

THE WAR BETWEEN
THE TURKS AND THE
PERSIANS

Conflict and Religion in the
Safavid and Ottoman Worlds



Giovanni-Tommaso Minadoi
Translated by Abraham Hartwell

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INTRODUCTION

Between 1501, the year when the Safavid dynasty established a state in Persia, and 1639, the year when the Persians and the Ottomans gave up fighting each other by concluding a peace accord that proved to be definitive, these two states were engaged in no less than six major wars. All of these stretched out over multiple years and involved numerous campaigns and battles as well as the repeated invasion and conquest of the frontier zones lying astride the territory of the two states – Armenia and Georgia – located in the piedmont of the Elbruz mountain range, the mountainous terrain of eastern Anatolia and the lowlands of Mesopotamia.

Launched and fought over the types of interests that have ignited wars since the dawn of time – territory, resources, kingly glory – the various instalments of the protracted Ottoman–Safavid conflict were articulated in religious terms, in a way that bears more than a little resemblance to the wars of religion that raged in contemporary Europe. The Ottomans saw themselves as the champions of Sunni Islam; the Safavids went into battle under the banner of Islam’s Shi’i variant; and each party vilified the other as heretical, the representative of irredeemable evil and utter depravity.

For the interaction between the Ottomans and the Safavids, including their military engagement, we have a plethora of Persian- and Turkish-language sources, some of which narrate entire campaigns in considerable detail. Yet all are rather stylized accounts, true to the genre of Persianate chronicle writing in being somewhat formulaic in their approach, aside from offering only the viewpoint of the side their authors represent. Western accounts of these conflicts, in turn, are rather few in number – even though the European nations at the time had a keen interest in the conflict and its outcome – mostly because few Western observers witnessed the events with their own eyes. Their observations, nevertheless, are extremely useful for complementing the information offered by the Safavid and Ottoman chroniclers, whose concerns were naturally very different from those of outside visitors.

Surely the most detailed account of the sixteenth-century Ottoman–Safavid military encounter is the monographic work of Giovanni Tommaso (Thomaso) Minadoi. Minadoi

was a renowned Italian physician who in the 1570s spent some seven years in Aleppo and Istanbul serving the consuls of Venice and who in this period collected a great deal of material on what would be the longest of the conflicts between Muslim powers: the war that broke out in 1578 and that would continue until 1590, when Shah 'Abbas I (r. 1587–1629) decided to accept the humiliating terms of a peace proposal offered to him by his opponent, Sultan Murad III (r. 1574–95).

Minadoi's family originally hailed from Sicily and had reached northern Italy either via Manfredonia on the Gargano Peninsula in Puglia or via Naples.¹ His father, Giovanni Battista, was born in 1501 in Ferrara and served as a medic in Rovigo, a town located halfway between Padua and Ferrara, in the northern region of Veneto. The precise year of Giovanni Tommaso's own birth is not known. He probably came into the world in 1548–9, the third of four brothers. Giovanni Battista, who had moved to Rovigo before his third son was born, died in 1574, stabbed on a public street while Giovanni Tommaso and his older brother Aurelio were studying philosophy and medicine at the University of Padua. Giovanni Tommaso Minadoi graduated from the University of Padua in 1574. Two years later, he went to Syria as resident physician to the Venetian legation, to serve Teodoro Balbi (1542–1619), the newly appointed consul to Aleppo (served 1578–81).

Minadoi remained in Ottoman territory, mostly in Aleppo, with various stays in Istanbul, for a full decade. In this period he went back to Italy only once. Upon his return to the Levant, he was asked to enter the service of Balbi's successor, Giovanni Michele (Michiel) (served c.1582–4). Following his definitive return to Italy in 1586, he became *medico condotto* (i.e. community physician) in the town of Udine, the capital of Friuli, located some hundred kilometres northeast of Venice. After a falling-out with the town's authorities, he was appointed professor of *medicina practica* at the renowned faculty of medicine of the University of Padua, a position he would retain for almost two decades. In this period, Minadoi wrote a number of treatises mixing medicine with theology on such topics as obesity and hair loss.

To most historians, Minadoi is best known as the author of a substantial work on the Ottoman–Safavid conflict that had broken out while he resided in Ottoman territory. Minadoi published the result of his research on this conflict shortly after his definitive return to Italy, having spent a brief two months preparing the manuscript. In 1587 the first edition, consisting of four 'books' or chapters, appeared under the title *Historia della guerra fra Turchi et Persiani, descritta in quattro libri* in Venice published by Andrea Muschio and Barezzo Barezzi, and in Rome published by I. Tornerio and B. Donangeli. In spite of the hasty final preparation, the book must have been years in the making, since as early as 1583 the Italian Pietro Bizarri appended part of a manuscript version of the work to his own *Persicarum rerum historia*, the first comprehensive history of Persia to appear in Europe.² Minadoi, now having access to proper libraries, kept adding material to his research, as a result of which a new, expanded version of his book saw the light of day in 1588. Titled *Historia della guerra fra Turchi et Persiani di G. T. Minadoi ... dall'istesso riformata, e aggiuntivi i successi dell'anno 1586*, this second edition was published in Venice by Andrea Muschio and Barezzo Barezzi, and in Turin by Giovanni Battista Bevilacqua. The account had been updated to 1586, ending with a report on the murder of Hamza Mirza, son of Shah Khodabanda and heir apparent, in December 1586; the four 'books' had been rearranged and expanded to nine, and the work

now included a chapter on the Safavid administrative system. The work also contained a lovely map, presented as a double-page hand-coloured spread. In 1594 Andrea Muschio and Barezzi Barezzi reprinted this edition. In the intervening time, Minadoi had become the private physician of the Duke of Mantua, a position he retained until 1593.

Minadoi's work was quickly translated into various languages. The Spanish rendering, titled *Historia de la guerra entre turcos y persianos de Juan Tomas Minadoy, en quatro libros, començando de año de 1576, que fueron los primeros motivos della, hasta el año de 1585*, was published in Madrid in 1588 (repr. Valencia: Universidad de Valencia, 2010). While evidently based on the original Italian edition, this translation was different in that it lacked the map and that each of the four 'books' was now divided into chapters. The sympathy that existed at this point among the Spanish political elite for Persia, as a country that might be enlisted in the struggle against the Ottomans, accounts for the timing of this translation, which really served as a piece of propaganda. The translator, Antonio de Herrera, a historian from Tordesillas, dedicated the work to the royal secretary, Juan de Idiáquez, one of Philip II's most trusted officials.³ In 1592 a German translation appeared in Frankfurt am Main as *Persische Historia, Das ist: Warhaffte und Aussführliche Beschreibung von dem alangwirigien und erschrockligen Krieg, der Turcken, wider die Perseier, welcher sich im Jahr nach Christi Geburt 1577 anngesponnen und bisanhero mit vielem Blutvergissen verhalten hat*. In 1601 a Latin translation came out, also in Frankfurt, as part of a reprint of Bizarri's *Rerum Persicarum Historia, initia gentis, mores, institute, resque gestas ad haec usque tempora complectens*.

