show called a *camīdiya*/comedy in a house nearby. They asked us to watch it. But I refused and so they insisted; however I still refused. Then a Christian, who had been a captive of my master and lord, came to us. He had some influence among his people for he was the overseer of the harbor and his brother was the minister of India. Because he knew our customs, he explained:

> The governor and the people of the city have prepared this show to honor you and to glorify our master, victorious by God. They have spent a lot of money on it. This is not the time of year for such shows, but they will perform it today for you and so you must indulge them.

As we were talking, the governor, the judge, and the city dignitaries urged us on, and so I could not but go with them.

We found a grand four-storey building, which they had illuminated with countless candles. There were musicians assembled on the ground floor but they led us to a place directly across from the stage.[13] As we looked around, we saw wonders beyond description: all manner of statues, animals and buildings that made the viewer think them real, along with numerous musical instruments needed for the dance.

I sat with them for a while and then returned to our residence.

The next morning we were led by the city dignitaries to a place called *torre*/tower, which was like a minaret. We climbed it and saw at the top a

huge mirror on a stand, so heavy that no man could single-handedly move it. There was a man who lived in that lighthouse whose job was to monitor ships at sea. With the mirror, he could see the ships as if they were in front of him and therefore was able to differentiate an enemy ship from a friendly one. He would then write a note stating that he had spotted a ship coming from such and such a direction, mention the number of its cannons and often identify its flag. Afterwards, he would send the note to the overseer.

We looked at Cadiz from that mirror [telescope] and saw that it was a large and beautiful city. Its buildings were all of chiseled stone, and all its houses had iron windows with glass panels. Its streets were straight and cobbled and in all its alleys hung lanterns known as *fanār* which are kindled at night. There were as many professions and crafts in the city as you could imagine, but its alleys stank because the sewers ran in the middle of the streets until they reached the sea.

We stayed in Cadiz for two days because of the heavy rain. On the third day, we prepared to leave but the governor started dissuading us, warning us against the rain and the extreme cold. I refused to be delayed, explaining that we could have no rest unless we fulfilled the commands of our master and lord. When he saw how determined we were, he brought all the coaches and the mules that we needed, and on Tuesday 12 Dhū-l-Ḥijja 1193 [December 21, 1779], we rode out of the city.

"Las Cabezas [de San Juan] may God return it to Dār al-Islām" (31–33)

[They passed through Isla de León, Puerto de Santa Maria, and Jerez.] As we approached the city [Las Cabezas], its inhabitants, high and low, came out to meet us, as others had done before. We went up the hill since the village was on top of an elevation, which is why it had that name, for *kabsa* in Spanish meant head. One of their most luxurious houses had been prepared for our residence, on which they had spent as much money as they could. We stayed the night there and on the following morning, we wandered around and saw the monuments left by Muslims, God have mercy on their souls: a round tower and a wall that the Christians called the Tower of Muslims. Near the wall was the butchers' market.

But the people were very much like Bedouins.[14]

We left the village and traveled into a spacious region where you could cast your eyes as far as you liked. It was all cultivated with artichoke, just like the Dukkala region in Morocco, and had no water except from wells and rain, although the wells were not far apart, unlike in Dukkala. I observed how they drew water from their wells: they placed two poles on the mouth of the well, and then a beam across the poles with a rope and a pail. The rope was attached to a piece of wood that was heavier than the pail: when they wanted to draw water from the well, they lowered the pail into the water, and when it was full, they released the rope and the pail rose with no effort on their part. The water was thereafter used for animals.

We continued in the aforementioned region until we reached a bridge above a gulf in the Guadalquivir River, which passed through Seville. During the rainy season, the water in the river rose – which was why they built the bridge. It had two arches, on top of which there were two turrets, one on each bank of the river – a work of the Muslims, God have mercy on their souls. The Christians still called it the Bridge of the Muslims. On the gulf, the Christians built two houses near the two sides of the aforementioned bridge for the use of travelers. They called them the Houses on the Bridge of the Muslims. The bridge was three hours away from Cabezas, with the city of Utrera to its right by a mile, and the small village of Ferti (with the letter “t” combined with the letter “sh”) to the left. Between them, the land was covered with olive trees.

Two hours after we left the aforementioned bridge, we reached a house where travelers could spend the night and find all they needed of barley and straw. They could also order whatever food and drink they desired, and when they were ready to leave, the house keeper or the wife of the proprietor handed them the bill for their expenses in food, drink, lodging, animal feed and all others. And they paid without arguing.

Such facilities were found on all roads in Spain so that travelers did not need to carry food, only money. We stayed in the aforementioned house to rest and they brought us food, as is their custom. They brought us olives, as big as walnuts, the likes of which we had never seen.

We left the house in the direction of Seville, and for the rest of the day, we crossed orchards of olives and grapevines, each with a press and a house. Apparently, the olives had been planted by Muslims, God have mercy on their souls, because the trees looked old. The region between

Cabezas and Seville was full of cattle farms; most of the goats of al-Andalus are black.

"The capital city of Seville, may God return it to Dār al-Islām" (33–39)[15]

We reached Seville after sunset, ten hours from Cabezas. As we approached it, about 200 coaches belonging to its local inhabitants came out to meet us, along with numberless men and women. The deputy governor welcomed us, and with all his accompanying dignitaries, showed much joy at our arrival. He offered us the governor's coach telling us that the governor was awaiting us with the guards near the city entrance. We continued and found the governor and his guards, along with all the musicians he could bring. His servants were around him as he greeted us, expressing deep regret that we had not arrived during daytime, and he led us to the house where we were to stay, having kindled numberless candles at the door, with guards outside beating their drums. The house was beautiful but unusual because it was very much like the residence of the Muslim kings of the Abbadis, God have mercy on their souls: it had wonderful craftsmanship, white marble floors, and 400 marble pillars, fifty-two in the lower floor, and as many in the upper. In the center, there was a pool with a statue that spouted water higher than a man's height. There were three domed rooms: the one to the right of the entrance was big, seventy-three feet in length and twenty feet in width. It ended with three arches that led to another domed room, what we call a *bahū*/hallway, fifty-two feet in length and twelve in width. It faced another dome but without a hallway. The two aforementioned cupolas covered very beautifully decorated spaces known as *bisāt*/ large hallway, while the third cupola was square-shaped, each side thirty-four hand spans, with a ceiling decorated with *tasṭīr*/calligraphy in what is known as "half orange." It was also covered with marble and in each of its three quarters there were three arches. Each of the two quarters to the right and to the north had a hallway as long as the cupola with a width of nineteen feet. The three arches in the cupola led to an elongated large hall. All the walls and cupolas of the palace were decorated with the most delicate and marvelous *zaliīj*/azulejos, up to a man's height, above which was plaster, also beautifully decorated. The plasterer inscribed above the azulejos and inside

the cupolas, all around the palace, the following two lines of poetry (*majzū al-rajz*):[16]

> My trust and my hope: You are my expectation and helper
> You answer pleas: Seal my labor with perfection.

He kept on repeating these lines until he circled the whole palace and cupolas. The palace was 110 feet long and eighty-eight wide. Elegantly carved on the lateral sides of the two cupolas were the following words: "Glory to God, Ownership is God's" and others, such as "Praise be to God." Also written on the sides of the cupola that was half orange-shaped were the following words:

> The glorious sultan, may his victories be celebrated, the king of Castile and Leon, may God extend his happiness and lengthen his days, ordered that these new doors be made for the felicitous cupola from world famous cypress wood, used always for the doors of courts and palaces.

On the other side:

> Made in Seville under the eye of the master builder Sidi Yūsuf al-Sharafī, and built by Toledan laborers, in 1404 following the *ṣifr*/brass money calculation, which is 776 [AD 1365–1366] according to the calendar of the Arabs. Finished. Praise be to God.[17]

There is a vast amount of Arabic writing, in prose and verse calligraphy, on the walls and in the rest of palace, all done by the plasterer and the carver. The aforementioned sultan who ordered the construction of the lateral sides was a Christian called Pedro son of Alfonso son of Herrando son of Sancho son of Alfonso son of Herrando, king of Castile. This despot reigned in al-Andalus during the time of Prince Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn Ismā'īl ibn Faraj, commander of the faithful, and one of the Nasride kings, because Seville was in Christian hands then. They had seized it from Muslims in the year 646 [1248–1249]. The despot Fernando Sancho III son

of Alfonso son of Sancho laid siege to Seville and it was he who took possession of it and of Cordoba from the hands of the commander of the Muslims, Abu ʿAbdallah Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn Naṣr ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khamīs ibn ʿUqayl al-Khazrajī al-Anṣarī, the sultan of al-Andalus and its province, and known as al-Nāṣir bi-Lāh [reg. 1231–1272]. He was the first of the Nasride kings, and a wonder of God's wonders, a courageous warrior at the frontier, patient and refusing of rest, preferring the strain of hardship over ease, always desiring little. He despised ostentation, was resolute and widely feared, always ready, wearing rough cloth and old shoes, ever pious. He ruled Seville and Cordoba for a short time and then he lost them – it is a long story; let whoever wants to know them consult the histories. It was God's will and is shown in the inscriptions on the lateral walls, which are dated from the brass money reckoning. But Muslims did not use such brass dating and it was not strange that the Christians wrote in Arabic, for at that time, they used Arabic openly.

Know that this dating by brass precedes the Christians' Christian calendar by thirty-eight years. The brass refers to one of the caesars, whose name was Octavian, who ruled over most of the world [63 BC–AD 14]. He ordered the covering of the river of Rome with brass plates after which the *Rūm*/Byzantines became victorious. He also ordered the building of the great cities of al-Andalus such as Cordoba, Seville, Mérida, Zaragoza, and the tomb of Saint Ferdinand in the Seville mosque, which today is a church for Christians, and remains so. On the thirtieth of May according to the Christian calendar, they celebrate his feast by taking out his effigy and parading him in the alleys.

There are many houses and residences that surround this palace, along with an orchard, but the ground floor remains uninhabited and only the purveyor inspects it. While many other parts remain unchanged, the governor lives in the upper floor, and he told us that his great one ordered him to preserve the palace and not do anything to it other than necessary repairs and such like.

We had heard that the minaret [Ghiralda] was similar to the one in the Kutaybiyyīn Mosque in the capital city of Marrakesh, may God protect it. So I spoke to the governor and we went to see it, accompanied by other dignitaries. As we climbed, it became clear that, like the Kutaybiyyīn minaret, it had no stairs. More than one of the Christians told me that they had ridden up on horseback. After we entered through the door of the

minaret, we started climbing and completed thirty-five rounds. It had small enclaves in the middle, just like in Kutaybiyyīn, in which Christians live whose job is to ring the bells. There are twenty-five bells one of which, it was said, weighed 185 quintals; but others were smaller. But the infidels who lived there had soiled it with their urine and dirt, creating such a stench that it was impossible for a human being to climb without covering his nose. May God cleanse the land of them and make them our captives. We belong to God, and to Him we shall return [Q 2:156]. Arriving at the top of the minaret, we could see all of Seville: a beautiful city that made a strong impression on us with its elegant buildings and minarets; all its house roofs were of white brick. Other cities in Spain were very much like that too.

Seville was founded on a plain and what added to its charm and beauty was the Guadalquivir River that ran near it, just about forty hand spans from its wall, like a crown around it. There was a small town on the other bank of the river called Triana, which was as beautiful as Seville. All parts of the city were spacious and planted with olive trees. As for the aforementioned river, it is the greatest in al-Andalus since most other rivers flow into it as it pours into the Big Sea at San Lucar de Barrameda. Ships from the sea sail up to Seville, carrying various kinds of merchandise along with sumptuous objects; on their return, they carry oil destined to India and distant horizons. This river brings to Seville the wonders of the sea and makes it supersede all other cities.

School for maritime education (41–43)[18]

In Seville, I saw a complex of buildings for teaching children the science of navigation and the manning of ships. The despot had appointed a man to be responsible for the orphans and indigent children who came from low social backgrounds, but there were also children from the nobility sent by their fathers for instruction. The first subjects the boys studied were writing and arithmetic in a designated room, but in another part of the complex, there was a ship with sails, ropes, cannons and others. Once a boy mastered writing and arithmetic, he went to the building with the ship where he learned practical maritime skills. In this building, there were instruments used at sea, such as the arch, the compass, the globe, and others. As I was standing near the ship, the instructor summoned the boys to take up their

positions, and in a second, they were on top of the ship, pulling at ropes, unfurling sails, and loading cannons. Also in the aforementioned complex, there was a large area where boys learned to use gunpowder and cannonball. There was a small cannon along with a target on the opposite wall at which they aimed. The instructor told us that they learned to fire the cannons on board ship, and one boy of twelve years old demonstrated to us by firing the cannon and hitting the target.

There was also a large rectangular room with beds where the boys slept at night, and I saw over 400 beds. When it came to be lunchtime, they took us to a place where we saw the boys assembled near cubit-high marble stubs on which there were wooden planks covered with food. There was also a kitchen with a cook who brought out a large pot filled with meat, which he poured into bowls and distributed among them. Before that, he had given them bread, and as soon as the boys were ready to eat, a Christian stood at the door and said something to which they responded. I asked about that and was told that he asked them to glorify God almighty. There was also a large room where money was kept by the great one for the food, drink and clothing of the boys. Near that room was another for the accountants who recorded all expenses.

Fountains and statues (43–44)

One of the extraordinary things in Seville was the orchard near the palace where we were staying. Its wonders were indescribable. They had divided it into different parts connected by straight paths with numberless statues. These statues spouted water, sometime from the mouth, or the face, or the chest, or the head, just like sprinklers.[19] There were many different statues one of which stood on the top of the wall of the orchard and had a musical pipe into which he appeared to be blowing: when they opened the water into the orchard, it spouted out of that pipe in the hands of the aforementioned statue. The wall was very high and was the work of Muslims, God have mercy on their souls. Even more spectacular was the release of water through conduits in the ground, which spurted out reaching more than the height of a man so that the water spurting from the left went through the air toward the right and the water from the right reached the left.

As we entered the orchard, a large crowd followed us, having overcome the guards at the gate – so many that they nearly trampled us with their feet. I complained to the governor, asking him to drive the people away from us, and as they continued to follow us, he whisked us to an elevated spot from where the Christians could not see us. When the crowds continued to gather, he ordered the guards to turn on the water, and so as the common people were wandering around and admiring the beautiful statues, water spouted from the ground and splashed them from all sides. Since the gate had been closed, they shouted and ran about, unable to find an exit; wherever they turned, they found water, above and under them, to their left and to their right, surrounding them from all sides until they were completely drenched. The gate was then opened and they hurried out into the city, followed by laughing boys.

Tobacco production (46–48)

There was a big building, just like the *qasbah*, with four large windows and 275 small ones to let in light. It had countless depots and was called the House of *ṭāba*/Tobacco. The sale of this weed was exclusive to their great one, and so too were salt and other commodities. None but he could buy or sell tobacco, and whoever did so without permission was severely punished; he could even be exiled to Ceuta or elsewhere, where he would stay for many years in hard labor. This was their way with criminals.

I saw them boiling that nefarious weed in large cauldrons, which resembled millstones. I could not count the millstones that were lined up, one next to the other, but each millstone had a number of attendants who pushed into it a ball of tobacco after they had cut it in half. Then, with iron poles, they pushed the aforementioned weed under the grindstone and brought out whatever the millstone ground with those same poles and poured it into adjacent millstones. They continued transferring the ground material from one millstone to another until it was ready to be sieved. I was unable to count the millstones because whoever entered that building could not but be overwhelmed by the smell of that nefarious weed. We nearly suffocated at one moment because of the dust, and so I hastened out.[20]

There were numberless millstones and sieves: I could not count them. There were also attendants who weighed the tobacco and then stuffed it into sacks. They worked ceaselessly in that building, and the governor told me

that there were more than 1,000 workers. Some cut the weed, some ground it in the first millstone, some in the second, and some in the third. Others sieved or weighed, while some made small tin boxes that could hold up to two or three rotls of *tabaaqwa*/tobacco, which they sent to all parts of the world. The superintendent of the building stored them in large warehouses, which were full from floor to ceiling with the aforementioned boxes.

I got bored.

So he took me to the place of registers where accounts and records were kept. There were also dormitories for the workers. I asked the superintendent how much the despot's monthly income was, and he said that it was close to five million riyals, after subtracting the expenses on the raw materials and servants. And a million is ten one hundred thousand riyals. He added that at that time we were there, there were twenty million rotls of tobacco, and since each rotl was valued at two riyals, the total sum was forty million.

I had seen nothing more tiring and arduous than what the workers did in this building. They were like the damned in hell: faces worn down and coated with dust: these are the iniquitous infidels. But I endured everything in order to report on them and learn their errors and shortcomings.

"The city of Ecija, may God return it to Dār al-Islām" (52–55)

[Al-Miknāsī visited the mint and the armory and left Seville on January 20, 1779, passing through Carmona until Ecija.] Towards dinner time, we reached the residence designated for us. At the entrance there were so many lit candles that night had turned to day. No entertainer or musician in the city had stayed behind, while women and children were numberless. When we approached, all raised their voices in praise of our master, commander of the faithful, and so we entered the aforementioned building and found that they had generously prepared for our arrival, and had arranged our seats in the middle of numberless candles. We sat with many dignitaries in our designated places, as droves of people, single and in couples, came to see and greet us. The building was now full of men and women and so they brought sweets and offered them to everyone there as a sign of their welcome. People were happy and smiling, telling us that what they were doing to welcome us had been ordered by their great one, and apologizing for any shortcomings in hospitality.

The *khazandār*, in charge of the city treasury, soon arrived to greet us telling us that he had orders from his great one to serve us and do everything we needed as a mark of respect for our master and lord. I said: "We know of the *maḥabba*/ affection that you have for our master and lord, commander of the faithful. We need nothing from God's bounty, for God has made us rich by our master and lord." That evening, the *ḍāmāt*, women of high social rank, came to greet us, bringing with them music, which they greatly enjoyed, and they all danced with the city's dignitaries, merrily, men and women together, expressing their joy. I asked the dignitaries whether there were any vestiges of the Muslims, God have mercy on their souls, so they looked around and found some money, dinars and small riyals and piasters on which were written some Qur'ānic verses with God's holy name and the Prophet's, God's prayer and peace be on him. I yearned to salvage the noble name from their hands by offering them compensation, but they were only willing to give me a few coins, refusing to accept any payment from me because they deeply cared for ancient objects, especially those that belonged to the Muslims. They would not give them away for any price because they were heirlooms and part of their family inheritance. I saw a sword with one of the Christians of Seville and offered him 100 misqals for it, but he refused to sell it to me, after which one man told me that at one time the owner had been in financial need and was advised to sell the aforementioned sword, but he refused. Still, and happy to see us, those Christians gave us ten dirhams, valuable as they were to them, as a present and a mark of generosity.

A Christian dignitary in the city greeted us profusely, saying: "I heard that you were looking for traces of the Muslims. I am a descendant of Qardanash and I am so eager to meet you." He had his little sister with him, which quite surprised us, but unfortunately, all of them had been [religiously] defeated: may God protect us – there is no strength or power except with God. We also saw a slab of stone on which was inscribed: "In the name of God the merciful the compassionate. The commander of the faithful, aided by God, Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam, ordered the building of this felicitous water fountain in the month of Muḥarram, 763" [August/September 977].

On the following morning, we left the aforementioned city. Its buildings, alleys, streets and rooftops were crowded with women and men. As the city dignitaries walked with us to bid us farewell, I looked carefully

around and found that most of the walls had been built by Muslims, God have mercy on their souls, while the alleys were still narrow, just as the Muslims had left them. We continued amidst a huge assembly of men and women, all showing immense signs of amity and friendliness. As for their women, God had granted them great beauty and elegance, which He had not granted any other in all the lands of al-Andalus, fair ones reserved for beautiful eyes [Q 55:72]. The city gate was near the river known as Chenil, the source of which was in Granada. Above it was a strong and fortified bridge, which served for defense; at the other side of the bridge, there was a gate leading into the city.

The land beyond the bridge was flat and spacious, beautiful and appealing. All of it was cultivated with numberless olive trees because the soil was rich, and it continued so until we reached Carlotta three hours later. We had seen numberless olive trees as far as our sight could stretch in gardens, often with their own olive presses. We traveled the rest of the day and stayed that night in the aforementioned village, where all the inhabitants, men and women, with marks of urban civility on them, came to welcome us. Curious, I queried them and discovered that most of them were inhabitants of Seville and Ecija: they owned small residences and came to the village to relax and stroll.

On the following morning, we rode near houses and through a forest of intertwined growth. The captain of the cavalry that accompanied us from Cadiz to Madrid told me that this region had been infested with thieves and highway robbers and so it was too dangerous for anyone to use for travel. As a result, the despot ordered the building of houses on both sides of the road and the inhabitants who lived there were each given some goats and chicken and told to choose the house they liked. He also gave them seeds for cultivation, and an ox for plowing the land. After eight years, the house became their own. The forest had been very thick, and so the despot ordered that the trees be cut down, leaving only the oak trees. All other trees were turned to charcoal and so robbers could no longer lurk there. We left the forest and continued in the direction of Cordoba, passing through a region of vine tree scaffoldings, but it was very muddy and difficult. The journey took us two hours.

“The city of Cordoba, may God return it to Dār al-Islām” (55–62)[21]

We reached Cordoba after five hours from the aforementioned village and were met outside the city by its inhabitants, both men and women. Near its gate was the Guadalquivir River, which passed through Seville. Above the river stood an excellently designed bridge with sixteen arches, made by the Christians. There used to be a bridge that had been built by Muslims, God have mercy on their souls, but a flood destroyed it, after which the Christians replaced it with the present one. There were many boats in the river, and because the city had expanded far beyond the bridge, people living at a distance from the bridge used these boats to reach it and cross from the east to the west bank.

This city was one of the great cities, the old capital of Muslims, God have mercy on their souls. It still showed Muslim influence in its walls and narrow alleys, just as Muslims had left them, God have mercy on their souls. When we reached the building designated for our residence, we found at its gate multitudes of musicians and dignitaries, all of whom had come to meet us. As we drew near, they loudly called out the name of our master and lord and they removed their *shamrīra*/sombreros from their heads, to show us how happy and friendly they were. They had prepared our residence with great care, furnishing it with numerous beds, rugs and silver pots, as was their custom. The chief of police arrived, leading fifty soldiers with flags and drums, and while they stood at the gate, he entered and greeted us. He was followed by the city treasurer, who also welcomed us saying that his great one had ordered him to be at our disposal during our stay and to fulfill all our commands. We replied that we needed nothing and that God had enriched us with our master and lord, commander of the faithful, and that the only thing we wanted was to see the congregational mosque. He assured us that we would go the next day.

And so we waited.[22]

They had informed the monk who was the attendant and the rest of the friars about our visit, and so in the afternoon, we went to the mosque. We reached it with much difficulty because of huge crowds. Inside, we found more men and women than were outside and so we walked between people, unable to see where to step, and reached the *miḥrāb* quite exhausted. I could

not really see it with all the people around us and I started wondering how we would ever get out. So the governor and his policemen pushed the Christians left and right to make an exit for us. Unable to see the mosque that afternoon because of the crowds, we left with great difficulty, but the friar in charge told us to come on the following day, promising to shut the gate so that none would enter but us. We waited another day, but when the friar came he said that the Christians, God destroy them, were celebrating a feast that day. "I thought they would go to another church, but all of a sudden, I found them inside the mosque." He was truly angry and so the friars agreed that we should visit the mosque at night.

After supper that evening, we went to the aforementioned mosque and found soldiers at its entrance barring people from entry. We went in and they had lit countless candles: and lo, it was one of the greatest of the world, spacious and large, its construction showing the talent of its builders, may God almighty have mercy on their souls. We walked toward the *miḥrāb,* which was the most beautiful of all, greater than anything that had been built by humans. It was made of white marble, with seven slabs of marble on the inside, each the height of a man and six and a half hand spans in width. Above these slabs were the following words:

> In the name of God the merciful the compassionate. Keep the daily prayers, especially the middle one, and "stand in God's presence in humility and devotion" [Q 2:238]. Victorious by God ʻAbdallah ibn Ḥakam, commander of the faithful, may God protect him, ordered the construction of this *miḥrāb* with its marble *kiswa/*cover in the hope of great reward in the afterlife. It was finished by the order of our lord and his chamberlain, Ja'far ibn ʻabd al-Raḥmān, may he find favor with God, under the eye of Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Nasr and Khālid ibn Ḥishām, his police officers, and Muṭrif ibn ʻabd al-Raḥmān the scribe in the month of Dhū-l-Ḥijja 354 [November–December 965]. He who turns his face to God while offering charity has held onto *al-ʻurwa wuthqā*/the firm bond [Q 2:256]. To God is the end of all.

Above that inscription was another:

> In the name of God the merciful the compassionate. Oh believers, if you rise to prayer, wash your faces and … render thanks.
>
> [Q 5:6]

And above that:

> Oh believers, fear God as He should truly be feared, and die not except as Muslims.
>
> [Q 3:102]

All these inscriptions were on the marble at the top of the *miḥrāb*, which was made of one very beautiful slab of marble. They had closed five arches in front of the *miḥrāb*, protecting it in the manner that curtains are used in our country. Two of the aforementioned arches had been sealed, but the three arches in the middle had iron windows. One window had a door that opened onto the *miḥrāb* and above the space between the *miḥrāb* and the iron windows, there was a very beautiful dome, made of stone, at the base of which were written in glittering gold the following words:

> In the name of God the merciful the compassionate. Oh Believers, bend down and prostrate yourselves your Lord [in the verse] in order that the Prophet might witness on your behalf.
>
> [Q 22:77, 78]

We left the *miḥrāb* and wandered around in the mosque trying to count its columns, but we grew tired and gave up because the Christians, God destroy them, had built numerous rooms and chapels inside the mosque for their infidelity and confusion. May God cleanse the land and the mosque of them. We would start counting from the front of the mosque but then we would encounter a chapel, so we would turn to the other side, and would encounter another chapel – and thus make mistakes. When the friar saw how exasperated we had become, he brought out a notebook from one of his chapels and relayed to us information about the mosque as it was documented. He stated that its width, from the *miḥrāb* to the entrance that opened on the passageway – the door near the minaret – was 202 varas, according to Christian calculation (each vara was three feet, which I

verified); and 131 varas from the *miḥrāb* to the *ʻanaza*; seventy-one varas from the *ʻanaza* in the *ṣaḥn*/courtyard to the entrance of the mosque; and the length, from the wall to the right of the reception to its left wall was 260 varas (each vara equals three feet).[23] The columns in the mosque were 731, and on top of each were two arches, one above the other, made of yellow, black and red marble. There were forty-two columns added by the Christians, perhaps for repairs, and the number of arches from the right of the reception area to the left was twenty-nine. The infidels, God destroy them, had built fifty-six rooms [chapels] around its circumference and eighteen more inside: there was in the middle of each of them a high table for their infidelity and confusion. There were also storage places for their silver and gold crucifixes, and for plates studded with precious stones of different colors and shapes. The friar in charge granted me access to all the chapels and places of his infidelity and showed me all the crucifixes, statues, and idols before which they prayed, may God demean them and cleanse the mosque of them and rebuild it in His name.

In one of these chapels, I saw the crucifix with the statue of the prophet of God, Jesus, peace be on him, as they claim in their corrupt faith, God destroy them. I could not control myself and said:

"This is total error and untruth. Nothing like this happened to the prophet of God because God protected him and raised him to Him, 'They killed him not, nor did they crucify him, but so it was made to appear to them' [Q 4:157]."

So he started arguing and disputing with me, repeating falsehoods, but I feared that if I refuted him, he would not show me the rest of the aforementioned mosque, and so I changed the subject, fully convinced that he would not accept the truth nor would he give up the errors that served as his hook with which he gained worldly rewards. In some of the chapels, I saw countless silver plates and many objects, including a silver *minaret* [tabernacle] weighing, as I was told, nineteen quarts, along with six silver candelabra just like marble columns. The mosque had sixteen doors and in the courtyard there were seventy orange trees, one olive tree, nine cypress trees, and three palm trees. Also in the courtyard were marble basins that were topped by four small domes with water spouts, and there were four other marble basins each with an iron grille and lock. In the center of the mosque, between the *miḥrāb* and the *ʻanaza*, the Christians had built a huge dome for their prayers and errors, and they installed musical instruments in

it. It was the biggest church inside this mosque, very high, with stained glass windows, which we visited and where we saw all their infidelities, God destroy them.

The *ʻanaza* of this mosque was unlike any other in Islam in its height and elegant inscriptions. It faced the minaret that was near one of the doors of the mosque to the left as one exited. The minaret was not as high as those in Seville or Toledo and the friar mentioned that it was 205 feet high. The Christians had mounted sixteen bells in it and had added a whitewashed vaulted gallery under the mosque ceiling. When I asked the friar whether they had found the ceiling in that condition, he led me to a part of the mosque without a gallery and I saw that the ceiling was made of wood, in the manner of ceilings in Muslim mosques. He said that they built the gallery because the mosque was very large and high; it was also dark and so the gallery lit up the mosque – which is why we ask God almighty to erase the darkness of infidelity and to brighten it with the recitation of His dear book …

The fame of this mosque that has reached all horizons makes it unnecessary to continue describing it. None is like it on the face of the earth except the Aqṣa Mosque. It was said that the roofed area of the Cordoba mosque was larger than of the Aqṣa. The one who planned this magnificent mosque was Imam ʻAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dākhil, ibn Muʻāwiya ibn Hishām ibn ʻAbd al-Malik [d. 788]. Later Umayad kings continued to add to the aforementioned mosque as much as they could until the time of al-Manṣūr ibn abi ʻĀmir, who extensively enlarged it and continued doing so for three years, ending in 384 [AD 994–995].

Horses (62–63)

Near the bank of the Cordoba River, which is the Guadalquivir River, there were farms and orchards for cultivation and for breeding horses. Cordoba was famous for its horses, more than any other city in al-Andalus, for they were viewed by Christians as the best in Spain. For that reason, past despots prohibited the mating of a donkey with a horse, and if anyone disobeyed that order, he was severely punished. They continue breeding horses today, and I saw a large building where the horses of the despot were kept. It was well built, serving as a stable for the studs used for mating. Inside, there were many horses, each with its name written on a plank of wood nailed in

front of it; and there were numerous other stables. The overseer lived in that same building with his children and with as many horse trainers as the horses. Each trainer looked after a specific horse, and if it did well, he was rewarded, and if not, he was reprimanded. As for mules, they were bred in Mancha, as I will show below.

Inquisition and the Jews[24] (63–65)

The inhabitants of Cordoba were farmers, but big as it was, Cordoba had only sixteen water sources, for the lands of al-Andalus were lacking in water. Actually, since entering the region, we had not seen them once planting near a stream but always planting what grew without irrigation.

The famous *qasbah* in Cordoba used to be the residence of the Umayyad kings. It still stands with its high walls and turrets, just across the Great Mosque. But no buildings are left inside because the *qasbah* today serves for burning Jews.

Christians lived there to burn those whom they discovered to be secret Jews. I mean: if a man outwardly appeared to be a Christian but had secretly reverted to Judaism – if he was discovered, he was jailed and all his property was confiscated while he was under full investigation. If the case against him stood, they advised him to return to Christianity and repent, and if he did, they mounted a distinguishing badge on his shoulders so that all the community would know that he had been a secret Jew but had repented. But if he persisted and refused to return to Christianity, they burnt him. If they discovered a Jew who was born a Jew, they sentenced him in accordance with their laws and expelled him from the country, but they did not force him to become a Christian. In this manner, they punished him in accordance with their laws and *dīwān* [Inquisition] because he had entered the country under false religious pretenses. It was known that no Jew could enter the country, which was why he would be punished. But if a Jew desired to enter Spain and did not hide his religion, they might give him a pass especially if he was a rich merchant. But they would keep him under military surveillance until he left the country.

The reason why Jews were not permitted into Spain was that when they used to live in the country, they killed little boys secretly. Whenever they captured a boy on his own, they killed him, confirming what was known

about their dishonesty and deceit, especially in practicing usury. So, during the reign of Ferdinand V, the Spaniards, along with the Inquisition, decided to expel them. They now have a *dīwān* which they call *al-inkistyūn/*Inquisition that searches for those who conceal their Judaism, and if one is apprehended, none can release him, not even the despot himself. During the time we were there, one of the dignitaries of Seville was discovered to be a secret Jew: he was imprisoned in Murcia for four years, during which time the Inquisition carefully examined his case.

"The City of Andújar, may God return it to Dār al-Islām" (69–70)

[Villa del Rio until] "The City of Andújar, May God return it to Dār al-Islām." We entered the city and found that its wall had been built by the Muslims, God have mercy on their souls. It was still in the same condition but the Christians had built numerous buildings and residences outside it. All the walls, actually most of them, and the narrow alleys were built by Muslims, God have mercy on their souls. Some of the dignitaries there told me that the old city of Andújar was not the one we were visiting but one that was an hour away. There, and at the start, the Muslims had lived, God have mercy on their souls, but when they left, the Christians moved in, after which the Muslims returned and seized it from the Christians. They destroyed it and built the present Andújar, which still shows the Muslim building. I entered a church that had been a mosque of the Muslims and found that it was still the same in its ceiling and general layout except for the crosses and places of their worship, may almighty God destroy them and cleanse the world of them. That evening we rode with the governor who showed us all the city, inside and outside. He took us up a high tower, the work of Muslims, God rest their souls, and it was still in the same condition with its thick walls and heavy construction.

The people of this region dug a lot of water canals for their vegetation and others. As for olive trees, they grew them in unirrigated soil, just like the rest of the olive trees in al-Andalus.

The people of Andújar rejoiced at our arrival and the governor and city dignitaries came to see us. They were accompanied by musicians and *ḍāmāt*, the women of high social rank, who wanted to welcome us and entertain us with music and dance. For them, such was the height of

hospitality and so I found no alternative but to go along and watch what they were doing, just for their sake.

They went in before us and the governor introduced the dignitaries and the *ḍāmāt* and then told the musicians to sit in the corner near us. He brought different kinds of sweets, which he served to all who were there, as a sign of further hospitality. After that, the musicians started playing and the governor and his *ḍāma* were the first to dance, his *ḍāma* being one of the grandest of *ḍyām*. They danced for a while after which the governor sat down, but she still wanted to dance, so one of the dignitaries stepped up and danced with her, after which she sat down. Another *ḍāma* stood up and danced with the second man, and then another Christian joined her to finish the dance. This rotation continued, each woman dancing with two men, and each man dancing with two women. When a man stepped up to dance with whomever he chose, he removed his sombrero and bowed before the woman, who slightly stepped back and bent her knees, without touching the floor. After the dance was over, they did the same thing in removing the sombrero and in bowing.

They continued until I complained that I was tired and should be preparing for travel, and so we pushed them away and left.

While music was playing, a *ḍāma* from among the elite told the translator to ask someone if he knew the man who brought him [al-Miknāsī] the dinar with the Muslim inscription in the city of Ecija. He translated the question to me and I answered in the affirmative, whereupon she said: "I am his sister and we are descendants of the Qardanash: my mother was the daughter of Birqāsh." She was very affectionate and warm and was joined by another man, one of the city dignitaries, who had met us on our first arrival. Having heard me talk to her, he said: "I too am a descendant of the Brays and my mother was the daughter of Birqāsh."[25]

So I told them that their kinsmen were famous in our land and quite affluent. "Why don't you come and join them?" I asked. He answered: "It is not possible." He continued by telling us about the Andalusian families that lived in our country, in Tetuan and Rabat. They were all prosperous and wealthy, but alas, they had waded into the seas of ignorance and had been nurtured on infidelity. May God protect us. There is no strength or power except with God.

"Bailén, may God return it to Dār al-Islām" (71–72)

[After five hours from Andújar, and as they approached Bailén] the inhabitants came out to meet us, showing the same friendliness and amity as others had shown. They had prepared the governor's house for our residence. In this village, we found a high number of the descendants of the Muslims, God have mercy on their souls, some of whom introduced themselves and sought to affiliate themselves with us, showing such affection that we found it quite moving. The governor's deputy and his sister came up to us and also sought affiliation, saying that they were of the remnants of the Muslims. He stayed with us for the rest of the day and the night out of his love for Muslims. He mentioned that he had excellent wine and since it was winter, he was willing that very hour, and out of his *maḥabba* for us and thinking that Muslims drank wine, to bring us some. This gesture was a great sign of hospitality among them. In the *maḥabba* that this Christian showed us, we saw the sincerity of his affection, but they had lived in infidelity and slept in the beds of confusion. Thus had been the will of God. We ask Him to help us all in things.

At night, the inhabitants of the village came with music and *ḍāmāt* to greet us and they started playing music and dancing, men and women together as we had described before. On the following morning, we left the village and reached La Carolina after four hours.

"The village of Menzanares del Monte, may God return it to Dār al-Islām": hostels and postal service[26] (74–76)

[They traveled through La Carolina and Santa Cruz de Mudela until Menzanares del Monte.] In this village, as in all parts of Spain, there is a house designated for travelers. After every two or three hours, a traveler finds himself reaching such a house, which is why he does not carry food with him, only money to spend. He can stay wherever he chooses, always sure to find fodder and straw for his animals. He tells the owners of the kind of food he desires, and while they prepare his bed and room, he wanders freely around. Whatever he asks is brought to him quickly. When he decides to leave, the wife of the owner presents him with the expenses he incurred in room, board, animal fodder and others; and he cannot but pay – without haggling.

There are also way stations on the road with fresh horses for the couriers who carry the mail. If there is an important letter to be delivered, the courier carries it on horseback, just as in Cadiz. On approaching the station, he blows into an instrument called a *būq*/horn and when the official inside hears that, he saddles a horse for him. The courier then dismounts and, if he wishes, gets something light to eat and drink, and then mounts the fresh horse and continues, following the designated route. He covers the distance between Cadiz and Madrid in three or four days, just about 100 hours of riding. Whenever he arrives in a city, he delivers the letters sent to its inhabitants in a house called *Dar al-raqqās*/post office.[27]

Every city in Spain has a post office so that whoever wants to send a letter to another city writes and seals it, and then takes it to the post office, in each of which there are officials and agents who collect and arrange the letters in accordance with their destinations. After they sort the letters, they hand them over to the courier, who delivers them to the post offices in the designated cities. People know the day of his arrival and go there and assemble in the post office: if they have a letter, they pay a certain amount of money and take it. A lot of money is collected this way, which covers the various expenses that are incurred; what is left of the money goes to the despot, who keeps it in the treasury. As for the *raqqās*, he takes nothing because his salary is paid from the treasury. On the road, he has to spend his own money and after he exchanges horses, leaving one and taking another, the postmaster returns the horses to the previous location.

"The village of Herencia, may God return it to Dār al-Islām" (77–78)

[After traveling through Villarta de San Juan] we approached the village of Herencia. The inhabitants came out to meet us in their coaches, and those who had no coaches, came on foot, showing much friendliness and amity. We were given the governor's coach as was their custom, but I told them that I and all my companions were suffering from cold and severe headaches, which we had contracted as soon as we entered Mancha, for the wind in that region was tempestuous and the cold indescribable.

The inhabitants showed us donkeys ready to mate with mares. The price of each donkey was 1,000–1,500 riyals, or anything in between. I found the

price very high, but they said that the price of mules is very high, too, each mule selling for 400–300 riyals, which is why the price of the donkeys is high. These male donkeys were bigger than Damascene mules.[28]

We spent the night in the aforementioned village and on the following morning, we traveled to Tembleque, which we reached after seven hours. All that region of Mancha was covered in dirt, rocks and shrubs, but it was still farmed and had numberless orchards of crawling vine trees, all in straight rows. There were also many feddans of saffron, but there were very few trees, except some olive trees near some of the villages. We spent the night in that village and in the morning we left to La Guardia, which we reached after an hour and a half.

"The village of La Guardia, may God return it to Dār al-Islām" (78)

As we entered the village and passed through its central square, its inhabitants welcome us, and stayed with us until we left. Outside this village, on the right side in the direction of Madrid, there was a building: Christians recall that in the past, the Jews killed a Christian boy there, and after they discovered what had happened, they built the church where the boy was buried. They hunted down the Jews and burned them. Before being driven out of Spain, the Jews frequently used to kill boys – which was why, some said, the Jews were not allowed into Spain.

"The city of Madrid, may God return it to Dār al-Islām": meeting with King Carlos III (83–85, 86–88)[29]

[After Castilla la Nueva and Aranjuez, they reached Madrid.] The city was very large and densely built: it was Spain's capital of capitals. It lay on a hill near the Manzanares River, which added to its beauty and charm. It was planted with many tall trees of *nasham* and others on the river bank near the city,[30] all in straight rows, which cast some shade in the evening on the inhabitants promenading in their coaches near the river; those who did not own coaches went on foot. As we entered the aforementioned city, we found more people inside than those who had met us outside, and we

walked in wide streets and among high buildings, most of which were six or five floors. Each building had windows overlooking the alleys, made of glass and covered with protective iron bars. Its markets were full of traders, craftsmen and merchandise, but most of its vendors were women.

When we reached the gate of our designated residence, near the house of the despot, we found a large number of soldiers whom they called *shuldhādh* with weapons, drums and flags. The inside of the building was grand and very spacious, and it was adjacent to the house of the despot. They had spent a lot on furnishing it with beds and rugs, while the walls were covered with gold-threaded silk brocade. There were also countless silver plates, 500 silver candle-holders, and much more. As we sat down, the overseer came and greeted us again and told us that the despot was in the aforementioned city of El Prado and had ordered him to wait on us in this building and to be his representative in greeting us. He was to do everything that the despot would have done had the latter been here. We responded politely.

We entered Madrid in the evening of Wednesday 4th of Muḥarram, the beginning of 1194 [January 12, 1780] and stayed there for twelve days. … Then on the Sunday designated for our audience [with the Spanish king], they came in the morning to the entrance of our residence in numerous coaches, one specifically for us, which was the despot's, and the rest for our companions. We traveled because the *rey* was outside the city of Madrid in a small city called El Prado, one and a half hours away from Madrid, as we had mentioned earlier. We traveled steadily and in the middle of our journey we found six mules, which replaced the ones that were pulling our coach, and so we reached the aforementioned city in just about an hour. The road between Madrid and El Prado was very straight, with trees to the right and left intended only to furnish shade. The river Manzanares was to the left of the road, with countless wild animals that nobody bothered because those places were preserves exclusive for the despot where none could hunt but he. Also on the road from Madrid to El Prado there were lanterns on the right and north sides, all of them raised on colored wooden posts and kept lit from evening to dawn.

When we reached the aforementioned city, we first entered the vizier's house [Count de Floridablanca]. He greeted us and we sat with him for a while until one of the dignitaries in the personal service of the despot, called *cond*, came and greeted us and said that the *rey* was waiting for us.

We walked from the vizier's house, I mean from its interior, in a straight road (which was connected to other roads) until we reached the house of the despot. We entered the first door and found a number of dignitaries, who stood up, removed their sombreros, and welcomed us. We passed through another door and found another group of a higher rank, who greeted us, showing much friendliness. We continued through another door, and found another group that did the same.

Then we entered a domed hall and found the despot standing to receive us. To his right was a table covered with silk brocade, and around him were his viziers and the dignitaries of his court. He removed his sombrero from his head, and so I approached him and saluted him in the manner that *sharī'a*/law dictated.[31] He was very happy and asked us about our master, commander of the faithful, to which I answered:

> He is well, praise be to God. He asks God to help him fulfill his responsibilities towards his subjects whom God almighty has assigned him. He sends you his greetings because you are not like others among the *Rūm* rulers: you support him and help to fulfill his goals.

He replied: "I am at his command, heedful of his requirements, and we will expeditiously fulfill all that he wishes from us."[32]

I took out the sultanic lordly letter and placed it on my head, then kissed it and presented it to him. He held it with both hands and said: "This is my vizier and he will discuss everything with you."