The English translation, *The Historie of Warres between the Turkes and the Persians*, which is here presented in a new edition, was originally published in 1595 in London by the printing house of John Wolfe, a key figure in the expanding foreign news market at the time. It is a faithful rendering of the expanded Italian edition of 1588. Yet it, too, lacks some of the features of the Italian original. Thus both the decorative borders at the top of the page and the illustrated squares enclosing the drop capital letter that opens each 'book' are hand-coloured in the original. The handsome map, presented in the Italian text in colour, appears in black and white in the translation.

The English translation remains better known than any other version of Minadoi's work, including the Italian original, mainly because it was reissued in a facsimile edition in Tehran in 1976, as part of the Pahlavi Memorial Series. The translator, Abraham Hartwell (1553/4–1607), was a member of the Society of Antiquaries, a society founded by Archbishop Parker in 1572. In his capacity as secretary to Archbishop Whitgift of Canterbury (1530–1604), a favourite of Queen Elizabeth I, Hartwell also served as a most active ecclesiastical censor, licensing a number of books on Turkish history for publication. Operating in an environment of heightened interest in Turkish affairs following the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus and the ensuing battle of Lepanto of 1571, as well as the launching of the English Levant Company a decade later, he also translated Lazaro Soranzo's *L'Ottomanno* into English.⁴

Minadoi's work consists of nine books, followed by a letter to Mario Corrado, in which the author voices his opinion about whether or not Tabriz corresponds with the classical Ecbatana, and a glossary of geographical names and terms. The first book, which covers the period between the late reign of Shah Tahmasb (1524–76) and the accession of Shah 'Abbas I in 1587, focuses on the reign of the two protagonists of the Ottoman–Safavid war: Sultan

Murad III, who had come to power in 1574, and Shah Mohammad Khodabanda, who in early 1578 succeeded the sanguine Shah Esma'il II. Books two to nine narrate the war between its outbreak in 1578 and the occupation of Georgia by the Ottomans some two years later.

Minadoi's account has to be read in the context of the conflict between the Ottoman Empire and Europe, and by extension between Islam and Christendom. The author makes it clear that the research he conducted for his work did not just receive encouragement but had actual material support from the Venetian authorities. In collecting the information that he used for his account, he stood in a century-old Venetian tradition of gathering intelligence about the Ottomans and their enemies, especially those who might become allies with the Christian nations in a common anti-Turkish front. Like Balbi and Michele, as well as the well-known (Flemish) Austrian ambassador Oghir Ghiselin de Busbecq, Minadoi never visited Persia itself. This tradition goes back at least as far as the days of Uzun Hasan (r. 1453–78), the ruler of the west-Persian Aq-Qoyunlu (White Sheep) dynasty, who in the mid-fifteenth century had requested assistance from the Venetians in his own struggle against the Turks. The Aq-Qoyunlu were defeated by the Ottomans in 1473 and faded soon after Uzun Hasan's death five years later. Less than a quarter of a century later, the rise to political power of a new dynasty – the Safavids – rekindled hopes that relief from the Turkish scourge might finally be at hand. The *Diarii* of the panoptic Venetian annalist Marin Sanudo and the account of Giovanni Rota, a physician stationed in Aleppo, which came out in 1508 in the form of a letter to the doge, portray the phenomenal rise of Shah Esma'il Safavi in 1501 as the *parousia* of a messianic saviour.⁵

Minadoi himself was a Christian, or at least viewed the conflict between Ottomans and Safavids through Christian eyes. Indeed, like most of his Renaissance peers, Minadoi clearly saw the Ottoman–Safavid conflict as potentially beneficial to Christian-European interests. As a good Venetian, he dreaded the Ottomans and the chance that 'each campaigning season might bring a renewal of Ottoman attacks on the West'. Minadoi even went so far as to accept 'as true whatever misfortune the Turks might plausibly have suffered'.

For a more sympathetic view of the Ottomans, one has to look for countries that were not directly at war with them or that competed with the Hispano-Portuguese Empire, such as France and England. Whereas Minadoi had dedicated his work to Pope Sixtus V (r. 1585–90), Hartwell in turn dedicated his translation to the Archbishop of Canterbury. England at this point occupied a peculiar position in this struggle. Not directly involved, it was relatively favourably inclined to the Ottomans, seeking their support, if only because its own arch-enemy, Spain, was a sworn enemy of the Turks. The English Levant Company understandably also had considerable interest in maintaining good relations with Istanbul. This may have been the reason why Hartwell cryptically refers to the secrecy he chose to keep with regard to some of the reasons why he had decided to undertake the translation of Minadoi's work.

Minadoi, meanwhile, shows some sympathy for the Safavids – whom various European nations had continued to court as potential allies against the bellicose Ottomans. Indeed, following a venerable Western tradition, he views Persians as a sophisticated and cultured people, as opposed to the Turks, whose reputation was that of primitive and predatory brutes.

Yet Minadoi's work is no ode to the Persians. Unlike Hartwell, who had a mostly negative view of Persia, Minadoi was ambivalent about the Safavid realm. If in many passages in his

work he seems to tilt towards Persia, this is less from a love for the Safavid state than from fear of the greater evil: the Turks. At the same time, he voices the stereotypical views of Persia and Persians expressed by many before and after him, conflating, in the antiquarian fashion current at the time, the ancient inhabitants of the country and the modern ones, calling the Persians ‘great deceivers, full of craftie Stratagemes, unconstant, and breakers of their word’. Yet, referring to a perceived anarchic disposition, he also claimed that they were ‘never content with any mans government’. Alluding to a presumed creative spirit, he further insisted that they were ‘lovers of novelties’ (p. 74). Yet on balance, not yet seduced by the wonders of Isfahan as fashioned and embellished by Shah ‘Abbas I a generation later, and not having set foot in Persia and thus unable to report on the cultural sophistication and hospitality of its people from first-hand experience, Minadoi classified the Persians as barbarians, just like the Turks.

Superimposing the Catholic–Protestant rivalry onto the Sunni–Shi‘i conflict that suffused the enmity between the Ottomans and the Safavids, Minadoi ultimately argued that they were both believers in the same prophet, that the Persians were just as inveterately inimical to Christianity as the Turks. In his account, the conflict between these two states thus becomes part of a providential plan designed to weaken the major Muslim powers and, therefore, Islam. In keeping with a sentiment that would long persist, the war, in his words, although ‘long and bloudie’, was also ‘very commodious and of great opportunitie to the Christian Common-wealth’. Minadoi hoped that his book would ‘animate Christian princes to take up arms against barbarians under whose rule famous and once powerful nations are reduced’ (pp. 1–3). He thus advocated a strategy that today we would call ‘dual containment’.⁶

What is perhaps most striking about Minadoi’s work is its break with past custom. Histories of Persia written by Europeans, before and after him, tended to make connections between Persians in the present with their forebears in antiquity in ways that Persians themselves came to do only in the late nineteenth century and under the influence of European practice. His work is pragmatic in character and purpose: rather than engaging in historical digressions about the presumed origins of the Persians and the Turks, Minadoi keeps the war he describes in focus, providing a wealth of detail about its origins, its landmark events, battles and skirmishes. He also pays much attention to the terrain, the topography and especially place names, seeking to give their accurate rendering. In this, he represented a new trend among scholars, who relied less on ancient nomenclature than their forebears in their attempt to find accurate current names for topographical places. In the process, Minadoi also provides a great deal of information about other aspects of the Safavid polity, much of it remarkably accurate, given his lack of direct access to the country. He thus touches on the formidable Pari Khan Khanom, Shah Tahmasb’s daughter, her role in the successive enthronement of her two brothers, Isma‘il II in 1576 and Mohammad Khodabanda two years later, and how she was sidelined and killed by the Qezelbash shortly thereafter. Further, he was the first European to give a detailed and informed overview of the Sunni–Shi‘i divide in Islam.

Minadoi’s narrative was not above controversy. He made the mistake of identifying Tabriz with Ecbatana, the capital of the Medes, most likely present-day Hamadan, and got into a dispute with Paulo Giovio, a contemporary Italian historian who had written on the Turks, concerning Giovio’s argument that Tabriz was to be equated with ancient Terva (Yerevan in

Armenian) – hence the letter to Mario Corrado.⁷ Minadoi became involved in a similar discussion with the Austrian humanist scholar Hans Löwenklau (Johannes Leunclavius), a specialist of Byzantine as well as Turkish history, who resided in Istanbul in 1585–7 and subsequently published various books about the Ottoman Empire, beginning with *Annales Sultanorum Othmanidarum usque ad annum 1588*.⁸ In 1595 the Venetian publisher Nicolao Morettum brought out the controversy between the two scholars under the title *Thomae Minadoi pro sua de bello Persico Historia adversus ea quae illi a Ioanne Leunclavio obijciuntur. Disputatio. Ad Aloysium Foscarenum Senatorem Illustrissimum*. This book was edited by Aurelio Minadoi, Giovanni Tommaso's brother, who dedicated it to the Venetian senator Luigi Foscarini (dedicatory letter by 'Aurelius Minadous' on the first pages).

What is especially important for the modern reader is that neither Minadoi's anti-Turkish bias nor his qualified sympathy for the Persians stands in the way of his search for the 'truth'. He goes to great lengths emphasizing that he has made great efforts to find the truth behind the story he is telling. This is a trope, to be sure, but in Minadoi's case, it is more than that: as he himself states, he interviewed many people and double- and triple-checked facts in the face of many inconsistencies with regard to place names. In his preface, Minadoi insists that he has done everything possible to collect and collate information from various sources, most notably by consulting eyewitnesses, 'men of great authority who were present for the most part at these actions' (author's epistle to the reader). He mentions how his medical knowledge has helped him gather his information. In this he was heir to another tradition with a long pedigree: in Islamic lands, Westerners were (until quite recently) often automatically credited with medical knowledge, and their (presumed) knowledge of illnesses and curative skills literally opened doors for European physicians, even to the inner sanctum of the homes of the elite. Their access to the royal palace was one of the reasons why Jewish doctors serving the bailo in Constantinople were highly prized by the Venetians.

Aleppo, the terminus for a branch of the silk trade originating in Persia, was an ideal venue to collect information on the Safavid state. Minadoi in particular invokes as informants the two successive Venetian consuls to Aleppo under whom he served, Teodoro Balbi and Giovanni Michele, calling them 'two most noble, prudent and valourouse subiectes of the State of Venice', and who 'most magnificently without sparing of any costes did favour me herein' (author's epistle to the reader). Balbi in turn benefited from Minadoi's knowledge. Upon his return to Venice in 1582, Balbi gave testimony on Persia to the Venetian Senate, and the similarities between his text and that of Minadoi makes it likely that the latter actually wrote Balbi's report to the Senate.⁹ Minadoi also mentions a Venetian named Cristoforo de Boni, who served as interpreter to these diplomats.

Most valuable for the information Minadoi offers on the Safavids, especially on their administrative system, must have been his other, 'native', informants. One was the renegade Scipione, the son of a nobleman from Genoa who had fought as a corsair until he was captured by the Ottomans, at which point he had converted to Islam. Upon his release, now known as Sinan Pasha, he had made a career for himself in the Ottoman army, to the point of assuming the function of commander-in-chief in the war against the Safavids. Eventually, suspected of plotting against the sultan, he had been dismissed and sent into exile. Minadoi mentions how he had treated him, curing him of a 'certain illness', most likely venereal

disease. Equally important as a source of information was an official named Maqsd Khan, who came to the Ottoman Empire as an envoy from Shah Mohammad Khodabanda seeking peace, and who upon his return was made governor of Tabriz. He next had a falling-out with the shah, causing him to take refuge with the Ottomans, to be appointed governor of Aleppo. Minadoi specifically notes how he met with Maqsd Khan's son after the latter's father had been made governor of Aleppo.

Minadoi's work, in its original version as well as its various translations, would have considerable influence on the image of Persia, its political system and its confrontation with the Ottomans in seventeenth-century Europe. The best illustration of such influence is Oruch Beg, better known as Don Juan of Persia, the secretary of an embassy sent to Spain by Shah 'Abbas I who, having arrived in Valladolid in 1601, converted to Christianity and chose to remain in Spain. He, or rather his Spanish mentor and translator, Alfonso Remón, followed Minadoi's account of events and made extensive use of his work.¹⁰ Another example is the English historian Richard Knolles (c.1545–1610), who copied the parts of Minadoi's work that deal with the Sunni–Shi'i schism verbatim for his own acclaimed work, *Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603–4). The information contained in Knolles's book, the first major work in English on the Ottoman Empire, was further publicized by Paul Rycaut's highly influential *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (1665), which rivalled Knolles's account as the standard work on the Ottomans in Europe well into the eighteenth century. The information Minadoi provided shows up as well in the works of John Cartwright and Samuel Purchas, two authors who reached a mass audience in seventeenth-century Europe by being included in the exceedingly popular Hakluyt series. Some of the various anonymous manuscripts on the Persian-Turkish wars that appeared at the turn of the seventeenth century are undoubtedly based in part on his work as well. The information offered by Minadoi thus long reverberated, helping to shape and solidify opinions about Persia and its inhabitants, separately and in relation with the Ottomans, that would have enormous staying power.