We left him standing there and withdrew to another hall where we met his son, the aforementioned *brinsibī*/prince. We greeted him and he returned the greeting in the same manner as his father. We were then introduced to all his children, but not to his wife who could not come to see us because of illness. So she sent her children on her behalf. Everyone was very happy, for whoever is welcomed by the mighty rises in stature.[33]

The aforementioned despot is short, white, blue-eyed and very long-nosed.[34] He is old, sixty-five years, and constantly shakes, but he still likes to hunt and to ride his horses in hot and cold weather. For that reason, he does not go to Madrid, except rarely, preferring to stay in El Prado, from January 7 until their fast.[35] Seven days before the end of the fast, he leaves for Madrid where he completes the fast, spends three days after the feast,

and then travels to Aranjuez. He stays there to hunt and promenade until the end of June and then returns to Madrid where he stays for twenty days. Then he goes to La Granja where he stays till October 6; he then travels to the Escorial where he stays until the beginning of December; then to Madrid where he stays for eight days; then to Aranjuez where he stays for eight days; then back to Madrid where he stays till January 6. He does this all the time, traveling between the aforementioned places because he has gardens, orchards, parks and preserves with wild animals, which none can chase or hunt but he. When he decides to hunt in a preserve that is eight hours away, mules are sent to locations at distances of one-hour intervals. Six mules are used along with horses [for his coach], and so when he rides, he travels like lightning, with the horses running at high speed. After the first hour, the mules are untied and replaced by fresh mules, while the horses stay on. And then he starts again. After crossing a distance of another hour, he leaves the horses and the mules that had been pulling his coach and takes fresh ones. Altogether, he completes the eight-hour distance in two hours.

In the year we were there, the despot was staying in El Prado as was usual. It was time for him to travel to Madrid, seven days before their feast, but he did not because the wife of his son, the *brinsipī*, had been pregnant and was about to give birth. Because she was in bed, he decided not to leave El Prado until after her labor – and so he did not travel to Madrid but went directly from Aranjuez to El Prado.

The *brinsipī*, son of the aforementioned despot, had no sons, only daughters. Both he and his father were deeply distressed because they loved this transitory world and their kingdom very much. They wanted to pass it on to their successors. When we were in Madrid, and the aforementioned woman was pregnant and about to give birth, the despot sent his vizier to us saying: “The wife of my son is pregnant and her time of delivery is soon approaching. As soon as she does, the vizier will inform you so you can come and see the baby.” I replied: “We shall do so, and may the newborn be a male, God willing.” It so happened that three days later, she gave birth to a baby boy and so horses were sent to us from him at dawn and we learned for certain that a boy had been born to the son of the despot and the *rey* wanted us to join him.

We rode until we reached him and found him in great happiness. He was delighted to see us, we who were sent from our master and lord,

commander of the faithful. He then brought out the baby for us to see. That and the following two days witnessed great celebrations in Madrid: none worked at their crafts, and not a single store was open for buying and selling. Instead there was merriment and music, and at night people lit countless candles in the windows of their houses.

Let us pause and introduce this despot. He is of French descent but is not from the lineage of the first kings of Spain who fought the Muslims when they were in al-Andalus, God rest their souls. His name is Carlos *ṭersīr*, which means he is the third who carries the name of Carlos among those who have been kings in Spain. As for his parentage, he is the eldest son of Felipe V and the first of French descent to become king of Spain. He is the son of the *dauphin* of the French king Louis XIV. Five kings have reigned in Spain, all of whom were French: Carlos II son of Felipe IV son of Felipe III son of Felipe II son of Carlos V.

America[36] (89)

One of the Spanish despots, known as Catholic Ferdinand V, is buried in Granada, may God return it to Islam. He was the king of Spain but when he died, he left no male heir so his wife, Isabel, ruled after him. She was the daughter of the king of Aragon and remained on the throne for years. She used to ride and travel on horses, acting very much like men. During her time, sea captains discovered Indian land where the people were chaotic and living like brutes, with no weapons except reeds with flints, which they used for killing. When one of those sea captains saw them in that state and learned of their laziness and indolence, he sailed back and told the queen about them. She gave him ships with cannons and cavalry and so he sailed back to the aforementioned land and fought and defeated its people, capturing their king.

The Spaniards continue to own large regions and countries in India from where they receive wealth and goods on an annual basis. The money and bounty from those lands have made them the richest among Christians.

Carols V (90–91)

They mean by Carlos *kanṭ* that it is the fifth time that the name Carlos has been used among that nefarious dynasty. But he is the first king to reign over Spain who has that name. The daughter of Ferdinand reigned over Spain with her husband, and this son of hers, Carlos V, grew up into a deceitful despot from among the infidels, God destroy them. He was sly, vicious and crafty and never rested, giving up on rest and comfort, until he ventured and reigned and attacked and led armies both on land and at sea. They have counted the number of his naval attacks and found them more than twenty. It was he who attacked Algiers with a huge fleet, more than 300, with siege equipment, stone, lime and men. He landed there at night, and by morning there was a solid well-built tower with cannons that began to destroy their fortifications and ruin their houses. They [Algerians] were in great distress and he nearly conquered them, but then God refused but to make victorious His religion of truth over all other religions. The sea rose and the waves crashed and sank all his ships on which he had sailed, leaving the despot only seven ships after much difficulty. It was there [in 1541], they said, that he took the crown from his head and threw it into the sea saying: "If any one wishes to attack Algiers and conquer it, let him try."

It was this same Carlos V that attacked Tunis during that journey [actually in 1535] and seized the region known to them as *marsā*/harbor.[37] It remained in the hands of the Christians, God destroy them, for more than fifty years as it was reported until the army of the great king of Constantinople arrived, along with the late sultan, may God grant him glory and honor, Mulāy ʿAbd al-Malik [d. 1578], son of Muḥammad al-Shaykh, as is well known in another context. The tower that the aforementioned despot built is now on a hill overlooking Algiers, to the right of the ʿAzzūn Gate. This despot wrought havoc in all the lands of al-Andalus, France, Germany, and Valencia and other countries, and he became known as emperor. He had a son called Felipe *sekund* which means second, because the name had belonged to his grandfather who came from Flanders. The father, Carlos V, handed him the kingdom and then entered the monastic life of the friars, claiming to have renounced the world.

Expulsion of the Andalusians (Moriscos) (92–93)

After the death of Felipe II, his son Felipe III inherited the kingdom; he was the third whose name was Felipe and it was he who turned Madrid into the

capital. His ancestors had used a city called *Biad līd*/Valladolid as their capital, a city that was three days away from Madrid. The latter had not been a city of buildings, crafts, or trade as it is today, but once it became the capital, its visitors and houses increased, and it became very urban, with wide streets of cobbled stone and tightly built residences, so much so that, they said, about 15,000 people live in the grand plaza, which is the big market in the middle of the city.

During the reign of Felipe III, those who had stayed of the Muslims in al-Andalus left at the orders of his vizier. They claimed that the king of the Turks wrote to the aforementioned vizier, urging him to expel those overpowered Muslims who were still in the country and over whom the Spaniards prevailed. The vizier ordered his subordinate to drive the remnants out of al-Andalus because they differed in their religion from his. "There are many of them who are still alive for whom their [old] religion is not far away in time" he explained.

> Their numbers are high and we cannot be sure they will not revolt again as they had done during the reign of Felipe II, the father of this despot. It is imperative that they evacuate this land and that they be sent overseas and disperse in the lands of the Berbers.

The despot concurred with his vizier and ordered them to be rounded up and sent across the sea – except those who were forcibly converted.[38]

Miguel Casiri:[39] more information about America (95–98)

When we met the despot, as was mentioned above, and we presented to him the imamate letter of the Hashemite, Alawite ruler,[40] he handed it to his translator to translate it from Arabic to *'ajami*/non-Arabic. This translator was a Christian man from the East,[41] who spoke with an eastern dialect and knew all non-Arabic languages including Syriac, Farsi, Hebrew, as well as Arabic. He also knew their scripts. He translated the honorable letter to the despot in which our master, commander of the faithful, expressed his desire to liberate Muslim captives [held in Spain] and mentioned the alms he had sent with us to them. The letter also mentioned that we should visit the

captives and examine their conditions – an order of our master and lord, commander of the faithful, that they obeyed. Arrangements were made to fulfill what our master and lord had dictated.

During our stay in Madrid, the king always inquired after us, to make sure we were enjoying ourselves in his city. He sent dignitaries to visit us and he ordered all his viziers, as well as the visiting delegates from among the despots of the infidels, called *lanbashdrīs*/ambassadors, to pay their respects to us. Everyone came, such as the French ambassador and the ambassador from Naples, both of whom were special in the eyes of the despot and were distinguished from other Christian ambassadors. They were called *embajadores de familia*, which meant they were his relatives, because the French ambassador was of his dynasty, and the Naples ambassador was from his first kingdom and the kingdom of his heir and son. The ambassadors of Valencia, Malta and Dania also came, along with the ambassador of the pope, called *nuncio*, and others. By living there, these ambassadors served as intermediaries between each of their kings and the despot and presented matters from one to the other. Each stayed in his post for about ten years and then was replaced by a successor. Only the English ambassador was not in residence: he had left Spain because of the war between Spain and England.

The cause of the war is that the people of *Marka*/America are subjects of the English who grew so rich from the incomes they generated that they became stronger than all other Christians. It was mentioned to me that the English increased taxes and other customs duties on them and then sent them a ship full of tea and demanded that they pay for it an exorbitant price. They [the colonists] refused to pay and asked the English to accept the money that was their due and not to break the agreement between them. The English insisted that they be obeyed and so they [the colonists] broke away and became independent in their thinking. The French started sending them supplies to fight the English in order to weaken the English because they had the strongest naval power among all the Christians. The result was that the English were worn out, and so when they learned that the French were helping the people of America against them, they told the French to desist, but the French denied having any dealings with them [the colonists], although they were supplying them secretly [with weapons]. As a result, many wars broke out between the English and the French, and the English started searching all Christian ships at sea to find out their ports of origin,

destination and cargo. Among the ships that the English searched were Spanish ships and so the Spanish despot wrote to the English telling them to leave his ships and subjects alone and not to delay them because such actions contravened the peace agreement between them. The English did not comply and continued searching ships and so war broke out. The Spanish sent a huge fleet against Gibraltar and laid siege to it, having also sent soldiers on land, to prevent anyone sending goods or money or others to the English there. The siege is now in its tenth month and the Spanish are still sending soldiers to the aforementioned mountain.[42]

There is another big war going on in the Indies, and the French and the Spanish are allied together against the English.

Statues, skiing and the museum (100–106)

I saw in a space [in El Retiro] in front of the house a square pedestal around ten hand spans high, above which was a big copper horse with a copper statue of Felipe IV holding a staff that kings carry, called by them a *bastūn*. The horse was standing on its hind legs, raising it front legs. I wondered how the horse could stand on its hind legs, given its weight: the attendant had told me that the horse with the saddle and the figure on its back weighed 150 quintals. So I looked carefully and saw that there was a brass pole in the horse that was stuck into the pedestal, which allowed it to raise its front legs. None could see this pole easily except one who looked carefully. Similarly, there were two thick copper poles at the hoofs of the horse that were stuck into the pedestal. Because of these poles, the horse stood without moving.

I had read in the travelogue about Spain by Sidi Muḥammad al-Wazīr, God have mercy on his soul, that some craftsmen made a copper horse that emitted sounds as if it were neighing. When they wanted to mate two horses, they brought them before this statue and activated the machines inside it, whereupon it neighed: they hoped that the mare would produce one like it. I inquired about what I had read, but none knew anything about it; perhaps they stopped those machines and people forgot about them. Outside Madrid, there was another copper horse on a wide pedestal with the figure of Felipe IV, as they claimed, on its back. He was raising his hands and bending one of his knees. Both horses were made by the same person.

There was also a huge cistern [pool] in that park, which collected rain water from Alcalá de Henares, a village six hours away from Madrid. The cistern was built by Felipe IV and there were lots of small boats and birds in it. In winter, it sometimes froze because of the cold but Christians would walk over it. There were some people who inserted iron wedges into their shoes and, when the cistern froze, they slid over the ice as swift as lightning, unable to stop. When one of them wanted to stop and rest, there would be no way to do that except by moving slowly towards the edge, where the iron wedge got stuck in the ground. He then rested, after which he started again. I was told that such activity was common in Flanders, where people traveled with postal letters from one region to another, arriving as fast as possible.[43]

…

There was a large and well-constructed building in Madrid in which the despot kept numerous kinds of amazing wonders from land and sea, as well as gold and precious stones. They are indescribable… In some marble slabs, I saw drawings of trees similar to pictures in Christian houses. I asked the attendant about them, whether they had been drawn by hand and he answered that they were in the stone itself. I asked again, and he repeated what he had said, adding, "You have not been brought to this building except to see extraordinary objects." I saw there a bamboo shoot of forty cubits and a half in length and two hand spans in diameter, and I was told by the attendant that it had been brought from India. There was also in the building a donkey from India whose skin was lined, one line black and one white, each line about two fingers in width. There were two boys, one of whom had two heads with one body while the other had one head and four hands and four legs. There was a heifer with two heads while another had one head and two bodies. There was an animal with one eye in its forehead: it was pug-nosed and its head like that of a dog. Another dog had two heads and one body. There were snakes as long as walnut trees, countless sea animals, and strange birds with many different shapes. This house had amazing wonders that no book could encompass.

The aforementioned animals were dead and kept in camphor. They were kept in this building because of their oddity. I saw also a *fakrūn*/turtle shell that was bigger than a drinking bowl,[44] and a dog with six legs and a pig with eight legs, and another pig, the attendant said, whose meat weighed forty quarts and whose hide had been stuffed with straw. There was a sheep

with two tongues and I saw a white bird that was quite strange. In short, the wonders of this building are countless and they continue to collect everything that is extraordinary that appears on land and at sea from every region of the world.

In Madrid, I saw another place that belonged to the despot, where there was a bird called a parrot, which was 100 years old, and another dust-colored bird that they said came from *sūdān*/Land of the Blacks and was eighty years old. It used to belong to the despot's father and was still alive.

Another of the wonders of Madrid was the building in which carpets and curtains were woven. These were hung on walls, as we could see in the house where we were staying. All the walls were draped with them and they had amazing designs on them, which included humans of all colors, shapes, clothing, and faces, laughing or grimacing, busy in their crafts and professions.

Everything was extraordinary.

…

The coaches in Madrid were numberless, which was why their din was heard day and night, even after midnight. I was told by one who was knowledgeable that the number of coaches was 10,000 and that each coach is pulled by six mules. I learned that the number of mules is very high and that the despot collects a monthly tax on each coach mule by means of trustworthy men appointed by him. He collected a large amount of money that he then spent in repairing the city's narrow alleys and the cobbled stones in the walkways. What remained of the money was kept in reserve until there was need for new reparations. The streets of Madrid were wide and large and completely covered with stone. When a stone broke loose, well-trained workers replaced it. I was told by one who was knowledgeable about Madrid that the cost of each stone in the streets, along with other expenses, was ten large riyals.

Unique in Madrid is the absence of beggars from the streets, although beggars are numberless in other lands of the Christians. But in Madrid, the worst beggars are the friars, God destroy them and cleanse the land of them, for they have lost their way and led others astray. They are stubborn and relentless unbelievers and they have disguised their profession by feigning poverty. They are most deceitful and have tricked those donkeys whom God had stamped His [message] on their hearts: they have made them lose their reason so that they no longer recognize the benevolences of God after

submitting themselves to them. Those iniquitous friars have misled them and convinced them to confess their sins.

And perhaps a friar secludes himself with a beautiful and attractive woman, who can be seen walking languidly to confess her hidden guilt after pulling down the curtain. She tells him everything, even about committing adultery, after which he forgives her because she declares her intent to repent. Perhaps she tells him that she will return to him and leaves with her sins forgiven and her shame exposed to the world. During our stay in Madrid, the friars emerged between sunset and evening and lit fires on top of poles. They carried the picture that they claimed was of Lady Mary and were joined by castrated friars (they had castrated themselves to keep their voices soft). They sang in the alleys songs in which they invoked the picture – and so Christians gave them alms. They did not stop doing that all the time we were there, even though it was winter and very cold. They feigned piety and humility, trembling and shaking.

Bullfight (107–109)

There is a wide round space in Madrid, surrounded by houses that are decorated during a feast called the Feast of Bulls. A few days after the fast ends, they buy fat, strong-boned bulls from the villages near Madrid. As they approach the city with them in the evening, all the inhabitants go out to see them, adding a few more bulls kept for this feast. They drive the bulls toward a designated building as numberless Christian bystanders assemble there. On that occasion, the despot did not come, being in Branchobis [?], but he sent one of his personal assistants, who prepared for us two seats in the upper part of the building that he decorated with silk covers. One was for us and the other for our companions. He said that the despot had sent him to make sure that we watched this entertainment. So we joined him as he led us to the aforementioned place, which overlooked the building filled with people at the same time that youths were cavorting in the center. When they got ready to start, numerous men came out on horseback followed by ten others. I asked about them and was told that they were the judges: they cleared everyone out of the center and then each of them took his position while the ones without specific posts exited through the gate. They brought out a paper, which a Christian read loudly, and when I inquired about it I was told that he was warning people to stay in their seats and not to move,

and if anyone came down and was hurt by the bulls he should blame only himself.

Two horsemen then galloped in, each with a spear to fight the bulls. They stood near the gate from where the bull would come out, one to the left and the other to the right. Above the gate was a Christian with an iron-tipped rod who prodded the bull once the gate was opened. The bull charged out furiously, and when it saw all the people and was deafened by their shouting it grew more furious, but found nowhere to go in the plaza except in the direction of the two aforementioned horsemen, and so it dashed at one of them. With the spear, the horseman struck it between the shoulder blades: either he hits the bull before it reaches him and the horse escapes, or he misses it and the bull attacks the horse and gores it. The other horseman came up and the bull attacked in the same manner, and the horseman *fa immā wa immā*/either or either. Many horses died that day, but none of the horsemen killed the bull because the one to kill it was another person who came after them to fight it with a sword. As for the horsemen, they fought it for a while to demonstrate their courage, and either or either. After all that horseplay, youths viciously attacked the bull and struck it with iron-tipped spears that entered its flesh, adding to its fury. A horn was blown by the aforementioned judges and the man with the sword came out to fight the bull. He came out with his sword in his right hand and a red cloth in his left. The bull charged at him, but he diverted it with the red cloth; the bull charged again, and he swerved left and right and did not stab the bull, in order to demonstrate his courage. When he finally decided to kill the bull, he faced it with sword in hand, and as the bull ran at him he struck it with the sword between its shoulders; sometimes, it passed all the way through its joint. The bull fell dead and they came with decorated mules and tied the bull and dragged it out of the plaza. Then they brought another bull until they finished all the bulls they had.

If a bull refused to fight the horseman and fled, or if it refused to come out, they released big dogs trained to attack the bull that gripped it in its ears or its sides. The bull would be immobilized, and only with great difficulty would they be able to release it from the dogs. Then the man with the sword would kill it.

I saw some bulls that had killed a number of horses while the judges were standing behind the wooden barriers. If they observed an enfeebled

horse that had been gored by the bull but its rider continued fighting, they removed it and brought another in its stead.[45]

They made a lot of money from this entertainment because every house around the plaza could be rented for twenty riyals or thereabouts. All the money went to cover expenses and the rest was designated for the *sbitār*, which is their *maristān*/hospital.

The pope and the celebrations of Easter (109–112)

The bull fights take place after the forty-six days of the Christian fast. The last day of the fast is the day of the full moon in April, according to the Jewish calendar. The forty-seventh day is the Feast of Resurrection, which cannot but be on a Sunday. So, if the forty-seventh day is not a Sunday, but a Monday, for example, they subtract six days from the forty-six so that the feast falls on Sunday, and if after the full moon by six days, they do the same. In their fast, they refrain only from meat, because they drink a glass of chocolate in the morning. An hour after noon, they eat whatever they want of bread, fish, and vegetables; at night during their aforementioned fast, they eat dairies such as milk, cheese, lard, and eggs – but only if each Christian had bought a *būla*/bull, which is permission from the pope to eat the aforementioned dairy.

How this bull is acquired is as follows: numberless papal permissions to eat what was mentioned earlier are given by the pope to an appointee. Each Christian then pays a certain amount of money to acquire one of these papers that grant him permission to eat. Even the beggar collects money to buy a bull. A large amount of money is collected that way, which the despot spends on his navy.

Consider how deceitful and conniving the pope is, may God humiliate him. Every year he grants new bulls because the old ones become null and void: in this deceitful way, he amasses a lot of money. It is he, and completely according to his own will, who devises their laws of infidelity that permit or prohibit; it is he who can solemnize marriages that are otherwise forbidden, such as between a man and his niece. In their religion, such a marriage is prohibited and none can marry his niece [on the sister's side] except the one with money and influence. He spends a large sum in acquiring the bull, after which he is able to marry her with a trumped-up

justification. I learned that the governor of Cadiz was able to marry his niece that way.[46]

They follow the pope like his shadow, and are more pliant than the soles of his shoes.

Why there is a pope, according to these cross-worshiping infidels, is related back to when Christ, peace be upon him, ascended to heaven. They claim that he said to them: "This disciple is my viceroy so heed and obey him." They see the pope as equal to Christ, may God punish them: they cannot disobey him and cannot but follow his commands: any deviation from his opinion is apostasy.

How the pope is elected: a meeting is held of a specific number of monks from among the elders of their infidelity, each called a cardinal, who is one notch lower than the pope. When a pope dies, and rots in hell and tastes of hellfire, the aforementioned monks, who have the title of cardinal congregate, then each goes into his own room, supposedly to pray. None speaks to the other and they remain in isolation for days, it was said, even for four months. Once the time is up, each reflects on who of the aforementioned monks should be pope in the light of that person's religiosity and reliability. He writes the name on a piece of paper and drops it in a sealed box, which nobody can see. All do the same thing and when they are finished, they meet together in a *dīwān* and open the box and read the results. Whichever name gets the highest number of votes is chosen to assume that office – following this they make him swear to covenants that he will be honest and trustworthy, after which he demands of them obedience to his leadership. He then becomes pope – but only if he also has the approval of the despots of the worshippers of the cross, such as the Spanish, the French, the Portuguese and others. Each of these aforementioned despots sends a *nebshadris*/emissary to the pope to act as intermediary – as do the rest of the kings of the *'ajam/*non-Arabs, too. So when a pope dies, news of his death reaches all despots and then each of them informs his emissary that he does not approve of so and so – but approves of all others. When the monks finish their prayers and agree on the one to be pope, they inform the emissaries who are representatives of their respective despots. If they all agree, then it is done; if they do not, the monks have to reconsider, for none dares oppose the despot, try as he might. This aforementioned pope cannot but be from Rome in the land of

Italy; he cannot be a Spaniard or a Frenchman or from any other people lest he favor one people over another because of his *ʿaṣabiyya*/solidarity.

I wonder at the stupidity of these people: on the one hand, they do not trust him; on the other hand, they obey him.

Let us return to their wicked fast. As was mentioned, it entails not eating meat, unless one is sick or has enough social status to get permission from the pope or his delegate after concocting some excuse. The common people eat fish and vegetables and dairy, as explained earlier, drink as much wine as they want and use tobacco and have sex, even in adultery. In the year we were there, the pope permitted them to eat meat four days a week: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. They could not eat it on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. The reason why the pope permitted what was mentioned was that most of the fish sold in Madrid was brought by the English, and since there was war with the English, the amount of available fish was small, because the local fish was not enough for all the people. For that reason, the pope permitted the eating of meat on those days.

Theological debate with Casiri (115–116)

[Al-Miknāsī continued in his description of Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, and Pentecost, showing familiarity with the New Testament and its Arabic terminology, derived most probably from Casiri.] During our stay in Madrid, the friar translator to the despot used to visit us. He was proficient in the Arabic of the East and so one day we started talking about Christ, peace be upon him, and I said to him:

> "What is your view of him?"
> "He is the son of God," he answered.
> "What do you mean by 'son'?"

He said, may God demean him: "God has three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.[47] The son of God descended into the belly of Mary and so Jesus was formed one part human and one part divine."

I said: "God almighty is not confined to place and is indivisible in His essence. How do you say He descended into Mary's belly?"

He answered: "God almighty is omnipresent in His essence."

"That cannot be true," I said. "One essence cannot be omnipresent in space because God almighty is omnipresent in His omniscience."

He said, may God humiliate him: "If He is not in His essence in one place, then He will have to be somewhere else."

"We do not say that. Rather, we say that none knows where God almighty is except God Himself. He is with us in all places by His omniscience."

But the infidel persisted in his infidelity, may God destroy him, and so I continued about Jesus, saying: "According to your false claim that he is God: how could the Jews overcome him and do unto him what you state they did and he be unable to protect himself? That is a contradiction."

> "That was by His own volition."
> "Why?"
> "He wanted to save mankind from the sin committed by our father Adam because the children of Adam inherited their father's offense. He himself wanted to save them from sin and so he redeemed them by enduring that pain on condition that they pour water on their heads, the water of baptism."

The noun *ta'mīd*/baptism is Persian. Every new-born is taken to church and the priest pours the baptismal water on his head and pronounces that he has baptized him in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. So I said to him:

> "You claim that the Jews seized and killed and crucified Christ – they did not "but it was made to appear to them" [Q 4:157]. You also claim that those who disagreed about him had no certain knowledge, mere opinion, and that they did not kill him except in error. Is that so?"
> "Yes, in error."
> "You say that Christ wanted to save mankind from the sin of Adam?"
> "Yes."
> "So," I said, "what about those whom you claim did to him what you stated: he saved them from sin committed by others, but then they committed a more heinous sin than the first? But, in truth, Adam, God's prayers be on him, heeded the words of his lord and repented

and did not stain the children of Adam. 'No soul burdened can carry the burden of another' [Q 35:18]. Prophets are always forgiven and you admit to that – for they are children of Adam."

But he persisted in his reprehensible belief and went astray from the straight path.

Laws (120–121)

[Al-Miknāsī described a museum, a diamond factory, and the postal service.] All affairs are governed by very strict *qawānīn*/laws, so much so that you find their soldiers distinguished in rank, between the high and the low, by a specific marker on their clothes. And each rank has a set salary: the higher the rank the higher the salary. Another custom they have is this: that to be promoted, one has to be from among the dignitaries who have status and class. There is a special group of people who investigate the history and pedigree of the candidate for promotion: they search his background, checking on him, his mother, his father and forefathers, and if he comes from a distant land, they write to their counterparts there to investigate the history of so and so. They try to find out all they can and only when they feel absolutely confident that he is a pure Christian, son of a Christian, to seven or eight forefathers, does the despot give him a cross that he hangs on his outer garment near his chest. The despot appoints a person to accompany him and to don on him a white gown with a long tail that he drags behind him. Elders who have reached that rank then join him, each wearing a similar white gown, and they lead him to church so that people know that he is now one of the elders. After that they remove the white gown and keep it. It was said that when one dies, it serves as the shroud. The elder who dons on him the gown assumes the role of his father.

They have many customs and beliefs that are so wicked: God destroy them all.

The Escorial[48] (122–127)

We left Madrid toward Segovia to see the Muslim captives. They had been sent there to put a distance between them and the sea lest they escape. We

left on Sunday, the 10th of Rabīʿ al-Thānī 1194 [April 15, 1780] and spent that night in a village called Galapagar which we reached after five hours. Although the region was rough and rocky, the road was so straight and even that it was used by coaches and carts. We reached the aforementioned village and found welcome from the inhabitants, who put us up in the building used by travelers. They had prepared everything we needed because they had been informed we would spend the night there. On the following morning and as soon as we left the village, we saw the Escorial, which we reached after two hours, traveling on as a straight a road as the aforementioned.

The resident friars welcomed us because the despot had ordered them to show us hospitality and to admit us to the church and all their collections and libraries, including the books of the Muslims, God have mercy on their souls, and all around the despot's residence, his orchards and hunting grounds. The friars were happy to see us, as commanded by their great one, and they put us up in a place overlooking the despot's gardens. That evening, they accompanied us to the aforementioned church in the Escorial, and it was one of the wonders of the world in the height of its walls and the vastness of its construction.

It is simply indescribable.

It had three doors on the western side: the middle door was the entrance to the church, the one to the right led to the kitchen [refectory], and the door to the left led to the place where the friars did their readings [library]. It was all built with large blocks of stone resembling marble. Near the church entrance there were very tall columns, and above the entrance a stone carving of metal bars that looked like a *mashwā*/gridiron that is used for grilling meat. They claimed that it was the representation of Lawrence *al-rayyāl*, the monk after whom the aforementioned church was named. So I asked the friar about the iron rod in his hand and he said that during the time of *jāhiliyya*/ignorance, a people called the Romans captured the aforementioned monk and tried to force him into their religion. When he refused, they seized him and roasted him on that iron grill and tortured him, but he continued to resist until he died [d. ad 258]. That had been 1,500 years ago.

We entered the church door and found in front of it a hall leading to a large space. We saw six stone statues on the lateral side of the church courtyard, each standing on the top of a very high column, which, they

claimed, represented the kings of the sons of Israel. On the head of each statue there was a crown of copper alloy. The one to the left had an iron axe in his hand: they claimed he called the sons of Israel to the worship of God, but they fled from his words into the forest and so he cut the forest down to prevent them from fleeing and to preserve their faith. Next to him, the king held a washbasin in his hand, which they claimed to be a censer; the third, they claimed, was the statue of God's prophet David, on our prophet and him prayer and peace, and in his hand he held an instrument that they call *arba*/harp with many strings, which they claimed he played when he read the psalms. The fourth was of Solomon, on our prophet and him prayer and peace; I do not remember any of the other names. The chief friar [abbot] of the church told me that the six statues, along with that of Laurence at the entrance, are all made from one block of stone. We walked further into the church and saw a huge dome with the image of the crucified whom they worship, and under him, images of those they claimed were the disciples, all [gold] gilded. This church is one of the most spectacular in design: for at its center, there is a very high dome resting on very high columns, each about twelve cubits in height. The friar said that there was no greater church in the lands of the Christians than this one. It was tiled with marble and illuminated by many candles, even in the daytime. The friar then showed us all the valuables that were kept there, along with precious stones and gold and silver statues – which they will regret having on the Day of Judgment, God willing. He showed us a silver statue of a woman that weighed eighteen quarts: she held a golden dome weighing eighteen rotls in her hand. Next to it was the statue of Laurence, the aforementioned monk, with his shoes tied to his right and left wrists, and two glass encasements, one they claimed, containing the hand of his father, and the other, the hand of his mother.

We went down about fifty steps under the church and reached an octagonal chamber: there were six boxes of black marble in the wall of each of the eight corners, one on top of the other reaching up to the ceiling of the dome. The boxes were separated, each in its own place, with a lid of the same kind of marble, and all completely sealed. This chamber is the burial vault of the royal descendants of Felipe II who had built this church. Each box had the name of its despot written in gold, as well as the names of the wives of their kings. They showed me the box prepared for the burial of Carlos, the current despot. The walls of this chamber were of red and black

marble, polished and pure like mirrors. We then climbed many steps inside the church to the place where they celebrated their infidelity, called *mīsa*. It overlooked the church and had more valuables than the lower level, including a musical instrument that they used in prayer called an *orkān*. It had a tube and many lead pipes; it was playing as we entered the church.

We left there and went down to the despot's residence, which was very spacious, with domed rooms overlooking the royal gardens. In one of them, I saw a slab of black stone, half a hand span extending out below one of the windows, and on the floor, there were six lines, each two lines three feet apart. A very small aperture had been bored about half of a little finger above the window, from which sunshine entered at four o'clock in the afternoon. At the same time in January, at dawn, the sunlight shone directly on the diagram at the bottom of the wall, but as June approaches, the light at sunrise shines at the top, near the window. And then it is reversed in the following six months. We saw the same in another domed room.

The Arabic manuscripts in the Escorial (125–127)[49]

They led us into their library, where we saw carpets studded with precious stones, all for use in prayer during their religious festivals. They showed us a diamond that weighed two or three rotls and they led us up the stairs to the second storey of the library and into a large and polished hall where they kept the books of the Muslims, God have mercy on their souls, which were now in the hands of infidels.

They preserved the books very carefully, and none could enter that library, no matter who he was. On the door of the library, there was an inscription in non-Arabic to the effect that the pope had ordered that none take anything out of this library. Because the despot wanted to honor us, the keepers opened the library for us and showed us the books of the Muslims. There were 1,800 books, including two copies of the Holy Qur'ān, numerous books of exegesis with copious notes in their margins, and many books of medicine.[50] I perused what I could in the short time I had there, and then I left the depository with a fire of sorrow burning in my heart. I sought vengeance for these books, but no vengeance ensued.

I wish I had not seen them.

In short, the Escorial is one of the wonders of the world. It has around 6,000 rooms, as I was told by the head monk. When the despot visits the Escorial at his usual time, accompanied by all members of his court and their servants, they all stay there since it is big enough to accommodate them. And when the despot travels away, the friars use it. Today, there are 150 of those misguided friars who have not yet completed their studies and are receiving their instruction in infidelity. They come to the Escorial for their education but they also have another place to study near Madrid, called Salamanca. Whoever has not studied in both these places does not have the same status as those who have.

Segovia: the captives (128–130)[51]

We stayed in this city [Escorial] for a day to see all that has been mentioned, and on the following day we left for Segovia on a road built by the father of this despot. It was further expanded by his son, the despot Ferdinand, and completed by the present despot. It is open even in the most forbidding places in the mountain: they dug the road, which coaches and carriages use now with great ease.

When we reached the top of the mountain and started our descent, we saw La Granja to the right and Segovia to the left, apart by two hours. We continued to the city of Segovia and reached it after eight hours from the Escorial. It was clearly an old city, most of its buildings dilapidated and with no outside wall as was the case with other cities in Spain. The population appeared frugal and most of them active in craft; their women worked at looms a lot and they did not have the luxury of other *ḍāmāt* in urban centers, such as Madrid and Seville and others. The city was built on a hill overlooking a river called Eresma, but it had no gardens or orchards and no fruit-bearing trees, because, as the people told us, the weather was too cold and snowy. The governor of the aforementioned city met us, accompanied by many dignitaries, and led us to our residence. They apologized for their shortcomings after which the chief of police arrived with about fifty soldiers who stood guard, in accordance with the orders of their great one.

We spent the night there and in the morning the governor of the *qasbah*, which is known as the Palace, came to see us. The Muslim captives were

kept there so they would be far from the sea, lest they tried to escape: the *qasbah* was extremely secure because of its high walls and its surrounding moat. The governor greeted us and I told him that I wanted to see the captives, and so we agreed on a time. When we reached the aforementioned *qasbah* we found the overseer and others at its entrance – youths who were there to learn the use of cannons and artillery. As their notebooks showed, they studied geometry and arithmetic and lived in the *qasbah*, each sleeping in a separate bed, as their master showed us. He also showed us their classrooms. Afterwards, he led us to the hospital where there was a large cupboard full of medicines and ointments. The physician lived with them but in another location; and so did the master and his family. They had everything and did not need anything from outside the *qasbah*.

The Muslim captives were under the authority of the overseer, who led us to an upper level of the *qasbah* where they were held. He let them out and we greeted each other as they so loudly praised our master and lord, commander of the faithful that the whole building shook. We went into their place of confinement and sat with them to comfort them and to give each of them the alms that our master and lord had sent them. Each received five misqals, may God accept the charity of our master, commander of the faithful, victorious by God. We conveyed to them the good news that our master and lord, commander of the faithful, was striving to ransom and liberate them, and that we had discussed their case with the despot who said that he placed their fate in the hands of our master and lord, commander of the faithful, and that our master, victorious by God, was negotiating with the ruler of Algiers. "Soon, God willing, you will receive the good news." They were very happy and so we told them to be patient, to pray, and to be obedient.

The despot treated them well. He did not put them to labor, and made sure they had enough food and raiment, but he was strict that they should not be let out. We asked the Christian who was in charge of them and of the *qasbah* to be kind to them until God opened up a path for them. Soon, God willing, orders would be issued for their liberation. We received commitments about that and then left after we bade them farewell, with tears drowning our eyes and sighs tearing the wind.

Paper and *malaf* production (131–133)

In Segovia, they showed us the building where paper is made. They had diverted a wide canal from the Segovia River, over which they built the aforementioned building, so that all the machines used for making paper would be run by water. How they did that was as follows: they collected large quantities of tattered linen from various regions and stored them in warehouses, which they showed us. They then sent the linen in small quantities to old women, who separated them according to categories: the excellent, the medium, and the very bad. They threw each separate category of rags into a large wooden basin and then filled it with water that they could open and shut at will. After they washed the aforementioned rags clean, they took them out and stored them until they rotted and stank. After that, they shredded them to pieces and dumped them into a container thirty hand spans in length and five in width. The container had wooden rods, with knife-like metal heads that were activated by water, and these heads beat down on the rags until they became like dough. They transferred the dough to another place and the action was repeated. Meanwhile, they filled another basin with water and threw the mashed linen in it and stirred it with long beams. The master craftsman dipped a thin wire into the water and when he took it out, some of the white water came up, which another master caught and dropped on a small mat of alfa. He placed a cast on it, which picked up what was there, i.e. paper, and then he covered it with another mat. He repeated this action until he had a pile as high as half a man. They then moved the paper under a press, which they rotated until all the water was squeezed out. Another master removed the pile from the press and removed the upper mat and pulled the paper from under it and laid it on a flat surface. He continued doing so until he removed all the papers in the pile, spreading them one on top of the other, but because they were still wet, he placed them in a room specific for that purpose.

I was taken inside the room and I saw it full of paper, while another room was full of cow hides and pieces of leather, which they boiled in water. They boiled the leather because it served as starch, and then poured the water out of the basin into a stone container and brought the pile of paper, after it had dried and got stuck together, and dropped it into the aforementioned leathery water until the papers were soaked. They did that to all the piles. After that, they put the papers under the press to squeeze them dry and then took each paper separately, and blew air on it and hung it on a rope to stiffen. I did not mention this method except to note that the

Christians do not care about purity: the starch used from cowhides did not meet the specifications of purity according to *sharī'a*.

…

In Segovia, there is another building for the manufacture of *malaf*/thick cloth in various hues and colors. The master artisan showed us everything: the place of the looms and of dyeing, while the grand master artisan told me that the wool that was used had to be previously soaked in oil – a quarter of a rotl of oil for every rotl of wool. After the wool was soaked, it was taken out and dropped into urine because no soap could remove the smell and grease of oil; only urine could. They then washed it and when they wove the aforementioned cloth, it reached fourteen hand spans in length. They spread it in a place called *baṭan* and sprayed water on it, after which they took it out. By then it lost half or more of its length.

"La Granja, may God return it to Dār al-Islām": glass manufacturing (137)

There is in this city a building in which glass is manufactured. It was the despot who brought all the master craftsmen, and so everything they make is for him. There is also a section in the building in which products are sold at set prices for each glass piece, but as the master craftsman told me, the despot does not make a profit and actually loses every year about 15,000 grand riyals. He suggested to him to discontinue production but the despot refused and ordered him to continue: he was willing to accept the losses because he wanted to keep that industry in his country. They admitted us into the place where they made the aforementioned glass, and they showed us the furnaces that baked it and how it was made. It was amazing. They also showed us other houses in this city where craftsmen and artisans worked, including the house where Indian files and other objects were made.

Guadarrama: rodeo (138–139)

We went to see the despot [in his summer resort outside Madrid] and found him standing. He removed his sombrero and was very happy to see us and asked us about what we had seen of his parks and hunting grounds. We

thanked him for the hospitality, respect and welcome that people had shown us. He said:

> I want to make sure you are happy and satisfied while you are in my country as a sign of reverence to our master and lord, commander of the faithful, may Islam prosper with him and may he remain a refuge for the high and the low.

We expressed gratitude as was our duty and went to the house designated for us, where we found a large number of the despot's servants who had prepared foods and sweets for us. They said that the despot had "learned that you had come to Madrid on your own, leaving your servants behind, and he has sent you this food which he ordered that it contain nothing that is *ḥarām*." So we thanked them.

The despot sent one of his servants saying: "We have prepared an entertainment with bulls for you in the afternoon. You can then choose between returning to Madrid or staying here."

So I said to the servant:

> Thank the despot, as is appropriate, for everything he has done confirms his *maḥabba* toward our master and lord, commander of the faithful. As for returning to Madrid, know that I have no interest in Madrid or anywhere else. What I want is to fulfill the wishes of our master and lord, commander of the faithful, and to return to his felicitous gates, having completed my duties. I will stay with the despot here and will leave if he decides to leave or until he sends me back to our master and lord.

So he returned to his great one, who sent servants to Madrid to fetch our luggage and possessions.

Now to return to the entertainment of the bulls. We went at the appointed time and found the entertainment to be similar to the previous one. But there was more. They dug a hole in which they stuck a strong, perpendicular pole. Then they released a bull, whereupon the viewers started screaming and shouting, which enraged the bull. A horseman came out with a long rope in his hand, which he threw and looped around the

horns of the bull. He then started going around the pole with the rope pulling the bull toward the pole. The bull was then tied tightly by its hooves and head, and the horseman got off, saddled the bull, and climbed on its back. They then cut the rope that was tying it and the bull dashed wildly, going in circles, and jumping violently. The man on its back was in great danger but continued until he became exhausted. They then gave him a lance and another bull was released, which the rider fought. All that was going on was very dangerous because the rider could be gored by the other bull. Other things also happened during this entertainment.

During our stay in Segovia, we saw the captives and their leaders, who asked us to speak to the despot about them. So I did, appealing to his mercy, and he replied to me through his vizier saying:

> The despot says that you know that there are many [Spanish] captives in Algiers, so if he releases his captives, he will need others with whom to ransom his own there. When you spoke with him about the captives, he released two of them as a gift, just for you. It is not customary for him to release Segovia captives until all [Spanish] captives are ransomed. We are sending the two captives to you.

All members in the *dīwān* were surprised that the despot had released captive leaders, who soon reached us by the blessing of our master and lord, commander of the faithful, may God lengthen his days. We asked him to be kind to those captives that were still there until God opened a path for them at the hands of our master and lord, commander of the faithful.

I stayed in La Granja with the despot all of Jumādī al-Awal [May–June 1780], in which time he arranged for us to visit his gardens and orchards and promenades, the like of which was not found anywhere else. One day, he sent us an elephant to see, which had been brought from India with its trainers. The trainer rode on the elephant holding a crooked iron pole in his hand, with which he tapped the elephant's head to turn it left or right. The elephant was huge although young, around fifteen years old, and every day it was fed half a quintal of rice: praise be to God, creator of what He wills.

Books (144–145)[52]

On Sunday, the last day of Jumādī al-Awal [June 2, 1780], the grand vizier who ran all the affairs of the despot, by land and at sea, furnished us with the answer to the letter of our master and lord, commander of the faithful, which included the negotiated terms of peace. He also gave us a few of the books of the Muslims, God have mercy on their souls, saying:

> The despot sent you these books as a present after he heard that when you visited the library in the Escorial, you wanted to take some of the books of the Muslims out. He tells you that had the Escorial books been under his authority, he would have given you all that you desired, but they have been safeguarded in that place since the first kings and they are under the authority and eyes of the pope. After learning that you were unable to take some of the aforementioned books you wanted, he searched in the kingdom but found only these books, which he is sending you as a present.[53]

We were very pleased, thanked him, and wished him well. He then bade us fare-well and left.

"Our entry into Toledo, may God return it to Dār al-Islām" (146–150)

[They left on June 4, 1780, and although the road to Cartagena did not pass through Toledo, they asked permission from the king to visit it, because it had been a center of learning.[54]] We arrived at the residence that had been prepared for us and found the governor and city dignitaries at the entrance. They did not look as wealthy as those in Madrid, Seville, or Cadiz. Still, they were happy to see us and in that evening took us to the *qasbah* where princes of the Muslims used to live, God have mercy on their souls. They showed us everything there but we found no trace of the Muslims, God have mercy on their souls; everything had disappeared and all that we saw was the work of the Christians, God destroy them. We saw a place, built by Charles V, the emperor, for the production of silk, and a loom called a *ṭorn*, of which they had many. There were other machines too, producing various kinds of cloth and colored silk.