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NOTES

- 1 This biographical information is largely based on John R. Walsh, 'Giovanni Tommaso Minadoi's History of the Turko-Persian Wars of the Reign of Murād III', in Bobodžan G. Gafurov (ed.), *Trudy dvadcat' pjatogo Mezdunarodnogo Kongressa Moskva 9–16 avgusta 1960: Obščaja časť, zasedanija sekcij I–V* (Moskva: Izdat. Vostočnoj Literatury, 1963), vol. 2, pp. 448–9; Lucia Samaden, 'Giovanni Tommaso Minadoi (1548–1615). Dal medico della «nazione» veneziana a professore universitario a Padova', *Quaderni per la Storia dell'Università di Padova* 31 (1998), pp. 91–164; and Nancy G. Siraisi, *History, Medicine and the Traditions of Renaissance Learning* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), pp. 246–60.
- 2 Pietro Bizarri, *Persicarum rerum historia in XII libros descripta, totius gentis initia, mores, instituta, et rerum domi forisque gestarum e narrationem continens* (Antwerp: Plantin, 1583).
- 3 Enrique García Hernán, 'The Holy See, the Spanish Monarchy and Safavid Persia in the Sixteenth Century: Some Aspects of the Involvement of the Society of Jesus', in Willem Floor and Edmund Herzig (eds), *Iran and the World in the Safavid Age* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), p. 190.

- 4 V. J. Parry, *Richard Knolles' History of the Turks*, ed. Salih Özbaran (Istanbul: ISIS, 2003), p. 13; and Anders Ingram, *Writing the Ottomans: Turkish History in Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 38–9, 48–9.
- 5 The specific references to Persia in Sanudo's encyclopedic work have been brought together by Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, ed., *Šhāh Ismā'īl I nei «Diarii» di Marin Sanudo* (Rome: Istituto per l'Oriente, 1979; index, ed. by Laura Bottini, 2005). See also Giovanni Rota, *La vita, costume e natura de' Sofi re di Persia e di Media ...* (Rome: Eucharius Silber, 1508); and Pierre Dodogne, 'La «Vita del Sofi» di Giovanni Rota. Edizione critica', in *Studi in onore di Raffaele Spongano* (Bologna: Boni, 1980), pp. 215–33.
- 6 This is a mirror image of the Iranian perspective and perception. The Safavids were quite happy to see the Ottomans and the Europeans engaged in war since, so long as the Ottomans were involved on their western front, they would not have the resources to take on Iran.
- 7 *Thomæ Minadoi Rhodigini Pro quadam sua sententia Disputatio*, Patavii: Apud Franciscum Bolzettam, 1604.
- 8 Frankfurt am Main, 1588. For Löwenklau, see Pál Ács, 'Pro Turcis and contra Turcos: Curiosity, Scholarship and Spiritualism in Turkish Histories by Johannes Löwenklau (1541–1594)', *Acta Comeniana* 25 (2011), pp. 1–22.
- 9 See Guglielmo Berchet (ed.), *La Repubblica di Venezia e la Persia* (Turin: Tipografia G. B. Paravia e Comp., 1865; repr. Tehran: Offset Press, 1976), pp. 276–89.
- 10 Don Juan of Persia, *Don Juan of Persia: A Shi'ah Catholic 1560–1604*, trans. and ed. G. Le Strange (London: Routledge, 1926; repr. 2005), introduction, p. 19.

The Epistle Dedicatorie

To the most Gracious and Reuerend Father in God, IOHN by the prouidence of God, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate and Metropolitane of all England, and one of the Lords of her Maiesties most honorable Priuie Councill.

Most Reuerend and my singular good Lorde, May it please your Grace with honorable fauour to accept of this paper-Present, which by starts I haue drawne out of Italian into English. Sondry reasons there were that at the first, about three yeares agoe, moued me to begin the translation thereof, but because they are such as concerne matter of estate, where withall I list not to meddle for feare of burning my fingers, I thought it good rather to conceale them, then in printe to publish them. The onely occasion, that caused mee after so long time hauing layed it aside, to take it vp againe and finish the same, was the graue iudgement of Sr. Moile Finche a right worshipfull knight in Kent, who this last Sommer beeing with you at your Maner of Beakesbourne, vpon speech then had about the great preparations of the Turke agaynst Christendome, and the huge victories that he had atchieued vpon his enemies that sought to weaken him, did verie highly commende this booke, and the Author thereof: whose eloquence although my english pen cannot possibly reache and expresse, yet is it trulie and faithfully doone in as plaine and significant Termes as I could: whereuntoo I was once minded to haue added certain aduertisementes and collections, as well out of the old auncient writers both sacred and prophane, that haue written of the most stately & magnificent Empire of the Medes and Persians in times past, as also out of Leunclaius & others, that haue lately written of the moderne and present estate thereof, which hath scarce a shaddow of the antique gouernement, wherewith it was then ruled & gouerned. But that matter grew to be so long, that I gaue ouer my purpose therein, least the volume should haue waxen too great. I was also minded to haue inserted into this Treatise, a certaine Prophetie touching the Catastrophe of the Turkish kingdom, which Antonius Torquatus of Ferrara did deliuer to Matthias king of Hungary in the yeare of our Lord 1480. De Regnorum Europae Mutationibus. But because he doth peremptorily set downe, that the Turkes shall fall into the handes of the Christians about the yeares 1594. & 1595. and that the house of the Ottomans shall vtterly decay in

their thirteenth or fourteenth king, and that it shall not exceede that number, nor passe the yeare of our Lord 1596: He shall pardon me, if I do not beleue him, nor commend his credit to future posterity. For (with great grieffe it must bee vttered) wee see all thinges go so quite contrarie to this prognosticon, and the power of the Turkes growe so huge and infinite; and their enemies so diuided and weakened, that vnlesse God come downe as it were out of an Engine, to protect the Gospell of his Sonne Iesus Christ, and the Professors thereof, I feare greatly that the halfe Moone which now ruleth & raigneth almost ouer all the East, wil grow to the full, and breede such an Inundation as will vtterly drowne al Christendome in the West. God for his mercies sake rebate her Hornes with the glorious shine of his brightest Sonne. The houres, that I haue employed in writing this translation, were stollen from your Graces grauer businesses whereon I should haue attended: And therefore no man can by any right challenge the same from you, nor I in duetie offer it to any other but to your Grace, whose wholly I am and must be, & of whom I may truely and iustly say as Oedipus saith in Sophocles. [...].