What was striking about these infidels was their attentiveness to worldly matters: they had gathered in that building a large number of orphans and widows to teach them crafts, each learning the craft of his choice. The despot covered all their expenses in food, clothing and other necessities until they mastered the craft and could support themselves.

…

They showed us the *isbiṭār*/hospital, which is what the *maristān* is in our country. It was very clean and spacious and had attendants who looked after patients, offering them treatment, food, and clothing. It was their custom to take the clothes off a patient when he was admitted, and give him other clothes that were suitable for confinement, after which he was attended to by the physician on duty. The patient would eat and drink in accordance with the instructions of the physician, and if he was cured he put on his own clothes again and departed, leaving behind the confinement garment. There was a special quarter for women where the attendants were old matrons, performing the duties of men. These hospitals were found in all parts of Spain, each with its own physician who had his own compartment of medicines; there was also a kitchen with all kinds of meats and game. If the physician ordered a specific kind of food for a patient, the cook prepared it.[55]

We entered the Great Mosque of Toledo, unmatched in its beauty, height, and columns anywhere in the world, a most extraordinary building. It was all built of stone that resembled marble, including the ceiling. The crypt did not have wood, and its floor was covered with black and white marble, but the Christians, God defeat them, had built churches [chapels] inside where they offered their prayers, called *mīsa*… One of the wonders of this Great Mosque was the single minaret, the like of which there was none in its beauty, built of the same stone as the rest of the mosque. To reach the place of the call to prayer, you climbed 200 steps, and from there to the very top was another 100. It was said that the height of this minaret was just about the same as that in Seville, this being one foot and a half higher. The width of the each minaret was fifty-one feet. At the top of the aforementioned minaret, there were nine bells, the central one of which was huge, about thirty-three hand spans in circumference, and its tongue was half a cubit long. It weighed 1,500 quintals and forty-eight rotls – as was indicated by some writing on it.

From the minaret we could see the city – large, full of buildings with white plaster roofs, like in other cities in Spain. The alleys were still narrow as they had been during the time of the Muslims, God have mercy on their souls. They were all cobbled with stone, and as we walked around in the alleys we passed near one of the city's greatest churches, built by Carlos V. We did not enter it because we had no time, but we saw that they had hung chains and locks on its outside walls. The governor explained to me that those chains had been used by Muslims for their Christian captives when Toledo had been in Muslim hands. After the demise of the caliphate, the infidels conquered Toledo from the Muslims in 478 [March–April 1086], during the reign of Yaḥya, known as al-Ṭāhir ibn Yaḥya, known as Ma'mūn of the Two Glories, son of the scribe al-Dhāfir Ismā'īl ibn 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn of Dhū-l-Nūn, known as Nāṣir al-Dawla, one of the Ṭā'ifa rulers. They kept the aforementioned chains and hung them on this church to serve as reminders of the past enmity of the Muslims, God destroy them.

…

There are many monuments of Muslims, God have mercy on their souls, in this city: the outer wall, the gates, the alleys, many of the walls, and the wells. The Christians still call the grand market in the middle of the city by its Muslim name, the Grand Market [Socodover/*sūq kabīr*]. So I asked one of the Christians with us what the meaning of the name that I had mentioned was, but he did not know. "This is how we heard it from our fathers, and they from theirs." The name was given in the days of Islam, but in the language of the Spaniards, they call a large space, *blaza mayor*. So too the bridge that we crossed: they call it Alcántara which is the name in Islam, although they do not know its meaning [Arabic *qanṭara*]. There are many other names that are still from the days of the Muslims, God have mercy on their souls. The present bridge is the work of Christians; perhaps the one built by Muslims had been destroyed by a flood.

Campo de Criptana: windmills, fireworks and a party in Gineta (152–155)

[They traveled through Nambroca, Almonacid de Toledo, Mascaraque, Mora, Consuegra, Madridejos, Alcázare de San Juan.] We continued and to our left in the valley appeared a village called Campo de Criptana, and to our left, about a mile away on the hill above it, there were windmills. This

village, along with the rest of the region we crossed since leaving Juan two hours earlier, was full of fields planted with vines and olives. After six hours, we reached a village called Socuéllamos, where the governor and the locals greeted us very warmly, saying they came out to meet us by order of their despot who wanted them to do everything for us, as a mark of respect to our master and lord, commander of the faithful. We stayed in the house designated for us until after we finished our noon prayers, and then we traveled, crossing open fields for six hours, to a city called Villarrobledo. Men and women came out to meet us, with drums and pipes, shooting fireworks into the air. They were very happy and took us to their village and into the house prepared for us. It was like a big festival for them and the inhabitants of the village congregated in the house, drinking chocolate and eating sweets – all as an expression of their hospitality. We stayed there and in the morning we departed, passing near a large number of windmills.

The region of Mancha is full of soil, rocks and shrubs, and completely cultivated. After four hours, we reached the village of Minaya, where we slept for a short time before our noon prayers. We continued for two and a half hours to a village called La Roda and then to Gineta, altogether spending ten hours since leaving the village where we had spent the night. The inhabitants showed much happiness in welcoming us and offered us a large house for our residence. We spent the night there and continued in our travels, leaving the region of Mancha and entering the region of, and the first village in, Murcia.

Most of the Mancha sheep have black skins, but the goats are white; the region has no water except in wells.

The inhabitants of Gineta welcomed us warmly and put us up in a house, as we have mentioned, one of their finest. In the evening, all the city dignitaries came, men and women, bringing musical instruments, a high sign of hospitality. They asked our permission to enter the house with their instruments and women *ḍāmāt* to dance, as is their custom. I could not but agree since they were doing everything in honor of our master and lord, commander of the faithful, and his servant. As soon as women and men walked in and stood together, the musicians started playing. Suddenly, the judge came swaying among his followers, having shaved off his beard and spruced himself up. There was great excitement at his arrival, everyone deeply appreciative of his joining them and they said to him what was meant to be: welcome, welcome. He sat down, looking left and right, rather

grimly and then he heaved himself and tightened his belt, stepped onto the dance floor, and said: “Let the oldies retire. Anyone to dance?” He then walked over to a virgin whose beauty dominated the whole assembly and removed his sombrero and called on her, saying, “I mean you and will not accept rejection.” And so he danced with her in his arms, his feet nimbly shuffling, totally heedless of the people who were there, the few and the many. How shameful! May God rebuke them and humiliate their audacity.

Elche: nuns and olive oil (157–159)

[They continued through Albacete, Petrola, Montealegre, Yecla and Aspe until Elche.] That evening, we went to see women nuns, called *mokhāt*. They live in a locked house from which they never leave. None visits them, and if one of them becomes sick, the physician comes to the house and the caretaker and some old women lead him in, surrounding him on all sides, and a monk enters with him. He examines the patient and prescribes the medication and then leaves. When one of them dies, she is buried in a cemetery inside the building. There is a large window in the building wall with a wooden panel: if they want to send anything out, they place it on the panel and rotate it to be picked up outside by the one in authority; the same is done if they want to receive something from the outside.

The truth about these *mokhāt* is that if a young girl or a woman chooses to become a nun and separate herself from people and live ascetically, or so they claimed, she enters a house that they call *alkanbant*/convent, and remains there for a year. Then, she is asked whether she wants to leave or whether she yearns for the things of the world, and if she decides to leave, then none stops her. But if she decides to become a nun and renounce the world, marriage, and everything else, she takes a vow that she no longer desires anything of the world’s transitory things and enters into this depraved contract, which deviates from the path of truth. Henceforth, she will never be able to leave, nor have a desire to leave.

When we got there, the caretaker opened the gate for us and brought out all the women and young girls. We greeted them and they were very happy to see us, and they asked us to join them for a while. So we conceded, just for their sake, after which the caretaker started describing to us their ascetical life and their poverty, and then complained about the people in the city who never helped them by sending them alms. In that manner, she cast

her net and prepared her trap. Because we had with us many dignitaries from among the *Rūm*, I made her a donation, although it was against my better judgment that I should help infidelity. She asked me about our master and lord, commander of the faithful, saying that since he cut off foods from their region, prices had soared. Having turned his face away, she implored, would he not resume his help to them?

I said to myself, "May God tear out their hearts." Then they rose to bid us farewell and we left them.

In the evening, the governor of the city and its dignitaries and their wives came to see us, bringing with them their music. They stayed for an hour, men and women dancing, as was their custom when they wanted to show hospitality. They served food and drink to all the inhabitants, saying they were obeying the despot's orders towards our master and lord, commander of the faithful. This city was two hours away from the Shāmī Sea and was full of gardens and orchards and palm trees, but most of all, olive trees. Its governor told me that the total income that year from its olive trees was 48,000 grand riyals. There were 121 olive presses, many in the city, but the larger number was in the fields.

Murcia: ship-building and captives (160–165)

[They crossed Oriheula into Murcia.] The city had been in Dār al-Islām, but very little was left of the Muslims, God have mercy on their souls. There were some walls and outside the city were two fortresses, one on top of a mountain and the other opposite to it on a hill. Some Christians told me that these were built by Muslims and they used them to lay siege to each other during the reign of the Ṭawā'if kings/Faction Kingdoms [ad 1008–1091].[56]

The inhabitants of this city welcomed us profusely and in deference to our master and lord, commander of the faithful: may God preserve him for the religion of Islam and help him defeat the unbelieving infidels, making him a mote in their eyes. … One evening, men and women gathered together and brought a musical instrument called a *klabi*/clavichord, so big that six or eight people had to carry it. The *ḍāmāt* danced as was their custom: you found a man sitting while his wife or daughter danced with a stranger, sometimes whispering and laughing, showing neither discretion nor embarrassment. Nobody cared about other people's talk: the indecency and debauchery rampant in their country are common knowledge. Although

they know about each other's misdeeds, nobody cares, for they were born without jealousy, may God demean them and cleanse the land of them.

There were nine convents in this city with *ifraliyāt*/women friars, and when we climbed to visit the minaret, they went up to the roofs and walked around in their glittering clothes, greetings us from afar. We saw them.

We then left, and after nine hours reached the city of Cartagena. It was a medium-sized city with many crafts and goods, with women forming the majority of traders. Because of its excellent harbor and attractive buildings, many of the Christians of Malta seek it either to trade or to escape storms in the Shāmī Sea. The sea forms a kind of gulf, and so they built docks from its bottom up, surrounded on the shore by large warehouses for ships. They also built huge storage areas for the masts: each had a gate, and so they unloaded the masts into the water and dragged them with ropes into the nearest storage. So much do they care for their navy, God destroy them, they have built a quay where each ship is docked. Written on each is the following: "This is the quay of the so and so ship, and its captain is so and so," as I was told by the port chief.

This harbor has two piers, one for the ships of the despot, near to the city, and another away from it, for all other ships. There are two towers there and every night, they stretch a chain over the water from one tower to the other, thereby protecting the despot's ships. No ship can then enter or leave. This chain is made of three huge masts, tied together by iron. One is tightly tied to the tower and the other is tied to it, and the third is tied to the other tower with a huge lock that is not opened until morning.

One of the extraordinary things in this harbor was the dry dock they built on both sides of the harbor. The dock was extremely well designed with a huge lock that was open towards the sea. When the lock was closed, it was so tight no water could enter. So, when they had a ship in need of reparation, they opened the lock of the dock and water poured in, carrying the ship with it. Then they closed the lock and used machines called *bunba*/pumps that were at the waterfront. They had heavy chains, which were manned by workers, captives and criminals. Theirs was an enormously exhausting labor. The pumps empty the water from the dock, leaving the ship on the ground, just as it was when it was being built. Then the master repairmen descend and fix it. When they decide to take it back into the sea, they open the locks and the water fills the dock, allowing the ship to sail out.

I saw two docks with two ships of seventy cannons each. On the lateral sides of the harbor was a ship-building facility with around 2,000 workers, not criminals, but men of every profession that pertained to ships: carpenters, blacksmiths, sail makers, rope makers and others.

The inhabitants of this city [Cartagena] welcomed us and then accompanied us to the house that was assigned for our residence. The military commander arrived with soldiers whom he posted at the entrance of the house. Although they were very generous in hosting us, I told the city governor that I desired that we continue the following day to see the Muslim captives in order to deliver the gifts sent to them by our master and lord, commander of the faithful. He acceded.

The next morning, I went to the harbor because the captives were there. We found the governor and his soldiers, may God humiliate him, standing there, across from the Muslim captives. When we reached the captives, they all raised their voices in praise of our lord, commander of the faithful, wishing him victory and power. Their voices and pleas to our master and lord grew so loud that the hair on our skin stood on end. The governor permitted them to step out and see us. They were in such a condition that the rocks would have softened at their sight, forcing tears from our eyes, and melting the hearts in our chests. Even the hearts of infidels would break by their cries.

I was agitated and bewildered, and so I started encouraging them by telling them that our master and lord, commander of the faithful, would not desert them, and that, in obedience to his orders, we and the despot had discussed their ransom or their exchange with the Spanish captives in Algiers. I continued:

> Our master and lord, commander of the faithful, and we, in obedience to his noble command, had discussed exchanging you with the Spanish captives in Algiers. The despot asked our master and lord, commander of the faithful, to conduct negotiations and so he wrote to the ruler of Algiers in regard to ransom. Soon, God willing, He will send you ease.

We then delivered to them the gifts that our master, commander of the faithful, had sent them, may God almighty accept them from him, and

reward him in the life hereafter.

The governor went over to the captives and selected thirty men from among them and said: "All these have been released by the despot as a gift to our master, commander of the faithful, on the occasion of your visit here." He then removed their shackles and they praised God for the blessing of our master, may God strengthen him. I saw the miserable and hopeless condition of the other captives because they had received no help from the ruler of Algiers: they had despaired of any succor except from God through our master, may God strengthen him. So I wrote to the vizier, telling him that his master had been generous and gracious to us.

> But as you know, on arriving in Cartagena, I distributed alms to the captives whereupon they sought the help of our master, may God make him victorious. Since they sought his protection, I cannot ignore them nor desert their cause. To God belongs the past and the future.

The despot was told what I had said, for nothing escaped him. So we waited in Cartagena for his answer, which came a few days later. He ordered the governor of Cartagena to release to us every captive we wanted, but added that some of his subjects were captives in Algiers, and he needed the Muslims to exchange them with his subjects. Otherwise, he would have released them all. And so I was able to take with me, by the grace of God and the blessing of our master, may God strengthen him, ninety-two captives, over and above the earlier thirty. We chose the children, whom we feared might be led to infidelity, God forbid, and the aged and the disabled and those who had been in captivity for nearly thirty years. I did not want to fail or delay their liberation, since everything I did was by the authority of our master and lord, commander of the faithful, may God accept of him all his deeds and not deny us the blessing of his gift.

I rented a ship and sent the captives from Cartagena to Ceuta, may God return it to the house of Islam, because our master had ordered us to return there. Meanwhile, I traveled by land to the city of Granada in order to visit it and then to the place where two seas meet in order to cross to Ceuta, as I will describe later. The released captives were all from Algiers and its *iyala*/regency, but our master, may God strengthen him, did not leave them behind: actually, he had already ransomed, in installments, over 2,000

captives. Some fourteen years earlier, our master, may God strengthen him, had insisted to the despot on ransoming the aforementioned captives by exchanging them with Spanish captives in Algiers. The despot agreed and asked our master, may God make him victorious, to negotiate the exchange. Our master wrote to the ruler of Algiers urging him to agree to the exchange, and then, he informed the despot who went ahead and released all the Muslim captives into ships and sent them to Algiers in exchange for the Christians held there. The ruler of Algiers, however, took in only the Turks and refused to take the Arabs: he wanted money for the Christian captives and did not baulk at returning the [non-Turkish] Muslims to captivity in the lands of the infidels.

Behold this evil and most horrible deed.[57]

Granada: "Al-Hamrā', may God return it to Dār al-Islām" (166–167, 176–183)[58]

After I sent off the captives to Ceuta, I traveled from Cartagena to the place where the two seas meet. We reached a village called Fuente Alamo de Murcia after four hours and stayed in the governor's house. He was happy to see us, and his wife brought us what there was of food, also showing happiness, like him. Then she brought her daughters who played on their musical instruments and danced.

Funtī means fountain, and the city has a fountain of sweet, smooth water that descends from the top of the mountain. After praying the afternoon prayer, we left for a city called Totana. [They continued to Lorca, Puerto Lumbreras, Vélez-Rubio, Chirivel, Cullar da Baza and Iznalloz. They reached "the City of Granada the Red, may God return it to Dār al-Islām" and al-Miknāsī gave a history of the city.]

…

When we climbed to al-Ḥamrā' from Granada, we entered the gate of the *qasbah* called the Gate of Pomegranates, a name from the time of the Muslims, God have mercy on their souls. We arrived at the residence of the Christian king and found the chief Christian officer standing there with his soldiers. He showed much deference and respect in his greeting and then he let us in and led us through its domed rooms and palaces.

It was one of the wonders of the world in the mastery of design and beauty of construction. There were gardens on all sides, with white rooms and palaces, like shining planets at night, or a sea overflowing its banks with glittering streams of water, marvelously conceived. The plasterer had worked meticulously in the rooms and palaces, and most of what he had inscribed was in beautiful Arabic calligraphy that has remained in perfect condition, such as "No Victor but God," which is the most frequently repeated inscription, and "Thanks be to God for the gift of Islam" and other Qur'ānic verses such as the Sura of "I seek refuge with the Lord of the break of dawn" [Q 113] and "Know that there is no god but God" [Q 47:19], and the verse of the Chair [Q 2:225] and others for which I have no space to write down.

As for the poetry, the heart was sad to read it. In one of the square-shaped rooms, the following lines of poetry were written, in thirty hand spans above a water fountain (in the *kāmil* prosody):

> My fingers have striped the brocade, after it arranged the jewels of a crown/ and decorated the bride's chamber: I have secured the happiness of married couples./ Whoever comes complaining of thirst, my fountain is of pure and refreshing water./ I am like the rainbow when it appears, but the sun is our master: Abu al-Ḥajjāj,/glorious in his deeds, whose house is the *qibla*/destination of pilgrims.

And:

> Glory to our master, the sultan, the king, the warrior, Abu al-Ḥajjāj, may his victory be celebrated and his conquests proclaimed – our lord Abu al-Ḥajjāj, commander of the faithful, may God succor his cause and glorify his victory. "Whatever blessings you possess come from God"
>
> [Q 16:53]

Abu al-Ḥajjāj is Yūsuf ibn Ismā'īl ibn Faraj, known as Abu al-Ḥajjāj, the seventh in the Nasride dynasty. He ruled as king after his father on 14 Dhū-l-Ḥijja, 733 [August 26, 1333], when he was fifteen years old. He died a martyr at the beginning of Shawwāl 755 [October 19, 1354] when he was

performing the last prostration during the feast prayer by an evil defector who stabbed him with a dagger. God granted him martyrdom, after which the defector was captured and burnt.

The officer showed us a large palace with white marble columns, and as we entered one of the domed rooms, he pointed to a spot saying that there it was where the king of Granada slaughtered some of the children of al-Sarrāj. During the reign of Sultan Ḥasan, the last of the Granadan kings, as the Christians claim in their histories, some of the Granadan sons of Zakari betrayed one of al-Sarrāj's sons, alleging that the latter had had some relationship with the king's daughter-in-law. The king became furious with the sons of al-Sarrāj, who were his allies in Granada, and slaughtered many of their elders under that dome. In those days, the sons of al-Sarrāj made up the strongest unit in the Muslim armies and they lived in the aforementioned Andújar, which was still in their hands after the infidels had conquered Cordoba. When they heard of the killing of their brethren in Granada, their strong sense of kinship and their fury drove them to join the despot in power then and convert to Christianity and march against Granada. Afterwards, they joined the despot, the aforementioned Catholic Ferdinand V, in the wars against Granada as he laid siege to the city and brought his armies and soldiers on 12 Jumādī al-Thānī in 896 [April 22, 1492].[59] He destroyed all the fields around the city and tightened his grip on people, preventing entry into the city and blocking its gates. The war lasted for seven months in which time nothing was brought into the city and all access was sealed.

The enemy was determined on taking Granada, and when the situation became dire for the Muslims, the learned and wise among them who were in the Red City agreed to commit the lesser of two evils, which was to reach a compromise with the despot over Granada. They wrote down sixty-seven articles, to which both parties agreed, and swore allegiance to the despot. The sultan of Granada left al-Ḥamrā' on 2 Rabī' al-Awal 897 [January 3, 1492] and the Christians took over al-Ḥamrā' and marched into it after taking some 500 Granadan dignitaries as hostages, fearing treachery.

Afterwards, the despot fortified al-Ḥamrā' and deceived the sultan, demanding that he leave the city. He gave him a pass so that none would block his departure to wherever he wanted to go, and so he sailed and landed in Melilla and then settled in Fez, where he died in 940 [June–July 1534]. The Christians then broke the terms of the covenants they had made

and forced Muslims to convert to Christianity in 904 [August–September 1499].

This is the summary. Whoever wants more should turn to other sources.

The aforementioned sultan who lost Granada was Abu ʻAbdallah Muḥammad, and with him the Andalusian kingdom of the Muslims came to an end. He was the son of Sultan Abu Ḥasan son of Sultan Saʻd, son of Prince ʻAli, son of Sultan Yūsuf, son of Sultan Muḥammad, victorious by God, who had been the original builder.

All is in the hands of God. What a calamity it was for Muslims. "We belong to God, and to Him we shall return" [Q 2:156].

The enemy of God buried Queen Isabel in the Great Mosque of Granada, may God increase her punishment in death and on the Day of Judgment.

…

I climbed to the top of the mountain from where I saw another mountain across the valley. There was a cave, which historians mentioned had been the Cave of the Seven Sleepers [Q 18:9–26]. I asked the Christians about it and they told me that it had been known to them since olden times because of unidentified dead people there. A Christian told me that he had entered the cave eighteen years before and found the bones of those people, still intact, so we sought their blessing, assuming they belonged to the Sleepers. This mountain with the cave is across from al-Ḥamrā' overlooking the valley that leads to Granada. Some explained to me that the city that is near the Cave of the Sleepers is known as Ṭarsūs, but God knows best.

Carlos V, one of the despots of Spain, built near the royal al-Ḥamrā' complex a very large building that rivals those of the Muslim kings. But the similarity is only external.[60] The enemy of God died before he completed it and it remains unfinished. We met some solitary monks in a large building: they never leave it nor does anyone enter except those who serve them. They are known as *Carṭūkhas/* Carthusians and claim to have renounced the world and isolated themselves from people. Whoever enters with the intent of becoming a monk never leaves the building. I asked one of them how long he had been there and he answered, about thirty years. They are like the women known as *mokhāt*, described earlier. They admitted me to all their churches and showed me all the valuables there, but they did not let me in the Grand Mosque and when I asked why, I was told that if we entered and passed by the crucifix, which they worship, we would have to

do what they did. So I complained that we had been to the Escorial and to all the churches of Spain and no one expected us to do that. “Is it,” I continued, “that the God you worship is greater than theirs?” The other monks promptly rebuked him, saying that he had scandalized them – which was what I wanted others to hear. They then invited me to go in but I refused, may God demean them and cleanse the land of them.[61]

God has selected this city for silk unlike any other. Workers produce numberless designs on woven silk. Only the aforementioned city of Murcia exceeds this city in silk production, but from there, silk is brought to Granada to be manufactured in larger quantities than in Murcia.

We stayed in Granada for three days and the inhabitants, one and all, were very happy to see us. To celebrate our presence, they distributed sweets and drinks to everyone who came, high and low, in houses as in alleys, while constantly explaining that their great one had ordered them to do so. They constantly apologized for any shortcomings and we reciprocated their generosity with what was appropriate. There were many people in Granada who were of the remnants of al-Andalus, some of whom openly proclaimed their lineage, while others did not. One of the police men came to see us, a rough man of authority who was harsh to Christians to the point of beating or cursing them. He said: “I am of the Muslims and I do what I do because I want to hurt those infidels. I am one of the sons of Ṣayrūn.”

We stayed in Granada for three days and then traveled for two hours through its gardens and fields, stopped in the building for travelers, and after performing the afternoon prayer, we continued to a city called Loja [and from there to Almeda and Pedrera].

Pedrera (184–185)

We stayed in a house of one of the dignitaries, who was very happy with us and said: “I am of the sons of Aragon and I love Muslims.” I replied: “There are brethren of yours in our country who are of the best among us. Why don’t you go over?” He answered: “I will go, God willing, to see the country and trade.” He stayed with us all the time and brought us seasonal fruit and vegetable. He was so eager to be hospitable and to show generosity that he said that he had old wine from so and so year and he wanted to honor us with it. I told him that we could not drink it because it

was forbidden. He was hurt, since offering wine was a great mark of generosity. We stayed in his house until after we had prayed the noon prayer, and he bid us farewell with evident *maḥabba*.

The return to Meknes, via Tangier, with 136 captives (189–194)

[They continued to Osuna, Puebla de Cazalla, El Arahal, Los Morares, Las Cabezas de San Juan, Lebrija, Jerez de la Frontera ("see its description in the beginning of the book"), Medina Sidonia, and Tarifa where they boarded the ship.] A stormy wind rose from the east, and prevented us from boarding the ship to Ceuta. Then the sea captains told us that God had sent us a westerly wind, and they transported our luggage in their boats to the ship. In the morning they came to us saying that they were ready to sail. We walked with them to the harbor whereupon the governor of the city [Ṭarifa] and other dignitaries went in their boats, which were all decorated in silk; even the crewmen wore gaudy uniforms. As we drew near the ship, the governor brought out the cannons on board, while many colorful flags fluttered, including the red flag of our master al-Manṣūr, which rose above all others. Everything was done in honor of our master, commander of the faithful, may God glorify Islam through him. The captain showed me how much they revered our master, God strengthen him.

When we climbed into the ship, he brought out all the cannons, as a sign of happiness, while Christians swung from ropes and masts, declaring what was translated as: "God extend the years of our master and lord, commander of the faithful." We entered into the place, called *qāmira*/cabin, and found chairs and various amenities, and then the anchors were weighed and the sails were unfurled and we launched toward Ceuta. We had a good wind and reached there after an hour and a half and cast anchor. Small boats full of the soldiers of infidelity came to welcome us and to lead us to the city. We stayed on board the ship until sunset, when the boats were readied, and then we got into them, whereupon the captain drew up all his cannons and pushed on, followed by the ship on which we had sailed, along with other ships from the navy. They hung numerous flags of different colors on the masts and ropes, expressing their joy and calling out the name of our master and lord, commander of the faithful. Every ship that sailed by us drew up its cannons until we reached the city where we disembarked. Again, they brought out the cannons as the seamen had done before, and we

found at the entrance of the harbor a large group of the infidel leaders and behind them soldiers and local inhabitants.

The leaders of the infidels showed us unprecedented humility and submission, in word and deed, in clear awe of our master and lord, commander of the faithful, may God glorify Islam through him. They said that their great one had ordered them to meet us and attend to all our needs, and so they led us to our designated residence, the one in which we had stayed the first time. After we settled in, the chief officer came with a large number of his soldiers carrying their flags and drums: he posted them at the entrance and came up to tell us that by order of his great one, he was at our service. I told him to leave a few of the soldiers at the entrance and to send the rest away – which he did.

The city governor brought a letter from our master and lord, commander of the faithful, which was to be delivered to us as soon as we arrived. It contained the orders of our lord, God strengthen him, to remain in Ceuta, assure him of our arrival, and to await his noble orders. Promptly, we wrote to our master and lord telling him of our arrival in Ceuta, may God return it to Islam, and we awaited his orders, as our master and lord had told us to do. We stayed there for thirty-six days, in which time we received numerous letters from our master and lord in regard to various matters. Meanwhile, boats from Tetuan and Tangier arrived, by order of our lord, victorious by God, carrying sheep and cows and other provisions for us in order to show the excellence and glory of Islam, which cannot be hidden. May God accept this deed from our master and reward him for his generosity.

In Ceuta, we asked the governor to fetch the marble slab on which the Qur'ānic verses were inscribed and that had stood on the tomb of 'Ali ibn Ḥammūd al-Idrīsī, as was mentioned at the beginning of the book. I had learned, while in Madrid, that the aforementioned governor had kept it and had not sent it to Tangier or to Tetuan but had reneged on his promise. So I asked it of the vizier, who sent him the orders of the despot to deliver it to us: and so when I demanded it, he could not but instantly bring it and I took it into one of the ships of our lord, victorious by God, which had recently arrived in Ceuta. I sent it to Tetuan and it is now in the Grand Mosque in the courtyard to the right of the entrance…

On the third day of Ramadan [September 9, 1780], we were ordered to prepare to go to the Alawite imamate presence with the Muslim captives whom God had freed from captivity. Our lord, may his generosity ever

remain, sent enough mules and horses for transporting us and the captives, which waited for us outside Ceuta. We received news of their arrival by means of the translator of the city, and so we made ready to travel, and after two days we asked the governor to release the captives from Ceuta whom the despot had given us. We had asked for them on arrival and he brought them out and when he unshackled them they became new people. They thanked God almighty, as we did, and we added them to the Muslim captives we had brought, and then they all hailed our master and lord, commander of the faithful, may God glorify Islam through him. On the evening of the sixth day of Ramadan, we prepared to leave, and the infidels, may God defeat them, paraded their soldiers from Ceuta, all dressed in elaborate uniforms and marching in strict formation. They were so many that they filled the whole space. Each unit wore different colors and carried drums and pipes, as is their custom during marches, which follow the beating of drums, as was mentioned earlier. When they were ready, the city governor, the dignitaries, the judge and *al-bosb/*bishop, who is like a mufti, came to us. They found us about to leave, so they entered the house in which we were staying, showing great respect, and we left with them.

No man or woman in the city but came out to bid us farewell, filling the alleys, rooftops and towers.

We walked past their fortifications and defenses, which they have built because of the fear that God instilled into their hearts of Muslims, and which keeps them sleepless and restless. They showed us all their defenses, one by one, and as we traveled farther, we saw even more, by far more fortifications than the ones inside, may God make them the cause of their destruction and demise. We continued and found the Christian soldiers lined up in proper formation with their drums and pipes. We passed in front of them accompanied by the governor and the city dignitaries and reached the horses of the Muslims that our master and lord, commander of the faithful, had sent. There were also riflemen intent on *jihad* against the infidels, God destroy them. They greeted us and the captives ran out, shouting and jumping in joy. From their side, the Christians fired their guns in celebration, and so we turned to the city leader and to the dignitaries and bade them all farewell, with whatever words would make them happy. At that point, they turned back, and we continued with the Muslims to the tents and the horses of the Muslims in Āshbar, where riflemen were joyously firing their weapons in the air, and then we turned to the captives and

congratulated them on their safety and liberation from the hands of the infidels.

We spent the night there and in the morning traveled to Tetuan and spent the night on the road near the coast. We then continued, and as we approached the city the people with the city governor, Muḥammad Āshir, came out with about 3,000 riflemen firing in the air, along with countless men and women, children and the aged: it was such a great day for them that many of the elders said they had never seen anything comparable to the crowd that day, adding that they never thought there were so many men who bore arms and carried ammunition [in their belts]. But if God so wishes, even the mute can speak.

We entered the city among a huge crowd and finally got to the house designated for us and for the Muslim captives. Theirs was a large house near ours and we stayed there for six days and then we got ready and left Tetuan. At reaching the Kharrūb River, we were met by a large number of soldiers from Tangier the outpost, may God protect it, with all the rīf servants of our master, God make him victorious, and the leader of the aforementioned outpost, Muḥammad ibn Bella al-Shaydhāmī. They greeted us and welcomed the Muslim captives at the same time as men on horses galloped firing in the air and continued doing so until we reached our destination. We spent the night there and in the morning we left with all who were there to Wādī al-Makhāzin, where we spent the night and then traveled to al-Qaṣr [al-Kabīr] where we were met by the tribes of Khalṭ and Ṭalīq with their horses and men and leaders, along with the servant of our master, God support him, Qāsim al-Sarīdī. We slept outside al-Qaṣr, and when we reached Sidi ʻIsa ibn al-Ḥasan, we were met by members of the tribes of Safyān and Banū Mālik with countless horses along with their leader, al-Hāshimī ibn Muḥammad. All of them continued with us until we reached our master and lord, commander of the faithful, who was waiting outside Salé, near the crossing.

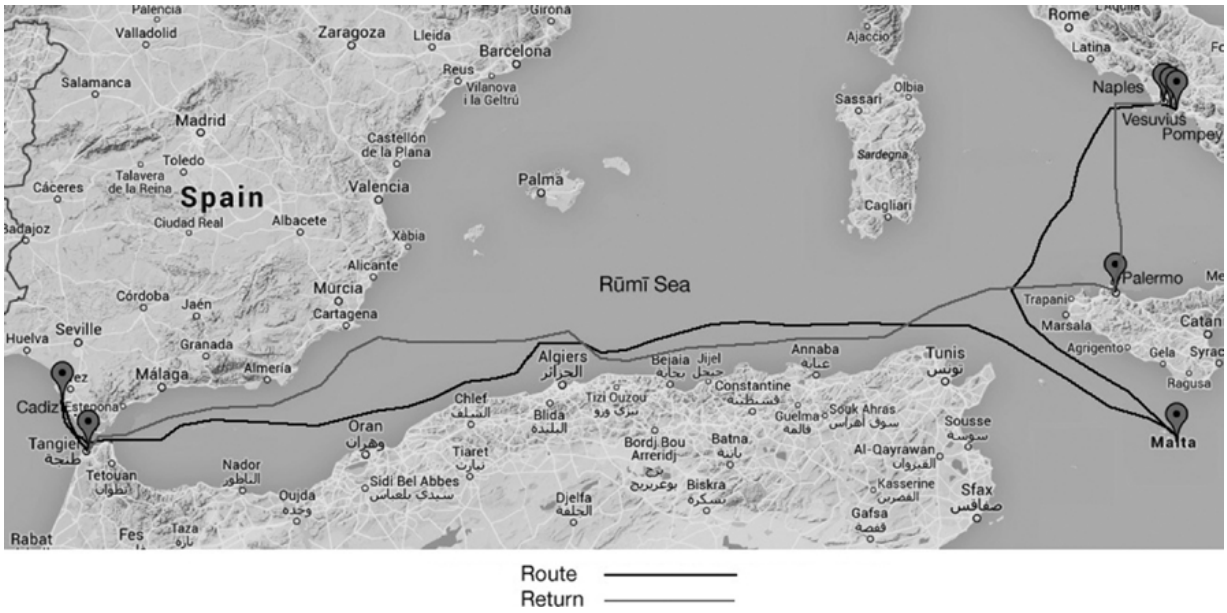
From two miles away, we saw his felicitous person, our lord, may he ever be honorable. He was riding with numberless soldiers in valleys and mounts, may God almighty protect them, so he would defend the land and spite the stubborn infidels with them. We approached our lord, commander of the faithful, with the captives carrying Muslim books that we had retrieved while we were among the Christians, including the Holy Qur'ān, which should be glorified. We met our master and lord, victorious by God,

and the voices of the captives and other Muslims rose in praise of our master and lord. He came down his horse and said: “May God, accept this deed as a gift” and then he fell on his knees in gratitude to God. He stood for some time with the Muslim captives, asking them about their tribes and clans and the duration of their captivity, saying

> Thank God that He saved you from the hands of the infidels, and brought you back among co-believers. You should thank God for His gift, for the more you thank Him the more generous He will be. You will remain our guests until we send you back to your communities and birthplaces.

It was the eve of the Night of Power [in the month of Ramadan, September 25, 1780]. So we stayed there to celebrate Eid al-Fiṭr [Feast of Breaking the Fast] and after two days, we rode back with our lord, may God honor him, to the aforementioned place where we had pitched our tents. We lined the captives in front of him and he gave each a gift in accordance with his need, condition, weakness, or strength. He did that with his own hands, counting and calculating, eager to receive God’s blessing and approbation. He then ordered us, may God ever be with him, to travel with the captives to Fez, and to give them enough horses and mules to get them to Tlemcen, from where they would go their separate ways. So I stayed with them until Fez, where all their affairs were settled and we bid them farewell, thanking God for His blessing.

Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds.



Map 2 Second journey: Malta, Kingdom of Naples and Sicily, 1781–1783.

1 From *al-Iksīr fī iftikāk al-asīr*, ed. Muḥammad al-Fāsī (Rabat: al-Markiz al-jāmi'iyy li-l-baḥth al-'ilmī, 1965).
2 All page numbers refer to the edition by al-Fāsī.
3 In that period, the misqal was worth 29 grams of silver (MZ).
4 Al-Miknāsī wrote the name in Arabic: *Sabta*. But on many other occasions, he wrote names in the manner he heard them from his Spanish hosts. Only cities that were known in Arabic history, such as Cordoba, Seville and others, were written by him according to Arabic pronunciation.
5 Al-Ghassānī had observed the fortifications, but in 1690, the Spaniards still feared Moroccan attacks and they did not allow the ambassador to observe their defenses. A century later, and with the decline of Moroccan seafaring, they did not mind. But both al-Ghazāl and al-Miknāsī asserted, rather pompously, that the Spaniards were in fear of "Islam."
6 A Turkish word.
7 Besides the "great one," al-Miknāsī used this term to refer to the Christian ruler, unlike his master, who did not use it in his correspondence. As the accounts were being presented to Sidi Muḥammad, al-Miknāsī may have thought it prudent to use the term to emphasize that legitimate rule was only among Muslims. But, interestingly, he did not use the term in the context of the Ottoman sultan.
8 The Church of Our Lady of Africa.
9 Section titles that are between inverted commas indicate that they appear in the original manuscript.
10 On every occasion that the delegation reached a new village or city, al-Miknāsī emphasized how well received they were – perhaps to counter the memory of the initial lack of welcome that had been shown to al-Ghassānī just under a century earlier.
11 Moroccan writers used *ṭāghiya*/despot instead of the Arabic word for king/*malik*, which had negative Qur'ānic connotations. On some occasions, al-Miknāsī used the Spanish *rey*.

12 **A Turkish word: although Morocco was never conquered by the Ottomans, various administrative** words in Turkish entered into usage.
13 Al-Miknāsī knew no Arabic word for stage, but used "the place of acting and *la'ib*/folly."
14 The term is *badāwa* – referring to nomadic society. It is the same term that Ibn Khaldūn used in his study of history. Al-Ghassānī had also used it about certain Spanish towns in 1690.
15 Al-Ghazāl too had described the city: *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-'Arabī, 74–91.
16 One of the sixteen meters in Arabic prosody.
17 The reference to *ṣifr*/zero reflects a confusion on the part of al-Miknāsī: brass is related to the word 'ora': Romans recorded the beginning of the annual pay of soldiers on brass (MF). In Arabic, the word *ṣifr* means both zero and brass money.
18 See al-Ghazāl, *Natījat al-ijtihād,* ed. al-'Arabī, 86–87.
19 Used by Moroccans to sprinkle rose water on guests and others (MF).
20 Tobacco had been introduced to Morocco at the end of the sixteenth century from sub-Saharan Africa but was condemned by Mulay Aḥmad al-Manṣūr (reg. 1578–1603). Still, it caught on and was sold to the Moroccans by the English from their plantation in Virginia. See a discussion of the Moroccan reactions to tobacco in MacLean and Matar, *Britain and the Islamic World* (Oxford, 2011), 202–203 and the references to the Arabic works on tobacco.
21 See al-Ghazāl, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-'Arabī, 95–103.
22 Al-Ghassānī, too, had offered a description of the mosque and of Umayyad history: *Riḥlat al-wasīr fī iftikāk al-asīr*, ed. Abdrahim Benhadda (Tokyo, 2005), 66–69.
23 The *'anaza* is a staff of wood with a base, which worshippers about to pray in the open set before them so none would go beyond it. During summer, the imam places it before him in the courtyard – signifying the boundary of the mosque (MF).
24 Cf. al-Ghassānī, *Lands*, ed. Matar, 150–151.
25 Cf. al-Ghassānī, *Lands*, ed. Matar, 125, and 152, who also stated that Andalusians came up to him and told him of their lineage; al-Ghazāl mentions the name among many others, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-'Arabī, 73. See the discussion of the Moroccan ambassador to England in the early eighteenth century: J. A. O. C. Brown, "Anglo-Moroccan Relations and the Embassy of Aḥmad Qardanash, 1706–1798," *Historical Journal* 51 (2008): 599–620.
26 Cf. al-Ghassānī's description of the postal service, *Lands*, ed. Matar, 137.
27 A phrase that had been in use since the days of the Mowahids (MF).
28 Al-Miknāsī often put the larger number before the smaller.
29 See al-Ghazāl, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-'Arabī, 111–125.
30 A mountain tree from which bows were made.
31 The salutation included the Qur'ānic verse: "Peace be to him who follows right guidance" (Q 20:47) the words that should be said to a non-Muslim, based on the words of Moses to Pharaoh.
32 An exaggeration that had also been repeated by al-Ghazāl who had made Carlos say that he was "one of the servants of your sultan, and among his slaves" *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-'Arabī, 139.
33 A Moroccan saying (MF).
34 Reg. 1759–1788. He was born in 1716. His physical appearance was dominated by the Bourbon nose that he had inherited from his father's side of the family.
35 From the Feast of Epiphany until the beginning of Lent.
36 Taken from al-Ghassānī's description of the discovery of America, *Lands*, ed. Matar, 144.
37 See al-Ghassānī on Carlos's attacks on Algiers and Tunis, *Lands*, ed. Matar, 148.
38 Al-Miknāsī's unit on the expulsion of the Andalusians is rather brief; perhaps he knew of the longer account that had been written in the first half of the seventeenth century by al-Ḥajari. He definitely knew of the account in al-Ghassānī. Still, the inclusion of this unit suggests that the memory of the Andalusian expulsion had not faded from North African memory – as the later meeting with Andalusians in Tunisia shows.

39 A Maronite priest from Lebanon (1710–1791), he was born in Tripoli and after ordination taught in Rome. He was commissioned by Ferdinand IV of Spain to prepare a catalogue of all the Arabic manuscripts at the Escorial. In 1749, he started working on the bibliography, which also included annotations and brief selections. He finished it in 1770: *Bibliotheca Arabico-Hispana Escurialensis*.

40 The Alawite Moroccan dynasty claimed descent from the Prophet Muḥammad through ʻAlī, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet. The reference to Hāshim is to the clan in the tribe of Quraysh to which the Prophet belonged.

41 Al-Miknāsī used the Qur'ānic term for Christian, *Nuṣrānī*, and not the term for Western Christians, *rūm* or *ifranj*.

42 The siege had started in June 1779. It lasted till February 1783.

43 Cf. al-Ghassānī, *Lands*, ed. Matar, 123.

44 A Berber word (MF).

45 Ten years earlier, al-Ghazāl had witnessed a bullfight, but had grown angry because "humankind should not torture animals," *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 65.

46 See the reference to this marriage in al-Ghassānī, *Lands*, ed. Matar, 161.

47 Al-Miknāsī used the Qur'ānic term, *rūḥ al-qudus*, rather than the Christian term, *al-rūḥ al-qudus*.

48 Al-Ghassānī, too, had described the Escorial, *Lands*, ed. Matar, 181–185. See also al-Ghazāl, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 147–153.

49 The story of these manuscripts goes back to the early seventeenth century. When the Saʻdian ruler, Zaydān, had to flee Marrakesh, he bundled his father's books and sent them to Asfi where they were loaded on a French ship sailing to Sus, a stronghold of Zaydān's allies. As the French captain was sailing, he was attacked by Spanish pirates who took the books and offered them to Felipe III. Moroccan rulers repeatedly tried to retrieve them: see my "Arabic Books and a Moroccan Treasure: Colonel Percival Kirke and Mulay Ismāʻīl, 1682–1683," *Seventeenth Century*, 26 (2011): 119–129.