The Lord God long maintaine your Grace in all honor and health vnder the most blessed gouernement of our most happy & renowned Queen ELIZABETH, for the continuance of the peace of this Church of England, and comfort of all those that are bound to honor and loue you. At Lambeth, this New-yeares-day 1595.

Your Graces most humble Seruant at commaundement, Abraham Hartwell.

The Authors Epistle to the Reader

Although Strabo doo write, that the writings touching matters of Persia, had alwaies but small credit euen vntill his time: and therefore it may seeme likely, that I, who haue taken vpon me to wryte such things as haue happened in those cuntries within the space of nyne yeares, ought greatly to feare lest these my writings should haue the very same successe, that they had: yet I haue thought it necessary to aduertise the reader, that for that respect I did not surcease, or refuse to publish this my history, (though indeed for dyuers other wantes and defectes it may seeme peradventure not soe worthy to appeere before the learned persons of this present age:) But rather, euen for the selfe same cause, it may rest assured, that without manifest wrong & iniury it cānot be despised or discredited. For if those former Historiographers (if algates they were euer worthy of that name) haue deserued, that little credit should be yelded vnto them: this default was imputed vnto them not for any despite or reproch, but in iustice and in reason: because (as Strabo himselfe saith) they louing more to delight then to profit, inserted many fictions & many fables in the truth & purity of the History. And so the things that happened in deed, being mingled and confused with such as were cogged and fained, they that read them, could not be so truly enformed of those aduentures and actions, as they desyred, and peradventure as they had great neede at that time to be instructed in. But I haue written this history, with a full and sound resolution, neuer to decline from the truth, & not to suffer, that vpon any occasion whatsoever, any thing should bee discoursed therein, but that which eyther I my selfe haue seene, or possibly could vnderstand to be true. Wherein, although I haue found many difficulties and vsed great labours, (aswell through the ignorance of the people, who being not able to tell me any other name of the Cityyes, of the cuntries, of the fieldes, of the Riuers, & of the hilles, but onely the barbarous names of them, they made the certaine knowledge of those places, wherein these battells were foughten, to be very difficult vnto me: As also because it was very requisite, that I should haue an eie to the seuer all qualities of dyuers nations, who are sometimes giuen to

lying, and by whom many thinges are wont to bee spoken, and many thinges concealed, for their owne particular respectes.) Notwithstanding I haue endeoured by all the best meanes I possibly could, to discharge my duty therein, ouercomming these & such other difficulties, with continuall conference among dyuers men in dyuers places, to the end I might find them agree together in their reportes, and expecting withall, that Tyme it selfe would at last bring forth the truth. Neither did I euer content my selfe with the first or second aduertisement deliuered vnto me, but alwaies iustified the first with the last, by conferring together the testimonies of both sides. And lastly, without regard of danger, of expenses, or of labour, I haue enformed my selfe of euery particularity, that possibly I could, by such men, as were esteemed no liers, but men of great authority, who were present for the most part at al these actions. Which purpose and resolution of myne, was greatly fauoured and assisted by three priuate & extraordinary meanes. First, by the credit and authoritie of Theodoro Balbj, and Giouanni Michele, being then the right honorable Consulles in Soria for the Venetian Senate, two most noble, prudent, and valourouse subiectes of the State of Venice: who most magnificently without sparing of any costes did fauour me herein, & in all my other studies, where, vnto I applyed my selfe in those countries. Secondly by the familiar conuersation which I had with one Christoforo de Buonj, cheefe Interpreter to the said most honorable Lordes, a person of great valour, well frended and beloued among those nations, and aboue all, of singular faith and dexterity. Thirdly, by my knowledge in Phisicke, which I was not squemish to practise among those people, to the end I might the better, & without ministring any suspition to any man, enter into their most secret & important aduertisements: and so by this meanes to purchase familiarity in the principall howses of those Citties, wherein for the space of almost seuen whole yeares together, I liued and was entertayned. And of thus much it shall be euen sufficient to haue aduertised the readers, who without any other Apologie or iustification of mine, mayrest contented and satisfied with my desyre, which hath beene to represent vnto the world Accidentes, that haue happened so far off, so strange, and so important, that thereby they may reape great profit both in peace and warre. Which satisfaction if I shall obtaine of their gratitude, I shall thinke my selfe to haue gayned enough, in lieu of all the trauelles, of all the dangers, & of all the expences, that I haue susteyned, & I shall rest assured that I haue not beene an vnfruitfull labourer herein.

The First Booke

The Argument.

The causes that moued the Author to write this Historie.

The Originall of this warre.

The causes of the same warre.

Aidere beheaded.

Ismahel the king vseth great cruelties, publisheth a new Religion, and spreadeth ab [...]ad a speech that he would passe into Babylonia.

Amurath resolueth to moue warre against Persia.

Periaconcona beheaded.

New stirres in Persia, wherof Vctres Bassa aduertiseth Amurath: who therby is confirmed in his opinion to make this warre.

Consultations at Constantinople, of the maner how to manage this warre.

Amurath will not in person go with the Armie: but choseth Mustaffa Bassa to be his Generall: who passeth to Chalcedon, and from thence to Erzirum, where he mustereth and surueigheth his Armie, and then departeth for Siruan.

Mustaffa arriueth at Chars: goeth vnder the Mountaines of Chielder, and there encampeth himselfe artificially.

The King of Persia sendeth Souldiers against the Turkes: and ouer them he maketh Tocomac the Sultan his Generall.

Tocomac cometh toward Chars; he findeth out his Spies, and being deceiued by his Spies, he doth confidently assault the Turkes.

At the first, Tocomac doth happely ouercome the Turkes, but afterwarde he was discomfited, and saued himselfe by the oportunitie of the night.

The particular of the Victorie.

Manucchiar the Georgian yeeldeth himselfe to Mustaffa, and is interteined by him.

THE WARRES BETWEENE THE TURKES AND PERSIANS

The warre in Persia commodious for the state of Christendom.

The causes that moue the author to wryte this historie.