50 Among the manuscripts were collections of Hadith; treatises on medicine, and the treatment of diseases; translations of and commentaries on Hippocrates, Plato, Aristotle, Ptolemy, Galen, Avicenna's *Canons*, and Maimonides; translations by Ishāq ibn Ḥunayn; the poetry of Ḥāfiz, Abū Tammām, and selections from Persian and Turkish literature. Some books had been written in al-Andalus, while others had been brought from regions as near as Majorca, and as far as Egypt. There were also a copy of the "Qur'ān from [the sura of] the Cow to the sura of Maryam and after, in Christian script" and another "written in Hebrew which I do not understand": see Nemesio Morata, "Los Fondos Àrabes Primitivos de el Escorial" *Al-Andalus* 2 (1934):87–181.

51 See al-Ghazāl on the captives in Segovia, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 144–146.

52 See the reference to salvaged books in al-Ghazāl, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 157, 229.

53 See al-Ghazāl who also brought back some books, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 142.

54 Ambassadors in Spain were given specific itineraries from which they could not deviate, and they always had guards with them, partly to make sure they did not.

55 See the more detailed description of the hospital by al-Ghazāl, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 53–54.

56 Cf. al-Ghassānī, *Lands*, ed. Matar, 130.

57 See al-Ghazāl's description of the captives, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 177–189.

58 See ibid., 194–212.

59 Cf. al-Ghassānī, *Lands*, ed. Matar, 121–132, passim. The story appears in Gines Perez de Hita, *Guerras civiles de Granada*, which describes the feuds of the Abencerrages and the rival family of the Zegris. For the history of the family, see Saḥar ʻabd al-ʻAzīz Sālim, "The Banū Sarrāj Ministers of the Nasrids, Between Historical Truth and Popular Legend," *Revista del Instituto Egipcio de studios islamicos* 28 (1996), 7–59, in Arabic.

60 Al-Miknāsī quotes the second part of a verse by Abu Ṭālib ibn al-Khaytham (d. 1245) (MF).

61 A hundred years later, in 1885, another Moroccan ambassador, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Karkūdī, who saw many of the same inscriptions that al-Miknāsī saw, commented on the dilapidated condition of the palace, *al-Tuḥfa al-saniyya li-l-ḥaḍra al-ḥasaniyya bi-l-mamlka al-isbanūliyya* (Rabat: Al-Matba ʻa al-malakiyya, 1963), 69–77.

2 Second journey

Malta, Kingdom of Naples and Sicily, 1781–1783

Al-Badr al-sāfir li-hidāyat al-musāfir ila fikāk al-asārā min yad al-ʻaduww al-kāfir.

(Muḥammadiyya: Hasan II University, 2005).

In the Name of God, the Merciful and the Compassionate

Reasons for writing the travelogue (108–109)[1]

When he [Sidi Muḥammad ibn ʻAbdallah] examined his followers and the members of his community, God granted him wisdom to send me on this unparalleled mission and gave me 86,000 riyals to spend on ransoming captives from the island of Malta and from Naples and any other region, to start with women, children, the old and the infirm, and then other men, seeking in that to please God and His Prophet.[2]

…

And so I decided to record all I saw on this journey, not unaware of my short-comings and the dangers and troubles that faced my weak spirit. Even if I had all the necessary capabilities to write, there was still the meeting with people of different languages, colors, and races, who were deceitful and hostile. Such encounters would distract the author from writing; and there was also the danger of the sea, which we had never encountered before, and where man is helpless to act or to choose, thrown like a babe in

a manger, dependent on the mercy of God, especially when accompanied by the undignified and the shameless.

The wonders of Cadiz[3] (118–123)

[The delegation began its journey from Marrakesh on December 16, 1781 and went to Tangier, sailing to Cadiz on February 20, 1782.]

Behold the extraordinary tower[4]

Of the extraordinary things that we saw during our stay was an old tower, said to have been built by the Muslims, God have mercy on their souls. There they [people of Cadiz] kept all the remarkable instruments of sea that the wise men, engineers and philosophers had devised. One day, we went to see the tower and were met by the attendant who showed us wonders upon wonders. There was an instrument that pumped air: to demonstrate how it worked, he brought a glass jar without a bottom and placed it on the table and attached the instrument to it. He took a bird out of a cage and put it inside the jar and then closed it. We could see the bird through the glass. He said: “The inside of this jar is full of air which the bird breathes. Now, I shall activate this instrument and pump the air out where-upon the bird will not be able to breathe and will die.” He rotated the instrument a few times and the bird fluttered and fell. He explained: “If I continue doing what I am doing, the bird will die. But look, I will release the air back in and it will revive.” He rotated the instrument in the opposite direction and so air returned to the bird.

He showed us another experiment. He brought a glass jar and filled it with water and then brought small-mouthed glass cups and pushed them into the jar. He then brought another glass jar and placed it above them and said: “This jar contains air under it and so do the small receptacles. Air prevents water from entering into them but if I take the air out, the water will seep in.” So he turned it around and as we were looking, the cups filled up with water. He said: “Air has left, which is why water has entered.” We could see everything through the glass.

I said: “What is the point of all this? What use is it?”

He answered: “If there is a ship at sea and water starts leaking through its outer hulk and it is far from land,” they bring a wooden hollow structure that is the size of a man (just like the one that carries brides in Morocco, called ‘*ammāriyya*). It has three planks in a triangular arrangement at its base, which are attached to chains. The master goes in and stands on the planks and takes his tools and they let him down into the sea by ropes to the place that needs reparation. It was said that water would not enter that hollow structure because of the air inside. The master would stick his head out to do the repairs, staying without air as long as he could, and then he would pull his head back in to breathe; he would keep on doing that until he finished the job. It was said that if he stayed too long inside the structure it got very hot, so they would bring barrels, fill them with air and seal them and send them down to him. When they reached him, he pulled them inside and opened them and let the cold air out of them. He would open a little aperture in the upper corner of the structure and let the hot air out, because, it was said, hot air was lighter than cold air. No water leaked in, and when he finished he gave a sign and they pulled him up.

There were also extraordinary mirrors that showed the flea as big as the head of a goat, and a hair as big as a rope, and others that are beyond description.

They also showed us an instrument with which ships at sea, if they get lost, can find their destination again. It was invented by an Englishman, and the master mentioned that the one who had invented it received a reward of 100,000 riyals.[5] This was described in more detail in the original draft that I had written, but it was lost when robbers attacked us, may God compensate us.

Of the extraordinary things we saw in Cadiz was a large reservoir outside the city near the sea, where they kept gunpowder. It was surrounded by a fence, just like a *shadhrawān*/railing, and at the roof of the reservoir, there was an iron bar with four thin chains stretching to the corners of the reservoir and reaching the railing.[6] They had inserted iron rings into the chains and had dug a pit in the ground for each of the chains, which reached inside the pit. The pits were open on each other, and they dug a passageway under the railing that led to a well nearby. In the middle of the railing near the aforementioned gunpowder reservoir, there was a high column standing in another pit that was connected to the other pits. Something like a spearhead was at its top, made of the same metal as the chains. It was said

that if lightning struck, the spearhead at the top of the column caught the lightning from forty feet away and from every direction: the lightning would stick to it and would not leave it but go down with it until it reached the pit. And if it struck the surface of the reservoir, the chains would catch it, just like a magnet, and the lightning would go underground into the pit and the aforementioned well. It was said that the metal chains caught the lightning and did not release it – which was why they placed those chains in areas where they feared lightning would strike, especially near gunpowder. So, if lightning struck, the chains would catch it and channel it into the well, as mentioned above. It was said that this piece of ingenuity was invented by the English and that they had found these chains in some of the English ships that the Spaniards seized during the war between them.

Of the extraordinary things we saw in Cadiz was a church that had been under construction for sixty years. They were still working on it and had not reached the ceiling because of its size. It had amazing decorations and vast and elevated enclaves, all of select stone brought from Malaga and Catalonia and elsewhere. They showed us one of the columns, which was sixteen cubits long: it was of red marble and hewn from a single block that had been brought from Malaga or Catalonia (I had this specific information in my original draft). What was so strange about this church was that attached to each of the columns were other columns that looked like palm branches. It was said that it had cost, until then, four million, to spite the spirit of the stingy miser (a million is ten one hundred thousand riyals). It will need a lot more money before it is completed. We climbed 150 and some steps to the very top, where they were constructing the *manār*/belfry.[7]

Qaranṭīna/quarantine (in Malta) (128–131)

[They stayed in Cadiz for twenty-six days, and then sailed to Malta on March 19, 1782. The sea was tempestuous, "an infidel sea" and "a sea of hell."] We were dumb-stricken because of terror, unable even to invoke or to plead, each of us thinking of God's help: "Is it not He Who answers the one in need when he prays to Him" [Q 27:62]. After the afternoon prayer that day, He extended to us His kindness and sent us a wind that replaced our fear and sorrow with joy and safety. We continued sailing that day and that night. Then, at dawn, the captain came to us, bringing us the good news

that we had reached Malta, and so we offered thanks to God and continued sailing until the afternoon.

Malta consisted of three islands: the first was called Gozo in the language of the Italians and *Ghodsh* in the language of the Maltese. It was very urban with fifteen towns, fertile, with a circumference of twenty miles. There was another small island called Comino with no buildings except for a watch tower. Beyond them was the island called Malta.

When we approached the harbor, a small boat came out and its skipper spoke through an instrument called a *būq*/horn, asking our captain where we had come from and how many were on board. He had seen the Muslim flag on the top mast, which indicated that there was an important person. The captain answered him that he was of so and so nationality and that he was carrying the ambassador of the commander of the faithful, God support him. We continued and docked in the harbor, having traveled for twenty-two days at sea from the first day we left Cadiz. Then another small boat came up to our ship with one of the city dignitaries, who asked the same question and received the same answer. They returned to their great one to report and came back asking us the reason for coming. We answered that our master and lord, commander of the faithful, had sent me to ransom the Muslim captives in their land. "When I finish with my task, may God help us attain every desire, we will go to Naples to meet its great one and discuss some important matters."

So he reported what I had said and returned saying: "You will have to go into quarantine." I answered: "Where do you think we came from? We came from the land of the Spaniards and our country has nothing of what you fear; otherwise, the Spaniards would have prevented us from entering their land." He said:

> You cannot avoid this – it is compulsory on all who come to us. It is possible you met with Spanish naval vessels, and they in turn could have met some ships from suspect lands. For that reason, you must abide by what was said. You will stay in quarantine for twenty days. The house is there: if you agree, we will have it prepared and you can stay there until the end of the quarantine.

I answered: “I will not go there. I will stay on board the ship during the days of the quarantine.”

They brought a Christian to board our ship, saying: “This Christian will arrange for you all your food supplies because he knows the town” – meaning, he will show us who can get us supplies. “For once he joins you, he will be under your authority and will not leave the ship until you leave.” That was the overt reason, as for the covert one: he was to spy on us in case there was an infected man in hiding.

The meaning of “quarantine” is that whoever arrives from a plague-ridden country has to wait for forty days; and whoever arrives from a suspect country stays for twenty days, and so on. He remains in a designated place or on board his ship, neither meeting nor touching anyone, and communicating only from afar. If anyone meets or touches him, he will have to enter the quarantine and remain there until he can leave. If he needs anything from town, he will go down to a designated spot that is surrounded by a wooden fence and behind which there are people appointed to get him what he needs, for pay. He calls out saying: “Get me so and so,” and he puts the money on a plank of wood and lowers it, telling the other what he needs. The other does the purchase and brings it to him on the plank. Neither touches the other. If he brings a letter, they take it with a reed and dip it in vinegar and incense and then open and read it. Once the quarantine days are over, those inside are inspected: if they are healthy and none of them is sick, they allow them out and admit them to the city. Halfway during the quarantine, and towards the end, they burn incense in the house, using a nasty incense made, it was said, from dog and cat shit mixed with bitumen and others.[8]

Description of Malta and its history (140–148, 151–155)

The harbor of Malta is unparalleled in Muslim or Christian lands. It consists of a narrow gulf with two towers facing each other. Inside, there are various ports into which the sea has entered; there is also a port outside which is the one that meets the ships coming to Malta from the direction of the Maghrib. It is there that the quarantine is located.

The island of Malta is stuck in the throat of the Shāmī Sea, which is why rarely do [Muslim] travelers escape its hostility. It is sixty miles in circumference and has thirty villages. It is very rocky; actually it seems like

one big rock. As for its land and sea fortifications: they are beyond description. The sea fortifications are visible, but when I asked why they needed land fortifications they answered that they feared an enemy would land on the coast and attack them. They did not even trust the natives of Malta: there is tremendous hidden enmity because the natives view them as invaders who came to dominate them and rule their land.

Most of the walls of this city are carved into the cliffs themselves, which they have cut and straightened making the defenses impenetrable. The stone of this island is white lime, just like marble. It is easy to quarry and cut: when it dries, it becomes solid and is exported to many lands by ships. They also export cotton, which is quite good, and cumin, which is incomparable: they are carried on all ships to all the world. Although the land is rocky, the people are farmers: they are hardworking and can endure much. You see them quarrying stone and then selling it; they also bring soil by boats from the aforementioned Gozo and from the island of Sicily and spread it on the surface of the land and then start planting. The fruit of this island is very sweet: we saw the best of *layyim*, which are known as *lashīn*/oranges,[9] and the season's first figs, which are quite big, most of them of the *lunbadar* kind. Good figs are sold individually [not by weight], each dozen for a certain price; and so too their watermelon, which is very sweet. Most other foods are brought from Sicily and other places, although Sicily is the main supplier because it is fertile and not too far. They brought *ḥabb al-mulūk*/ king's cherries, the like of which I had never seen before. Fat goats are also brought from Sicily. That is why the people of Malta are under the thumb of the ruler of Naples because they rely so heavily on food supplies from Sicily. And Sicily is part of his dominion. So they do not disobey any of his orders, secretly or openly.

The inhabitants of Malta speak Arabic. They had been pagans and then were converted to Christianity by a monk called *Sanbūl*/St Paul. They believe in him and follow his teachings. It was said that a people called Liwāta from near Tripoli,[10] were of Maltese stock, but when the Maltese converted to Christianity, they fled to the [North African] mainland. Still, they are viewed by them as kinsmen.

The island came under Muslim rule when Sicily was conquered [AD 869]. I have forgotten which was conquered first by the Muslims – the information was [in the previous draft, which was] lost during my journey. Oh You who will gather all people on that Day, let my loss be returned!

The one who wrested Malta from the Muslims was a Christian known as Count Roger, who came from Normandy after he had conquered Sicily from the Muslims, as I will explain later, in 1200 and either the twenties or the thirties after Christ. Many other peoples ruled over the island until it ended up with the Spaniards, who continued for forty years from that year. And then these devils seized it, bringing with them deceit and treachery.

Let us tell the story of the rulers of Malta. They are the foundling sons of devilish giants, lurking on the island, intent on harming Muslims. I had written extensively about them in the lost copy, where I mentioned how they had first started and how they committed all sorts of treachery and violence and how they were determined to attack Muslims. I had also written about their wars in Jerusalem, Syria, Constantinople and Rhodes: here, I will repeat what I still remember. We say: the leaders of Malta are a gang of Malagites,[11] made up of rascals from many tribes, consisting of seven different languages, worshippers of the cross, whose sole goal is to inflict harm on Muslims. They consist in the French, who have three languages, the Spanish, the Portuguese, and the *dadshāk* who are the Germans. They dedicate themselves to serve the monk Juan, and from the start, they have been sworn enemies of Muslims, may God wrap them in contempt for all time. Whoever from among those people decides to join this fiendish assembly, which deviates from the true path and which only the unbelieving infidel pursues: the first action he undertakes is to sail in their war ships for two years and fight Muslims. Then, if he decides to continue in his association with them, they take him to Juan's church and give him bread and salt and force him to vow that he will die in the service of Juan's flag, that he will endure hunger and nakedness even if he has to eat only bread and salt, and that he will relinquish all his possessions and eat the food that is offered to him. When he dies, Juan inherits him. The recruit is allowed to spend only one-fifth of what he owns, and he can never marry. After this vow, they give him a white badge, which he puts on his cloak over his chest, showing that he is one of the elders of the followers of Juan. He continues to serve, rising in the ranks until, after a long time, and if he performs well, he becomes *belli* – by stressing the letter "l". He becomes one of authority and power, awaiting his fortune in the kingdom.

Let us describe how this evil group, infidels of the trinity, started, because there is no mention of them in the history of ancient or modern kingdoms. They have no lineage, and are recent foundlings who follow a

monk. It was the custom of Christians to go to Jerusalem, seeking the blessing of the shrine of Jesus, peace be upon him. Sometimes, some of the poor and the invalid were stranded there and could not meet their expenses and ended up lost. So, when two French merchants in Egypt heard about this situation, they decided to build a house in Jerusalem for all such impoverished invalids. They went there and spoke to the prince about establishing a house for the aforementioned purpose, and they gave him money for that purpose. As soon as they built it, they started taking in and treating the sick and the indigent. News of their activities spread in all lands and the Christians praised them and started joining their gang and serving with them. They then built a church, which they named after Lady Mary and which brought them much prominence. At the same time, the sick and the visitors to Jerusalem spread the news about them in all lands. Christians joined them from near and far, and so when their numbers increased, they decided that none would join them except members of the nobility. The pope gave them permission to wear white cloaks as their habits.

Then, they started thinking of other things, and because of their wickedness, they plotted to rebel against the Muslims and wrest Egypt [Cairo] from them. Their council decided to delay conquering Egypt and instead moved to conquer a city near it called Belbeis: once they took it they could have a respite, in which time they would start preparing to attack Egypt. They had studied the strategies of the Muslims in war and decided that such a course of action was the best. They laid siege to Belbeis, seized it, and established a base and then, aiming to capture Egypt, they sent a squadron of ships to attack the city through the Nile. The rest of them went by land but found themselves face to face with the Muslims, who soundly defeated them. Meanwhile, the squadron entered the Nile, ignorant of the battle outcome, whereupon God enabled the Muslims over them who killed large numbers of them. Those who managed to escape joined their brethren in Belbeis and barricaded themselves there. The prince of the Muslims learned about them and sent an army that surrounded and eradicated them. Their church in Jerusalem was torn down and only sixty monks escaped to Jerusalem [?], from where they wrote to the French despot informing him of their plight. They pleaded with him to intercede with the prince and promised to pay the poll tax and remain as monks in Jerusalem. He passed on their request and the prince agreed, and so they entered into *dhimma* under the Muslims, “abject and humbled” [Q 27:37], and paid the poll tax.

Then, they asked to build a church and were given money to do so. They named the church after the monk called Juan and it is to him that they dedicate themselves, their properties, and their countries. He was a monk who lived during the days of Christ: it is said he was the one who poured the water of baptism on him. All they do is dedicated to him.

The church is rich and has a vast income from taxation and from religious endowments spread around the lands of the Christians. Every year, large amounts of money are brought to it. The leaders of this community oversee the church's property and build ships from money that is generated by the endowments. They also distribute salaries to soldiers and pay the wages of all who serve.

As for the wars between *ahl al-fidā'iyya* and Juan, according to commander Jamāl al-Dīn and the other leaders of the Ismā'īlīs: they were directed against this dirty group.[12]

…

When the Muslims evicted them from Syria, they wandered around until they reached a monk called Sans in a monastery. They sought shelter with him and started wearing black and stayed there until they took over the church and removed the monk's name, claiming it to themselves. Consider the deeds of these profligates even with their own kind, for they are the least of God's worshippers, full of shame and evil. Then they asked the emperor to grant them some land in his territories near Constantinople, which was then in the hands of Muslims. There were territories that had remained in the emperor's possession [Charles V]. But after they settled they reverted to their evil deeds, spreading confusion all around. The prince of the Muslims in Constantinople was informed about them and so he decided to test them. He sent some sheep with one of his farmers and told him to graze them in their land. When he reached there they asked him: "What do you want? You have come to graze your sheep here leaving behind you far better grounds. Whose sheep are these anyway?" He answered: "They belong to the sultan." So they killed the sheep and the shepherd escaped to report everything back to the sultan. The latter sent an army against them and they met in battle. He then sent another army and since they were fighting his first army, the second army conquered the land without struggle. When news reached them that their country had been taken, they surrendered and fled, but the swords of the Muslims pursued them, killing a large number of them and driving out all who had remained.

They continued wandering from one land to another until they settled on an island called Rhodes, which they fortified. They remained there until the Ottoman [Sultan Suleyman] laid siege to them with a large fleet and forcibly drove them out, killing a large number of them [AD 1522]. Once more, they became landless, wandering around among God's worshippers. So they asked Charles V the Emperor, king of Spain, to give them land to inhabit, and so he gave them Malta, which was part of his dominion. He sent an ambassador with them to his viceroy in Malta and ordered him to grant them some land, which he did, and which is now called Malta. It was a forest and so they cut down the trees and began to cultivate it; they also designed the city and built the church dedicated to Juan. They controlled only the city, for the rest of the island remained under the control of the Spanish viceroy. They continued for forty years until, devils that they were, they bribed and ensnared the aforementioned viceroy, making his son one of the officers of Juan. So he handed the reins of the island to them and they took it over completely.

The first thing that those devils did was to inflict harm on the native population of the island, as they always did to those with whom they cohabited. The native population of the aforementioned island had always had four appointed agents, called in their language *juradī*/jurists, whom they viewed as city keepers. These agents had certain sums of money that they used to increase the general income and to buy food since they were cut off on an island. The money came from the inheritances of the dead, from the gifts of the living, and from other sources, too, and it was used for the general good. These agents were in charge of the money until those cursed ones came. The first thing they did was to seize the money saying: "What do you do with this money which you have had for years?" They replied: "We purchase food and whatever profit we make, we ransom captives with it." They said: "Why should you ransom them? Better to spend the money on building up our military capabilities, and if there is money left, then spend it on ransoming captives." And so they took the money from them and established a soldiery that was paid from that money. The native population of the island hates this evil gang very much and opposes them totally because they have taken over their land.

Their leader is called the grand master and in their language *gran mayster*, which means a big master… [The present master is] white in features, speaks little, and dresses in black like the monks. His name is

Emmanuel de Rohan-Polduc [1725–1797], originally French, and is fifty-seven years old. He grew up a ward of the despot, Felipe V [1683–1746], father of the present Spanish despot. It happened that the father of the grand master quarreled with the king and was sent into exile. The aforementioned grand master was in his mother's belly and so the knights went to the Spanish despot then, Felipe V, and after the [exiled] father had died, the mother pleaded with the French despot for forgiveness. He agreed on condition that her children become monks. He wanted to end their progeny after their death. So he became a monk of Juan and rose in the ranks.

Ransoming captives[13] (155–158)

Let us return to the real purpose of our journey: ransoming captives from the hands of the enemy and all that happened, which made us drunk although we were not.

After staying in the city of Malta for a month to find out the conditions of the country and everything about it, what was secret and what was not, people started talking. They said: "These Muslims claimed they wanted to ransom captives, so why are they still around and not negotiating?" When I heard that, I started the ransom negotiations in order to put an end to all hostile talk. But when I finalized the ransoming of 250 captives, the common people in the city started saying that we had come to Malta to deceive them, plotting a revolt in their country. With little insight, they started insisting that the released captives should leave and not stay behind: for after effecting their release, I congregated them all together. The Maltese also murmured that the captives had earlier been polite to their owners in word and deed, but after their liberation they started insulting them, even cursing them and denouncing their religion. And so they asked me how long I was planning to stay in their country. I answered: "Until five naval vessels from our master, victorious by God, arrive so I can take the captives out and sail in one towards Naples." They became even more suspicious: "These five naval vessels would carry at least 3,000 fighters; and there are already 1,500 captives in the city." They imagined that the chests with our luggage and the ransom money were full of weapons: they were not used to such agreements having not had one with us before. They recalled what had happened thirty years earlier when they suspected that

captives intended to revolt: they rounded up the captives and tortured them, forcing them to confess their plot. They used hot iron hooks and bars to cut open the flesh of the captive and pour tar into the wounds – until the man died. They also tied the hands and feet of the captive to two small boats, after which one sailed west and the other east, tormenting the captive until he was ripped in half. They used other forms of torture until they exterminated a whole group from among the Muslims.[14]

This time, when they started thinking that way, they kept the captives in prison and ordered armed soldiers to watch over them, as they did over our house, too. [There was so much tension that] we were about to attack each other had it not been for God's mercy, for He will help whomever He chooses of His worshippers. The despot that ruled over them was a reasonable man who said to us: "The captives should not remain in our country more than three days." His intention was good because he wanted to extinguish the furor and to put an end to accusations. He sent someone to rent ships for us and so after three days, we dispatched the captives in two ships, one belonging to Ibn Ghāzī [Benghazi] and the other to Tripoli. Meanwhile, I had already discussed ransoming 290 other captives as a group, but these tensions delayed the negotiations, and I could do nothing but be patient in order to fulfill our master's wishes, commander of the faithful, whom I obey and cherish and for whom I would expend myself: "If God knows of any good in your hearts, He will give you more than what was captured from you" [Q 8:70].

God helped me with His grace to complete the blessed ransoming of 613 other captives, and it became known in all the corners of the world… We rented some ships and put the ransomed captives on board, sending one ship to Tripoli and one to Sfax and one to Tunis. Thanks be to God that everything went smoothly. You should have seen the captives on board the ships as men jostled with their shoulders, women ululating in gratitude, and men and boys responding by asking God's blessings on our master and lord whose glory had reached the sky. They hugged each other joyfully thanking God for what He had done, assured of safety from the infidels and their nefarious acts. How many husbands, wives, fathers, sons, brothers and sisters had been separated for a long time by captivity, unable to see each other secretly or openly, year after year and month after month. The heart softened to see their broken condition for they did not care whether they were alive or dead after each had fallen into the pity of captivity. Through

our commander of the faithful, whom God has chosen, He brought them together again, and parents and families rejoiced.

Feasts (159–161)

One of their feasts shook the city for three nights. The despot invited us to see it and sent his secretary with coaches saying: the despot wants you go to his house to see the entertainment for this feast. We agreed and went. We climbed to the top floor and sat overlooking a long street that passed near the despot's house wall. They had covered it with sand because it was all cobbled stone. They feared that if some of the participants fell, they would hurt themselves. Suddenly, there was noise and clamor, and countless Christians and women looked out from the rooftops: horses and donkeys appeared (the donkeys of this island are unlike anywhere else, except, as it is said, the donkeys of [the Tunisian island of] Jerba). So I asked why they had been brought there, and they answered: for the purpose of having them race. That was why the street had been covered with sand for fear that someone might fall. The despot pointed out the horses that had flaws in them.

The donkeys raced first and the one that won was given the allotted reward; and then the horses raced and the one that won took what was allotted. They had great pleasure watching the donkeys because the animals were well fed by their owners, and so they could not run quickly. Many riders fell off and people laughed and clamored.

Another feast occurred on the 24th of June, the feast of *ʿanṣara*/Pentecost. Again, the despot invited us to watch and sent us coaches. We entered his house and found seating that overlooked a large open space, with piping and drumming soldiers lined all around it. They placed five or six barrels, each four steps away from the other. Each barrel was placed on top of a pile of straw.

We watched and waited. At sunset, the despot came out with four or five city elders, equal to the number of barrels, each carrying a long flaming candle in his hand. The soldiers started beating their drums and the despot and those with him started going around and around the barrels. Then the despot lit up one of the barrels with his candle, and so did the others. And he went back into his house. As the fire was consuming the barrels and the

straw, they brought out their cannons and started firing them into the sea: they use live ammunition only on feast days.

The meaning of all this was as follows: they believe that Juan, whom they obey, was killed and burned by fire on that same day. So they do that in remembrance of him, and they fire the cannons to emphasize how much of a warrior he had been.

Muslim countries have been imitating them in lighting fires on that day[15] – a veritable disaster.

Naples (167–170, 171–174, 181–223)

[There were 700 more captives and so al-Miknāsī sent word to his master about them. He left Malta on July 18/21, 1782. Again, he described the terror of the sea, after which he and his delegation arrived to a warm welcome in Naples.] We climbed to the upper floor in the house and were met by one of the elders of the government, who had been sent by the despot. He welcomed us saying that the king had sent him to greet us and to say on his behalf: "Thank God for your safety. We are happy you have come. We have been awaiting you for quite some time. This country is your country." He then showed us the house and presented us with three large trays of seasonal fruit: pears, apples, watermelon and numerous sweets that are made in their country, and others. Six captives from among the Muslims in his possession carried those trays, and he said: "This is a gift from the king." So we thanked him and said: "If the king really wants to add to this gift, let him include those who bore the trays. That will make us much happier and more joyful." So he told him about what we had said and the king released the captives. They were the first that we freed. He continued walking with us around the house drawing our attention to the seats, the rugs and the glassware. All this attention demonstrated how much the prince was happy with us because of our master and lord, commander of the faithful. He then sat down with us.

…

Six days after our arrival, the vizier asked to meet us – for that was the protocol for visitors to the kings of the Rūm. They first met with the vizier and handed him the letter that was sent. The vizier would read it and learn of the status of the emissary and what the goal of the visit was, and then he would inform the despot so he could treat him in accordance with his status

and to address him in the [diplomatically] appropriate language. So we went to his house, where he welcomed us, and we gave him the lordly letter and left. He translated the letter into non-Arabic, studied it, and then presented it to the despot who informed us, subsequently, that he was ready to meet us on the following day, one hour before sunset.

When the appointed time came for us to leave, the despot's horses arrived, as was mentioned before. They stood in front of the house and then one of the dignitaries who was assigned to meet the *almabashaṭrīs*/ambassadors to the king greeted us saying:

> The despot is ready to meet you, and is waiting. His wife also wants to greet you. She too is waiting and will see you after you meet her husband. It is not the custom that you meet her, but she insisted because she is so happy with you and your master, commander of the faithful.

Meeting King Ferdinand IV

When the coaches arrived, we got in and proceeded, preceded by sword-wielding cavalry. Numberless Christian men and women followed in their coaches until we reached the gate of the despot's house. We encountered more people there than we had seen before, and we could only pass through because of the soldiers who pushed open the way for us. We climbed to the upper floor and found the dignitaries and officials of the government in all their ranks waiting for us. We entered the first domed room, whereupon all stood up and removed their sombreros. We continued to another room and found those of higher rank who did the same. We walked through many other rooms, each larger than the previous one, and people again stood up and did the same. Finally we reached a large room and one of the attendants walked ahead of us into another room as if to ask permission. He returned to us saying: "Proceed to the despot" [Ferdinand IV, 1751–1825]. So I entered the room and found him standing near a table covered with silk, and to his right, there was another table with gold-plated feet, and behind him a gold chair, too. The domed room was full of viziers and dignitaries and government officials. When we saw him, he removed his sombrero in salutation, so we made a gesture with our hand while approaching him. He

removed his sombrero again and we did the same thing, and then he removed it for the third time.

When I stood before him, I took out my lord's letter, kissed it and extended it to him. He received it in both hands and asked me about our master, the commander of the faithful. I answered: "He is in the best condition, God be praised. And you are very dear to him. His *maḥabba* to you, because of your father, is more than to any other king of the Rūm." He said: "And our *maḥabba* to him is equally strong and we are very eager to negotiate with him, fulfill his wishes, and sign a peace treaty as my father had done." I said: "This is the reason we are here, as your father told you a year ago when we were in Spain." He said: "Here is my vizier and he will represent me in negotiations and I will concur with whatever he agrees to."

We left the despot and his wicked followers in the same manner as we had entered. The despot remained standing until we exited. We found the army of infidelity standing in rows, numbering hundreds if not thousands, each taking his position after removing his head gear: they were polite and silent unless addressed. Then it was said: "The queen is expecting you and she has sent this contingent to accompany you. Proceed to her so she can welcome you as is appropriate" [Maria Carolina, 1752–1814]. So we walked to her door, where her chamberlain met us and walked with us into a large domed room. We found her standing near a table, surrounded by women of dignity and status. She greeted us, and the way she did that was as follows: she lowered herself so that she was nearly kneeling. This is the way their women greet guests. I gestured with my hand to return the greeting. She repeated what she had done, and so I too repeated what I had done, and then she did that again, and I did the same – three times, exactly as with the despot. When we approached her, she said: "Welcome: we have been long awaiting you. Whatever difficulty you encounter with the despot, we will help you resolve it. Ask what you want: we don't want you to be unsatisfied. We have your *maḥabba* in our hearts." We took that as a sign of success in our mission and knew that we would meet with good fortune, against all the envious.[16] "A confident intercessor is better than a helpless one."[17]

We thanked her for her words and her welcome and then left her, in the same manner that we had greeted her, by gesturing three times, as was mentioned. We got into the coaches and proceeded to our residence, preceded by the sword-wielding cavalry. The roads were so crowded it was

like the Day of Judgment, people both walking and on horseback, alone and in groups. When we reached our residence, dignitaries came to congratulate us on our meeting with the king and his wife, for to them, that was proof that the ambassador had met with approval and that his mission would be successful. We stayed there to welcome and thank all who came because that was a duty that we had to fulfill.

When the despot read the letter from our master, commander of the faithful, he learned of its content in regard to the peace agreement that we sought, since his father had told him about the peace agreement we had signed with him. He also learned of our desire to ransom the Muslim captives in his land.

As mentioned earlier, we started negotiating the terms of the peace treaty with the vizier. Meanwhile, he sent me a gift of thirty captives whom he freed, saying:

> We have freed those in your honor. As for ransoming the captives whom our master, commander of the faithful, had mentioned: know that the captives in our land are all from Tunis, Algiers, Tripoli and other eastern countries. And with those countries, which hold our brethren captives, we are at war. Had not our brethren been held by them, we would have freed all the Muslims in our hands as a sign of honor to [y]our master, commander of the faithful. Since our brethren are captives, we urge you to try and ransom everyone.

We thanked him for the captives he had released and wrote to our lord, God support him, to try and effect the release of the Spanish captives in the aforementioned places so that Muslims would be freed.

Description of Naples

Naples is a great and large city, attractive and rich, a city of cities the like of which eye has not seen. It lies on the Shāmī Sea, stretching for miles, with beautiful buildings that attract attention by their elegance: “Say: Shall we inform you who are the greatest losers in works?” [Q 18:103]. The city lies between two mountains, is triangular in shape, with impressive edifices, all perfectly designed, as if built by both humans and jinn. It also has water and

fields for grazing, large stores, high and proud edifices and a harbor teeming with ships. One who had been to Egypt [Cairo] and Great Constantinople, two cities which travelers cannot but praise, told me that Naples was even greater, larger and more beautiful. As for its markets, they are full of amazing commodities and crowded with buyers and sellers all the time, as if every day were a festival. Everything in the world is found there, and whenever an item is sold, it is immediately replaced, as if it lay there to be seen and not sold. One might think that nobody bought anything in its markets.

As for the food markets: what is found there in a day is enough for other cities for a year so that one might think oneself in a dream [Q 20:130]. The markets are busy all night and so if you walk through them, you will need to jostle. There are so many stores that even the chicken have their own butchers in their own separate markets. I also saw the water seller carrying ten lamps to give him light! I can go on and on about all what is there. The best that can be said about the stores and the crowds in all its streets is that they are like humanity on the last day who have been judged and freed and are gathered together.

Most of the houses are five or six or seven floors high, towering above us. One day I rode in a coach down one side of the city, the horses galloping fast, and we did not finish until after an hour, I mean, finish driving past the buildings of Naples. Those buildings are contiguous even if a man walks for a whole day. The villages and hamlets are also connected so that a person cannot fully explore this city in three or four days. A friend who visited it daily to buy supplies told me that every day he saw new markets and alleys he had not seen before. In short, this is a city that is a sea of buildings. Even on its own, it would be sufficient territory for a prince to rule.

…

[Al-Miknāsī continued with the history of Naples and its rulers and then turned to the present king.] Let us return to describe this despot. We say: he is white in skin, tall, blue-eyed, with reddish hair, even his eyelids and brows. He is thirty-one and his name is Ferdinand IV. His wife is the sister of the emperor of Germany. The aforementioned despot is French by origin, Neapolitan by upbringing, son of the king of Spain, Carlos III. The reason he took over the kingdom of Naples and Sicily is that when Carlos II died without issue he left two sisters: one with the emperor and one with the French king. War broke out and continued for eighteen years between the

sons of the two sisters, and so Spain remained under the control of Felipe V, son of the sister who was in France. The emperor seized Naples, and Victor Amday [Amadeus II 1666–1732], the despot of Sardinia, seized Sicily during that war. Felipe V had sons and wanted one of them, called Ferdinand [VI 1713–1759], to become king of Spain. So he prepared a huge fleet, it was said around eighty ships, and sent it under his son Carlos III, the present king of Spain, to fight Naples and Sicily and if he won, he would become king. So he laid siege to Sicily and took it from Victor Amadeus, king of Sardinia and Saboya [Savoy], and then laid siege to Naples and took it from the emperor [Carlos VI, Holy Roman Emperor, 1711–1740]. Naples and Sicily and their dependencies came under his rule, after which his father passed them on to him as separate kingdoms.

When his father, Felipe V, king of Spain, died, Ferdinand succeeded him, and when he died leaving no successor, Spain came under his brother Carlos, the aforementioned king of Naples. Ships sailed from Spain to transport him there. He took with him his eldest son because he would become king of Spain after him, and another son who was retarded and not fit to govern. He appointed his son Ferdinand, the current despot, although he was only eleven years old, and left with him counselors to guide him, on condition that when he reached eighteen years of age, he would assume full control.

This is what I still remember about all these kings. I had written an extensive account in the draft that was destroyed.

Although there is not much use in narrating the history of their kings, nor is news about them interesting, knowledge of something is better than ignorance of it since it will be remembered among people. It is useful to learn about what has happened to countries in the past, their armies and cities, when they were victorious and when they collapsed, and about the change of polities. He who is intelligent and enlightened by almighty God will learn from all this history that nothing in this world is permanent.

Social club

One manifestation of the urbanity of this city and its inhabitants' leisureliness is represented by a building where all dignitaries meet. Every night, they get together for socializing. I said: "Who owns the building?" They answered:

> There is no specific owner and it is open to everyone. Each of the dignitaries, male and female, pays a certain sum every year to a designated agent who collects the money and uses it to buy furniture, the candles that are used nightly, and other necessities. Drinks and sweets are served every night to whoever decides to come. Coming here is a matter of personal choice: if one is busy or does not want to come, one does not have to.

One day, those dignitaries invited us to visit their aforementioned house. We could not but concede just to make them happy. It is the duty of every visitor to do so to his host.

We went after dinner and when we got there, we found a crowd waiting to welcome us and the place illuminated by many big candles held in the hands of servants. Everyone was delighted to see us and they greeted us warmly and led us inside. We climbed upstairs and found it full of dignitaries, both men and women. They had lit many candles inside glass lamps, making the place very bright. They stood up in respect and deference and showed us around all the rooms and the balconies that overlooked the scenery [stage]. They then seated us and brought us iced drinks and sweets while they sat in their appropriate places in dignity. Servants with glasses went around offering them to the ruler and the ruled, after which the musicians arrived. They climbed upstairs and began playing on their stringed instruments, heedless of decorum, men, women, and children, without shame, like "prostitutes" [Q 4:25]. There were boys who had been castrated to keep their voices always soft, just like the voices of women. These castrati chose to be castrated because of their poverty, and so by singing they grew rich and popular because people loved listening to them. It was said that women really liked those castrati because they could not be held suspect, since there was no danger of pregnancy, should one of the women decide to indulge herself.

May God demean them and their deeds and reduce their likes.

We stayed there and observed them, noting the total absence of jealousy among them. The armies of Satan were all around, bringing them together, men and women, young and old, drinking and making merry as if they were billy goats in a barn. When I saw how much their visages disguised their intentions and how much they were slaves to their desires, I could not stay any longer and took my leave, relegating them to Satan and his wiles. I

said: “We have enjoyed watching you in your merriment, in all your words and deeds, but I am sleepy and need to go. My eyes desire rest.” So they all stood up and accompanied us to bid us farewell, and we left them not knowing what they did afterwards.

Royal garden[18]

Another manifestation of the urbanity of this city is that the despot appropriated a large piece of land near the sea shore, overlooking the ships and fleets in the port. He had it completely leveled and then added rows of wooden arches. He planted a kind of green vegetation similar to what we call *lawwaya*:[19] it coiled around the arches, making them delightful to see. There were also unusual metal windows, water ducts full of every kind of sculpture, and lanterns in long rows which, in summer, remain lit all night till dawn. Every dignitary could go there for pleasure and relaxation. In the middle, there was a wooden dome with seats over-looking that expanse where musicians and singers performed to all who were there. There was also a large pool with statues of humans and others, all spouting water. On one side of the aforementioned piece of land, there were two halls where food and drink were served, and visitors could walk in and take whatever they desired and pay the predetermined price. There were guards inside this place, and at its gate stood soldiers who kept out everyone who was not a dignitary.

One day, the despot sent for us to inform us that he was planning to spend some time in that garden and that we should go and meet him there. After sunset prayer, we rode to see him and when we reached the gate, there were soldiers standing guard. We entered on foot: no one entered there in a coach except the despot; everyone entered walking so that the grounds would not be ruined by the wheels of coaches and the hooves of horses. We soon came across the despot, walking with his counselors, and so we greeted him and thanked him for all that he had done for us. He said:

> I built this place for my people so they can relax in summer, and I spend on it my own money. As you can see, I continue adding to it to make it more entertaining and enjoyable and thereby offer this city its share of ease.

We wandered around with the despot and then we entered the food hall to view it. Immediately, the attendants brought chairs, thinking that we wanted to eat and drink. I said: “We came in just to look.” Then we walked past the musicians who were sitting on a raised platform, and listened to their tunes and songs. We bid farewell to him and returned to our residence. If you were to see that place from a high promontory, you would see the stars of the skies reflected in its pools, for everything beautiful in the world had been brought to it. If you wished, you could say it was the sky upside down, a mirror to the viewer. The despot paid for all its expenses from his own money: for lanterns, oil, servants, and wages of musicians and others. He spent from his own income on his people so that he would be remembered.

But they had taken the wrong path with sickly eyes: “God guides whomsoever He wills to a path that is straight” [Q 2:213].

A night at the opera

One day the despot summoned us to watch what they called *alobera*/opera, which the Spaniards called *alkamdiyya*/comedy. He sent one of his counselors to inform us and the latter brought two keys to two balcony seats in that building where the folly was to take place. Between the two prayers [sunset and dinner], the despot’s messenger arrived saying that the despot was on his way to watch that folly and we should precede him.[20]

We rode in the coaches and were met at the entrance by servants carrying numerous candles. One of their elders led us to our designated seats, which we found were balconies overlooking a large covered hall, seven floors high, with chairs all in equal and harmonious rows. The building was full of Christians, from top to bottom, and all were there by paying predetermined fees: those in the balconies had one rate to pay, and those in the open space [orchestra] had another. They had lit candles in every floor, hundreds of them, and lined them elegantly. In one of the corners there was a space with a wooden platform raised half the height of a man above ground, where the folly was to take place. They had concealed it with a curtain that separated it from the audience. No sooner had we sat down than the building shook with men and women saying: “the despot has come”. They stood up in deference and he walked to his seat as people sat down. Then the musicians began to play and the curtain was lifted and there

appeared a tall building, with seats, benches, rooms, and floors, from which men and women sauntered out in the most splendid of clothes.

A girl stepped forward and began to sing, alternating with a man: they were pure wonder.

The curtain was drawn for a while and then there was a whistle and it was lifted again revealing a building, different from the previous one, from which emerged men and women who started singing and dancing. They continued doing so and every time they finished the curtain was drawn, and then somebody would whistle, and then it would be lifted showing buildings and structures different from before. All was the work of the imagination except the human beings: they were real. And if you could see how they presented a battle scene at sea with sailing ships and horses on land: it was stunning.

We visited that building numerous times since the despot called us over whenever he was there. We were always offered juices and sweets as a sign of hospitality. The kind of work that was done there was the same; only the follies changed with the changing of actors.

An indication of the splendor of that city and its many buildings was that some inhabitants found it difficult to cross from one end of the city to the other and so they used boats. Whenever you looked at the sea you would see more than 100 boats sailing on its surface, other than the ones near the docks.