I write the sondry successes of the warre betweene Amurat king of Turkie, & Mahamet by surname caled Codabanda king of Persia, both of them among the Barbarians beeing most mightie & most warlike Princes. A warre not onely long & bloudie, but also very commodious and of great oportunitie to the Christian Common-wealth: for that it hath granted leisure to the Champions of Christ to refresh and encrease their forces, being now much weakened by warres both Forreine and Ciuill. A matter in truth rather diuine then humane, there being now newly arisen among the Turkes, fresh hopes of victories, by meanes whereof (contrary to the custome of such contentions) the wrath of these two Princes was drawne in length, which if they had bene conuerted against Europe, might haue made our state most troublesome and turbulent. These successes and all the rest, that together with the like motions haue come to passe, sometimes intermingling among them the priuy treacheries of the Tartarians, sometimes the oppressions of the people of Drusia, and sometimes also the insolencies of the Arabians, I here take in hand to describe, being therunto moued, principally vpon two occasions. The one is, for that they all seeme to me of themselues very worthy to be knowne both of the men that liue at this day, & also of those that shall come after vs: neither haue I as yet seene any man that hath made any full or true report thereof Which notwithstanding I hope shalbe herein performed by my myselfe who haue bene entertained almost seauen whole yeares (during the said warres) partly in Soria, partly in Constantinople, and by occasion of my practise in Phisicke, haue bene familiarly conuersant with many Bassaes, Embassadours, and other great men, aswel Persians as Turkes, that haue beene agentes and dealers in these affaires. The other is, for that I doe verily persuade my selfe, that I shall breede great profite and delight to all nations Christian by the reading of this history, wherein they shall vnderstand how mighty the forces are of these two enimies of the name of Christ; and in what termes they stand euen at this day: by meanes of which knowledge it may peraduenture fall out, that our Christian Princes will bee encouraged to take vp armes against the Barbarians, vnder whose gouernement so many famous and potent nations are already reduced. A losse (to say the trueth) very great, and not to be thought-of without shedding of teares, that whereas a people so renowned for their Nobilitie, & glorious in all ages for wisdome

and science, did in times past gouerne so many nations, as though they were Lordes of the whole world: Now being either driuen from their proper Colonies, from their owne houses, from their domesticall confines, they goe wandring vp and downe poore, & needy of other mens helpe: Orels being brought into a most vile kind of seruitude, some serue as sclauers, & some yeeld obedience to the enimies of Christ in such sorte, that euen in Greece it selfe, the very name of Greece is quite extinguished, and al because it was departed from the bosome of the Catholike Church. But let not this my history take his beginning at these quarrels and complaintes, which peraduenture to some mens humors would seeme the more vnpleasant, in that they would proue more necessary to be set downe in this respect: And therefore my conceit is rather, that in mentioning such thinges as are neerer to our remembrance, I should beginne at the death of olde Tamas the most famous king of Persia, and withall discourse vpon the state and condition of that kingdome whilest it remained in the successors of the said Tamas, videlicet Ismahel and Mahamet, his sonnes: for that by this very briefe narration, euery man shall manifestly see the true occasions of this warre, and so we shall auoide the inserting of any superfluous replication in the contexture of this our history.

I say then, that Tamas after the warres, which he valorously waged with Soliman the first of that name, and the eleuenth Emperour of the Turkes, at such time as the said Tamas did driue Soliman out of Tauris (being of old called Ecbathana, the very same, wherein Herodotus writeth, that the kings richesses & treasures were then kept, & not Terua as P. Giouius would haue it) a Citty which the same Turkish Emperour had sacked, and hauing concluded a peace, wherein it was agreed that the Castell Cheiseri, by the Turkes called Chars, & by Ptolomee (as a man may resonably coniecture) Corso, being in this great change reduced by Soliman, into a fort, should be razed: he withdrew himselfe to the government of his own kingdome. Vnder whome the Persian Empire flourished in sacred & redoubted lawes, the people demeaned themselues after the best manner they could, abundance of collections came plentifully in, the Rentes of his chambers increased wonderfully, Armes, Artes & Sciences did happely prosper, and were highly esteemed: neither was there any more feare that Soliman would renew the warres, as one that had altogether bent his thoughtes another way. When as after a few yeares, wherein both Soliman and his sonne Selim, which after him had enioyed that damned foelicity of his Empire, departed out of this lyfe, Tamas also himself died in the yeare 1576, the xj. day of May, hauing left behind him eleuen children, one called Mahamet the eldest, who passed his life a while in Heri, (in times past called Aria,) and afterwardes in Siras, (of old called

A peace betweene Tamas & Soliman, & the conditions thereof.

Soliman & Selim dead. Tamas dyeth. Tamas leaueth eleuen children.

Persepolis) by the appointment of his father, being nowe waxen proud for his issue of many sonnes. Another named Ismahel his second sonne, who for the fiercenesse of his courage was banished into a Castell, called by the Persians Cahaca, situate betweene Casbin (otherwise called Arsacia) & Tauris. The third, who had to name Aidere, was kept in the custody of Zalchan, Piry Mahamet, Acta Hussain, and other of his kinsfolkes, by occasion of the mother of the said Aidere, all being cheefe Capitaines in the coast of Istigelù. Other eight children there were partly by the same mother partly by other women, whose names were Mamut, Solimano, Mustaffa, Emanguli, Alichan, Amet, Abrahin, & Ismahel the yonger.

Tamas his last will.

This Tamas, before he dyed, did solemnly appoynt by his will, that his sonne Ismahel the elder should bee set in the kingdome: who although, because he was yonger then Mahamet, could not bee his lawfull successor, yet did he yeeld great hope of his most excellent wit, and singular vertues: insomuch that he seemed to promise euery man an happy gouernment, & sufficient habilitie to defend himselfe against his enemies, were they neuer so fierce and warlike. Ismahel, after that he was confined by his father Tamas into the eastel of Cahaca, had euer sought to shew himselfe superior to his brother in the Arte milirarie: and although he gaue himselfe by secret industrie to learne the preceptes of the Turkish law (a thing which if it had beene publikely knowen, would alone haue beene enough to haue barred him from succession of the kingdome:) yet had he alwayes endeouored himselfe to be an open enemy to the Turkes, and thereupon with his often inuasions (which was the cause of his imprisonment) whiles the peace held betweene Tamas and Soliman, he was so bould as now & then, contrary to his fathers commandement to assault the Territorie of Erzirum and beyond all honestie to spoile the townes & castelles of that region withhis sodaine incursions. By meanes whereof he made shew of his great valour to all people, but principally to his father Tamas, who although in outward shew he seemed greatly to mislike those his youthful heates, yet was he dayly confirmed in the opinion, that he carried of him, to name him his successor, thinking verily that of soe great a dignity he would proue himselfe either altogether, or at least more worthy then his brother Mahamet. Which Mahamet (to speake the truth) aswel for the disease of his eyes, whereby for his surname he was called Codabanda, as also for the manner of his life altogether giuen to that ease, which is proper to such as are studious and quietly mynded, neuer shewed himselfe sufficient to sway the burden of the Empire,, and to brydle the fiercenesse of his enemies: yea and he protested himselfe that hee did vtterly abhorre so great a weight, and those so many cares, as are wont to follow so ample and soe many-partied a kingdome. And yet

The simulation of Ismahel.