One night, a vizier invited us to his house to honor us. He also invited many other important ministers, and so after dinner we went to see him and he met us at the entrance, accompanied by some of the despot's counselors and chamberlains. He led us upstairs to a huge domed hall, the walls covered with silken cloth, which had been prepared for us, the guests. There were lit candles in glass chandeliers, which glittered brightly, and he settled us in a place with chairs. He then brought some sweets, of which everyone partook; even those in the alleys were not denied it. The people had their fill while the servants wandered in the aisles, offering drinks. Everyone was overwhelmed by the minister's generosity.

Then, one of the servants brought some notebooks and distributed them to all who were inside the hall. He gave us one since we were part of the audience [even though it] was in non-Arabic. I gave the notebook to our translator, asking about the contents that had been written in great elegance, and why the note-books had been distributed to the crowd. He said:

“Regarding the contents, they are songs about love stories full of sadness and chants. As to why they are distributed — that is so each will know, in due time, what the songs are that accompany the tunes.”

Then, the curtain was lifted, and a door opened. A girl appeared from her quarters, dressed in white, like a halo around the crescent. She swayed around, from one place to another, reappearing as bright as the crescent. The crowd associated her [with God] and blasphemed. She opened up the pages of the song-book, and everybody followed suit. Then a musical instrument was brought near her, mentioned in the Psalms of David, known as *al-ārba*/harp, producing melodies and tunes that were both moving and joyful. She started playing on it, striking it with what the noble soul desired. Then a castrated boy stepped up near her, and they started singing in beautiful voices to gentle and delicate music. The boy acted the role of a sickly infatuated lover, while the girl acted the role of the beloved who was distant and untrue. They continued in this whispering complaint and colloquy until all souls [in the audience] were enchanted by them, and the beauty of her features penetrated the chambers of the hearts. The voices then subsided, the audience was alive but silent like the dead, with birds on the head,[21] saying nothing except by sign or wink or signal with the eyebrow.

When she struck that instrument, which resembled the *‘oud*, she made you forget the psalms of David; and when she sang without instrumental accompaniment, she made you forget the world and all that was in it.

She was a masterpiece of the masterpieces of time, not to be found in Damascus or Yemen. Nothing was like her or even came close. When she sauntered, she was like a spear, and when she parted her lips in a smile, she divided hearts, and if she looked from the corner of her eye, she left hearts broken with sorrow. When she approached, she killed, and when she withdrew, she conquered the hearts and prevailed, having dissipated minds and dreams.

When she finished her rapturous singing, which was beyond wonder, she sat down to rest. People started talking and whispering with each other about her talents, each person with his companion and friend. All were unanimous that neither eye nor ear had seen her like, and all the beautiful women whose fame had spread around the world admitted to her excellence. Even rivals conceded and gave up the struggle.

Perhaps a polite [observer], reading what we have written, will disagree, saying that the one who is describing her imagines and invents. I answer him, he who does not believe that I had seen her:

> If they saw Leyla they would marvel at her beauty
> And say that my praise was inadequate.[22]

Having seen how wondrous she was, I started looking secretly at her as if she were my creed. I prayed for safety and liberation from her trap: "Here eyes are instruments of destruction. To escape, take a snow-white yearling horse and flee."

I was afraid to be one of those whose eyesight would lead his heart astray so that the innocent would be punished for the sin of the guilty. We noticed that midnight had already passed, but the people's spirits were still enchanted by that beguiling gazelle as if she were the *qibla* [Mecca]. They were unable to turn away from her beauteous grace, not even to blink, and they became so confused as to use adjectives incorrectly and barbarously.

I decided to leave at sunrise before we were bewitched, and to leave while still unharmed before we became corroded. I did not want to be her friend lest I be wounded by her glances. God have mercy on [Abu Muḥammad al-Qāsim] al-Ḥarīri when he said:[23]

> You see but you do not smell the lightning,
> Beware of lightning that has the thunderbolt of death;
>
> The bane of youth is to follow the whims of the spirit,
> The dissemination of love is the ambition of the eye;
>
> Turn your eye away from love
> Lest you be covered in humiliation and indignity.
> …

I determined to leave before I fell in the snares of passion and possession. I asked the vizier to help us leave. He said: "You will disappoint us tonight." But I insisted, and so he complied. His daughter, who had been singing,

joined the crowd to bid us farewell. So we rolled up our gear to depart, leaving them to what they were doing for the rest of the night.

The bank

We saw another manifestation of urbanity in this city when we entered a large building with rooms and stores called *al-bank*. It had money in it which was controlled by directors. Whoever needed to borrow money came here with an object to pawn: he left it there and took money. If he needed ten misqals or less, he had to bring an object worth that amount of money; and when he returned the money he retrieved his pawned object without paying any additional amount. If the sum was bigger than ten misqals, however, he would have to pay five percent per year: the equivalent value of the pawned object plus two years' interest. If he paid back the money he borrowed within two years, he faced no problems; but if he failed to pay after two years, then the pawned object was sold and the money and the interest were retrieved. If there was some money left, it was given to the bank director.

When we reached there, the director met us at the door and admitted us inside. He then took us around, one room after another. In some rooms, there were only weapons; in others there was silverware while some had gold jewelry, kept separately. He opened a small vault and showed us rings with precious stones: emeralds, rubies and diamonds. They were all pawned, each having a card next to it on which the name of the owner was written. In another part of the building we saw all sorts of clothing, such as *malaf*/thick cloth, silk, mattresses, rugs all piled up to the ceiling. All were pawned.

Some 200 scribes and servants and directors worked in the building. There were two men: one knew everything about clothing and its value, and the other about the value of silver, gold, precious stones, and weapons. When someone brought an object to pawn, if it was a piece of clothing, then the man who knew about clothing estimated its value, including the interest; and if it was an item of gold or silver or precious stones or weapons, then the other man did the same. If two years passed and the man who had pawned his possession did not return to reclaim it, the pawned object was sold. If the sale was higher than the original value, the extra money was taken by the pawnbroker; if less, then someone had to make up for the loss.

If one wanted to safeguard one's money in that aforementioned building, one deposited it there and received a written receipt stating that so and so had deposited the sum of so and so for safeguarding. When he wanted to retrieve his money, he handed them the receipt and got his money back. I asked them about the amount of money in the building. They said, it was a million and a half.

There were seven other buildings like this in the city. Someone told me that when these banks were started, there was little money in them. Then, whenever there was disagreement among people over money or property or other things, they seized the contested money or property and used them: if money, they loaned it to people and took the interest as profit; if property, they collected whatever income it generated until the two parties agreed. Then they returned the capital value of the property but kept its income – which was how the amounts of money in the bank increased.

The story of the elephant[24]

One of the most extraordinary things we saw in this city was an elephant that had been brought to the despot from India. It showed us one of the miracles of God.

Dusty in color and huge, its foot was as a column of a building, its ears as big as *shuwāri*,[25] it had a trunk that extended beyond its mouth by four arm spans, which it used for eating, drinking and calling out. It ate bread, barley and rice; it liked sweets and so they brought it barley mixed with sugar in a wooden bowl. It caught the food by its trunk and stuffed it into its mouth and left nothing behind, as if it had hands. Then its keeper gave it bread mixed with sugar and he stretched his hand toward it: it coiled its trunk around the food and put it in its mouth. With its trunk it could grip soft and hard foods, just like a man with his hands. It also drank wine: the keeper brought a corked flask of wine and placed it in front of it. It coiled its trunk around it and pulled out the cork. I have no idea how it could do that. Then it poured the wine in its mouth and returned the flask to the ground unbroken. It was quite intelligent: the keeper spoke to it in a non-Arabic language and it understood him. He told it: "*ibrik*," and it sat down, and so he got on its back and said: "Rise," and it rose into the air.

I thought: what would happen if the elephant refused to sit down again?

The keeper had bread with him and in non-Arabic told the elephant to take it. The elephant lifted its trunk above its head and took the bread from him and quickly pushed it into its mouth. It did that again and he gave it more bread – and it went on for a few times. Then he said to it: "Sit," and it sat and so he descended and brought it six large jars of water. It extended its trunk inside the jars and then poured the water into its throat, making a sound similar to that of a water skin. The keeper said to it in non-Arabic: "Give me your hand," and the elephant lifted it to him. It made a loud noise.

The keeper had a spear, which he used to goad it, and it was the reason why the elephant obeyed him. He told me that he never feared the animal even if it became agitated. He also told me that once a year he took it out around the city so that it did not grow sick because of lack of movement. On one occasion, they came across a coach pulled by a horse. All of a sudden, the elephant coiled its trunk around the coach and broke it and killed the horse; the rider barely escaped. The keeper of the aforementioned elephant also told me that notwith-standing its power and might, it still feared the mouse – because if a mouse entered its ear, the elephant died. Consider the wisdom and power of almighty God! This creature was one of the mightiest and most dangerous and yet could be defeated by the smallest creature: a mouse.

I recalled what was said about a certain king: he invited a number of scholars, I think one of them was al-Shāfiʿī [AD 767–820], may God be pleased with him and grant him approbation. The king wanted to challenge him and so he asked him about God's wisdom in creating flies. At that moment, the scholar noticed a fly on the head of the king and immediately found his answer, saying: "God created the fly to humble the mighty. The mighty can tyrannize and grow proud, but then a fly can sit on him and he can do nothing. Praise be to the almighty and all prevailing."

Vesuvius

One of the most extraordinary things we saw in this city was the mountain, which was two hours to its south, if you walked briskly [Vesuvius]. Smoke always spewed out of its top, like a furnace of lime, and sometimes fire. But smoke was constant. We walked to see it and decided to climb to the top but we were told that it was dangerous because the fiery stones on the slopes were never stable. As much as you stepped on them and tried to move

forward, you slipped backward. They said that whenever someone wanted to climb the mountain, he would hire a guide who tied a rope around his body and then climbed toward the top ahead of him, while the other followed in winding and difficult pathways.

It was summer and they told us to observe: once a few Englishmen arrived who were touring the country and one of them climbed with great difficulty to the top and looked into the crater to see the fire. Suddenly, fire flashed and engulfed him, pulling him to his death all the way to hell. Near the aforementioned mountain, we saw another mountain, just like it. They said it had not been there and was formed from all the rocks and earth hurled by the fire.

Pompeii

They showed us the ruins of an old city to the south of the aforementioned mountain called *bunbiyāna*/Pompeii. Before the time of Christ, it had been a city full of buildings and trades but God directed fire on them. At first, the mountain hurled cinder, so they waited and hoped; that was followed by small fiery pebbles, but they remained unmoved until the mountain exploded with fire that came down like a river, destroying everything in its path: gardens, orchards and edifices. Then it reached the city and buried all the people as if in a grave, completely wiping out their remains, as if there had been nothing in that area before.

They were forgotten for 1700 years.[26] But after time and generations of people, the city was discovered and locals started digging and unearthing the ruins. We walked into it and saw many of its buildings, churches and markets. The buildings were elegant: we saw many of the decorated walls that had been underground for so long. If you poured water on the walls, they regained their brightness and a human being could see his face in them. In one place, I saw the painting of a huge snake, and near its head was the soot of a lantern. It was said they had been Magians and worshipped that snake. I entered some of the houses and found many jars with burnt human bones. The administrator of the city said to me that its first inhabitants used to burn their dead and collect their bones, keeping each dead person in a jar. He added: “The proof of that is here.” He led us into one of their churches and in the center there was a platform raised as high as half a man, with the marks of fire and smoke. He said to me: “This

is where they burnt the dead and others because burial took place inside churches."

I saw in this city many workers digging up the ground, so I inquired about them and was told that digging earned them wages. Whenever they found any remains from the inhabitants of the aforementioned city, such as jars, jewelry, coins, or others, they sent them to the despot, who deposited them in one of his buildings specifically designated for that purpose. I will describe it later, God willing. They also showed us a round building, which they said had been the house of folly, called comedy, demonstrating that this kind of folly took place in ancient times, too. They dug up some of the roads and alleys and found them paved with large stones: they had wheel marks of coaches in them, showing how old the city was.

The workers continued in their labor, sending whatever they found to the despot to safeguard in the aforementioned building. The Neapolitans were very attentive to things of the past and when they noticed that some walls or houses were about to collapse, they restored them; and if they had already collapsed, they repaired them, since they wanted to preserve the old ruins. Some twenty years before, fire had erupted from the mountain and poured down like a river and destroyed everything in its path until it reached the sea. It was said that the water rose until it reached the mountain. I saw the path that the fire carved: it was black, and not a single plant could grow there.

As we walked there, it felt depressing and strange.

We traveled to another city in order to have lunch and to rest. The despot had prepared a house for our stay, having heard that we were passing there. It was well decorated and furnished, and when we arrived we found a large number of soldiers at the door, with their flags and drums and pipes, ready to honor us. As we entered, the overseer welcomed us, saying that the despot had prepared this house for our repose, "and I am his deputy in greeting you. The soldiers here are at your beck and call." We climbed to the upper storey and he led us into rooms well furnished with chairs. When we reached the last room he said: "This place is for your stay. Here the emperor of Germany stayed when he visited this land." So I rested there, having sent the cooks ahead of us to prepare our lunch. We stayed there till the afternoon prayer…

Burtigi and Caserta

On the following morning, we went to the building where the overseer had been informed by the despot to meet us and show us everything in it [Burtigi]. When we got there, we found him at the door, and after he welcomed us, he began showing us its domed rooms with all their wonders and marvels. We also saw the private quarters of the despot, and those of his wife, and the beautiful glassware there. He showed us a room full of exquisite statues of humans and land and sea animals. There were also grand mirrors, around twelve hand spans in length, which faced each other symmetrically. Then we entered a room with the remains of the ancients who had been burnt by fire and buried in the aforementioned city of Pompeii: he showed us their burnt bread, rice, figs, wheat and foods, all having remained the same for 1,700 years. He also showed us brass statues and containers and doctors' instruments, and from a cupboard he brought out a board on which were rings, precious stones, and other remains of the people from that city. He took a ring and said: "Carlos, king of Spain, used this ring when he was in Naples but when he was ready to return to Spain, he took it off and returned it to its place."

Consider how much they care for the things of the past. Here was a king who did not take a ring to another country because it belonged to the history of this city.

One of the most extraordinary things we saw in that building was a room with a monk who held burnt papers in his hands. They had been glued together even though they were tattered. So I asked him about them. He said: they belonged to the books of the inhabitants of that burnt city. "We found them under the ruins and so we copy what we find in them so we can learn what they knew."

I was stunned and started wondering how he could glue together burnt papers which, on touch, disintegrated and turned to ashes. I said: "I would like to see how you do that." He showed me a flat slab on the table in which he had carved grooves in straight lines and then inserted skin from sheep intestines into them. They looked just like the web of a spider. He stuck the burnt papers onto the grooves and then with a special instrument in his hand, he turned the slab over and the papers fell out and he was able to copy what was in them.

This is a wonder that can be believed only when seen.

As we were touring the wonders of this building, we were told that the despot had arrived and could be seen from where we were. "He is eager to

greet you and it is appropriate that you look from one of the windows." Soon horses galloped announcing his arrival, followed by the despot's coach. We were told that the despot was greeting us and had taken his sombrero off his head and that he was gesturing with this hand. I looked carefully inside the coach but saw other people and not the despot. So I looked again and there he was riding outside the coach in the seat of the driver. I asked: "Why does he do that?" The answer was that it was his custom. He had been asked about that to which he answered: "I like to experience the strain and fatigue that servants endure so I know how much they should be rewarded." I was told that sometimes in his gardens he took the axes from the hands of the workers and forced all dignitaries with him to do the same and to eat bread and onions. When he sailed, he took hold of the oars from the sailors and also applied himself to fishing. He went hunting always for he did not want to be indolent or inactive.

If you saw his hands, you would see how scruffy they were because of the hard work he does. You would not distinguish him from the poor or the Bedouins.

The despot went to one of the orchards there and so we followed him. We found him in an open space with his counselors. He was happy to see us and repeated his greeting, saying: "We came to this garden to play ball." So he took off his clothes, as did all who were with him, keeping only a linen shirt and then he split the group into two parties, one on his side and the other opposite and they brought balls made of untanned animal hide and started filling one with air, using an instrument. They held straight poles in their hands, extending from the elbow to the knee, and they started hitting the ball with the wooden poles where-upon the other party hit it back. A man stood there to count and declare the winner because they placed bets on the game. They could win money from the despot but then the other party would feign loss in order for the despot to win. He asked them to play again but they complained saying that they no longer had any money and that they would not play with him unless a certain sum of money was designated as a reward for the winner. They agreed on a sum, in the thousands, and then the two parties would conspire against the despot: his co-players would fail him and he would lose, after which they would divide the sum they had won from him among themselves.

They did that all the time.

We reflected on their game: it was very exhausting and if one was hit by that ball in his side or foot or arm, it was extremely painful.

When the despot decided to go to his aforementioned house in Caserta, he invited us to see it before he left it. We reached it after three hours, traveling briskly, the despot having sent too many horses for the number of coaches that we had. But halfway, they replaced the horses that were pulling the coaches with the other horses, because they had grown tired, tying them to the coaches, and we continued quickly until we reached his aforementioned house. The chief dignitary of the city where the despot's house was located welcomed us and led us to his house to have some rest. Then we went to the despot's house and lo, it was one of the wonders of the world: huge, with beautiful etchings and carvings, seven floors high, with four or five halls. Each floor had iron windows and glass doors with marble columns on the sides, remarkable in height and magnitude. The overseer told me that it had 1,211 rooms. The building had been built by the father of the despot, Carlos, king of Spain when he governed that land, but when he left for Spain, it was still unfinished, which is why they were still working on it.

One of the most extraordinary things we saw in that city was the water that was brought to it and known as *jullī* [?]. The aforementioned Carlos had brought it to his house from twenty miles away, passing between rocky mountains. At one point, there was a wide valley and so he built an aqueduct bridge in three levels with ninety arches: nineteen in the lower level, and twenty-eight in the second one, which is 300 feet above ground. It was said that the foundations went down 250 feet into the ground. The length of the aqueduct from one end to the other was 2002 feet.

I had not seen any edifice more impressive or amazing.

There was no sound of splashing water flowing in the top level, as if there was no water at all. I had not seen anything like this except the aqueduct in Segovia in Spain, which had two levels but had been built by the Romans who were able to get the water from one side to the other. But this despot had done even better: when water reached near his house by two or three miles, it was diverted through a straight stream to many pools and basins, all in different shapes. One of the pools had statues that spouted water in many directions, while another spouted water as if from a spring. Near the house, there was a huge rectangular pool, with iron apertures and surrounded by green orchards. The pools and lakes there looked like

smiling mouths. The despot had begun digging a road in a straight line from this building to Naples.

Convent

One day, the nuns known as *monkhāt* summoned us. They were nuns who did not leave their houses for the rest of their lives. If a woman wanted to become a nun, she entered one of those houses and remained there for a year. Once she reached puberty, she was queried whether she wanted to stay or go on her way: if she chose to leave, she left, and if she chose to stay and live a monastic life, giving up on the world, on a husband, and on the transitory things, they paraded her around the city, as if to have her bid farewell. Then she was admitted to the house where she stayed till she died. If she had not reached puberty, she stayed in the house until she became a woman and then she was queried and the same process followed. Many Christians sent their daughters to these houses in order to protect their honor and, at the same time, to acquire a craft – there was no other reason because if a father decided to marry his daughter off, he took her out. No man ever entered these houses and if one of the nuns got sick and there was need to admit a physician, they brought him and surrounded him by old women from the moment he entered and examined the patient until he left.

I was told that the emperor of Germany drove all nuns out and forced them to marry and gave orders forbidding these kinds of houses. His deeds reached the pope, the foundation of infidelity, and the latter became extremely worried that the bases of his infidelity might be undermined, one after another, and that other Christians would hear of such deeds and adopt them. So he rode in person to the emperor and warned him especially against abolishing nuns, and then he left. But it was said that the emperor did not heed him and continued to dismantle the nuns' houses.

In their isolation, those nuns committed many sins. Having renounced men, they joined with Satan and practiced lesbian activities [*musāḥaqa*]. There were many houses of nuns in this city, each house having an abbess [*muqadama*]. I was told that the number of nuns was 5,000 (I had more specific information in the draft that was lost). They practiced many crafts such as embroidery and knitting, and they collected and inspected the blossoms used in the making of paper and linen. They were also the only

ones who made sweets in various kinds and colors; on several occasions, they sent us some as a gift and a sign of generosity.

Ship launching

One of the most extraordinary things we saw in Naples was the launching of ships at sea. One day the despot invited us to the seaside where ships were launched. We found sailors and master shipbuilders. They had prepared a seat for the despot, covered in silk, and next to him was one for us, which was also decorated. We sat in the designated place overlooking the ship that was about to be launched. After a while, the despot and his counselors arrived, and so he looked up at us and removed his sombrero, showing happiness at seeing us, and then sat down.

The workers removed the lateral wooden boards that were holding the ship up. Two monks climbed on board by ladder, one with a silver flask in his hand containing water. He proceeded to splash the water on the ship and then they stepped down. I inquired about all this and was told that they had poured baptismal water and given it, i.e. the ship, a name. They moved a machine called a *būjī*/winch in front of the ship with ropes that were tied to it, the only thing holding it back from sliding into the water. The master went up and cut the ropes with an axe and the ship smoothly slid into the sea.

We met the despot as he was leaving. He asked us what we thought about all that, so we thanked him for his attentiveness, which made him happy.

We saw there a house in which a master shipbuilder made small models of ships and showed them to the despot. If he liked one, he ordered its like to be built. I saw near the ship that was launched another ship and I suspected that it too was to be launched, for that place from where ships were launched was like an irrigation ditch, but while the first ship had been in the water, this second ship was adjacent to it but on land and so I wondered how it would be launched. We asked the Christians about that and were told that it would be lifted from where it was to where the first ship had been and then launched.

I thought that was quite impossible. And I said: “I want to see how it will be moved. It is a ship ready to sail, like a mountain. How can you say that?”

They answered: “It is as we told you and we will let you know when we are ready to move it.”

A few days later, they decided to move it and so we went to see that. They had prepared the same seats for us and the ground was covered over with wooden planks smeared with grease and oil and other things. The ship was tied from its bow and stern by ropes to the winch. Once they activated the winch, it hauled the ship to where the earlier one had stood and then let it float into the sea in no time.

They know everything about worldly matters, but “They know only the externals of this present life, but as for the hereafter they are totally heedless” [Q 3:7].

Feasts

In Naples, we witnessed one of their greatest feasts, in which once a year they visited the church. They swept the streets and sprinkled them with water, and placed troops on the sides. Soldiers held banners that they kept with them through the night. In the morning, the vendors of food, drink and sweets emerged, while others covered the walls and seats with glamorous silken covers and set up tents with chairs. Houses overlooking the streets rented out seating for those who wanted to watch.

The despot sent us his messenger and we went with him and saw the coaches that the despot and his family and entourage were going to use. They did not bring them out except on that day: we saw coaches the like of which we had not seen before, like fortresses plated with gold. Then, he showed us the stables of the horses that pulled the coaches: each was in a stable of its own, the black, the red, the blue, the yellow and other colors, with a wooden sign near each. When we finished looking at the horses, we entered the building where sea shells were kept, and he opened the vaults and showed us shells of different shapes and colors. As we were about to leave, the overseer gave us two receptacles of his making, decorated with shells.

We found they had prepared a table for the despot's lunch, with seasonal fruit and others such as apples, pears, grapes and figs. The servants were hovering around with tree branches to drive away the flies. As we stood, we heard drums and pipes and were told the despot was coming. We went out to meet him and he arrived on horseback with his sword drawn. He

removed his sombrero as a sign of peace, and behind him were riflemen all dressed alike. Once they stopped and were lined up in rows, he called at them and they turned around; he called for the second and third time, and they turned again. He started giving orders in military matters and they obeyed. They then put down their weapons from their hands and he came down from his horse and walked to us repeating his greeting and saying: "These men are sons of dignitaries and I am their commander and they obey none but me." I praised him for having trained and prepared them for war, which made him very happy. Then he started asking me about soldiers in our country and when I told him about our soldiers, he regretted having asked me the question. He stayed with us until sunset and then he walked over to eat, as we did too.

When we reached the house where food was served, the soldiers, both the cavalry and the riflemen, also arrived with their drums and pipes. The riflemen stood in formation from the door of the despot's house until the last man, while the cavalry lined up all the way to the church door. They remained in their positions and we looked at all of them from our seats in the house. We prayed the afternoon prayer and then we heard a loud noise from a distance and it was said: "The despot has come." The horsemen galloped in front of him, as was usual, followed by one of the aforementioned coaches with servants and attendants carrying rods in their hands. It was said that was the man of justice, meaning the judge of their religious law. Then followed an empty coach and it was said that remained empty in case something happened to the despot's coach at which time this would be used. Then came soldiers with spears followed by the despot in a coach with his wife, and he gestured in greeting to us. He was followed by another coach with his eldest son, and then the rest of his children each in a coach pulled by eight horses of the same color. Having reached the aforementioned church, they went in and renewed their infidelity and iniquity and left in the same order, followed by the riflemen and the cavalry, until it became dark.

We witnessed one of their feasts called *bizlaman*/besa la mano, which meant kissing of the hand. It celebrated the birthday of the despot. All the dignitaries and notables put on their best clothes and the despot stood in a room while the Christians prepared to meet him. They entered in an orderly manner as he stretched out his hand. Each went down on his knee and kissed it and left – until all of them had done so. We stopped to have a look

and found the building full of the valiants of infidelity. When he saw us, he left them and went into another room and told us to join him, saying: “I did not want you to stand with the others because we recognize that your rank is higher than theirs.” He then called in his children, having earlier taught them how to greet us. Each came with a woman who instructed him in civility and proper behavior and they showed such courtesy that we were quite impressed.

Poorhouse

One of the beautiful aspects of this city was the house designated for the poor and the indigent. It had been established by Carlos III, king of Spain, when he was in Naples. At the time he left, it was still unfinished, and so his son Ferdinand continued it, although they were still working on it even then. One day we went there and were met by the overseer, who was very happy to see us, saying: “I wish you had informed us of your visit; we would have prepared ourselves to meet you.” Then he led us into an open space and called on the poor boys to come. They put on their uniforms and lined up in front of us, and then one group started playing music. He said: “Had you alerted us, you would have been able to see them at the crafts they are learning.”

This building was designated by the despot for orphans and widows who had no one to look after them. He appointed workers to search for them in the alleys and to bring them to this building where they would learn crafts and skills. They learned to do whatever they liked and the despot paid for their food, drink and clothing. He earmarked 70,000 riyals per year to spend on clothing and feeding the widows and orphans, including the salaries of their instructors. Every new year, he inspected them and whoever had reached eighteen years of age and had mastered his craft so he could earn enough to sustain himself, the despot gave him the tools of the trade and sent him off on his own. The same was done for widows. The overseer told me that the building had more than 3,000 rooms and that work there was continuous.

By God, this is the work of humans; how much better if they had the true foundations [of religion].

Monastery

One of the extraordinary buildings we saw in this city was a church in the west, on top of a mountain inhabited by monks who never left it [Saint Martin's Charterhouse]. When one of them died, he was buried there. It had a fort that rested on white marble columns with very beautifully carved capitals. We entered the church and saw wonders of wonders in etchings on marble – beyond description – decorated with lapis lazuli worth their weight in gold. As for the images in gold and silver and all the valuables: they were so many they could not be described. It was said that the church was the richest of the churches of the Rūm and that there was none richer in that region. It was said that the despot argued with them about its income saying that the money was not being used effectively. "What are these cadavers doing with it? Better to spend it on warships or on payment for soldiers. We will only allow for whatever expenses the church and the monks need." The aforementioned monks pleaded with him and conceded to give him 50,000 riyals every year so he would leave them alone. He agreed on condition that they would not admit any more novices to their community – aiming to obliterate their memory after their death.

Museum

One of the most extraordinary buildings we saw in Naples was the large one where the despot collected things of the past. It functioned very efficiently. One of the most extraordinary things we saw in that building was a hall 202 feet in length and eighty in width where the things of old were kept. They continued to improve it, adding shelves on the four walls on which they placed the aforementioned items, similar to what the despot kept in the building in the aforementioned city of Burtigi. They had a round scaffolding with stairs, which they used for climbing to reach the upper shelves.

In the aforementioned building, we saw the bones of a whale that had been cast on the sea shore of Naples twelve years earlier. It was said that the whale used to follow the ships of *al-Moscow/*Russians so the sailors grew afraid and shot it with cannon balls and killed it. Its flesh rotted so they scraped it and kept the bones as a memorial. They mentioned that they had found one male and one female organ, and that the male organ weighed eighty rotls and the female organ forty rotls. Altogether it weighed 1,000

quintals (their rotl was equal to thirty-three riyal). They showed us the bones of its lower jaw: it had teeth and was about ten hand spans long. They said the length of this whale was seventy plus feet, its circumference forty plus feet, and its belly twenty-seven feet. The length of the fins on its tail was twenty feet. We also saw a dead elephant: they had mounted its bones and stood it next to its skin which they had stuffed.

Royal hunt

One day the despot decided to go hunting and se he sent us his messenger saying: the despot wants you to go out with him tomorrow. So we slept and at dawn the hunters started with their dogs and drums and guns, followed by the despot in his coach. He passed by our door, followed by his wife, and so we got on our horses and followed him until we reached a mountain at the foot of which they had dug a tunnel twenty hand spans or more in width. They dug this passageway under the mountain, and it was two miles long (I had the precise number in the draft that was lost). It was said that it had been dug by the Romans when they were in those lands. Because the tunnel was under the mountain, they lit many candles so we could pass, but the locals did not need candles since they used it all the time, except if they traveled at night. We continued until the despot reached a forest with wild animals: wild bulls, boars, wolves, foxes and others. The forest was closed in by a fence built by the despot and extending to the mountains: it was wild and uninhabited and so animals multiplied there and did not leave. He was happy to see us and described to us the forest and its animals. Then he asked me about our country and whether we went hunting. I answered that we hunted a lot, mainly lions and tigers. He was surprised about the lion hunt as there were no lions in his country.

Then he said: “Let us start,” and he gave the signal to the hunters. He had divided them into two groups: one at each end of the forest. One group sent out the hounds and beat their drums and fired their guns scaring the prey to flee to the other end. When it got there, the other group did the same in sending out the hounds, beating their drums and firing their guns, so the prey ran back as the two groups drew closer and closer aiming to reach a large open space in the middle of the forest. The despot stood there with his horses and hounds as the beast was driven into a pit boarded by wooden planks. Once it was there, the hounds and horses were unleashed at it and

since it could not escape, they killed it. We stayed with him till noon by which time they had killed thirty boars and a number of bulls and others. Then carriages came and carried all the carcasses. After we reached our residence, the despot sent us seven or eight buffalos and a wild heifer, all killed in the hunt saying: “These are yours.” So we gave them to the Christians near us.

Cave

One of the extraordinary things we saw in Naples was a cave where, it was said that whoever slept in it died. I doubted that. So we went to see it and told the cave attendants: “I heard that if someone slept in this cave, he died. I want to check if that is true.” They said: “It is so.” They tied a dog by its legs and opened the cave and laid the dog on the ground with its head pushed down and in a moment, it fainted, opened its mouth, started drooling, and its eyes were turned.

I shouted for them to bring the dog out lest it die.

They did and the dog remained on the ground for an hour before it recovered. Its owner said: “If I had kept it there, i.e. the cave, it would have died.” I said: “Why does this happen?” They answered:

> It was said that in olden times, a shepherd and his sheep entered the cave to escape the midday heat. They slept and died. When they examined their bodies, they found no sign of foul play, so the people were confused. They brought a dog and put it inside the cave – and it died instantly.
>
> There was another story about this cave. The cave owner brought a gun and filled it with powder and cleaned it so that he could fire it easily. He went inside the cave and pulled the trigger, but it did not ignite; he repeated that numerous times but nothing happened. He went outside the cave, and it fired.

Acrobatics

One of the extraordinary things we saw in Naples was people playing on ropes. They asked us to let them perform before us and so we agreed. They

entered the house and tied their ropes in a wide space. On the following day they returned to perform, so we sat down to watch them.

What they performed was incredible: One walked quickly backward and forward on the rope with his shoes on; he jumped into the air the height of half a man and then fell back on his feet, sometimes on one foot, sometimes sitting with his legs together on one side. Or he would stand upside down with his head on the rope and raise his feet into the air, or he would coil his feet on the rope and dangle his head toward the floor. Another extraordinary thing he did was to bring a plank and place it on the rope and put each foot in a basket and then walk on the plank on the rope. Even more extraordinary was when he stood on the rope and was handed a musical instrument like the *'oud*: he stood on one foot and with his right hand he held it and with his left plucked at it, with neither fear nor fatigue.

One of the extraordinary things we noticed was the softness of their bones. They brought a wooden table, half a man's height, and put two planks on it, each about a cubit in length. A girl stood on it, one foot on each plank. Then they put a coin behind her and slowly, she bent backward until her head reached the table and she caught the riyal in her mouth and straightened up.

This is so extraordinary that the mind has to see it to believe it.

Circus

One of the extraordinary things we saw in this city was a troupe that came from England and played on horseback. They asked us to watch them in the place prepared for this play – an open space with wooden boards fixed in the ground like a fence, and small wooden booths inside which watchers sat. We went and found that they had prepared one of these booths for us. After they welcomed us, musicians started to play, whereupon a girl came out on the back of a horse that ran swiftly around in the space. Then she stood up on the back of the running horse. They brought out another horse onto which she jumped and rode sidewise with the other horse. The horses continued running swiftly for a while and then she lay on the backs of the two horses while they ran. It was said that she would put her head on the back of the horse and raise her legs up, but she did not do that that night.

There is nothing extraordinary in that for they are devils that can perform the impossible.

One man rode on an unsaddled horse and kept jumping down to the ground and up while the horse was running; sometimes he would jump on the other side of the horse and then jump on its back. Another put a ladder on a table and climbed up: the ladder was not leaning against a wall or anything else, and he started going up and down following the tune of the musicians. He kept on doing that for an hour.

By God, the most extraordinary of extraordinary wonders.

Royal palace

We saw in this city the house of the despot, which his father, Carlos, the despot of Spain, had built. It was on an open piece of land overlooking Naples from the north, from which the whole city could be seen. We were taken there and shown all its rooms along with its collection of books by Muslims, Christians and Jews. So I asked: "What do you want with the books of people whose language and religion you do not know?" They answered: "We want this collection to be inclusive and to show it to visitors from other lands."[27] They were proud of it very much. Then the overseer showed us a large depository of strange objects, the strangest of which was a small stone, smaller than the palm of a hand, which had three pictures of horses, one black, one red, and the third white. He kept on showing us amazing objects until evening and then we agreed to return to see more of those objects later. But we never did because of our commitments.

As for the hospital where sick, unwell, and poor men and women are supplied with beds, food, drink, clothing and treatment: it is so famous in all the lands of the Christians, there is no need to elaborate.

Strangers' cemetery

We also saw a place called *kanb sanṭ*/Campo-Santo which had 365 holes, equal to the days of the year. Each hole was quite large inside with a narrow mouth at ground level and a stone that tightly covered it. There was a high fence around the place and a number of workers. This place was for the burial of strangers such as those in the hospital. Every day, the workers lifted up the stone using chains and a machine, thereby opening the hole for the whole day. Whoever died was thrown there after which the hole was

closed and not opened until the following year. On the next day, they opened the next hole and so on all year round. May God demean them.

As for the houses prepared for eating and drinking [hotels], even on roads: they are famous in all the lands of the Christians. Whoever wants to travel finds all he needs of food and drink and lodging. If he decides to stay two or three days, even his whole life, he can do so, eating what he likes and asking for what he desires – and paying what is required. I heard a story in this city that the keeper of the house where people stay registers every name and then sends the names to the city governor, having checked where each person came from. It was agreed among all the governors of the cities that if someone committed a crime and fled, the governor of the city where the deed was committed would inform all others, specifying the name and description of the culprit. It was known that travelers could find no other place to eat and drink except in those houses and so whenever a city governor received news of a crime, he looked in these houses and often found the culprit there.

In conclusion: this city is one of the wonders of the world. Even after years of residing there, a person would not exhaust its amazing wonders. They are innumerable – nor will he be able to describe them adequately.

As for its natural resources: speak of the sea. Fruit is abundant even out of season, so much so that the fruit of two years can be found at the same time.

Captives and peace treaty

Let us now return to the purpose of our journey and our preparation for departure. When we visited the father of this despot, the king of Spain, and signed a peace treaty with him, he included his son in it. So when we met with this despot we held negotiations with him in regard to the terms. Each party put forward specific terms that satisfied their interest, and when an agreement was reached, we transcribed and signed it.

As for the captives: as was mentioned before, God enabled us to liberate 100 captives whom the despot had sent to some Christians so they could sell them and ransom their brethren from captivity. We liberated them with God's benevolence and in the hope of reward in the afterlife, and we reunited them with their kin who were with us. We all thanked God openly and in our hearts. The Neapolitans had initially planned to sell the captives

to the Maltese in order to serve on their ships, which would have added to the misery of their captivity and separation; that would have made their captivity endless. God saved them through our master, the man of evident blessings and noble deeds.

Then we discussed with them a ship that our master, God support him, had sent to the prince of Tripoli with grain because of the famine there. Neapolitan ships had captured it and so I said: "You must return the ship that our master, commander of the faithful, sent to Tripoli with grain." He replied:

> How can I return it? It was captured during wartime: between us and the people of Tripoli, there is nothing but war. We do not have a treaty with you on such matters, and it is not usual to return booty seized during war.

I said: "It is so, but if you want peace and cooperation, you need to do what I said, even if you lose the booty. You will find that returning this ship will bring great reward to you." They felt the pressure of our master and commander of the faithful, and the enemy realized that nothing would save them except doing that. So one day he sent for me saying: "The ship and the grain have been sold. I have ordered that the sum paid for it be calculated and I will hand it over to you, just for the sake of our master, God support him."

Having completed, with God's help, our duties, we decided to leave the land of those who have veered from truth to infidelity. So we asked one of the counselors to inform the despot, who was in his aforementioned country residence. He replied: "I will come to Naples to bid you farewell. No need to tire you." He set a date and when he arrived he sent word that he would meet us between the two dinners [sunset and evening prayers]. So we got ready, and after prayer, one of the dignitaries responsible for meeting ambassadors, came for us, accompanied by horsemen who waited in formation at the entrance of the house. The coaches arrived and we got in, and the horsemen preceded us, with their swords unsheathed, just like the first time, until we reached his house.

There, we found countless Christians, with candles that illuminated the alleys and the roads. We climbed to the top floor, with Christians standing

in reverence on every floor until we reached the same room where we had first met him. We found him exactly as before, standing on a stool covered with silk and to his right another table and behind him a gold-plated chair. The room was full of the kingdom's dignitaries and viziers and when he saw us, he removed his sombrero from his head as a greeting. We gestured with our hand and approached him. He did that three times. I started by thanking him for all his generosity and hospitality and the joyous welcome that he and all his people, high and low, had shown us. "I will report to my master and lord what friendship we have seen from you, so you will be thankful for the peace which we have signed and you will be at peace with all nations."[28] He replied in a manner that exceeded all conventions: "My country is your country, and everything in it is yours."

We left him in the same manner we had entered and were met by the despot's chamberlain, saying: "The queen is waiting to bid you farewell." We proceeded to her house and when we entered the room, we found her standing as she had the first time we met, and to her left and right, women from among the families of dignitaries and elders of government. She greeted us as had her husband, but the way a woman greets is by slightly lowering herself towards the floor. She did that three times, and so we thanked her for all the hospitality and generosity shown to us during our visit, and her assistance to us in fulfilling the will of our master, commander of the faithful.

Description of Palermo (229–231)

[They left on December 10, 1782 aboard a ship from Dubrovnik which the Neapolitans had offered them. But there were such terrible storms that they changed course to shelter in Sicily. Al-Miknāsī described his fear and despair in elegant rhymed prose. On December 29, he and the delegation went into Palermo.] The city was built on the south side of Sicily, and was very big with around 242,000 inhabitants. It was the residence of the despot, known as vice rey, on the island. It was very fertile, with gardens and orchards and water, and much of its produce was sent to the lands of the Christians. Its circumference was 700 miles and it was triangular in shape…

The city was extraordinary because they had divided it into four parts: they built a straight road from one city gate to the opposite one and then intersected it with another straight road that also cut across from one side of

the city to the other. In the center, there was a large round space with a beautiful pond. The roads were full of stores.

The people were very welcoming, eloquent and well-mannered, and very attentive to visitors. There was a big difference between them and the inhabitants of Naples about whom it could be said: “As for the land, it is the most beautiful, But the people are the meanest.” All were happy to see us and they hosted us generously. They helped us forget our sadness for being away from home and kept us company in our loneliness. They invited us to every performance and took us on promenades, and when they found that we enjoyed ourselves, they invited us again.

Theater (231–232)

The governor of the city informed us through some dignitaries that they had prepared a performance for us that night and that they wanted us to attend. I found that difficult to accept but then I realized that the people were doing everything to entertain us and to celebrate the glory of our master, the victor, our imam. So I thought it best to accommodate them and not to act contrary to their practices. Otherwise they might say things that could be offensive for which we would be to blame.

So I agreed and joined their company. There were large crowds in a big building with numerous floors and balconies that overlooked the bottom floor, just like the aforementioned one in Naples called *wabra* in their language, and *kamdiya* in Spanish. They lit a lot of candles as dignitaries and elders, both men and women, arrived and sat down. Then musicians began to play non-Arabic melodies, but they were still harmonious. The curtain was lifted and revealed a building wondrously and delicately built: “Your sight will return to you, humbled and flagging” [Q 67:3].

A girl appeared who was the instructor accompanied by her servants, “growing from a root” [Q 13:3],[29] all dressed alike so much so that you could not distinguish them. They performed various acts, each in a different manner, until they grew tired: sometimes they danced, quite energetically going forward and backward, doing what was nearly impossible, at least for humans. Then the curtain was drawn after which a whistle was blown and it was lifted revealing different things from what had been shown before: place and time, houses and chairs, people standing and sitting, a long road, the sea and the fleets, none of which was real for they were all works of

decoration and imitation. Sometimes princes and soldiers appeared in battle and you heard the sound of guns; at others a desperate lover, about to expire, and his beloved showing him nothing but rejection and distance. And while he implored her openly and in secret [soliloquy], another man took her away. Their follies have no meaning or goal, neither limit nor purpose.

Masquerade (232–233)

When their fast approached, which they call Cuaresma, they added more follies to the aforementioned houses, and activities similar to our *sha'bāna*.[30] You found the markets full of masks made of waxed linen in the shape of humans, with a nose and two holes for the eyes. They bought them and wore them on their faces and then both men and women changed their clothes and went to the aforementioned houses where they mixed together. They did not know each other unless they had agreed on a sign by which to identify themselves. They danced in that house, men and women who did not know each other, and on the next day, they talked about it, inquiring in which place they had been or what disguise they had worn – sometimes saying that they had recognized each other.

As for their immorality: that is obvious and widely known, from past days, months and years. But it is not denounced in their religious law and we had seen it earlier in Malta.

We saw even more of such follies in this city. The building designated for folly was filled up at night by these people who changed their clothes and disguises, may God hasten their punishment, and then danced, men and women together. They continued till sunrise. There was another building filled with food and drink and others: whoever among them desired anything went there and ate and drank. Then he left back to the dance and the entertainment.

Earthquake in Messina (233–235)

The earthquake happened on Wednesday the 2nd of Rabī' al-Awal [February 5, 1783] at dawn. The city shook. The following Tuesday after midnight, another earthquake occurred: the people were afraid and fled to

the gardens and orchards. The earthquake damaged many cities in the island of Sicily, most important of which was Messina, which lies at the strait between Sicily and the Great Land [Italy]. It had an extraordinary harbor, the like of which, they said, there was none. The inhabitants of this city sent messages to Palermo, pleading for help and money because all the supplies they had were buried under the rubble. Other cities in the Great Land just across from Sicily, called Calabria, were also destroyed in this earthquake. Some said that the number of destroyed cities was fifty, others more, others less. As for the dead, they could not be counted: those who exaggerated gave the figure of 100,000 and those who were minimalists said 20,000. As for the money that was lost, none could determine the amount. Calamity befell the infidels after this disaster, which was followed by further calamity and fire so much so that sunlight was dimmed by the smoke. God demeaned that protectorate of infidelity and destroyed its people, each one of them finding his grave under piles of rubble. The towers of the city that had been decorated for infidelity were brought down, and the sea drowned many of the people, while those who survived found themselves refugees. The word of God came true and it did not help them that they said: "Would that we could be returned to life" [Q 6:27]. Their statues and tombs and corpses remained a lesson to those who would learn, and a miracle to those who could see, and a reminder to the travelers, so that the deviance of the unbelievers would be halted. And so, when that disaster befell them, they stopped the follies and all their drolleries and returned repentant to God. They shut down those houses and opened the churches and chapels, and the monks and clerics preached and warned about what had happened in the past.

The despot sent ships to the inhabitants of Messina with food and medicines and physicians and machinery for construction, while the great one of Malta sent them ships with food and clothing and money in order to assist the despot, because he wanted to have some influence with him. They took the food and clothing but returned the money.

Playing chess (238–239)

One day, a dignitary of the city said: "The elders of the city want you to visit them in the house where they regularly meet." These elders have a house where men and women meet every evening for friendly conversation.

There are attendants in the house who light the candles, bring seats and chairs, and prepare drinks and sweets for all who come. Whoever decides to come can come, but if someone is busy, he does not have to. Each person has to pay a fee at the beginning of every new year, and the money that is collected is spent on the house and in paying the wages of the attendants and other things.

So when they asked us to visit them, having heard that we had seen the house of the dignitaries of Naples, we could not but go. So we went in the evening and found them standing at the door, having lit a large number of candles. They were very happy and welcoming and led us into the house, showing us all rooms and seating areas. We saw a group of dignitaries, men and women, some talking, others playing a game called Carta with cards that had numbers on them. We found two elders playing chess. I watched them closely as they played where-upon one of them asked me whether the game was played in our country. I answered: "A lot." He asked: "Can you play?" I knew how to play and so I answered in the affirmative. Little did I know that they were planning to have me play, for one of the two players asked me to play. I answered that I did not want to because I had not played it for years. He insisted and pleaded and the more I resisted the more he wanted me to play. Soon all the people in the house gathered around us, repeating his request, and so I could not but agree to what they wanted, lest they start disbelieving me or thinking that my resistance was because of my fear.

I had learned how to play chess as a boy, and as is known, what you learn in youth is like carving in stone. Still, I was worried that he might win, for even in wars, things always change, and many men and heroes lose. So I thought it better to be cautiously prudent. I looked at the man who had challenged me to the game and then at the chess board and I realized that he was about to lose. One or two more moves and he would be defeated. So I said: "I will continue with the two of you the game you started and I will win it for you." He said: "The game is lost. Let us play another game." And so he called his friends and family to start a new game to watch a new game. I said: "I will only finish this game between you two, just to make you happy." I thought that if the other won, then it would not be too much of a humiliation since the game was lost, and if we won, it would be a blow to him and he and his supporters would weep while we laughed.

So we started: I moved the pawn that was to the right, thereby leaving the rook exposed, or so he thought. He saw victory, but then I brought the *farz* [queen] and opened the way for her. I prepared for my next move and in a twinkling of the eye, the king was dead by the queen who was protected by the rook in the corner. He was stunned and threw the pieces from his hand, humiliated and defeated, as the victory of God became evident. He ripped his clothes like a threatened hedgehog and I said to him: "This is the way Arabs play – and you wanted it."

A girls' orphanage (243–245)

One of the extraordinary things we saw in this city was a group of musicians who had a box with a curtain and some machines which, when rotated, gave out tunes and melodies. And there was a dog that accompanied the tunes with its voice and raised its head and swayed left and right.

One of the manifestations of the urbanity of this city: we entered one day into a large building for indigent orphaned girls. The overseer met us with joy and then an old woman who was responsible for the girls showed us their sleeping quarters in large bedrooms, where each girl had a wooden bed, a foothold, a cover and a pillow. Then she showed us where they ate, and the women teachers who instructed the aforementioned girls in their crafts of weaving, knitting, embroidery, and cooking and other womanly skills. She told us that the despot was financially responsible and annually gave clothing to the girls and paid the teachers their wages. The girls remained in that house until they got married and none left until she had learnt a craft. From that craft she would pay her husband [dowry].

Another extraordinary thing we saw in this city was three brothers who were deaf and mute, but they could still write. I did not believe that and so they brought them in front of us and they wrote.

By God, how extraordinary.

Anatomy class (244–245)

One of the manifestations of the urbanity of this city: I went into a large house where boys received education. We passed through rooms in each of

which was a teacher with boys who were learning arithmetic, astronomy, navigation and Latin, which is as important as grammar for us. They also studied philosophy and medicine and other subjects. They were very attentive to education.

They showed us the library of their books. I was stunned by their organization and orderliness. It was said that there were 30,000 books and they had spent around 12,000 riyals just on the shelves.

These boys sleep in their parents' houses, where they also eat and drink; in this building, they only receive education. When we went down to the lower floor, we found the boys as numerous as locust. They started screaming so I asked the translator what they were saying, and he answered that they were asking me to implore their teachers to send them home. So we so asked the teachers to do that and they sent them off for three days.[31]

An extraordinary thing I saw in that building was a man and a woman who had had the flesh removed from their bones after which the veins were reconstituted. The human looked like a net of veins. They had removed the veins even from the intestines, and then laid them out, coiled as they were in the abdomen; so too their sexual parts. They also removed the heart and replaced it with something similar to it that was red, and then they put the [real] heart inside a container. The man was set up on a slab of marble after they had glued his bones together, making him look exactly as he was in life. As the slab rotated, he turned around. The woman and her fetus too had had the flesh removed and the veins reconstituted. "This is God's creation – now show Me what they created, those other than Him!" [Q 13:9]. The almighty said: "Will you not open your eyes?" [Q 51:21].

Capuchin monastery (246–247)

One day, I entered an isolated church in which lived bearded monks who wore rough cloth, called Capuchin. They claim not to own anything and live on alms, and offer all the food that that they do not eat in charity. They were happy to see us and showed us their house, including their sleeping and dining quarters. I watched them during their meal: one of their practices was to have someone read to them from a book while they ate and listened.

They led us down to the lower level of their church, where their dead were standing at the walls. When they built the walls, they added niches as high as a man and a cubit in depth. The dead were standing inside those

niches with wooden plaques hanging around their necks bearing their names because their bodies had changed. Each had a rope around his neck as a mark of his monastic vocation (more to drag them down to hell). There were also small rooms inside the walls with small doors that were tightly sealed. When a person died, they seated him on a stone with a hole in it, and kept them inside one of these rooms. Then they closed the room and he remained there for six months until all his liquids seeped out and his putridity was gone. Then they took him out and stood him in the aforementioned places. And if the bones of one of the dead crumbled, they collected them and put them on shelves. As for their elders, they put them in boxes, a row of which they showed us.

History of the Muslims of Sicily (249–252, 253)

The Muslims, God have mercy on their souls, had an arduous jihad in Sicily and at one time they had a strong bastion. They conquered the island during the caliphate of Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam [reg. ad 684–685]. They first took a city called Syracuse on the coast facing Malta. Sicily was then under the rule of the Rūm and their king, Constantine, was in the capital of his kingdom, *Qusṭanṭīna* [Constantinople] the Great. He had surveyed Sicily before the arrival of the Muslims and studied its conditions and then returned to Constantinople. After he left, the Muslims landed and God defeated the cross and all those who carried it, and lowered its head and made victorious His true religion by granting Muslims conquest and dominion. They continued in their conquests, with God's help, and the infidels endured much from the Muslims, heroes defending the faith.

After conquering most of the island, the voices of the infidels rose calling for revenge: these were Christians under Muslim rule and *dhimma*, paying the poll tax on themselves, for their children, fathers and mothers. The news of the conquest and all of the fighting and violence reached distant lands and so the pope, the principal of infidelity, grew wrathful at Constantine, and congregated all his bishops and made them swear that if Constantine did not re-conquer Sicily, he would be denounced. But the Muslims remained on the island, lording it over the infidels and humiliating them, collecting the poll tax from the high and the low, each paying it in servility [Q 9:29], until Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik [ad 668–715] sent Mūsa ibn Nuṣayr to Africa [Tunis] and beyond to the Maghrib.

The infidels assembled and declared that the opportunity was ripe to retake Sicily since the Muslim armies had joined Mūsa ibn Nuṣayr in his war against al-Dharīq, the last of the kings of the Goths in Spain. So they sent their soldiers on board ships to Sicily and fought the Muslims in numerous battles. Reinforcements were sent to the Muslims, who soundly defeated the polytheists who fled. The Muslims chased them, and crossed the sea to the Big Land and laid siege to Rome and attacked all the lands of *laṭaliya*, inflicting great devastation on its people. The Muslims reached the frontiers, forcing the people to the very borders. Sicily thus remained in their hands until 1100 and some twenty years after Christ. An infidel from among the enemies of God, called Count Roger from a land called Normandy, led his armies and landed in one of the cities of Sicily called Syracuse, where the Muslims had first landed. He fought the Muslims fiercely, but the Muslims received no reinforcements from the main-land because of all the feuds among their coreligionists. The infidel enemy kept fighting the Muslims, wresting forts and cities from them: "Do they not see how We descend upon their territory, causing it to shrink from its margins?" [Q 13:41].

The Muslims sought shelter in the aforementioned city called Palermo, but he laid a tight siege and wrested it from the Muslims after many battles in which countless Christians died. The Muslims fled, but the enemy pursued them and so they sought shelter in a city called Messina, which is the one where the aforementioned earthquake occurred. He descended on that city with his armies and so the Muslims fled by sea and he took over the whole land. And that was the last of the Muslim presence in Sicily and all its regions: "The earth belongs to God and He gives it in inheritance to whomsoever He pleases among his servants" [Q 7:128].

…

Of the monuments of Muslims on this island, I found only one large mosque that had been altered. There was also a lake outside the city into which the water of a stream flowed. When it was full, they sailed small boats in it for pleasure. Next to it was a bath and the ruins of a building, which I think was a recreational garden. Until now, the Christians credit its building to Marwān.

Theological disputation (254–255)

One day, we met a monk from this city who spoke Arabic. As we were conversing, I said to him:

> "What do you believe about *al-Masīḥ*/Christ?"
> "He is from God."
> "What do you mean? Are you saying he is part of Him?"
> "No."
> "Are you then saying that he is His son by procreation? Or by transmutation [Istiḥāla]"
> "No."
> "Then you cannot but say what we say: he is of Him in the sense that He made and created him. Is there anything else?"
> "He is God who entered into the body of *'Isā*/Jesus. Had he been what you are saying he was, he would have had to have a father."
> "It is better for you to say about Adam what you have said about Jesus – and also of all insects born of mold and earth, since they, too, have no father. So too the camel of the Prophet Sāliḥ that came out of the rock" [Q 7:73].
>
> He stopped. God is above all that the misbelievers say. But I continued:
>
> "Why did the human join with the divine, as you claim?"
> "He wanted to save the world from Adam's sin."
> "Did he know what was to happen, as you claim?"
> "He did."
> "That goes against reason."
> "And if I say he did not know?"
> "I say to you: why did you so claim?"

In short, although they are so knowledgeable and learned about the world, they are wrong in religion.

> Had your Lord willed, He would have created mankind a single nation. But they continue to differ, save for those to whom God has shown mercy. It is for this reason that He created them. The Word of

your Lord is fulfilled: “I shall fill hell to the brim with both Jinn and humans!”

[Q 11:118–119]

Oh God, preserve our religion and our reason so that you will be pleased with us when we face you in the Day of Judgment among your prophets and messengers and all whom you have favored among your well-guided worshippers.

Return of the captives to Meknes and meeting with Sidi Muḥammad (255–258)

We stayed in that city for three months and three days, awaiting the eastern wind. We were there for most of the winter, December, January and February.[32] Then God sent a wind from the east, and so the captain alerted us that we could leave. The city people bade us farewell.

We left on 16 Rabīʿ al-Thānī in the year [March 30, 1783] and after six days we crossed the difficult parts of the sea and sailed near Sicily, Sardinia, Majorca, Minorca and Ibiza. Across from Cartagena, we encountered a strong western wind that pushed against us, so we decided to seek shelter there to escape the danger of the sea, but then we started hoping “perhaps” and “maybe” God would extend His mercy and relieve us. The wind persisted for two days, as if two years, and we feared being driven back and away:

The strongest passion is felt when you draw nearer and nearer to your land. But God almighty showed us His power and His forgiveness and sent us a wind that helped us and carried us under the wing of His mercy. We sailed on in safety and tranquility and docked in Tangier after traveling for twelve days.

As we were docking, the sea was turbulent and the wind was strong so we could not disembark that day. On the following day, we did because we had grown tired of the sea, at the same time that we feared what might happen, not trusting its consequences. Small boats came out to us and the sea captain, having removed his cannons, took us to shore where we found the whole city population, every father and son, awaiting us. The governor and his soldiers welcomed us warmly in front of the Christians – for which

he is worthy of thanks and appreciation – and gave us a horse. I rode preceded by the soldiers in an impressive formation and with dignity and reverence while the women were hailing us from rooftops, and drums and pipes were resounding from the sides of the streets. We brought down the captives in consecutive groups and the Muslims rejoiced to see them, and we settled them in houses in the city to rest, and extended to them the generosity of our lord, victorious by God.

We wrote to our lord, commander of the faithful, about our arrival with the Muslim captives, he who had liberated them through almighty God's blessing from the distant lands of infidelity, this being only one of his noble deeds. We thanked God for saving us from the horrible dangers and numerous tribulations, and stayed in Tangier until we received word from our master, may God support him, congratulating us on our safety. He ordered us to him and sent beasts of burden to transport the captives.

We traveled to him, God support him, in Meknes, and spent our last night in the valley of Fara, two hours away from the city. On the following day, our lord, may God ennoble him sent us his horsemen to meet us, along with military leaders and others, and he showed immense joy at the return of the Muslims. May God record that deed among his glorious deeds, reflecting his pure intention and his untainted spirit. Horses galloped and shots were fired in the air and as we were entering the city, our master, God support him, sent us a messenger telling us to lead the aforementioned captives to the tomb of his grandfather, the blessed leader, our master Ismā‘īl, God have mercy on his soul, may God lighten the burden of his grave, and admit him to His everlasting gardens. We were joined by the jurists, the *ashrāf* [descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad], students, and city dignitaries and we all recited passages from the Qur’ān and invoked God for our master. Our master sent food to the captives, which they ate, and then he ordered us to settle them in houses prepared for them in the city, and for us to rest and to see him that afternoon.

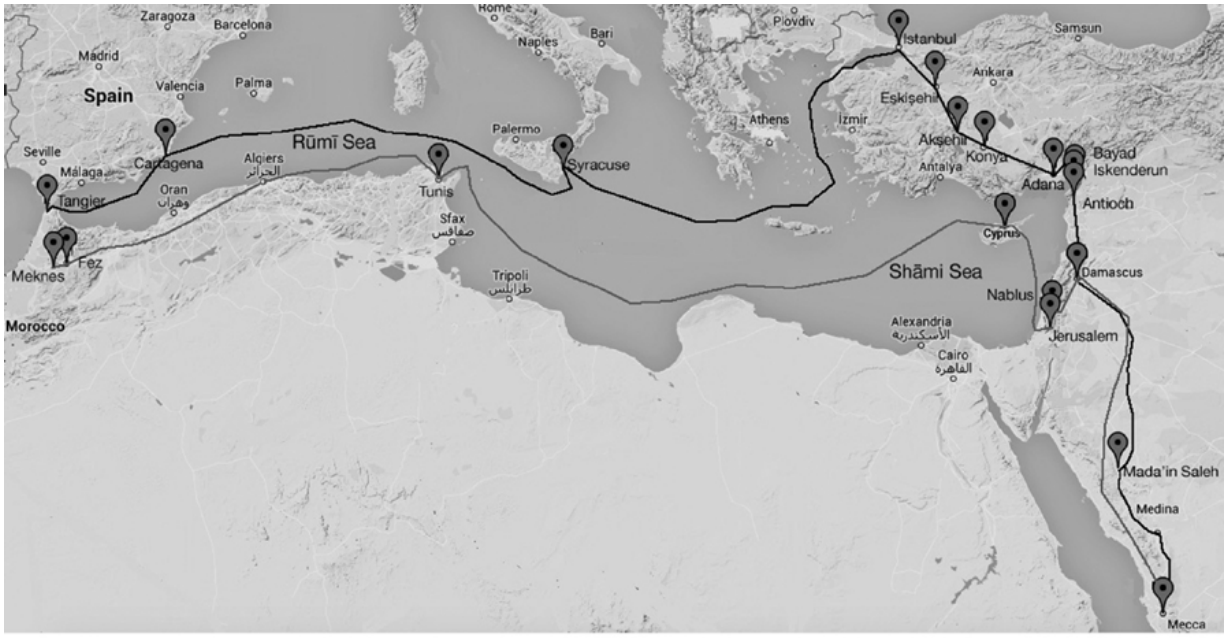
After prayer, we went to his Porte, and the expanse of his presence, and took to him the present that the despot of Naples had sent him. We found him near the Sawānī gate and he was joyous to see us and thanked God for our success. Then we handed him the letter of the despot and the peace agreement we had concluded and signed, along with the despot's gift, which he had sent in fear and trepidation. We also handed him the receipts for all that had been paid in ransom, along with the signatures of the Christians

from whom the captives had been ransomed, and with the rental fee of the ship in which we had sailed.

On the following morning, we led the captives to him in al-Dār al-Baydā' [a palace in Meknes], where he asked them about their tribes and clans and the length of their captivities. He spoke with them for a long time, just to make them feel happy, saying: "Thanks be to God that He hastened your liberation and by bringing you back, completed the happiness of Muslims." Then he ordered beasts of burden to carry them instantly to Fez, and they left him joyous, their voices raised in gratitude for our master.[33]

[Al-Miknāsī added to his travelogue five *maqāmāt* in which he denounced members of delegation in scathing language, accusing them of indecency and vulgarity and reprimanding them for presenting a negative image of Muslims to their hosts who had been welcoming and generous. After fifty pages of rhymed prose, he ended his account]:

The writing of this text was completed after the loss of the earlier draft in early Jamādī al-Thānī [May 1783], and then further delayed until 17 Dhu-l Ḥijja 1197 [November 13, 1783]. May God extend His prayer on our lord and master, Muḥammad, seal of the prophets and foremost of the messengers, and on his family and companions. Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds.



Map 3 Third journey, the Islamic World, 1785–1788.

1 All page references are to the edition by Malīka al-Zāhidī: *al-Badr al-sāfir li-hidāyat al-musāfir ila fikāk al-asārā min yad al-ʻaduww al-kāfir* (Muḥammadiyya: Hasan II University, 2005).

2 Thomas Freller states that al-Miknāsī was also to "visit Rome and the pope," "The Shining of the Moon," 314.

3 Al-Miknāsī had described Cadiz very briefly in his earlier travelogue. Before him, al-Ghassānī had written about it during his 1690 visit. See also al-Ghazāl, *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-ʻArabī, 218–220.

4 A title that appears in the manuscript (MZ).

5 The marine chronometer was developed by John Harrison and was described in *The Principles of Mr Harrison's Time-keeper* (1767).

6 A Persian word no longer used in Morocco (MZ).

7 As al-Miknāsī stated, the governor spent 2,740 riyals on them during their twenty-six-day stay.

8 Al-Miknāsī used the vulgar Arabic word for feces.

9 The word is used in colloquial Moroccan (MZ). The dictionary gives the meaning as lime.

10 A Berber tribe, mentioned by Ibn Khaldūn (MZ).

11 It is not clear if al-Miknāsī is referring to some specific group or just deriving a name from the word for "foundling" or "refuse." Or is it from Malta – *malātiqa*?

12 *Fidā'i* refers to a military rank among the Ismāʻīlis/Nizaries/"Assassins." Jamāl al-Dīn Shīḥa (1259–1328) (MZ).

13 For a detailed discussion of the process of ransoming the captives, see Mariano Arribas Palau, "La partipacion de Fernando IV de Nápoles en las gestiones para al rescate de musulmanes cautivos en Malta," *Studi Maghrebini* 7 (1980): 216–232.

14 In 1749, Muslim captives rose up in revolt but were defeated and sixty of them were executed (MZ). The most comprehensive study of Muslim captives in Malta and Gozo remains the work

of Godfrey Wettinger.

15 Possibly similar to celebrations of ‘Ashurā‘ (MZ)

16 The peace treaty was signed on October 10, 1782. The Arabic and Spanish versions are reproduced by MZ in appendices III and IV.

17 A line of poetry from al-Firazdaq (AD 641–730) [MZ].

18 The garden had been recently opened, in 1781 (MZ).

19 A Moroccan word referring to a climbing plant (MZ).

20 Teatro di San Carlo, opened November 4, 1737 (MZ).

21 A common saying suggesting calm (MZ).

22 From al-Maqqarī's *Nafh al-Tīb*, a book celebrating the history of al-Andalus, written *c.*1620s.

23 The popular author of the *maqāmāt* who lived in Basra (ad 1054–1122).The quotation is from his tenth *maqāma* (MZ).

24 Title in the manuscript (MZ).

25 Colloquial Moroccan: the saddle laid on the back of a mule (MZ).

26 Excavations began in 1748.

27 Cf. nearly the same words that had been said to al-Ghassānī, *Sources inédites de l'histoire du Maroc*, Deuxième série – Dynastie fialienne, ed. Henry de Castries *et al*. (Paris, 1925), 3: 356.

28 The signing took place on October 19, 1782.

29 Not Khalidi's translation.

30 Moroccan festivities at the beginning of the month of Sha‘bān (MZ).

31 Did al-Miknāsī repeat an episode that al-Ghazāl had described? *Natījat al-ijtihād*, ed. al-‘Arabī, 89.

32 The names are transliterated.

33 Sidi Muḥammad continued to ransom captives from European countries although it is very unlikely that he ransomed 46,000 as the nineteenth-century historian, Aḥmad ibn Khālid al-Nāṣirī, stated in *al-Istisqā' li-akhbār duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqṣā* (Cairo, ah 1312), 4: 121. Still, in 1788–1789, he initiated the ransoming of 600 captives from Malta: see Mariano Arribas Palau, “Un rescate de 600 musulmanes cautivos en Malta (1788–1789),” *Hespéris-Tamuda*, 35 (1987), 33–89.

3 Third journey

The Islamic World, 1785–1788

In the Name of God, the Merciful and the Compassionate

Iḥrāz al-ma'ālī wa-l-raqīb fī ḥajj bayt Allah al-ḥarām wa ziyārat al-Quds al-Sharīf wa-l-Khalīl wa-l-tabarruk bi-qabr al-ḥabīb (1785–1788) [ed. Muḥammad Būkabbūt].

(Beirut: al-Mu'assassa al-'arabiyya li-l-dirāsāt wa-l-nashr, 2003).

On travel and its benefits (47–55)[1]

Traveling in the world and reflecting on God's creations is a great reminder to the heart, and what a reminder [of God's glory]! And it is a great illumination to the eyes, and what an illumination! For all that God has created is a miracle, visible to all. But only by going into foreign lands will the heart be made pious and be directed to God away from everything else…

Abu 'Abdallah [Sidi Muḥammad], victorious by God, Muḥammad, son of the commander of the faithful, our lord 'Abdallah, may God always protect him and make him victorious, leveling the land before him and making all worshippers bow in obedience to him, ordered us, may God elevate him and guide him in all his affairs, to take a letter to Constantinople the Great, that majestic capital, and meet with its supreme

sultan, the absolute *khāqān*,[2] servant of the two Noble Sanctuaries and of Noble Jerusalem, the first direction of prayer, Sultan ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd Khan [AD 1725–1789], may God almighty support him, and protect his dominion, and make him an eyesore to his enemies, and keep away all evil and harm, and strengthen him over the infidels, and help him defeat his enemies, and keep these two great sharifian princes a bulwark for Islam, so that they may bring back to Islam its youthful vigor, and its branches bear leaves of green, and unify the word of Islam in order for the Muslims to overcome the polytheist.[3] God is above all things.

He also ordered us, may God protect him and record his goodness for all time, that after finishing with the delivery of the letter in Constantinople, having seen the crescent of that halo [the Ottoman sultan],[4] to continue to the Mother of Villages [Mecca] to perform the hajj and all its rituals, and to distribute Sidi Muḥammad's presents to the people of the two Noble Sanctuaries, which he had given us to carry. He, may God always grant him happiness, entrusted us to write down all that we saw in our travels, among Bedouins as in cities, and so I tried not to describe anything unless I had verified it personally, nor to mention anything unless I explained it…

I ask God for His help and assistance.

At the beginning of Muḥarram 1200 [November 1785], we parted from the presence of our master and lord, commander of the faithful, God protect him for Islam and Muslims, while he was in Rabat, carrying with us gifts of gold and silver for the *seyyids* and *ashrāfs* of the Noble Sanctuaries.[5]

[Al-Miknāsī and the delegation went to Tetuan and Tangier where they spent six months waiting for good sailing conditions. Finally] on the eve of Monday 2 Rajab [May 19, 1785], we boarded a ship sent by the great one of Spain, by order of our lord, victorious by God, that took us to a larger ship in the city of Cartagena. We sailed from Tangier in the aforementioned ship and reached Cartagena after three days, where we dropped anchor in its extraordinarily shaped harbor. We remained there for five days and then transferred onto the big ship that was a navy vessel with about fifty cannons and 500 sailors and soldiers.

Syracuse (56–58)

[They set sail to Malta, but the sea grew rough and so they sought shelter in Syracuse, docking there on June 8, 1786.] From Syracuse, the Muslims conquered Sicily during the reign of the Umayyads and it remained in their hands for about 300 years. Then the infidels seized Sicily, also attacking from this city: to God belongs all the earth and He bequeaths it to whomever He chooses of His followers. Since the city became the point of entry, the aforementioned despot [Carlos V] fortified it, all of which we described in our travelogue called, *Al-Badr al-sāfir*. It has a lot of olive trees and the governor told us that it had about fifty oil presses and that the oil-pressing season lasted for two months.

The inhabitants were happy and carefree and welcomed us openly, and many times invited us to come on land. But we refused because we had entered their harbor only to take water on our way farther. When they saw our resistance, they came over to our ship in the evening in their entirety, men and women, with singers and musicians, all in beautiful clothes. Our captain prepared for their arrival in accordance with their customs: he decorated and shaded the ship, and hung glass lanterns with candles, so much so that the ship looked like no other ship in the harbor, one of the finest. After sunset, the inhabitants arrived with the women/*ḍāmāt*, the title signifying high status, while chairs and cushions were arranged for seating. The singers then went up on a platform and started playing their instruments and singing about all the complaints and laments of the young. Since it was summer, we drank sweet, iced potions to drive away the heat.

Then quickly, they started dancing, men and women, for that was one of their customs that could not be changed. They spent the night in jollity, totally oblivious to the goings and comings around them. … Nothing was stranger than our night festivities, so far away on the waves of the seas.

On the fourth day of Great Ramadan [June 30, 1786], and after the captain filled up water from Syracuse, we sailed away. God graced us by the blessing of that holy month with a westerly wind that helped us cross vast distances, which would not have been possible without God's benevolence. As we sailed past islands in *Barr al-Turk*/land of the Turks, we met with a contrary wind, but we continued by tacking, and made some headway until we approached the *bughāz* of Constantinople [Bosphorus]. The word *bughāz* in Turkish means throat and the *bughāz* is a strait between two lands that are near one another, which is why it is called “throat.” They

had built high forts on both sides, with cannons whose shot reached the other side. No ship could pass through without having a pass.

In this region, one of our slaves died, and since we were far from land, we threw him into the sea, God have mercy on his soul. All my companions, even the Christians on board the ship, offered me their condolences, except one man known as Ibn Yaḥya who was indifferent. I was hurt and composed a poem in lamentation of the aforementioned slave in which I mentioned the indifference of that man: he spent his time playing a game with his friends known among the common people as *ḍāma* [checkers].

Arrival in Istanbul[6] (61–63)

We reached the capital, Constantinople the Great, on 4 Shawwāl [July 30, 1786]. As soon as we docked, some of the inhabitants came to us by boat to make inquiries, as is the custom. After we talked to them, they went back and informed the sultan, may God make him victorious, and so he ordered them to prepare one of the residences near him and while we waited on board the ship, he sent us many glass receptacles full of sweets, drinks and delicacies, all as a sign of hospitality and generosity. There were also many seasonal fruits: pears, apples, grapes, watermelons and others.

On the following day, state dignitaries arrived in their many boats and we went with them to the city. On reaching the quay, we found horses with gold-covered saddles, which we rode: we were preceded by locals and dignitaries all the way until we reached the building designated for our residence. We climbed upstairs, because Turks always have their quarters on the upper level, and found a large hall with many chairs and rooms and glass-covered windows overlooking the sea and the city. The view was beautiful. The furniture in all the rooms was made of silk, as was their custom. Afterwards, and to honor us, many state dignitaries sent us gifts.

We stayed five days after our arrival until the vizier invited us to meet him. It is their custom that after an ambassador arrives and has some rest, the first person he meets is the vizier. This is the custom among all *ʿājām/*non-Arabs. He sent us a number of horses with gold-covered saddles led by various dignitaries and so we got ready and rode on, their horses preceding us and their soldiers surrounding us. We passed through the

streets of the city, everyone standing up for us in respect, until we reached the vizier's residence. We climbed upstairs and found it full of dignitaries and servants. We walked through rooms, one leading into the other, until we reached the room of the vizier. He stood up, in honor for our master and lord, commander of the faithful, and we exchanged greetings. After we sat down, he asked us about our travels and whether we were tired, along with a few other questions. Then, coffee was served, which we drank, for that was one of their customs with which we had to comply, and then they offered us glass cups with sweet drink, followed by frankincense and incense. Whenever they offered us anything of the aforementioned, they covered our clothes with embroidered silk kerchiefs; later they brought us kaftans, called among them *akrāk*, some of the best of their attire, which they gave us to wear. We returned to our seats, after which they brought other kaftans for our companions. We then prepared to leave, having been told that the meeting was over, and so we stood up, as did the vizier, and he bid us farewell. They led us to his underling, called *kāhiya*, who was happy to see us and so we sat with him. He showed the same hospitality that the vizier had shown us in regard to coffee and others, and he talked with us about relevant subjects. Then they led us to the *daftardār*, who is in charge of the sultan's finances, revenues and expenses. As we entered his quarters, he stood up in honor, showing his happiness, and asked us to sit next to him. He showed us the same hospitality as others had done. We talked about relevant subjects, after which we returned to our residence.

When we met the vizier, we handed him the letters that our master and lord, commander of the faithful, had sent with us to the sultan. That was their custom: letters were first given to the vizier before they were forwarded to the sultan in order to have them translated from Arabic to their language; also, to learn of their content and know the purpose of the journey and thereby apprise the sultan. This custom of theirs was similar to the custom of the Christians and their *'ajamī* rules.[7]

Meeting the sultan (65–67)

They led us to meet the sultan. We entered through a door where countless men were standing. We discovered that only select people could join us to see the sultan. Two men held tightly to our garments, one to the left and one to the right, and we proceeded into a room full of chairs, with the sultan's

chamberlains standing in readiness. When we continued into the next room, we found the sultan sitting on an elevated platform with the vizier to his right. The sultan had a dagger in his belt. The vizier spoke in the language of the Turks, as if informing the sultan about the goal of the delegation and where it came from. That was a mere formality because the information was already known.

I approached, carrying the present of our master and lord, commander of the faithful, may God support him and make him victorious. An old man took it and handed it to the vizier who in turn gave it to the sultan. We stood there for a short while and then left in the same manner as we had entered. We got on our horses but they had us stand near the gate until all the dignitaries had passed. Each had his own retinue in an admirable formation. The vizier was the last to leave and after he had gone, we returned to our residence.

The men in the divan told us that this kind of reception is not usual – that emissaries were received during feast days or soldiers' paydays. They called such a gathering of men: *diwān* – and it was convened when the sultan wished to meet someone.

The name of this sultan is ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd, may God almighty make him victorious, and protect his dominion, son of Sultan Aḥmad [reg. 1703–1739] who is the twenty-eighth of their kings since Sultan Muḥammad al-Fātiḥ [reg. 1451–1481]. He is white-skinned with some reddishness, blind, with an aquiline nose and a thick black beard. His age was, it was said, sixty-six. In this government, everything is run by the vizier because the sultan does nothing.

The reason why they hold everyone entering to see the sultan, as mentioned above, was stated by the author of the book, *Akhbār al-duwal wa āthar al-uwal*,[8] about Sultan Murād al-Ghāzī, son of Sultan Urkhān, son of Sultan ʻUthmān, their grandfather, from whom they are all descended. This is what he said:

> In the year 791 [AD 1389], the sultan went out to fight the leader of the infidels, Ibn Lazir. They met in a place called Qusrāq in the lands of *Rūm*. The battle started and swords were wielded, arrows were shot, and the armies clashed until the wind of victory blew on the Muslims and the infidels fled back to their country, humiliated.[9] After the defeat of the infidels, one of their princes called Milosh ibn Qūbīl

came with his horsemen feigning obedience. As he bent to kiss the hand of the sultan, he struck him with a dagger hidden in his sleeve. Since then, the Ottomans decreed that anyone about to kiss the hand of the sultan should be held by his garments, by one to his left and one to his right, as a precautionary measure.

“Constantinople the Great, superior to all the world's capitals in organization” (71–75)

[Al-Miknāsī continued with the history of the Ottomans, taken from al-Qaramānī and other writers.] Nothing can describe this city with all its buildings from one end to another, other than the words of some of the elders of the Christians who have lived there since olden times. When I exclaimed how great a city it was, one of them said: “Do not say city. It is the world.” How true his words! For it has every worldly good that one might want or eye might seek. Nothing, even the strangest thing, you desire but is found in its market.

It is the assembly of all peoples and the destination of all men and a sea of buildings and the goal of all seekers. It is not possible to describe its beauty and legacy sufficiently. There are stunning mosques and excellent educational facilities for students, unrivaled in their construction, grandeur and elegance. There are markets full of an infinite number of objects. How true are the words of the Christian elder!

But its cold is biting and severe, which none can describe. No fireplace can warm you for it is like an ice piece that prevents sleep.

Fires often devastate its markets and living quarters because its houses are made of imported wood. And by God, the reason for using wood, which is quite beautiful, and not using stone for construction, even though both require the same amount of labor and cost, is that there are earthquakes that leave nothing standing. Death, one way or another, is God's will. And so, much as it is a city of abundance, it is a paradise surrounded by danger.

Much honor and glory accrues to it by the presence of the tomb of Abu Ayyūb al-Anṣārī, companion of the Prophet, God's prayer and peace on him. It is also the site of jihad and war against the enemy: from this city, armies are launched and ships and fleets are sent out; in it, salaries and charities and payments are made, may God protect those who carry out

these offices. The tomb of Abu Ayyūb is outside the city and is heavily built up. We visited it frequently, sailing to it by boat, for the land route is very long, given the size and magnitude of this metropolitan city. We entered his blessed tomb and found a magnificent dome, with valuable silver plates, minarets, huge candle holders and others. We prayed at his tomb and received his blessing, may God be pleased with him for helping us. God be praised. Next to his tomb is the mosque where the Friday prayer is held.

This city is built at the confluence of the Rūmī Sea and the *Akḥāl*/Black Sea, which they call in Turkish, *Kar Deniz*. The sea swerves around and so does the city, everything being connected together. On the eastern coast is Galata, which like Constantinople, is full of buildings that continue until the strait of the Black Sea. The strait is so narrow that a cannon bomb shot from one side can reach the other. There are many fortifications, with cannons on both sides. Cities and markets spread out until the very end of the strait.

One day, I decided to see for myself so I sailed in a boat for three hours near the coastline, so full of buildings and markets. But the sea pushed me back and so I returned. The strait is narrow and the water pouring from the Black Sea into the Shāmī Sea is as powerful as a torrent: nothing can withstand it. At certain points, the sailors could not row hard enough to go forward and so we hired people on shore to pull us with ropes, something that they were used to doing. We did that on numerous occasions. Even large ships could not cross except in this manner, and so they were always delayed when they wanted to enter that sea. As for leaving the sea into the Shāmī Sea, it was easy because of the current.

The sultan, God make him victorious, had two residences, one in Istanbul which he used in winter, and the other on the opposite side, which he used in summer. To the east of this latter site was Constantinople, with Galata facing it, and Uskudar to its south.

No words can describe the abundance of goods in the city. Summer and autumn fruit and vegetable are never lacking: apples, pears, grapes, watermelons are year round until new fruits appear. As for meat: during the cold and snowy winter season, it is at its best; and so are the local sheep, which have tails. Strangely, prices never vary: bread, wheat and meat remain at the same price, neither increasing nor decreasing because of the large number of consumers. More strange still is that everything is brought to the city by sea: if you look at its harbor, you will find it teeming with ships, an indication of its vastness. As for the small boats that people hire to

cross from one coast to another, I asked some of the sailors while we were in their boat about the number of these boats, but they did not know. They explained, however, that during the reign of Sultan Muṣtafa [AD 1717–1773], God have mercy on his soul, the number was about 80,000; many others gave us similar numbers. Such numbers showed how big this city was. Meanwhile, if you tried to keep track of all who entered and left it, you would be exhausted because ships arrived like caravans, carrying the goods of the world.

Each region had its own harbor so that ships could be identified when they docked and merchants know where to go. The markets for silk clothing and blankets, gold, silver, precious stones and weapons were numerous. As for the market that in the Maghreb is called *qaysariyya*, it was so vast that if a person was separated from his companion, he would not be able to find him unless the two had agreed beforehand. It was full of people, narrow alleys and difficult passageways.

One sign of the urbanity of this city and of its excellent planning was that each market sold the same kind of merchandize and was separated from other markets. Only those of the same profession worked there – even those who made earwax cleaning agents had a market all to themselves and none worked there except they. All the markets were like that: there was even a market for insects used by physicians.

Mosques (92–93)

[Relying on numerous sources, al-Miknāsī continued with the story of the conquest of Constantinople, the building of the tomb of Abu Ayyūb al-Anṣārī, until he reached the description of libraries.] In regard to libraries in this city: there were none like them anywhere else. No report can sufficiently describe them. Every mosque had a library and there were numerous libraries not connected to mosques. They remained open with an attendant present, and whoever wanted to read or transcribe anything could stay there until he completed what he wanted to do, but not a single paper could be removed or taken out.

Some people told me, after I had asked them, that the number of mosques in Constantinople (but no mind can believe it) was 200 excluding the mosques of kings, which were ten. In Galata and Uskudar and thereabouts, there were about fifty mosques. Some people also told me that

the number of baths inside the walls of Istanbul was 177 and in Uskudar and Galata and Qāsim Pasha, they were twenty.

One of the greatest, most famous and biggest mosques in Constantinople, to which were attached students, schools, readers and prayer groups, was the mosque of Sultan Muḥammad Khan the Conqueror, we mean the conqueror of Constantinople, God have mercy on his soul. The mosque looks like Aya Sofia, and is made of very white marble, exquisitely carved. The *ṣaḥn*/courtyard was also covered in marble, surrounded by columns that were of marble, too. Written on top of the mosque wall beyond the courtyard was the following Hadith: "Constantinople will be conquered, blessed are the army and the prince."

Although Aya Sofia is bigger than all others, the mosque of Sultan Muḥammad was the busiest mosque in Constantinople with a high number of pupils and students. One day, I started talking to some of the instructors and they told me that the number of schools associated with that mosque was sixteen and that all of its pupils receive daily or monthly allowances from the mosque endowment, established by its builder, the sultan, God have mercy on his soul. Whenever you entered this mosque you heard the voices of teachers, since the groups were near each other. Most of their readings were in logic, grammar, rhetoric, and conjugations; other topics are infrequently taught.

Security and the manner of paying soldiers' wages (97–99)

One of the signs of the magnitude of this city was the presence of guards in its markets and alleys, by night and day, to prevent fighting, hectoring and robbery. Imagine: shop owners left their stores, full of merchandise and wares, without shutting them: and nothing was lost! I was told that the number of guards serving on all shifts was 40,000, some taking one shift, others taking another. They were so spread out in the markets and alleys that one could not lose sight of them: after you left one batch of guards you quickly came across another. The guards have officers in charge of them, and are given specific areas and posts to man. If anything happens in a specific area, they are held responsible. The aforementioned guards receive food and drink in the morning and in the evening, as well as wages to cover other necessities. That is why, even though the city was huge, you would never come across noisy or fractious scenes, and if any person misbehaved,

he was apprehended and punished. Had the soldiers not been spread out that way, people would have fallen on each other because the population was so mixed.

What also shows the magnitude of this state was the wages paid to soldiers. One day, we attended the payments made to solders and we saw the proof of the greatness and eminence of this state. On the appointed day, the soldiers assembled in the morning outside the sultan's residence and money was brought to a room in which the vizier sat, below a window from where the sultan could see but not be seen. Officers approached in an orderly fashion, followed by their soldiers, and then each officer, joined by his accountant, stepped up and received three months' pay in accordance with the records of the vizier and the *daftardār* – while the sultan watched them all.

The distribution continued, each officer taking his soldiers' wages and carrying them in leather bags. He then walked back to his soldiers and distributed the money. We stayed there, watching and counting how much was paid in our presence and calculated, after converting their currency into the riyal known among us, that it was 600,000 grand riyals. Then it got late and we left. Afterwards, one who stayed behind told us that the same sum of money was dispensed after we left so that the total amount paid in wages every three months approached a million, and about five million in a year. A million is ten one hundred thousand riyals.

This, by God, is amazing. Thanks be to God who showed us what gladdens Muslims and irks infidels. May God protect this Muslim state.

Wedding of a princess and celebrating the birth day of the Prophet (100–103)

This kingdom is so affluent that the sultan, God support him, arranged the marriage of the niece of Sultan Muṣtafa, God have mercy on his soul, to a high-ranking official.[10] We attended her wedding and people of all classes along with men of state assembled according to their rank at the entrance of the sultan's residence. It was a memorable day as people arranged wooden seats and chairs in the city streets and markets, to the left and right of pedestrians, so they would sit and watch the marriage of the daughter of the sultan. Although the seats were expensive to rent, they soon filled up: I was

told by one of our companions that a woman was charged forty dinars for a seat. All the shops and stores and roofs were filled with people, from the entrance of the sultan's house to the bridegroom's. People ran around trying to find seats to rent. Soon, all were filled.

In the afternoon, horsemen were the first to march out from the entrance of the sultan's residence in four rows, followed by numerous formations of the infantry in their different ranks and uniforms. They were followed by the master artisans attired in remarkable clothes, each group carrying the tools of their trade to distinguish themselves from others. The tools were made of silver or gold, which they hung from their belts. On such a day, they brought out their tools to exhibit them, for this was something that was well known among them. They were followed by the state officials, each followed by a magnificent procession of all the servants, attendants, children and helpers, the highest in rank coming first. At the end, the grand vizier and shaykh al-Islam appeared in a splendid procession with men surrounding them, carrying boxes of gold filled with precious stones belonging to the trousseau of the sultan's daughter. Then one of the house servants came on horseback carrying the Holy Qur'ān, which he offered to the bridegroom for its blessing. Then followed the coach that carried the bride: it was enameled in gold and beautifully decorated, drawn by six horses. There were two horses in front of the coach on one of which a slave rode with a saddlebag full of dinars, which he distributed left and right. Behind the coach, there were two other house slaves.

The bride's coach was followed by over seventy coaches, carrying, it was said, the women slaves whom the sultan had given to his niece to serve her. A few of them were in each coach. After the coaches had passed, the drummers and pipers and others followed on horseback, and everyone continued moving until they reached the house of the bride and settled her in her bedroom.

I was told that the silver plates that the sultan gave his niece as part of her trousseau were calculated at thirty-seven Moroccan quintals. He also gave her fifty gold candle holders. As for beds, curtains and carpets – it will take too long to describe; just compare with the earlier gifts.