Why Mahamet was called by surname Codabanda.

Mahamet loueth not the charge of a king.

for all that did not Mahamet remaine altogether deprieved of all the whole fauour of his father: forsomuch as Abas Mirize, the middlemost i of his sonnes, was confirmed in the Citty of Heri, (where he was before borne,) and honored with the tytle of the Visier of that remote and abundant Cuntry: yea and Tamas himselfe had established Emir Hamze, the eldest of Mahamets sonnes, in some great dignitie, if death, though some what tardee, yet not altogether vnlooked for, had not by preuenting him, bereaued him of his lyfe, and taken from them all hope of greater matters.

King Tamas then being thus dead, the said Ismahel was called by the Sultans, for the execution of his fathers will, to Casbin, that he might (as he ought) be saluted & proclaymed king. But while the Postes (whome the Turkes call Volacchi) ran with these great aduertysmentes to Ismahel, there arose a stirre within the Citty of Casbin, or rather within the pallace of the king, where remayned at that tyme Periaconcona, a woman in yeares elder then all those her brethren, the sonnes of Tamas, who was niece to Sahamal the Georgian on her mothers side, being sister to Sahamal, & wife to the said Tamas, of whom also was borne the yong Mustaffa, being one of the eyght sons aboue named. She hauing the care committed to her, and other Sultan Councillers of estate, to see the last will and testament of the dead king put in execution, was by sondry deuises dyuersly attempted, that the place might not be preserued for Ismahel, but vnlawfully yeilded to Aidere: who whiles Tamas was sorest afflicted with his sicknes, boldly entring into the chamber, where he lay, had adorned his forehead with his fathers Crowne, and in the sight of his old and weake parent, with an action more rash then became his honestie, shewed himselfe desirous of this ambitioue succession. And besides this errour, (for the which he was presently & sharpely rebuked) after the death of Tamas, he with drew himselfe to his sister, most instantly beseeching soe desyred a dignitie at her handes: with whome, as also with the rest of the Counsellors of estate he had vsed so many prayers & faouours, that the enheritaunce could not be any longer kept from him, but by the helpe of some secret deceit. His sister durst not be so bould, as to moue any important mittigatiō of these matters before the Counsellors, neither would her hart suffer her to set forward any action, that might be preiudicial to her brother Aidere: neither could she tell how to permit so great an iniury to be done to Ismahel, who was chosen by his father into the succession. And therefore in this perplexity she sought meanes to satisfy the ambitioue youth being present, the right and reasons of Ismahel being absent, the honour of her dead fathers will and testament, and the proffit of the kingdome. For hauing consulted with all the Sultans, she resolved to yeeld, that Aidere, being inuested

Abas Mirize
Mahamets
sonne, in Her

Emir Hamze
Mahamets sonne.

Ismahel called to
Casbin to be crowned
king of Persia.

Stirres in Casbin.

Periaconcona, sister
to Mahamet, Aidere
& Ismahel, yet elder
in yeares then they.

The singular
boldnesse of Aidere.

Aidere procureth to
bee made king before
Ismahel.

The subtilty of
Periaconcona to
entertayne Aidere.

Aidere stalled king in
Casbin.

in his regall apparell, and settled in the great gallerie, should attend the acclamation of the people, and be publicly installed, as though he were elected king. And euen thus did this vnwise & bould youth suffer himselfe to be led by the blind desires of gluttonous glory: who being set in his maiestie perswaded himselfe, that he should now see his frendes and foes obedient vnto him, and himselfe reuerenced of all men, as king of the Empire. But to these designementes so hasty and so prosperous, the successes that sprong from the subtilty of those Counsellors, and his dissembling Sister, were nothing conformable: for that by their aduise she tooke order, for the gates of the Pallace to be presently locked, leauing at euery passage asure garde, and permitting that one narrow wicket onely should remayne open, and safely warded with a company of most faithfull and valourouse Captaines, wholly deuoted to Tamas & Ismahel, who had strait charge also giuen them to suffer euery man to enter in, sauing onely the followers and keepers of Aidere. In this sort did she thinke to entertaine the young man, vntill such time as the nominated king should arriue from Cahaca, and so put in execution what he thought best, for the honour of himselfe, for the custodye of the kingdome, which fell to him by inheritance, and for the generall quiet of all Persia.

Aidere acknowledging
his publike
derision, flieth all
fearefull among
certaine women.

Thus then sate the young man Aidere, replenished with vnwonted ioyes, receauing honour from al the people of Casbin, sauing onely from his frendes and keepers. By meanes whereof, perceauing now the prohibition of them, and the great stirre of Zalchan his chiefest fauorite, (who discovering the prepensed deceit, and crying vpon king Aidere, threatned the lady, the Sultans, & all the rest that waited vpon this fained succession, which was indeed ordayned but for a scorne & despight of him) he acknowledged this publicke derision, and secretly together with all his misfortune, he abandoned his fresh-begun honors, and of a king (as he presumed to be) he had the grace to make himselfe a fugitiue, and being become all fearefull and sorrowfull, with all the force he could he withdrew himselfe closely among certayne women of the pallace, hoping so to find some way to escape with his lyfe.

Aidere beheaded by
Sahamal his vncl.

In the meane tyme so greatly increased the cryes and threatnings of the frendly company of Istigelu (and now all of them had prepared themselues for some dangerous & pernicious attempt against Persia) that the counsellors, with consent of the lady were enforced to take order, that to bereaue these tumultuous and seditious people of all their hope and courage, Aidere should be depriued of his lyfe. And so Sahamal the Georgian vncl. to the young man, after long search made for him, at last found him hidden among the weomen, and without any stay, taking his head by the lockes, cut it quite from his carcase: and in the place, where Zalchan with the rest of vnfortunate

Aidere his favorites stode crying and threatning, among the greatest medley & thickest presse of the proude conspirators, he flong the head all blouddy, & as it were breathing for heate, crying out vnto them, Behould there your king, enjoy him at your pleasure. At this sudden and horrible spectacle euery man burned in rage and anger: neither did there want for the present time many a rash head, that meditated most cruel reueng, & turbulent stirres: Yet in the end when they perceiued that the neere succession of Ismahel was ineuitable, and the death of Aidere (that followed) irreuocable, euery one betooke himselfe to his owne priuate affayres, & at last deuyded themselues one from another, and seuerally departing from the pallace, some saued themselues here, and some there, leauing those courtes and lodginges all in quyet.