In this city, we participated in the celebrations of the Prophet's birthday. They observe it solemnly although, sometimes, they push the date forward for a special reason, as did happen when we were there. The birthday was on Tuesday but they pushed it to Wednesday and kindled all the lights in

Constantinople. On the morning of Wednesday the thirteenth of Rabīʿ al-Nabawī [January 2, 1787], people assembled in the Mosque of Sultan Aḥmad, having abluted previously, and they performed the morning prayer. They laid down cushions to the left and right of the *miḥrāb*, but the cushions in front of it were higher. Then the jurists and scholars arrived and sat in their places.

It is the custom for the vizier to invite all jurists and dignitaries to attend the celebrations. Soon, the brother-in-law of the sultan arrived; he was married to the sultan's niece, and he sat on the cushions. He was followed by shaykh al-Islam who sat in front of the *miḥrāb* on the higher place, the people having stood up for him. Then the grand vizier arrived and so shaykh al-Islam and everyone else stood up as he walked over to sit near shaykh al-Islam in that same elevated place. All the rest of the government officials sat in accordance with their rank to the right of the vizier, while shaykh al-Islam and, grand judges, and other jurists sat to his left.

After all were seated, the sultan arrived and sat in a high place designated for him, after which the Friday prayer was led in his name. He reached his seat from outside the mosque from where he could look from behind the *miḥrāb* through a small window and see all the people; but they could not see him.

He opened the window and closed it as a sign of salutation to his attendants whereupon all those in the mosque stood up in respect (except one of our companions, an insolent man, thereby causing displeasure and annoyance among the public). A man stood on a chair and started praising the chosen one [Prophet], God's prayer and peace be on him, in the language of the Turks, and after he came down he received a robe of honor and a bag. Another man did the same and received the same, followed by three others, perhaps the last being the least in status. All received the same things.

During the praising of the Prophet, the fragrance of incense and frankincense filled the mosque, having been burnt in front of the vizier and shaykh al-Islam. Then numerous tables of food and drink were brought in and laid in front of the vizier, the jurists, and the high officials. Dates from Medina, the best prayer and peace be on its inhabitant [the Prophet Muḥammad], were distributed among the people as a blessing.

It was the custom among them that when the pilgrims returned from the pilgrimage and reached Damascus, they sent a messenger apprising the

sultan about the affairs of the caravan. Usually the messenger reached Constantinople days before the feast day, but he remained in his house until the aforementioned day. Then he put on the clothes of a traveler and went to the mosque where the celebrations were being held, giving the impression that he had just arrived.

It was also a custom among them that the chanters of the praises of the Prophet, God's prayer and peace be upon him, were the ones to lead the prayers: when they did so on the night of his birthday (as al-Buṣayrī, God be pleased with him, said, “Religion is joyous on the night and the day of his birth”), then the sultan and all the people stood up in his honor, may God's prayer and peace be upon him. At that moment, the messenger of the Prophet's pilgrimage caravan would be admitted to deliver the letters, after which he received a robe of honor and a generous gift. Then he left. The reason the messenger was delayed was that the sultan had to stand up to receive the letters with the reports about the two Noble Sanctuaries and about the caravan. Perhaps, because he did not want to stand up twice, the moment he stood up in honor of the birthday of the Prophet, God's prayer and peace be upon him, the messenger was admitted, and so he stood up only once.

Criticism of the Turks (103–104)

After the celebrations were over, and people had enjoyed themselves eating and drinking as much as they could, they smashed all the plates. I found that offensive, especially that they did not pay any attention to their guests: they did not invite them to anything that they had eaten nor did they send them any food, although they saw the guests in the same mosque with them. They only cared for themselves. May God comfort us and them and may He direct their hopes and goals to what is acceptable to Him.

The sultan was completely isolated from the common people, while his officials were preoccupied with this transitory world, caring only for their desires and gripped by greed. They praised themselves and viewed their race as superior to all races, priding themselves on the number of their followers, thumbing their noses in pride [at non-Turks] and saluting with a mere hand signal of acknowledgment.

There was total aversion between them and the Arab race, in word and deed. They did not like the Arabs, and making friends with Turks was

nearly impossible. May God almighty save them from this calamity and guide us and them to the path of righteousness. But, the disrespect shown by our companion in not standing in honor of the sultan and the birthday of the Prophet, God's prayer and peace on him, truly angered them.

Mahdism and eschatology (105, 121–123)

A man called al-Manṣūr appeared and became famous in 1200 [AD 1786–1787]. He was from the village, Jajān Qobiya, in Daghistan in the land of the non-Arabs.[11] His people were called Lazkī and their country was near the Caspian Sea. He gathered some followers around him and claimed that he was awaiting another man and so some people proclaimed him the precursor of the Mahdi who is awaited at the end of time and promised in the Hadith.

…

[Al-Miknāsī continued with a long section on the Mahdi, derived from various scholarly works.] Scholars have written numerous books about the Mahdi and the signs that point to his appearance at the end of time. Whoever needs further information should consult those works. We will discuss this matter here because of the reference to the aforementioned Manṣūr as one of the precursors of the Mahdi at the beginning of 1300 [AD 1882–1883].

But in the books of Hadith, and as relayed by Imam Ḥāfiz Suyūṭī in his book, *Al-Kashf ʻan mujāwazāt hādhihi al-umma al-alf*, [Revelations about this Community after the Thousand Years] and here I quote his words verbatim and will comment afterwards: I say

> Historical evidence shows that this the age of this *umma* exceeds a thousand years, but by no more than 500 years. For it has been stated that the age of the world is seven thousand years, and that the Prophet, God's prayer and peace upon him, was sent at the end of the sixth millennium, and that the antichrist will appear at the beginning of a century whereupon Jesus, peace be upon him, will descend and kill him and remain on earth for forty years. Human kind will continue after the rising of the sun from the west for 120 years and there will be forty years between the blowing of the two horns – so here are,

> necessarily, 200 years. What is left of the thousand years now are 102 years, but until now, the sun has not risen from the west, nor has the antichrist appeared, nor has the Mahdi been manifested whose appearance precedes the antichrist by seven years, nor have the conditions for the appearance of the Mahdi been met, nor is it possible for the antichrist to appear soon because he can only appear at the beginning of a century, and there should be many signs that precede his appearance by years. The least that is possible is that he will appear at the beginning of the millennium, or a century later: so how can anyone believe that the hour will come before the millennium is over? That is not possible. Rather, it has been suggested by scholars that the antichrist will appear at the beginning of the millennium, after which the world will continue for the aforementioned 200 years. What is left is the appearance of the antichrist along with the rising of the sun from the west; and if the antichrist is delayed, no one knows whether he will appear at the millennium, or after a hundred years, or more. But the time cannot be more than 1,500 years.

I will also mention other Hadiths and histories on which I have relied, one of which is from Anas ibn Mālik who said:[12]

> The Prophet of God said, God's prayer and peace on him: Whoever fulfils the need of a Muslim will be granted by God the age of the world, 7,000 years of fasting in the daytime and rising at night. He said at the end of the aforementioned book: After finishing what I have written, I saw in Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal's book, *al-'Ilal*, the following: It was narrated by Ismā'īl ibn 'Abd al-Karīm ibn Ma'qal ibn Munbih: 'Abd al-Ṣamad reported that he had heard Wahb say: 5,600 years have elapsed in the age of the world, and I know all the kings and prophets of those times. This shows that this *umma* will not continue 400 years after the 1,000. Finished [the quotation].[13]

I say: it is determined that there should be 200 years between the descent of Jesus and the last hour, that the antichrist will appear at the beginning of the century and that the Mahdi will appear before the antichrist by seven years. The signs will occur years before the Mahdi, and so what the histories show

is that the Mahdi will not appear at the beginning of this century, and that the aforementioned Manṣūr is not the Manṣūr who will precede him because al-Sufyānī has not appeared who should precede the Mahdi, nor has the army of al-Sufyānī been defeated in the desert, nor has the river Euphrates dried up and revealed a mountain of gold, nor have the black flags arrived from Khurasan, nor has an eclipse occurred twice in Ramadan.[14] All these are signs that should occur before the appearance of the Mahdi, and all still need time to happen. The Mahdi will reign for seven years, followed by the antichrist at the beginning of the [*hijrī*] century.

What the histories show is that the Mahdi will appear at the end of the century and then there will be 200 years after the descent of Jesus. It is possible, but God knows best, that the Mahdi will not appear in this century except toward the end so that the antichrist will appear at the beginning of the century. This confirms the words of Imam al-Ḥafiz al-Suyūtī that the period could not be 1,500 years. As for what Wahb has said that 1,400 years are left for this world, only 200 years remain, which are the years that must follow the descent of Jesus, peace be upon him. The time of the antichrist and the Mahdi and the signs will precede that descent, unless, God knows, they are successive, as was stated in the Hadith, "like in a necklace." The antichrist will appear at the beginning of the century, and he is accurate in the reference to its other half and end [of the century], whereupon the 200 years after the descent of Jesus will complement those 200 years – and so remain within the 7,000 years, which are the duration of the world. This event will take place in [AH] 1200 or close to that year; otherwise consult the Hadith of Wahb and others. God knows best: "They ask you as though you had knowledge of it. Say: Knowledge of it rests only with God, but most people are ignorant" [Q 7:187].

The conditions of the last hour were put in verse by Shaykh 'Isa al-Shāfi'ī, God have mercy on his soul and favor him for this composition:

> The first condition is the expulsion of the Turk, by war;
> The Cry will spread and frighten all humanity;
> The Hashemite will come after the Sufyānī and then the peace of the Mahdi
> Then will appear the Qaḥṭānī and the one-eyed antichrist.
> Christ will descend to kill the antichrist
> And the sun will rise from the west and move to the east…

An episode (127)

[Al-Miknāsī continued about the Mahdi and told a story from *Kitāb al-ishā'a liishrāṭ al-sā'a* by Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Rasūl ibn 'Abd al-Sayyid al-'Alawī, d. 1692.] A youth appeared in a city beyond the river and he was called Abu Qāsim al-Qushayrī. He used to live with his mother, showing great respect to her. Then he decided to travel for his education, but his mother refused to let him go and kept on weeping, and so he returned to her, whereupon God ordered al-Khiḍr to teach him what Abu Ḥanīfa had taught him [al-Khiḍr].[15] In that way, the youth complied with his mother. So al-Khiḍr came to him for three years and taught him all he had learned from Abu Ḥanīfa. He became so knowledgeable that he wrote 1,000 books and started performing *karāmāt*/wonders. He used to have an old pupil who never left him. The shaykh put all of the 1,000 books in a box and said: "Go and throw this box in Jayḥūn."[16] He went but did not throw the box, in order to spare the books and so returned. Three times, the shaykh sent him until he threw the box, whereupon a hand came out of the water and took the box. He returned perplexed about the meaning of all that had happened. The shaykh said:

> The secret meaning is that when the day of judgment draws near, and the antichrist appears, and Jesus, peace be upon him, descends onto *Bayt al-Maqdis*/Jerusalem, he will put the *Injīl*/gospel near him and say, "Where is the Muḥammadan book? For God has ordered me to judge by it and not by the *Injīl*." They will search but not find it, nor will they find any other of the Muḥammadan law. Jesus will become confused and ask: "God, with what law should I judge your worshippers?" whereupon Gabriel will descend and say: "God has ordered you to go to the Jayḥūn River and call out, 'Oh keeper of the Abu al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī box, hand me the box – I am Jesus son of Mary and I have killed the anti-christ.' " The water will split and the box will emerge in which he [Jesus] will find his seal and a thousand books. Copied from the book, *Anīs al-Jalīs*. Finished.

An episode (131–133)

Some Moroccans in Constantinople often came to see us. One of them, a Malikite imam, told me that he went on the pilgrimage to Mecca and so liked the place that he decided to settle there. He met a pious man, a dervish, using a walking cane, and they became good friends and he would often invite the dervish to his house and offer him food.

> One day I blurted out asking him to give me his cane, but he refused; I repeated my request again, and persisted, but he said: "it will do you no good. If you own it, you will never settle down anywhere and you will never have peace of mind." I answered: "just give it to me and don't worry." He said: "take it."

He continued.

> After I took the cane, I left my house and went to Jeddah, having forgotten about my family and children, as if I had none. Then I sailed to Yemen and headed to Sana and from there to the Aden and then to [Bilād] al-Shuḥur until I reached Basra. I visited the tomb of Abu al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī [d. AD 728] and then the tomb of my [Sufi] master Muḥammad al-Rifā'ī [d. AD 1182], may God almighty be pleased with both of them. As I was near his tomb, a black dog came up to me and started brushing itself at me, although I had never seen it before. Without thinking, I hit it with the cane – and lost consciousness. When I awoke, I found myself on a mountain, and the owner of the cane came at me, hit me hard, and gave me back the cane, saying: "You insisted on having the cane until we gave it to you. But then you hit us, threw it, and lost it."

He continued:

> I awoke and looked around. The man had gone but there was a lion near me. I was terrified and ran down the mountain until I could see it no more. I reached a pond and pulled out some weeds to cover my privates, since I was naked. While I was in that state, some local women came to fill up water, but grew afraid when they saw me and fled. They reported me to their community and so some men came and

took me to their tents and gave me something with which to cover my privates and then they shaved my hair. All of the members of that clan stared at me and asked me for blessings, believing me a man of virtue. They talked among themselves and I heard some say: “This is the man we saw riding the lion on that so and so day when we were hunting in that so and so place.” They asked me to settle among them and promised to set up a Sufi lodge for me, never doubting my virtue. I refused and asked about the name of the mountain. They said it was the mountain of Jīlan [south of the Caspian Sea]. I asked: “How far are we from Baghdad?” They answered: “About twelve days.” I said to them: “If you want to do me a favor, direct me to Baghdad.” So they sent me a man who traveled with me to Baghdad.

When I reached the city, people stared at me saying: “This is the man who walked around naked a year ago.”

He continued:

I then met some folks from Morocco who were living in Baghdad and we established a bond among us. I asked one of them about what he had heard people say, and he answered: “It is as you heard: you entered Baghdad and were naked; children followed you and threw stones at you. And you remained in that state for about two months and then you disappeared.”

He said:

I stayed in Baghdad for a few days and then went to Kufa, where people started pointing at me and saying: “This is the poor man who used to walk naked here.” I left for Mashhad where Imam ‘Ali is buried and from there continued to Basra. I went to the tomb of Sidi Muḥammad al-Rifā‘ī and threw the cane on his grave, exactly where I had hit that dog and after which everything had happened to me. When I threw the cane I regained my memory and recalled my family and children and how I had forgotten everyone. I started crying and lamenting and so boarded a ship and returned to Yemen and from there to Jeddah and Mecca. I returned to my family who had despaired

of seeing me again, and so people came to welcome me. I calculated the time of my absence and found it to be twenty months.

Markets and war (133–134)

One of the signs of the magnitude of this city was its markets, which in other countries were active on Friday or Thursday or Sunday, but here were busy every day, and in different precincts. The markets were held in front of mosques because each mosque in this capital city had a large space around it from all four sides. The market was held in the middle of that space, and people from the city and the country knew on what day it was held and flocked to it.

One of the customs of this kingdom was that when a child was born to the sultan, a street caller announced the child's name all around the city asking the people for their prayers. While we were there, a baby girl was born to the sultan on 7 Safar 1201 [November 28, 1786] whom he named Ṣāliḥa – as the caller announced.

In this year, Sultan ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd, may God make him victorious, waged war against the enemy of religion, Moscow, because of the latter's rebellion and aggression to seize Muslim land.[17] We left while he, may God support him, was busy in preparations, manning outposts, sending soldiers by land and sea to fight the infidel enemy. We ask God almighty to grant him victory over the infidels under the guidance of the master of humanity [the Prophet Muḥammad]. I composed a poem on that occasion which I include herewith…

The road to Hijaz (136–143)

[Al-Miknāsī and his delegation spent about ten months in Istanbul, waiting to join the pilgrimage caravan to Mecca and Medina.] I decided to describe the stages of the journey and record all that was there about the land and the regions.

We got ready to travel, and on Friday 23 Rajab [May 11, 1787], we crossed the sea to the other coast, which was connected to the land of Syria, Egypt, and Mecca and others, and spent the night in Uskudar in a place designated for pilgrims of the Prophet's caravan. We stayed there Saturday

and on Sunday we continued, trusting that the difficult phase will prove easy. Traveling at a moderate pace, we arrived at the coast of the Shāmī Sea opposite a village called Kartal, four hours away from the aforementioned Uskudar. On the following day, we left that village and reached a village called Gebze after five hours, and stayed outside, for one of our companions slapped a man as a result of which the people, we mean the Turks, became angry and threatened not to permit any caravan to pass through their city in the future. He brought us misfortune even in this region, may God relieve us of him.

On the following morning, we traveled for two hours until we encountered a gulf on the Shāmī Sea, which was nine miles wide. We crossed it in small boats from a spot called *Dīl Saqal Sī*, in the language of the Turks. *Saql* in their language means a building on the sea – as was the case here. The length of this gulf from Saqalat al-Dīl [Dil Iskelesi] until the city of Izmit was sixty miles. After crossing, we continued for half an hour and arrived near a village called Kersak Koy, having traveled that day for two hours and a half.

By calling this gulf *dīl*, it is as if it is the tail of the Shāmī Sea. Whoever decides not to cross it can walk for three days until it comes to an end; otherwise, he can take a boat from the aforementioned location and sail it to shorten the distance, as we have stated. People prefer to use boats in order to shorten the distance. The Shāmī Sea ends at this gulf because the sea has two gulfs, one to the east and another to the north, which is the Gulf of Constantinople leading to the Black Sea (which in the language of the Turks is known as Kara Deniz). Its length from Constantinople until it ends at the borders of Karj is 1,000 miles.

On the following morning, we left the aforementioned place and travelled through mountains near a river called Kawir Ko [Kavurga] in the language of the Turks, which means the River of Infidels because the word *kāwir* means infidel and *ko* means village, where the genitive comes first, as is the case in their language. The river led a winding course among the mountains, and we had to cross it twelve times before we reached the aforementioned village whose inhabitants were all Christians, protected by Sultan ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd, may God make him victorious. It was a large village with a rich water supply, just like the rest of the region through which we traveled, and there were orchards with blackberry trees, the leaves of which were fed to silk worms. We crossed the village and after a quarter of an

hour, we stopped in an open area, since the village was surrounded by too rough a terrain to halt. That day we traveled for five hours, and on the following morning, we continued for six hours until we reached an ancient city called Jinzank and stayed outside it. It is known as the city of marble and has one of the strongest and highest walls, made of huge blocks of stone, but the wall is ruined in many places as are other parts. It was located on a lake, fed by many rivers, but it had no outlet because it was surrounded by mountains. We walked for more than three hours near the lake, but the air was stagnant and very unhealthy, for which it was notorious. The inhabitants have yellow faces.

We left on the following morning and reached a village called Lefke after five hours of sturdy travel. It was a big village on a mountain overlooking a river called the Lefke River that cut through the land, and was surrounded by mountains. The water of the river was used for irrigation, especially of the blackberry trees needed for silk. On the next day, we traveled for four hours and reached a village called Khān al-Wazīr, after the khan that was built in it by one of the viziers called Sinān Pasha. It was a great and spacious khan built to accommodate pilgrims during the wintery season of snow and mud. May God reward him for his good deed. It was a medium-sized village with one *khuṭba* [communal mosque], which lay near the aforementioned Lefke River and was full of gardens and orchards and trees, most of them blackberry. The region we crossed that day was mountainous, and we went up and down the road until we reached our house. So too was the region from Constantinople: neither easy nor rough, rather in between, with a lot of water but quite shady because of the trees and the pleasant breeze. You never reached a stream or a river without finding a bridge over it, or a muddy area without some kind of well-laid stone pathway. May God reward them for their good deeds.

On the next day, we traveled in a region similar to what had been described before, full of ascents and descents, and after seven hours we reached a city called Sogut. This was a big city with many gardens and orchards, mainly of blackberry. The next day we continued and after ten hours we reached the outer part of a city called Eskişehir. It was a prosperous city, quite large, with eleven communal mosques, but it was more Bedouinish than urban. We spent the night outside the city and stayed for two days there because this was the first of five locations between Constantinople and Damascus where caravans rested, along with their

animals. All the water-carriers, cooks, attendants, cameleers and others came asking their employers for some extra pay. This was an accepted practice, which they called *baqshīsh* in their language.

There was a bath in the city where very hot water gushed out of the ground and poured into a large basin, just under a man's height in depth. It was like a bathtub where water flowed in and out. It was always full and people washed themselves at its edge and whoever of the pilgrims wanted to take a dip could do so. The water in this bath was as much as in a small river and there were attendants who were arrayed in the same manner as in other baths. Whoever entered and used the *mayzir*/loin cloth or asked for help from one of the attendants had to pay for that; and the cost of a servant was as much as that of a masseur. Whoever served himself and brought his own loin cloth did not have to pay anything because the water was hot by the power of God almighty; none had caused it. They called it Ḥammām al-Qudrah/Bath of Power. I washed myself in it but could not stay long because of the heat.

…

After twelve hours of travel at a moderate pace, we reached a city called Akşehir and stayed it its outskirts. The inhabitants said that it was the city of Juha, who was known for his anecdotes, and they showed us a dome under which they claimed he was buried. There was something funny about this dome that was credited to him, however: it had a strong locked door but no surrounding wall, only wooden planks stuck in the ground. Apparently, this Juha was like Abu Zayd al-Surūjī, al-Ḥārith ibn Hammām, Abu al-Fatḥ al-Iskandarānī and ‘Isa ibn Hishām: all are enigmatic for nothing is known about any of them.[18]

Before reaching this city, we passed through another city full of water and orchards called Saklī and on the following day, we stayed outside a city called al-Ghayn [Il Gin], after traveling for nine hours. After midnight, we left it and nine hours later, we reached at a village called Ladik, famous for its rugs. And so its inhabitants, men and women, kept on trying to sell them to us. We left it at night, as caravans do in summer, and after ten hours arrived at a city called Konia, a big city with many mosques. We prayed the Friday prayer in a mosque outside the city wall near the tomb of a holy man called Mulla Hinkār. After we finished prayer, we visited his tomb, which contained the remains of the shaykh and some of his progeny. The place was brightly lit. Next to the tomb was a wood-covered floor where many

people sat awaiting the shaykh who was a descendent of the holy man, and who looked after this lodge. He walked in austerity and silence and sat in a designated seat and then a man stepped behind him and started reading Qur'ānic verses and explaining them in the language of the Turks. He preached about divine unity for some time, and then, a party sitting separately, prepared for the [Sufi] session by striking tambourines and playing on pipes. The shaykh and a group of mendicants began to circumambulate, and whenever they faced the tomb of the shaykh, they nodded in silence and respect. Then the mendicants entered the central space and began to whirl.

We left them because we had to continue our travel at night. We had seen such a group and their [Sufi] *ḥaḍrat*/state in Constantinople. They called it Ḥaḍrat Mawlāna. They told us that when there was a new sultan, one of the designated descendants of this shaykh would go to proclaim him sultan and receive his commitment that he would treat Muslims justly. He then would hand him the sword, acknowledge his sovereignty and declare obedience to his rule and to all his commands and prohibitions. Then dignitaries and the rest of the people would follow suit.

Rebel (146–150)

On the following morning, we traveled for eight hours and reached the outskirts of a city, medium to large in size, called Adana. It had nine communal mosques and lay at the edge of the Jīḥūn River [Ceyhun]. We crossed it twice that day (it was not the same Jīḥūn River that was in the land of the non-Arabs). This city was one of the five stops for the pilgrim caravan from Constantinople to Damascus. We stayed there one day. There were signs in this city that it had been a great city in the past, but now it was in ruins. A magnificent thing to see was the bridge on the river, large and built with huge blocks of stones. Its arches were sixteen and they were very wide, and between each two there was a passageway for the water because the river brought heavy torrents during winter.

One of the very strange things I saw were big houses with wooden roofs floating in the middle of the river. They were tied to the bridge over the river by heavy chains. Inside those houses there were mills that ground wheat for the inhabitants of the city [Adana]. The mills rested on wheels that were tied to the houses and they operated by water gushing in either

through small ship-like channels or wooden ducts. When the rains were heavy in winter and there was fear that the current would pull the houses away, they loosened the chains and pulled the houses near the shore where the current was weak.

We left at night in order to avoid the heat, and after six hours, we arrived at two villages, called Misis, built on a river that lay between them. Here too were houses with mills, as earlier mentioned. This region was rich in cotton, which the inhabitants carefully grew. We stayed near the river bank and at night traveled for seven hours and reached an area called Qarṭaqrāṭ which had a fort and a khan for pilgrims. The soil was rich and very fertile.

At the aforementioned bridge, we were met by a rebel with his horsemen. It was said he was a rebel and collected money from the pilgrimage caravan every year, then accompanied it for two days until it left his territory. The leader of the caravan welcomed him and gave him many presents, but the rebel took as many tents as he wanted from the caravan, along with other things. In the past, he used to take these things by force, but now it was force with another face. He rode with his followers in front of us at the beginning of the night, and we continued until we reached his citadel after ten hours. It was on the coast of the Shāmī Sea where the sea ended.

…

The citadel of this thief was built in a village called Payas, full of orchards and water, but it was largely in ruins. The Ottoman sultan, God make him victorious, sent his soldiers by land and sea against this rebel, but the latter wore them out and fled to mountains near a mountain called Gavur Dagi, which means the Mountain of Infidels; but now there are many religious groups living there. The soldiers ravaged the region, but when they left he and his men returned, and so it went on. After the sultan realized that he could not defeat him, he made him a vizier in that region, just like other viziers who kept order in their various territories. He sent him the robe of honor with the commander of our caravan, but that did not stop him from extorting money from pilgrims: he used to do that by force and violence in the past, while now he takes his dues brazenly, claiming he had brought his horsemen to prevent highway robbers from attacking the caravan. But he was doing exactly that.

We passed by groups of his followers in all the territory we were crossing. Each group had a flag and they congratulated us on our safety and then demanded the price of that safety – which they got. It appeared to be a request but it was not. At night we left and traveled until the early morning, passing through a village called Iskenderun on the Shāmī Sea in the direction of Syria. It was a village at the end of the sea and had some Christian tradesmen in it. It was known as the port of Aleppo because it was the nearest to it. After eight hours, we arrived at a large village with a large khan called Bilan.

The people in these mountains were not law abiding. They raided our caravan and asked for things but then took them by force and intimidation. They seized some of the animals carrying merchandize, which the owners then had to ransom. This village was located among rocky mountains with many rivers and water springs, making the roads very difficult. We left our resting place after the evening prayer and traveled by night, carrying many torches because of danger. Some of the camels slipped and fell on the slopes but we could not rescue them and we continued all night and the following morning, and after twelve hours we reached the famous city of Antioch. We stayed outside the city, which is quite large with about fifteen communal mosques. Its soil was fertile and cultivable and it was built in a plain that reached a mountain; around it were fields and a river called al-'Āsī [Orontes]. The common people used to tell a fable that it was part of the Nile – but there was no truth in that, for its source was near Baalbek.

Antioch (150–152)

There was a great winding wall around the city, the fields, and part of the mountain and its pathways. One could not think it was built by humans, but actually, it was built by the Byzantines who were there before Islam. However, their fortified walls could not withstand God. Today, various parts of the wall are in ruins because of earthquakes, history and time, which is why the city did not measure up to its former glory. It had been a thriving urban center, but time transformed it into a weak city, although its buildings were large, constructed with chiseled stones. Its alleys and markets were all cobbled and I had the opportunity to speak with some of its inhabitants who told me of repeated droughts and plagues – the last of which we actually encountered. We had reached it during summer and the feddans of wheat

were ready to be harvested, but there were very few people to do the harvesting, having been wiped out by the plague. I went to one of their baths to wash and was told by the man with the loofah that only two out of sixty attendants were left.

You can draw conclusions from that.

On top of the plague was oppression: I was told about one vizier who was passing through and was hosted by one of the city dignitaries for about forty days. The latter spent a lot of money on his guest and retinue, about 100 *rūmī* riyals per day. The guest then stole the host's money and killed him:

He who does good to the undeserving will meet with what Mujīr um ʻĀmir met.

This is the condition of the officials of this government: they eat the meat and suck the bones. May God help the Muslims.

This city was honored and blessed in having the burial site of a virtuous man, Ḥabīb the Carpenter, may God favor us with his blessings.[19] We went to visit his tomb, which was in the center of the city. As we entered, we had to go down six steps and found there two tombs, the right one, as the attendant explained, belonged to Ḥabīb the Carpenter and the left one to Simon/Simʻān al-Ṣafā/the pure, the companion of Jesus, the prophet of God, peace be upon him, and one of his disciples. Above the tomb of Ḥabīb, he showed us a small round hole, like the mouth of a pit, saying: when the inhabitants of Antioch killed Simon al-Ṣafā, who had been sent to them by Jesus, peace be upon him, they also killed Ḥabīb, who had come from the farthest end of the city to preach to them. He had said: "Oh people, follow the messengers," but the people threw both men into this pit. Later, the people enlarged the pit by digging from the inside and sealing it, turning it into tombs. It was a reminder to them whenever they walked down the steps. May God be praised for enabling us to visit them.

Homs (176–177)

[Al-Miknāsī quoted from numerous historians and travelers about Homs, including a long poem about the city by the famous scholar Sufi al-Nābulusī, and visited tombs of the companions of the Prophet.] Outside the city, and to the right of the tomb of Khālid ibn al-Walīd, may God be pleased with him, were the tombs of Kaʻb al-Aḥbār and Jaʻfar al-Ṭayyār,

may God be pleased with them. They were buried in an incline near the city wall called the Red Vicinity; it was said that 300 of the Prophet's companions were martyred there, God's prayer and peace on him. We read the opening Sura of the Qur'ān for them and invoked God with what we hoped He would accept – which was why people showed respect by taking off their shoes in the Red Vicinity. This region was a corner of paradise because of all the companions and holy men who lay buried there, may God favor them all. Amen.

This city had one of the greatest walls, and its alleys and markets had been cobbled with stone since the days of the Byzantines. But its buildings were not very high, and the walls that had collapsed and been rebuilt did not look the same as in Byzantine times because clay, not stone, was used in the rebuilding and nothing else. The city had a strong fort that could not be conquered except by divine will; I had not seen anything as remarkable as that. But the wall had collapsed in many places. There was a subterranean tunnel that led into the city – but it too was in ruins. It was said that the city had ʻUthmān's copy of the Qur'ān, which was brought out every Friday, but because we were not there on Friday we did not get to see it. It was also said that when the people of Homs needed rain, they brought out that copy and used it in the prayer of *istisqā'*: they called on God to send them rain, and He did – many times.

Silk was widely produced in this city and many of the inhabitants came up to our tents to sell us their products. The city had many Christians, remnants from past times. They were under Muslim *dhimma*.

Damascus (178–179; 180–181)

As we neared the city, all the populace came out in a grand procession to meet the pilgrimage caravan with joy and awe, accompanied by pipes and drums and horses. When we entered the city, we were welcomed and led to the house designated for our residence, in obedience to the orders of the Great Sultan, ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd Khān, may God preserve his reign and lengthen his sultanate. The house was one of the finest with water everywhere, because the Syria region is one of the most abundant in water, traversed by seven rivers. They also brought us food and animal fodder, more than we needed, as a sign of hospitality. May God reward the sultan on our behalf.

After settling down, we went first to visit the tomb of the prophet of God, Yaḥya ibn Zakkariyya [John the Baptist], on our prophet and him prayer and peace. On our way, we passed by the companion of the Prophet [Muḥammad], God's prayer and peace on him, ʻAbdallah ibn Mardās, and so we were blessed and rewarded by seeing his tomb. From there we continued to the burial site of the head of the prophet of God, Yaḥya, which was inside the Umayyad Mosque, in front of the *miḥrāb* of Imam Mālik because the imams of the four schools prayed there, each with his own *miḥrāb*. But few were the followers of the Malikite school in this city; there were more Shafiites and Hanafites. So we sought his blessing at the tomb, offering thanks to God that He had made our visit possible. As for his body: it lay in the Dilla Mosque near a village called Zabadani, eight hours away from Damascus. We also sought the blessing of the copy of the Qur'ān that had belonged to ʻUthman ibn ʻAffān: when we asked the attendant to show it to us, he brought it out of its encasement and we kissed the spot where his blood had been shed, may God be pleased him.[20] The blood was still there. We thought of the words of God almighty: "'Eat from the delights We provided you.' It was themselves they wronged" [Q 2:57].

…

We also visited a spot in the mosque that they say contains the tomb of the prophet of God Hūd, peace be on him, where the following was written: "The tomb of the Prophet Hūd." It is possible that he prayed there but others say it is the tomb of Mu'āwiya ibn abī Sufyān.[21]

The Umayyad Mosque is one of the greatest, most beautiful, most glorious, and most elaborately built in Islam. It is huge: its length from the right side of the entrance to its left is 600 feet, plus or minus a few feet, depending on how "feet" are measured. Its width from the *miḥrāb* to the wall at its end is 337 feet; it also has three courts the width of each is fifty-two feet. The width of the *ṣaḥn* is the same as the courts outside, 356 feet, while the court at the end of the *ṣaḥn* is twenty-five feet. There are thick, high columns of marble, and four doors, God have mercy on the builder and on the one who cleansed it of the filth of polytheism and skepticism and extricated it from the invading infidels: may God keep it for Islam until the Day of Judgment.

We included among our visits one to *ḥaḍrat*/Sufi master Shaykh Muḥyi al-Dīn ibn al-ʻArabi al-Ḥātimī al-Andalusī, the supreme shaykh, the foremost master, the greatest teacher, the red bitumen [an image from

alchemy]. May God hallow his [mystical] secret. He is buried in the Salihiya, a quarter in Damascus near the Qasiyun Mountain. God granted us joy in visiting him. All thanks are to God.

On one of the walls there, I saw a poem on a sheet of paper in praise of the shaykh. It was written by the blessed shaykh, the learned and knowledgeable man, he who knows all the secrets and unveils all the mysteries: the aforementioned Shaykh ʻAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī.

Criticism of corruption among jurists in Damascus (244–246)

[Al-Miknāsī continued by quoting long poems by al-Nābulusī and then presented a detailed account of Ibn ʻArabī's discussion of the eternity of hell's punishment, followed by his own poem on the Andalusian Sufi. He listed the names of every figure associated with the Prophet Muḥammad who was buried near Damascus and whose tombs he visited.] The house of the mufti of the Hanbalites, Shaykh Ismāʻīl al-Jizaʻī, was near ours and he became a close friend and often visited us. Then, a great calamity occurred in Damascus. A judge jailed a man whom he had had before him in court. He wanted him to pay him one tenth of the sum that he judged for him. This is the custom of judges in the Mashriq. We ask God for help against this kind of malpractice to which they have degenerated. For confusion has prevailed in Constantinople and the lands of the Turks and in Syria, Iraq, Egypt and all the lands of the east. They sold their afterlife for this world, never reflecting about their misdeeds, with no sense of shame or guilt. No reprimand or reproof or warning could make them change their behavior, as if such money was theirs by right to collect, which they called, income. We witnessed the judge struggling to get the money, without embarrassment or hesitation, and feeling neither dishonor nor infamy. Let us lament for the demise of the noble and just judgments of Sharīʻa, for they are ignored and forgotten.

Al-Jizaʻī asked me to intercede for the man before the judge, although I had had no contact with the latter. But the man insisted since I had become good friends with the judge, who was based in Noble Mecca, after traveling from Constantinople together. The sultan had appointed him to be judge in the Noble Sanctuary [in Mecca], and the road brought us together and we got to know each other well. So I wrote some verses asking him to intercede before the aforementioned judge. … But, the judge to whom we sent the

verses asking for his intercession on behalf of the aforementioned man [was not any better]: as we were on the road to Hijaz, I saw him behaving more odiously than the other judge. Whenever any of the pilgrims died, he sent his assistants to evaluate the deceased's possessions after which he took one tenth of everything, even though there were descendants and inheritors there [to whom the possessions rightly belonged]. Even when one fell sick, he appraised his possessions before death and his assistants quarreled and fought about the money, even if someone pleaded with them. They believed it their right by sultanic decree.

If they thought that such actions were acceptable to God, they were wrong: there is no strength or power except with God. The judgments of Sharī‘a were eroded in these eastern regions for the legal decisions of jurists were based on custom or precedence, and if they decided to follow the laws of Sharī‘a, the smallest bribe would override justice.

Our companion, the distinguished jurist, author, and shaykh Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Ghazzī al-Dimashqī, recounted this strange episode: He was traveling by sea when the Christians took him captive to Malta. As soon as they recognized that he was a learned man, they allowed him to move around freely. One day, he entered a church and found a monk seated among books and saw among the books the *Tafsīr* of Abu al-Su‘ūd [d. 1574] and of al-Bayḍāwī [d. 1286] and others. He leafed through one of the volumes of Abu al-Su‘ūd's *Tafsīr* and found on the last page the following words: “Written by so-and-so the Jerusalemite.” So he said to the monk: “Did you copy or buy this book in Jerusalem?” He answered: “I copied it when I was a judge there.” He said: “How could you have been a judge in Jerusalem and you are a monk?” He answered: “I was a captive to the judge of the Istanbul soldiers. After serving for a long time, he promoted me and made me judge of Jerusalem.”[22]

Consider the enormity of this corruption. There is no strength or power except with God. May God help the Muslims.

Further preparations for the pilgrimage (249–250)

[The pilgrimage caravan spent thirty-eight days in Damascus.] After the evening prayer and the rising of the moon, we loaded our possessions on the camels and moved out. The markets of the city were bustling with buyers and sellers and the shops were open and the streets were full of

people, men and women, out to bid farewell to the pilgrims. Only after one hour were we able to pass through the crowds and reach the gate of the city called the Gate of God, and as we pressed on, we could still see the city behind us.

In brief: Damascus is a big city (in addition to what we said about it earlier). As for the old city inside the wall, it is not that big, rather medium-sized. But much has been added to the city outside the wall, giving it a very long and rectangular shape, pointing to the south. We continued traveling and performed the morning prayer on the road, and one hour after sunrise, we reached the tents,[23] and then after five more hours, we reached a village called Dhū-l-Nūn [Khan Dannun]. Its inhabitants came to us with all sorts of seasonal vegetables, along with apples, bread, fodder and figs. We stayed there, prayed the afternoon prayer and left in the evening and continued all night long. Six hours later, we pitched our tents near two villages called Sanamayn.

This part of the journey took us through a rocky and desert terrain: the only vegetation we saw was wormwood. We stayed there until the noon heat had subsided and a breeze arose. We left after performing our afternoon prayer and continued south until the evening prayer. We prayed in the morning and continued until we reached the tents. The vizier had preceded us, as mentioned above, and he came out with his soldiers to meet the Prophet's caravan, positioning the soldiers on the left and the right sides of the road, with the caravan in the middle. We reached the tents after ten hours at a place called Muzayrib where pilgrims always stayed. We rested for six days in order to finish all our preparations.

There, agreements were struck with the attendants who were hired to accompany the pilgrims and furnish them with food and drink. They were paid a fixed sum of money for every pilgrim, horse, and camel, and for carrying supplies and luggage. They were called *muqawwimīn*/caretakers because they attended to the pilgrims in everything that was mentioned; they even set up the tents for them. You would not find a single person in the Syrian caravan who cooked or set up tent himself, unless he decided to cook something over and above what was provided by the caretaker.

On 27 Shawwal [August 11, 1787], and after the pasha, the prince appointed to lead the caravan, finished negotiating with the Bedouins for carrying his luggage and other belongings, he gave the signal for departure by bringing out the guns.[24] On the following day in the afternoon, we

traveled in open grounds, but after leaving our previous location by half a mile, we came across the pasha's belongings, which had been carried by the Bedouins, thrown on the ground. And the Bedouins had fled with the rental fees, etc.

Mada'in Saleh: on the road (256–258)

After the sunset prayer, we travelled in a rocky terrain, preceded by the soldiers, who in the daytime went ahead of us to a narrow gorge between the mountains. There was always fear of the *'arab*/Bedouins taking hold of it and preventing the caravan from passing. We got through the gorge and saw the soldiers descending from the tops of the mountains with their flags, while the vizier was at the mouth of the gorge with his cavalry. They stayed there until the whole caravan had passed. This gorge used to be very narrow and difficult, so much so that camels went in single file – until the time of ʻUthmān Pasha, God have mercy on his soul. Sixteen years ago, he widened the gorge and removed all the heavy boulders and dug the mountain from both the left and the right sides of the road. It became wide enough for four or five camels to walk side by side. May God accept his good deed. This vizier improved the road a lot: he built numerous forts and dug watering wells. May God increase his like among the Muslims. Money goes, but not gratitude.

…

In this region, the mountains were all like cities turned upside down, God protect us. The houses were carved into the mountains and it seemed they were the villages of the people of Lot because they were the ones who were punished.[25] As for the people of Sāliḥ, God destroyed them with His scream [Q 11:67]. But God knows best.

By this time, the travelers had consumed their water supply because of the intense heat. This stage of the journey was one of the most difficult, as we trudged through barren land, full of stones and rocks. People and beasts of burden had drunk their fill earlier and had carried water to the next stop because there was no water there either. We slept in the afternoon and then performed our prayer and traveled on for the whole of the night until sunrise when we reached a place called Sahl al-Muṭrān. There was a fort to our right, which we saw from afar. This stage was the second after Mada'in Saleh: had we gone in the direction of the higher grounds, we would have

found water, orchards and palm trees; actually the inhabitants had brought dates and limes and others to Mada'in Saleh. But we had decided against taking a right turn towards those grounds because the people were thieves and very dangerous, and so the vizier took this road because it was shorter and void of those devils, even though it had no water.

We stayed there until the afternoon and continued the rest of the day and all night and until noon of the following day. After twenty-one hours, we reached a fort with water called al-Bīr al-Jadīd, and about sunrise of that day we reached another fort whose water was called Zumurrud, but the vizier decided not to stop and left its water until the return journey. We rested in al-Bīr al-Jadīd and travelers, camels, and beasts of burden drank their fill of water, cooked and ate. After dinner, we traveled for the whole night until the early morning, when we arrived at a fort called Hadiyya. We had not encountered heat as we did that day, especially without water and with the sun burning down on us. On that day 175 travelers died of thirst. We saw some lying on the side of the road, and others were reported to us. A large number of camels died, too.

This fort, that is the fort of Hadiyya, was built between mountains in a land where water was near the surface; if you dug for a cubit or less, it gushed out. But the water was not clean; it was polluted and caused many people severe diarrhea.

Medina and Mecca (259–264)

[They reached Medina.] After we pitched our tents, the first thing we did was to wash and put on white clothes [*iḥrām*] and perfume. We were about to visit the greatest haven and the most glorious destination, that of our master and our avenue to God, the Prophet of God, God's prayer and peace be on him. When we reached the gate of Medina, we went on foot to the entrance of the noble and holy mosque and walked slowly towards his *miḥrāb*, God's prayer and peace be on him, and we prayed two prostrations. We then turned to the blessed and hallowed tomb and touched his fragrant grave through the meshed window, God be praised. We were blessed by his sight and so we offered our invocations at his noble maqām, as well as of the tombs of his companions Abu Bakr and ‘Umar, God be pleased with them.[26] We returned to the tents and on the following day we did the same, and so too on the day after.

We went out to al-Baqī‘ [cemetery south east of the city] and first visited the tomb of *sayyidna*/our master ‘Abbās, uncle of the Prophet, God's prayer and peace be on him, and our master Ḥasan ibn ‘Ali, may God be pleased with him, and Imam Zayn al-Ābidīn, and Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq, and Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir,[27] and *sayyida*/lady Fāṭima [d. ad 632], daughter of the Prophet, God's prayer and peace be on him. All were buried in the same area. And then we visited the wives of the Prophet, God's prayer and peace be on him, and *sayyida* ‘A'isha, daughter of Abu Bakr [d. ad 678], and Ḥafṣa [d. ad 665], daughter of al-Farūq ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭāb, and Um Maymūna [d. circa ad 681] and Juwayriyya [d. ad 676]. They were all buried near each other.

Then we visited the daughters of the Prophet, God's prayer and peace be upon him, who were also in one place, then the grave of ‘Aqīl ibn abu Ṭālib [d. ad 686], then the grave of the great imam, Mālik ibn Anas, may God be pleased with him [d. ad 795], and next to him Nāfi’, the shaykh of chanters [of the Qur'ān].[28] Then we went to our master Ibrāhīm, son of the Prophet, God's prayer and peace be upon him, and with him, according to some falsifiers, the rest of the ten noble men, but that is not true, for Abu ‘Ubayda ibn al-Jarrāḥ was buried in the *ghor* [Jordan Valley] near Jerusalem, and Imam ‘Ali, may God be pleased with him, was buried in Kufa,[29] and *sayyidna* Ḥamza outside Medina, near Uḥud,[30] and Abu Bakr and ‘Umar in the Prophet's room and our masters ‘Uthman and ‘Abbas in al-Baqī‘. Ṭalḥa was killed in the Battle of the Camel, and so was al-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām, who died in that battle in Wādī al-Sibā‘.[31] But God knows best…

Our goal in staying in Medina was to go from there to Mecca, but we stayed for two days and left on the third. We started at noon and traveled for two hours and reached Dhu al-Ḥalīfa, which today is known as Ali's Wells [Shiqqat al-Biyar], because there are many wells there. People stopped there and pitched their tents and drank and filled up water to last them for that night and the day after because there would be no water ahead. We stayed there till one hour after the last prayer of the day and then traveled all night and most of the following day. We stopped at a place called al-Shuhadā’, sixteen hours from Medina, an area full of mountains and rocks and extremely hot. We rested for the afternoon and after prayer, we traveled all night and into the following morning. We reached a village called El-Jadida, built on a mountain with sweet and running water. There was no

better water between Mecca and Medina than the water there. We reached it after fifteen hours but found it in ruins, having been destroyed by the sultan of Mecca, Surūr, after he attacked Medina. We found him there along with its people who were evil and who attacked pilgrims, as it was said. We rested for a while and after the afternoon prayer, we left and passed through the mountains where we saw the effects of the siege that had been carried out by its people, who had blocked the road with rocks and trees. Their houses were on both sides of the road. There were lots of palm trees in their country.

We emerged from the narrow pass onto open ground. We traveled for the rest of the day and the night, passing by As-Safra' where there were villages with orchards and palm trees. At night, and on the side of the road, the inhabitants sold dates and limes while burning the leaves of palm trees for light. We prayed the morning prayer in Hunayn, which is also full of orchards, water and palm trees and continued walking until we reached Badr, fifteen hours from El Jadida. Having arrived there first, we waited to meet the Egyptian and Moroccan pilgrimage caravan. We stayed there, but the water of Badr was terrible, which was why we had carried the sweet water of El Jadida.

We met with the pilgrims from the Maghrib who delivered letters to us from Morocco from our master, commander of the faithful, and from our relatives. We were pleased to hear their news.

In the Egyptian caravan was our master Yazīd, son of the commander of the faithful.

In the afternoon, we left ahead of the Egyptian caravan. We traveled for the rest of the day and all the night and all of the next day, and after fifteen hours we reached a spot called Al Qa, a spacious and open land. There was no water there and we stayed until the noon prayer and then continued the rest of the day and the night and all of the next day until the afternoon. We reached a place called Al Qa in a flat terrain and we rested there for fifteen hours without water. After we performed the noon prayer, we continued for the rest of the day and all the night and the next day until the afternoon, arriving in Rabigh after twenty hours, where we found food. It was a big village surrounded by palm trees but its water was bad. The Qulzūm Sea, now known as Suez, could be seen from there; we had seen it the evening before. We found that the villagers of Rabigh had fled their homes, afraid of the Sharīf Surūr, sultan of Mecca.[32] We spent the night there and on the

next day, until late afternoon, people prepared their *iḥrām*, as I did, too.[33] We continued traveling all night and on the following day reached [Wadi] Qadid, full of palm trees and settlements, but in ruins, also destroyed by the sultan of Mecca when he marched at Medina. The travelers had to go for quite a distance to find water wells. After the afternoon prayer, we continued on for the rest of the day and half of the night and reached a place called Al Khalis, which had sweet water, eight hours away from our next stop. On the way, we entered a place called ʻAqabat al-Sukkar, an elevated area of deep sand in which animals sank to their knees. We stayed in Al Khalis for the rest of the night, and on the following afternoon we left, carrying water with us since we knew that there was no water ahead. We traveled for the rest of the day and the night and at dawn, thirteen hours later, we pitched our tents in a place called Sabīl al-Jawākhī. We left that evening and traveled for the rest of the night, and in the morning arrived at the outskirts of Noble Mecca on 7 Dhū-l-Ḥijja [September 19, 1787] …

We circumambulated the House, the circumambulation of arrival, and we performed the two prostrations of circumambulation behind the shrine of Abraham. We supplicated God and left through the gate of al-Ṣafā and then we performed the *saʻī* [ritual walking] between al-Ṣafā and al-Marwa seven times. We returned to the House and we sat blessing our eyes with its sight.

We dispatched some of our companions to rent us a house and as soon as they found one and it was made ready, we moved in from the tents. Because of God's goodness, the house was near the Holy Mosque – and so we spent most of our time in the Mosque.

Gout (282)

[Al-Miknāsī described the rituals of the pilgrimage, and composed a long poem about the occasion (pp. 268–279). He then joined the Syrian caravan back to Damascus.] During the pilgrimage time in Mecca I was stricken by gout. As soon as we started back, the pain became severe and I kept on rolling around in the litter, the pain constantly denying me rest. We reached Medina and pitched our tents outside the city and I thought I should ask for a physician or a doctor to help me with some cure, but by God, I could not make myself ask whether they had a physician or a doctor because I would immediately think of the Prophet, God's prayer and peace on him, and

would feel ashamed to ask. Two or three times, I nearly asked and then held back. And so I went to his tomb, God's prayer and peace on him, and told him about my condition. When I returned I felt some ease and I continued to improve, thanks to his blessing, God's prayer and peace on him. God made possible that I entered the Prophet's chamber and performed two prostrations in the *miḥrāb* of the Prophet, God's prayer and peace on him, where he himself used to reflect.

Return to Damascus and traveling to Acre (282–284, 288–290)

We stayed in the outskirts of the city for three days, and I went to see him every day. Then we went again to visit Al Baqīʿ where we sought the blessing of its [buried] inhabitants. But we could not go to see *sayidnā* Ḥamza because the road was unsafe. We sought his blessing from a distance, for he was buried in the slope of Mount Uḥud, his dome visible from a distance, and next to the dome of the Prophet, God's prayer and peace be on him, built on a square. We sought the blessing of everyone as we passed by them to our right.

[Al- ʿMiknāsī did not describe the return journey] …

Before sunrise, we reached the Damascus gate, which they called the Gate of God. We rested there and prayed the dawn prayer and entered the city. A friend whom we had sent ahead of us met us; we had asked him to find us a house and so he took us to it and we settled in. Throughout our stay, we visited the tomb of the Prophet Yaḥya regularly, seeking its blessing.

I sent to our friend, the mufti of the Shafiites, some dates that I had carried from Medina, on its inhabitants the best of prayer and peace. He was a man of civility and humor and wanted the blessing from the city. I also included a *subḥa*/prayer beads of the kind called *yusr* [black coral], adding some lines of poetry…

During our absence in Mecca, a large number of people in Damascus had died because of the plague. It was said that they used to bury 500 people every day. We found that many of those whom we had met earlier were dead, including the distinguished jurist and the Hadith scholar Shaykh Saʿd al-Dīn, a descendant of the man of blessings, Sidi ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī. So I wrote an elegy for him.

…

[On December 18, 1787, al-Miknāsī and the members of his delegation left Damascus towards Acre.] On the road, it rained heavily and so after five hours we sought shelter in a khan for travelers. Next to the khan was the pit of Joseph, peace be upon him, surrounded by a wall. There was a door and three steps and across from the well, behind the wall, there was a small mosque with one courtyard. We went to the well and found the water very sweet. We supplicated God there and I sat at the mosque door in front of the well and read the Sura of Joseph, thinking of him and of his father, peace be upon them. … On the following day, we prepared to leave and so we went again to that well and repeated our supplication and then traveled on a very difficult road, full of rocks and stones. We reached a village called Rama after five hours and stayed in some of its houses. The village was full of olive trees and its inhabitants were Christian in Muslim *dhimma*.

On the following morning, we left for Acre and reached it after six hours. As we drew near the city we sent one of our companions to rent us a house, but he could not find one even after searching all around the city. The vizier of the city, known as Aḥmad Pasha al-Jazzār, heard about us and assigned us a well-built house overlooking the sea in a new area near the seaport.[34] A day after our arrival, he asked us to go and meet him because he was sick, and so we went. He was very happy to see us and we talked for an hour and then left.

This vizier had a great impact on the city. It is he who made it famous and it, in turn, made him famous. He built one of the finest mosques, following the design of mosques in Constantinople, and he planted in its round *ṣaḥn* rows of palm and cypress trees. He also built a bath the like of which I had not seen either in Constantinople or in Damascus. The local inhabitants praised him a lot because he succored the week and the poor, especially those who were too embarrassed to ask for help. But he was not compliant in his actions toward the [Ottoman] government: in his country, he did what he wanted and only obeyed the orders he chose. The government ordered him [to go to Constantinople] telling him they wanted to send him on a jihad against the enemy, but he refused. He should be excused because he did not feel safe.

Outside the city, there was the tomb of the prophet of God, Ṣāliḥ, peace be upon him. It was in the middle of a cemetery on your left if you traveled east out of the city. We went there and they opened the vault of the blessed

tomb for us. We read what we could of the Qur'ān and asked God for what we hoped would be accepted.

When I went to the beautiful and remarkably built bath, I found the attendant most welcoming and helpful – for birds of a feather flock together. After I finished, I sat on one of the couches to rest, and he came to me with coffee.

Nablus (290–292)

We stayed in Acre for nine days until we found a ship that would take us across the sea. We contracted its owner and agreed on the travel date, and the captain then started preparing the ship. We seized the opportunity to visit Noble Jerusalem, desiring the blessing of the Aqṣā Mosque and all the prophets there, on our Prophet and them prayer and peace.[35] We left Acre and after six hours, we reached the tents of Bedouins, where we spent the night, near the tomb of a famous holy man in that region called Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Zuʿbī. It was raining hard as we drew near the Bedouins, and the moment they saw us, they came out and welcomed us into one of their biggest tents, showing their happiness and acting with the civility of people from the city. They brought us coffee and fodder for the horses and a served us a dinner rarely found in cities. They kept watch over the tent where we were staying until morning. May God reward them.

Next morning, we traveled for seven hours to Fort Sanur. The chieftain welcomed us and brought us food and expensive cushions. He offered us as much food and drink as city dwellers would have offered. The fort was strong and we found that the men there had hung their weapons at the gate, and so when we entered, they took them from us and from our companions. They did not allow anyone in with his weapons. In the morning, and as we were leaving, they returned the weapons to us… We left the fort in the morning and reached the city of Nablus, a medium-sized city in the middle of mountains, quite attractive, its buildings all of chiseled stone. It had a lot of water and orchards but its alleys were foul smelling and the road from the aforementioned fort was up and down hills covered with rocks. We reached it after four and a half hours and went to the house of the aforementioned chieftain; earlier, during our stay in the fort, we had met the son of the chieftain who had authority in the city, too. We spent the night

there and in the morning, he assigned a horseman to accompany us on the road to Jerusalem.

As we were leaving Nablus, they pointed to domes to our left which they said were the burial sites of the sons of Jacob, peace be upon him. We visited them and asked for their blessings and read the *Fātiḥa* and continued on a rocky road, especially in a place called Khan al-Labbān across from Wadi al Tīn. It lies in a low plain among mountains that are all planted in fig trees. The terrain was rough and rocky, but the valley was full of figs. If you know what you want, you will easily find it.

Ten hours later, we stayed the night in a village called al-Bireh, and in the morning, we reached Noble Jerusalem after two and a half hours. One hour before we got there, we saw the Prophet Shamu'īl ibn Ya'qūb [Samuel] to the right of the road to Jerusalem, in a building on a hillock. We read the *Fātiḥa* as we faced it and supplicated God. This region is very rocky, as was mentioned earlier.

Jerusalem and the Dome of the Rock (294–302)[36]

[Inside the Dome,] we went down fourteen steps to a place under the rock. It was now above us, and it was held up by a building, and under it was a marble column that was connected to it, as if part of it. There was another column near the stairs that was connected to it near the part called its tongue.

This place under the rock is very congenial, where a person finds readiness to worship God almighty. So we prayed in the *miḥrāb* of our master Solomon, peace be on him: it is made of marble and is to the left of you as you leave. We also performed two prostrations in the *miḥrāb* of our master David, peace be on him, which is to the right of you as you leave. Under the rock, we read what we could of the Qur'ān and we invoked God with what we hoped He would accept. Then, we went up the stairs and they showed us a part of the rock that stuck out, which they said was the tongue of the rock. There is no basis for such a view: it is made up by the guides.[37]

The Sura of al-Isrā' [Q 17] was inscribed in the outer circumference of the Dome of the Rock, as too is the Sura of Yasīn [Q 36] until the word "they eat" [verse 33]. These were some statements of historians: the rock lies in the middle of the mosque and rests on a large *ṣaḥn*/courtyard

elevated above the floor level of the Noble Aqṣā Mosque. The height of the dome above the courtyard is fifty-one *ʿamal* cubits, each equivalent to one and a quarter human cubit. As for the height of the courtyard above the floor of the mosque, it is seven cubits. And so, the height of the dome above the floor of the mosque is fifty-eight cubits.

…

The *miḥrāb* of the Aqṣā Mosque is most beautiful. In it, it is said, the Mahdi will pray and when Jesus, peace be on him, returns, he will find him leading people in prayer and will pray behind him. The mosque is covered with slabs of marble the width of each less than a hand span and altogether numbering seventeen: eight of them are white, four red, three rather blackish, and two rather greenish. There is a story told by the people of the Ḥaram: if intended to be true, that is fine; and if not, then it is extraordinary. They say that the eight white slabs point to the eight prostrations of the noon and afternoon prayers; the four red ones point to the evening prayer, after the redness of dusk; the three that are blackish point to the last prayer when night approaches; and the two greenish ones point to the morning prayer. We prayed there for the blessing.

In front of the *miḥrāb*, there is a dome decorated with beautiful colored stones. In the middle is written:

> In the name of God the merciful the compassionate. This blessed dome was restored in the days of our lord the victorious king, the warring, just, fighting scholar, the one supported by God, defeater of the rebellious heretics [*khawārij*], upholder of justice in all the world, the sultan of Islam Muḥammad son of the martyred sultan, King Qalawūn the virtuous, God have mercy on his soul, in the months of the year 728 [ad 1328].

And above the *miḥrāb*:

> In the name of God the merciful the compassionate. ʿAbdallah Yūsuf son of Ayyūb, father of the victorious king, Salāḥ al-Dunyā wa-l-Dīn, a man of virtue, ordered the restoration of this holy *miḥrāb* and the building of the Aqṣā Mosque when God helped him to conquer it in the months of the year 583 [ad 1187].

There is also a pulpit of fine wood, a most stunning piece of workmanship, made by Nūr al-Dīn the martyr, governor of Damascus, mentioned above.

It, that is the roofed Aqṣā, has eleven doors: seven in a single row face the rock, the middle of which is the biggest and is aligned with the *miḥrāb*. In front of these doors, there is a roofed hallway with four doors. To the west of the courtyard, there are various schools connected to a mosque forming one large and very long court known as the White Spot where the Malikite imam prays, near the tethering place of al-Burāq. They say that the Prophet, God's prayer and peace on him, prayed there. Next to it are the Sufi corner of ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, may God grant us to benefit from him, and the room of our shaykh, Abu al-Sa'ūd, who is its attendant.

The length of the wall of the Aqṣā Mosque, between the roofed part and the rock, is 785 cubits, from the Asbāṭ Gate to David's *miḥrāb* to the Maʿrifa Market. This Maʿrifa market is a roofed area between David's *miḥrāb* and the place of Mary's *miḥrāb* and Jesus's cradle, peace be on both of them. I could not find out the meaning of the name [market], but the guides there said that it was the place where the souls of the virtuous meet. There is no truth to what they say; and the purpose of such statements is well known.

…

Inside the Ḥaram, we visited our Lady Mary's *miḥrāb*, where there is also the cradle of Jesus, peace be upon him. We went down some stairs and I sat in the cradle, seeking his blessing. From this spot, we could see all the foundations of the Aqṣā Mosque: it stands on columns of huge stones, built by the jinn during the time of the prophet of God, Solomon, peace be on him. Some of the guides from among the people of the Ḥaram stated that the number of columns on which the mosque rested, if you can believe them, was 3,000 and that they were all underground. We saw a few of them through a small window from the place of Jesus' cradle. They are huge, each column consisting of three immense stones.

Also in the Ḥaram, we visited the tomb of Solomon, peace be on him, and the seat of his rule. It was said, correctly, that he was buried with his father in Gethsemane outside the wall of the Mosque to the east. Some scholars confirmed that our master David was buried in Zion, outside the city wall to the south. His tomb was famous and greatly venerated: it was visited by all, high and low, seeking help and blessing, as it was said. But God knows best.

We visited the seat of rule of the prophet of God David, peace be on him. It was in front of the Dome of the Rock, under the Dome of the Chain. Above the *miḥrāb* of this dome was written: "Oh David, We appointed you a deputy on earth, so judge between people in truth" [Q 38:26]. This chain was let down from heaven during the days of David, peace be on him, near the rock that is in the middle of Jerusalem. People used to be judged there: whoever was honest could touch it, but the liar could not – until they discovered the trick. It seemed that a man entrusted another with a gem, which the latter hid in his walking cane. When the former asked for its return, the latter denied having it, so they sought adjudication. The accuser said: "if you are telling the truth, let the chain draw near me," and he touched it. Then the accused pushed the cane at him saying: "Oh God, if you know that I have returned the gem, let the chain draw near me." And he touched it. So people said, the chain had equated the truthful with the untruthful. People saw the subterfuge.[38] Thereafter, David was inspired by God to judge people in accordance with what is evident and right. And that continues until today.

We also visited the tomb of the prophet of God, David, peace be on him, which is outside the city wall. We read Sura Ṣād and supplicated God there. We also sought blessings at the tethering site of al-Burāq, where we performed two prostrations and looked at the ring with which al-Burāq had been tethered – although the original had been replaced and the one there was just for remembrance.

We went to visit Ṭūr Sīna and all those who were praiseworthy there.[39] We left through the Asbāṭ Gate, one of the gates of Jerusalem, and first visited the tomb of the Prophet's companion ʻAbāda ibn al-Ṣāmit, which was to the left of the Asbāṭ Gate, near the wall. A short distance farther was the famous companion Shaddād ibn Aws, near the aforementioned wall in the cemetery.

We walked down to visit our Lady Mary, daughter of ʻImrān, and we stood near her tomb and read the *Fātiḥa* and invoked God there. The key to her shrine is in the hands of Christians: there is no strength or power except with God. May God guide this government, for its members have been corrupted by greed. There was also the tomb of the Hanbalite imam, author of *Tarīkh al-uns al-jalīl fī-l-Quds wa-l-Khalīl* [Mujīr al-Dīn al-Ḥanbalī, d. ad 1522]. We climbed up the mountain and visited the tomb of Shaykh Muḥammad al-ʻAlamī, a descendent of our master ʻAbd al-Salām ibn

Mashīsh, may we benefit from his blessing. Next to his tomb, there was a mosque and a Sufi corner called al-Asʿadiyya, named after the builder, Asʿad Effendi who was shaykh al-Islam. Then we went to the location where Jesus, peace be upon him, was raised and we performed two prostrations. They showed us a stone that still bore the mark of his foot and we sought its blessing and invoked God there. This [church] too had been in the hands of Christians, but God saved it from them by the good man, Shaykh Muḥammad al-ʿAlamī, who was helped by the aforementioned shaykh al-Islam. Then we went to visit the tomb of ʿAzīz [Q 9:30], the prophet of God, and praised God as we entered.

From the Ṭūr mountain, Jerusalem appears in great beauty and splendor, and so too from the south. From the west and the north, nothing can be seen because of mountains that block the view. Both Jerusalem and Hebron are located on rough and rocky mountains, where walking is difficult and distances are far. The mountains surrounding the two cities would demand three days of brisk walking to cross them in length and the same to cut across them. If, however, God granted a visitor the opportunity to reach the Noble Aqṣā Mosque and the Noble Sanctuary of the Khalīlī [Hebronite/Abraham] Mosque, he would rejoice and find indescribable happiness. These are the words of al-Ḥāfiz ibn Ḥajar after he reached Jerusalem:

> I came to Jerusalem seeking my home in the gardens of eternity
> The road was punishingly difficult, but after such difficulty, there is bliss.[40]

We descended from behind Ṭūr Mountain and turned toward the interlocutor and prophet of God, Moses son of ʿImrān. It was said that it would take us four hours to get there. I decided to go but people told me that the road was dangerous, so we looked in his direction and supplicated God there.[41] Then we went to the well of God's prophet, Job, peace be upon him, where we sought God's blessing. It was the well that was mentioned in the words of God almighty: “Kick with your foot: this is a place for washing, cool, and for drinking” [Q 38:42]. Some of the distinguished men of learning from Jerusalem, who had come with us on this visit to guide us around the sites, said: “In winter and during heavy rain, this well pours out

so much water it becomes like a river." We saw its dry duct that had been carved by running water. We peered into the well and saw that it was full of water and very deep. So I threw a stone, but it did not hit water until some time.

Then we passed near a water fountain called Silwan. The city people told me that it sometimes has water, sometimes not. The water springs from a mountain but none knows from where. Imam al-Ḥanbalī wrote in his history, *al-Uns al-Jalīl*: the Silwan Fountain is outside Noble Jerusalem towards the south, next to the south wall of the Mosque. He said at the end of his description about it and about Khālid ibn ..:[42] Zamzam [in Mecca] and the Silwan Fountain in Jerusalem are springs of paradise. Remarkably, water from Silwan does not run except during prayer time; at other times, it is held back. When we reached it, we found no water but when we left, its water flowed and gushed on the ground into the ducts. We drank and lo, it tasted just like the water of Zamzam. The people there knew about this fact and had told us about it before we tasted it. When we drank the water, we found it to be just as we had been told.[43]

It was told by many of the people there that once an Indian man was drinking from the water of Zamzam when his cup fell into the well. After a span of time, he came to Jerusalem and asked for water from some villagers. When they gave him water in a cup, he looked carefully at it and discovered it to be the same cup he had lost in the Zamzam Well. So he asked his friend: "Where did you find this cup?" The friend answered: "Drink and don't worry." He said: "This cup is mine and I had dropped it in the Zamzam Well. It is wrapped in leather. Remove the leather and if you find some dinars hidden there, then you will know if it is mine or not." The friend answered: "Confirming what you have said: the cup came out from the Silwan Fountain which is where we found it." And so they took the cup and hung it in the Aqṣā Mosque.

And I saw it. There is nothing strange about that episode. It was said that all the world's water comes out from under the Rock of Jerusalem.

We also visited the location where the Prophet of God, God's prayer and peace on him, ascended during the night of Isrā' [Night Journey]. It is to the north of the rock, not too far. We performed two prostrations there and supplicated God with what we hoped He would accept… Afterwards, we left Jerusalem to visit the city of Ḥabrūn, which today is called al-Khalīl. We left via the gate known as the Khalīl Gate and on the road passed by the

tomb of Rachel, mother of Joseph, peace be upon him, which was to our right. It had a dome and was an hour away from Jerusalem. Then we passed by the village of Bethlehem where the prophet and mouthpiece of God, Jesus son of Mary, peace be upon him, was born. It was to our left and most of its inhabitants were Christians who controlled that blessed location. We visited the place from afar and recited the *Fātiḥa* and supplicated God.

We continued until we faced the tomb of God's prophet Jonah son of Matti, the man of the whale. It was on top of a mountain to our left, and so we supplicated God almighty as we turned to face it. We reached Hebron after six hours of sturdy traveling. It was to the south of Jerusalem and very much resembled Mecca on first look since it was built on mountains. We went to the house of the city shaykh and after abluting we walked to our grand destination and goal, the father of prophets, our master Ibrāhīm Khalīl al-Raḥmān, peace be on him. We entered the mosque and turned to his corner, seeking blessings at his tomb. We then read the Sura of Ibrāhīm [Q 14].

Cyprus, Marseille and Tunis (318–320)

[Al-Miknāsī continued with information about Hebron from numerous previous authors. He also described his meeting with Sufis of the Qādirī order. Then he returned to Jerusalem.] The inhabitants of Jerusalem were friendly, articulate and well mannered. They welcomed the stranger and engaged him in conversation, especially if he was a scholar. They were very attentive to such men, may God reward them.

We stayed [in Jerusalem] for two days [after returning from Hebron] and then left. On the way, we stayed in the village of Sanjil, where we were hosted by its inhabitants, but they complained about the viziers and governors who were appointed by the Ottoman government, may God protect it. For they ate the meat, sucked the bone, and swallowed the marrow: there is no strength or power except with God. Actually, that was the way they [Ottomans] dealt with all their provinces, for everyone we came across complained about their tyranny. Some asked me about the payments people make in the Maghrib and I answered that they were what God has prescribed: *zakāt* and tithe. They asked: “What do you mean, tithe?” I answered: “Nine tenth of the harvest goes to the owner and one

tenth to *zakāt*." They said: "Wish they would leave us one tenth and take the nine tenth."

Even worse was that the viziers appointed Christians as their representatives in villages and so you found the Christian collecting the village *khirāj* for the vizier, insulting the Muslims as he took the money. All matters are left to God.

In this village, we stayed in the fort of Sanur where the inhabitants hosted us and then we continued toward Acre. On the following morning we arrived in Acre where we stayed until the 27th of Rabī‘ al-Awal [January 6, 1788]. We finished all our affairs and prepared for travel. The vizier of this city was generous to us, may God reward him.

Although it was winter, we sailed, relying on God almighty, and after three days we reached the island of Cyprus, because the ship's captain had some business there about which he had informed us. We stayed there for about ten days.

Cyprus was a big island, fertile and abundant where we found water and from where we took some supplies. We disembarked and rested from the sea for two days. There were few buildings on the island and some of the inhabitants complained to me about the tyranny of governors: there is no strength or power except with God. The governor of Cyprus was the grand vizier in the Ottoman government, and the island was apportioned to him, and whoever assumed the vizierate was given authority by the sultan to collect its *khirāj* poll tax.

We returned to the ship and sailed toward the city of Marseille in the land of the French. We had rented the ship on the basis of that itinerary, but when we left the island of Cyprus, and it was the end of the winter season, the sea became very rough and we met with such dangers that we gave up on our lives. When the wind blew in the right direction it was stormy, raising waves that none could describe; and when the wind blew in an opposite direction, had it not been for God's mercy, we would have perished. We were unable to perform our prayers, sometimes praying while sitting, and sometimes performing our ablution by *tayamum* [dry ablution] because we were unable to use water.

Fearing for our lives, the captain told us that we should change course and sail to Tunis. We agreed and decided to disembark there and then walk to our country. We forgave him what he owed us in rental fee and we sent one of our companions on land to rent us a house. The prince of the city

[Hammūdah Bey, reg. 1782–1814] heard about us and so granted us a house for our residence, one of the finest in the city, and appointed an attendant to bring us food and supplies. We stayed there and found the inhabitants as welcoming as was the prince. Six days later, he summoned us to meet him and so we went to his house and headquarters, which were an hour away. As we entered he greeted us happily, and brought us coffee, as is their custom. But we were fasting [to make up for lost days in] Ramadan and so we asked to be excused.

Tunis (324, 325–326, 327–328)

We encountered [the history of] Sidi Aḥmad ibn ʻArūs al-Maghribī al-Tūnisi, the virtuous servant of God and [mystically] drawn. He was one of the greatest men who were [mystically] drawn in Tunis and had numerous miracles and ecstatic states. Wild birds flew down and ate from his hand; while sitting among the poor, he used to stretch his hand out in the air and produce what was enough to feed them. One time, a man came to see himself and noticed his long fingernails and his bushy hair. So he said something to him and received the following in answer: "The lion needs its nails." He had a very strong presence, so much so that not everyone could remain in his company: one shivered at his sight. He used to sit on the roof of a *funduk* in Tunis, night and day, and he continued to do so until he died in the 860s [ad 1450s]…

Tunis was a big city with a busy port, built on a plain near a small lake that was open to the sea. It was about twenty miles in length, full of olive trees the oil of which was exported by sea to the lands of the Christians all year round. Some of its inhabitants who attended to us told me that the tithes on oil in Tunis, and excluding the surrounding regions, were 36,000 *maṭars*, where each *maṭar* consisted of two *qilla* measures, and each measure consisted of thirty-two rotls – and therefore very profitable. There were about 300 oil presses in Tunis and in neighboring regions.

This city was founded by the Umayyads and was very fertile but had little water. What drinking water there was came from rain. The inhabitants were elegant and they carefully attended to their clothing and fragrance. Its mosque, we mean al-Zaytuna Mosque, was dedicated to the reading of the Qur'ān and to instruction. Many of its scholars and students died of the plague in 1200 and after [ad 1786]: actually, the plague had lingered till just

before we arrived, but it was largely gone. The inhabitants told me that they buried nearly 80,000 people during the plague, sometimes burying between 500 and 1,000 people per day. God have mercy on Muslims.

Andalusians

[Al-Miknāsī stayed in Tunis for twenty-three days, and left on 3 Rajab 1202/April 18, 1788.] We reached the outskirts of a small city called Testour. As we approached it, one of the inhabitants came out to query us, and after we informed him who we were, he returned to the city and the inhabitants came out to greet us with their flags and drums, young and old. They were very sincere in their welcome, just like brethren, may God reward them, and they accompanied us until we reached our residence. Tents were pitched for us and they brought many kinds of food, along with animal fodder. They were exceedingly welcoming and later at night, they brought more food.

Most of the inhabitants of this small town were from al-Andalus, very urban, polite and well mannered. They did not cease asking about their home country al-Andalus: I knew about their country because I had visited it in 1193 [1779–1780]. And so I told them everything about the country and the land, and that made them very happy. Each would tell me, "I come from such and such a city," and then he would ask me to describe it for him, which I did. They were proud about their urban origins especially those who came from big cities such as Cordoba, Seville, Granada, Jaen and others.

Then a group of their students joined us and we discussed learned matters. May God help them realize their goals and increase their examples by His generosity.

Algiers and Tlemcen (330–331)

> [Al-Miknāsī continued through villages where the inhabitants were "Bedounish" until he reached Constantine and then Algiers.]

Algiers was strongly fortified against attacks from land and sea. It had two walls and a moat in between. The walls had turrets with cannons pointing at

the sea because the Christians often attacked it with their navies and soldiers. They succeeded in landing but God defeated them and pushed them back. The Spaniards had invaded numerous times: in the last decade of the twelfth century [1770s], they attacked it with ships and cannons, posing great danger. The Muslims did not know what to do and could not fight back because of their cannons. As they were deliberating among themselves, God inspired them: they gathered their camels and used them as shields which they drove in front of them against the enemy. The Christian cannons fired at the camels, after which the Muslims attacked the infidels and God gave victory to His religion. Many of the infidels were killed.

The plague was in this city and its environs, as a result of which a large number of people had died. After we left the city, we traveled for twelve days and reached Tlemcen and pitched our tents on its outskirts. We bought necessities for travel and visited the tomb of the virtuous man who is invoked in all these lands, Sidi Abu Madyān al-Ghawth, may God grant us His blessings. Also the tomb of the great exemplar, Sidi Muḥammad al-Sanūsī, may God grant us His blessings.

This city of Tlemcen was a large and famous city, abundant in water, gardens, orchards, olive trees and other produce. But it was in ruins and little remained of it except its memory. What aggravated its dire condition were the [government] agents of tyranny: they usurped everything that belonged to the Muslims. A friend told me that he used to come to Tlemcen to do some business and would see the inhabitants buying things from perfumers and paying with their produce because of the lack of liquidity in people's hands. The governor was so insolent and greedy that, heedless of God, he even took money from pilgrims on their way to the House of God based on the value of the luggage and possessions they had. May God help the Muslims.

Return to Morocco, meeting the Sultan, and taking ransomed captives to Algiers (332–335)

We [arrived in Fez, where we] stayed for two days until the arrival our master and lord, commander of the faithful, the warring supporter of religion in the cause of God, may God keep him and sustain his judgments, and make victory always to be behind and before him. Amen. In Meknes,

he had heard, may God grant him glory, about our arrival in Fez and so he sent for us and we went out to meet him, that being our supreme goal and desideratum. We found him in a camp in the valley of al-ʻAṭshān, between Fez and Meknes. We rejoiced in seeing him and conducted our business by looking at his noble visage, to God be praise.

We relayed to him, may God grant him glory, the news about the two Noble Sanctuaries, the Mashriq, Syria, Constantinople and other regions we had seen and visited. We stayed in his blessed camp till morning when he sent us to Fez again. He went to look after Muslim affairs in the direction of Sharāqa, and from there he continued to the territory of al-Ḥayāyni, also to check on the conditions of the Muslims, his subjects. May God reward him on behalf of Islam and Muslims.

Then we received his command to go to him and we found him in a camp near al-Nakhīla in the territory of al-Ḥayāyni. We met him, may God be with him, and stayed in the camp for three days. Meanwhile, the captives arrived whom the great one of Spain had sent to him as a gift in his honor. For he [Carlos] had made peace with the people of Algiers.

The agreement for ransoming the captives had been in accordance with the peace articles, but the ruler of Algiers refused to ransom his captives in the manner that the Christians had done to their brethren. He did not want to exchange the Muslim captives for the Christians, but demanded money for his Spanish captives, so much so that he did not exchange a single Muslim captive for a single Christian. He cared nothing for the Muslims and kept them captives in the hands of the infidels. “We belong to God, and to Him we shall return” [Q 2:156].

When the great one of Spain heard of the Algerian's unwillingness to ransom the Muslims, he was furious. He paid the Algerian ruler and ransomed the Christians and then gathered all the Muslim captives in his possession and sent them gratis to our master and commander of the faithful as a present in his honor. For he knew of his, may God support him, earnestness to save the Muslims and that the gift of captives was more valuable to him than anything else in the world. The Spaniards had thousands of captives from among the Muslims, and it was our master, commander of the faithful, may God keep him and elevate and protect him, who saved them after he signed a peace treaty with the Spanish ruler. He, God support him, always ransomed groups of captives, and those who were

liberated were the last of the Muslims in Spanish hands. May God accept his action and reward him…

After we had stayed with him in the camp in al-Ḥayāyni for three days, he, may God grant him victory, summoned me and said:

> God almighty saved those captives with our hands, to Him be praise. We now want to send them to their countries. We want you to gain God's favor and so go with them and watch over them as they travel, eat, and drink, until you deliver them safely to Tlemcen and hand them over to its governor. Once there, you will give them this *ṣila* [gift].[44]

He gave us money to distribute to them, ten *misqal* for each of them, and then he sent for mules and food supplies. We left him, God support him, and traveled until we reached the outskirts of Tlemcen, at a place called the ʻAqabat al-Yahūdī from where the city could be seen. There we met with the vanguard of the inhabitants of the city, and under the olive trees, there was a representative from the governor who introduced himself to us. We rested until all the people arrived and gathered together and then we rode toward the city. En route, horsemen accompanied us as they fired their weapons in the air, until we reached our destination. All the people were calling out to our master and lord, commander of the faithful. The horsemen and the captives left us at the gates of the city as we were led to the house of the governor, where we rested.

On the following morning, I distributed the *ṣila* to the captives, may God almighty view that action favorably, and then we went to the visit the famous Qutb [Sufi master], Sidi Abu Madyān al-Ghawth, whose blessing we sought again, God be praised.

Meknes and conclusion (343, 352)

[Al-Miknāsī stayed in Tlemcen for two days then traveled via Oujda, Taza to Fez.]

We left Fez by way of the Jadīda Valley, with overflowing emotions, and spent the night among some Berber tribes of the Ayt Yamūr. They hosted us generously and we stayed among them well treated and protected. We then

prayed and continued, and on the road were met by droves of relatives and friends and kin and neighbors until we reached our house, whereupon our children and brothers came to see us, along with all the servants. They were overjoyed and exultant, may God bless them and never expose them to the pain of separation: “God will gather together the dispersed – after they despair of reuniting.”

We returned to Meknes on the morning of Tuesday of Shawwāl in the year 1202 [July 1788]. The duration of our blessed absence was three years less a month and a half. The journey and the return were like the twinkling of an eye.

…

God: grant us what you have granted those whom you have favored, and bring us closer to your threshold and do not deny us entry;
Be forgiving on the Day of Judgment and have mercy on us, You are the Merciful One;
Detach us from this transitory world and its demands ad protect us from tribulations of the afterlife;
Guide us to what You sanction, and forgive us our forgetfulness and error, and join us to those whom you have blessed among the prophets and the martyrs, the trustworthy and the virtuous: make them to be our companions.

Our last invocation is to praise God, Lord of the Worlds: have mercy on your slave. Amen.

The copying of this travelogue was completed in the middle of Dhū-l-Ḥijja, one of the months of the year 1202 [September 16, 1788].

The travelogue is finished.

1 All page references are to the edition by Muḥammad Būkabbūt, *Iḥrāz al-ma‘ālī wa-l-raqīb fī ḥajj bayt Allah al-ḥarām wa ziyārat al-Quds al-Sharīf wa-l-Khalīl wa-l-tabarruk bi-qabr al-ḥabīb (1785–1788)* (Beirut: al-Mu'assassa al-'arabiyya li-l-dirāsāt wa-l-nashr, 2003).

2 A Turkish title, perhaps used by al-Miknāsī to emphasize the non-caliphal status of the Ottoman ruler.

3 It is odd that al-Miknāsī called the Ottoman “sharifian”: he was not.

4 There had been numerous embassies from Sidi Muḥammad to Istanbul: in 1761, 1764–1765, 1766–1767. Relations between him and the Ottoman sultan were so good that Sidi Muḥammad called for supporting him in the sermon/*khuṭba* of the Aḍḥā Feast in 1784.

5 Descendents from the family of the Prophet Muḥammad.

For a detailed discussion of the visit to Istanbul, see Muḥammad Menouni and M'hammad
6 Benaboud, "A Moroccan Account of Constantinople," in *Les provinces arabes à l'époque ottoman*, ed. Abdeljelil Temimi (Zaghouan: Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches, 1987), 39–76.
7 The meeting with the sultan took place on August 23, 1786.
8 Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Qaramānī (AD 1532–1611), a Damascene historian.
9 The reference is to the battle of Kosovo, June 28, 1389 between Sultan Murad I and Prince Lazar of Serbia.
10 It is interesting that al-Miknāsī used the term *mamlaka* – which he did not use anywhere else.
11 He was the Chechen Imam Mansūr who led a war against Russia's Queen Catherine in 1785. He was later captured and died in 1794 (MB).
12 He was the founder of one of the four schools of jurisprudence in Islam, and the one that has prevailed in Morocco and the Islamic West (AD 612–709).
13 Wahb ibn Munabbih (*c.*655–*c.*725), a Yemeni jurist who narrated Hadith, some of which was included in the two *ṣaḥīḥ*s of Muslim and Bukhārī.
14 The reference is to a rebel against the Caliph al-Mu'taṣim (833–843). The title al-Sufyānī refers to a messiah of Umayyad lineage.
15 Abu Ḥanīfa (AD 699–767), founder of the Ḥanafī School of jurisprudence.
16 The largest river in Central Asia.
17 The war was provoked by the aforementioned Manṣūr of Mahdist claims. Preparations for war on the Ottoman side began in January 1786.
18 In the light of his authorship of five *maqāmāt* after his second journey, it is surprising that al-Miknāsī did not recognize them as the trickster heroes of medieval *maqāmāt*.
19 His story appears in Q 36:12ff.
20 'Uthman was assassinated in ad 656 in Medina.
21 The first ruler in the Umayyad dynasty, d. ad 680.
22 This story was frequently mentioned in Arabic sources: see the translation from Abu al-Qāsim al-Zayānī's *al-Turjumāna al-kubrā* in Matar, *Europe through Arab Eyes*, 241–242.
23 The commander of the caravan had preceded them to prepare the tent sites.
24 Al-Miknāsī referred to the commander/*amīr* of the caravan also as pasha and vizier.
25 The reference is to the Nabatean ruins.
26 The first two successors to the Prophet Muḥammad from among the Righteous Caliphs. They died ad 634 and 644 respectively.
27 Respectively: 'Abbās (d. ad 653); Ḥasan (d. ad 670); Zayn al-'Abidīn (d. ad 713); Ja'far, the sixth imam in Twelver Shī'ism (d. ad 765); Muḥammad al-Bāqir (d. ad 742).
28 Abu Ruwaym Nāfi' al-Laythī, one of the ten chanters of the Qur'ān (d. ad 786).
29 'Ali was assassinated in Kufa, ad 661.
30 Ḥamza was the uncle of the Prophet Muḥammad and was killed in the battle of Uḥud, ad 625.
31 The Battle of the Camel took place in ad 656 near Basra.
32 He had seized control of Mecca in 1771 from his uncle. He died in 1788. In a study of the Moroccan pilgrimage caravans, Muḥammad al-Menūnī stated that two of the daughters of Sidi Muḥammad had been wedded to Surūr and his son. If so, it is curious that al-Miknāsī did not mention that: *Rakb al-ḥajj al-maghribī* (Teṭwān: Maṭba'at al-makhzan, 1953), 20.
33 Cleansing and wearing the proper attire.
34 It is interesting to note that al-Miknāsī used the epithet *al-jazzār*/the butcher in 1788. Aḥmad Pasha, the Ottoman governor of Acre (reg. 1775–1804), was very cruel, which is why he earned that epithet, but al-Miknāsī did not seem to be aware of its implications.
35 See Muḥammad Menūnī and Amḥammad Bin Abbūd, "Riḥlat Ibn 'Uthmān al-Miknāsī ilā al-Quds al-Sharīf wa manāṭiq min Filasṭīn,"*Al-Manāhil*, 39 (1990), 20–43.
36 For a study of Moroccan views on Palestine, see Muhannad Mubaydin, "Al-Quds fi riḥlāt Ibn 'Uthmān al-Miknāsī," *Al-Majalla al-thaqafiyya* 76 (2009):179–183; and my study of another

Moroccan traveler, al-‘Ayyashi, “Two Journeys to Seventeenth-Century Palestine,” *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 29 (2000): 66–79.

37 This observation is the same as Mujīr al-Dīn al-Ḥanbalī, whose book al-Miknāsī mentioned in his account: *Uns al-jalīl bi-tārīkh al-Quds wa-l-Khalīl* (Amman: al-Muḥtasib, 1973), 2:15.

38 A widely repeated story as early as Usama ibn Munqidh (d. 1188), *The Book of Contemplation*, trans. and introd. Paul M. Cobb (Penguin, 2008), 250.

39 Al-Miknāsī means the Mount of Olives.

40 The same lines had been quoted by ‘Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī during his 1693 visit to Jerusalem: *al-Ḥaqīqa wa-l-majāz fī riḥlat bilād al-Shām wa-l-Ḥijāz*, ed. Riyād ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Murād (Damascus: Dār al-Ma‘rifa, 1989), 323

41 In 1693, al-Nābulusī was able to visit the site, *al-Ḥaqīqa wa-l-majāz*, 387–390.

42 Missing word.

43 This association between the waters of Silwān and Zamzam goes back as far as al-Muqaddisi in the second part of the tenth century Ad: *Description of Syria including Palestine*, trans. Guy Le Strange (London, 1896), 49.

44 Al-Miknāsī reached the Moroccan capital on June 4, 1788, but instead of going to see his family, he had to go to Tlemcen, in obedience to Sidi Muḥammad.

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Index