In the meane tyme was Tamas buried acording to their prophane rites, and Ismahel the successor arriued from Cahaca, who without any stirre at all was embraced by his sister, saluted by the Sultans, and reuerenced of all men, as the lawfull heire of so great an Empire. But he, assoone as he began to sway the regall scepter, and sawe himselfe superior to all men in liberty & authority, without any pittie at all (swaruing therein from the Persian custome, and imitating the Turkish maner) caused the heades of all his eyght yonger breethren to be cut off, and with all vsed such f [...]nder diligence, that not onely all those which were neere vnto them in bloud or affinity were bereaued of their liues, but also all the fauourites of the late slaine Aidere, were vnhappely destroyed in that publike slaughter, so that the streetes of Casbin were defyled with blood, and all the City resounded with mourninges & complaints. Which vnexpected cruelty, being altogether vnworthy of so worthy-a-thought king, did in such sort encrease that opinion of great successes, which all the Persians had conceaued of the person of Ismahel, that there was not a man to be found, which changed not his former hopes into new fears, & bitterly sorrowing for the calling of such a Lord to rule ouer them, did not hate this new fiercenes of his mind, & bewayle so vntymely & miserable a massacre. But much greater and farre more lamentable did these miseries growe, assoone as certayne speeches were published and spred of the king, That hee would change the religion, (if we may so call it:) & assoone as he commanded openly, that whosoeuer desyred to liue vnder his standard, & loued to obey his lawes, should detest the superstitious worships of Aly, the foolish and false prophet of the Persians, & according to the impious custome of the Ottomans, obserue and mayntaine the impure and wicked rytes of Abubac, Osman, and others, that were reuerenced & honoured by the Turkes with a profane worship. So that by this great nouelty, quite contrary to the late publike and famous actes of Ismahel, and altogether repugnant to their hope, whereby they expected glorious matters from

The head of Aidere throwne among the conspirators.

Ismahel putteth to death many kinsfolkes and frendes of his dead brother Aidere.

Euery man bewaileth the cruelty of the new king Ismahel.

Ismahel publisheth a new superstition.

New publike griefes
& new deathes
happening by
occasion of Ismahel.

The Califfe of
Casbin de pryued
of his eyes by the
commandement of
Ismahel.

A rumor spread that
Ismahel would passe
to Babilon with
an army.

King Ismahel
suddenly perished,
& the manner of
his death.

him, to the generall benefite of Persia, the myndes of all men were so afflicted, that the country neuer felt greater trouble, nor euer indured a more dangerous & vncouth a change: by meanes whereof, & by force of this publike Edict of the new king, (whether he did it because he was in loue with this wicked worship, and had learned this abomination rather than any other, as we sayd before: or whether he did it to reuoke his neighbours the Mesopotamians, the Babilonians, and Assyrians, vnder his banners:) many of his prophane priestes, many of the Gouvernors of his frendly and subiect Citties, being too much inflamed with the former superstition, were dryuen into exile, many put in prison, some had their eyes pluckt out, (among whome was the Califfe of Casbin) and not a few others in sondry sortes deprivued of their liues: yea many Ladyes, ioyned in bloud with Ismahel himselfe, & dyuers others of his kinsfolkes, to whom neither sex, nor age, nor innocency could be a sufficient defence, did endure sondry tormentes and strange calamities.

In this so great an innouation, and among these tumultes, there went abrode with all, an vniuersall rumor, not onely among the Citties of Persia, but in the regions of the Turkes also, (Fame the publisher of euill, rather than of good newer, arriuing euen to the City of Constantinople) that with all these disorders, Ismahel sought to put in order a great number of such soldiers, as faouered this new proclaimed vanity, & passing with them to the citty of Babylon, now called Bagdat, there, to the imitation of Soliman, would receaue the Crowne of the Empire at the hand of him, that (whosoever he was) he should find to be the successor of their great Califfe, and in the cheefest place among theyr vnclane priestes. In this dyuers variety of matters, and in so great nouelty of euentes, beyond all common expectatiō, whiles there encreased rather feares of newe motions, then ensued hopes of auncient quyettesse, by the helpe of the aforementioned Lady Periaconcona, (who as the kinges greatest faourite suruiued all the rest) he was sodainely bereaued of his lyfe: whether it were that this his death happened by occasion of certaine amorous practises of Ismahel himselfe, or whether his sister had cunningly conueighed poyson into some electuary prepared for him: or (as some more probably do affirme) that his sayd sister hauing priuately conspyred with Calil-chan, Emir-chan, Piry Mahamet, Curchi Bassi, being al at that time captaines of great accompt, & as it were Presidentes of the kingdome, had brought them in, apparelled in womens weedes & gowns, & that they strangled him, at such time as Ismahel had priuately withdrawen himselfe among his paramoures. Howsoever it was, sufficient it is, that by the helpe of the saide Periaconcona, the 24. day of Nouember being S. Katherins euen, in the yeare of our saluation 1577. this king, being generally tearmed

by his people a seditious man & a contemner of the lawe, was suddenly taken out of this world, to the exceeding ioy of all those Nations, that by his death thought they should remaine freedde from great and manifold troubles.

Ismahel being thus dead, the Lady began presently to parlee with al those Sultans, that were the ministers of this fraudulent death, & told them, that as they had giuen aduise, for the greater benefit of all Persia, that Ismahel should be depriued both of his kingdome & lyfe: and that as yet it was not knowen, who should worthely succeed in that Crowne, which now remayned in their handes, forasmuch as the king, that dead is, hath left no issue behind him: so it touched them verye neere to take vpon them the protection thereof, and preseruing the maiestie of the Scepter, the liberties of the people, and the peace of the subiect Citties, strongly to defend and deeply to settle the safety of that nation, which onely possesseth the true orders of the elect disciples of crafty and wicked Mahamet. There were at that tyme many gouernours and Capitaines assembled in Casbin: and euery one of them had withdrawen himselfe thether, for the accomplishment of his owne priuate designementes, these gaping after the mutations of the world. Emir-Chan he burned in ambitious desires, and hoped by the meanes of a match, to be concluded with a sister of Periaconcona, (who was already greatly inclyning to him) that he should be exalted to the soueraigne degree of all Persia. Mirize Salinas, cheefe among the Sultans, of that court, he hoped on the other syde to aduance into the estate, eyther Mahamet brother to the dead king, or els Hamze the eldest son of the sayde Mahamet Codabanda: and by bestowing vpon him his daughter to be his wyfe, (as afterwarde hee did) so to encrease the glory of his house. Others there were that hoped they should be able to draw Abas out of Heri, and to create him king of the Empyre. There was also one of the Tutors of the infant Tamas, who waited likewise for some oportunity to settle Tamas in the kingdom, and so by meanes of his greatnes to exalt himselfe to the soueraigne Tytle of cheefe captaine among his fellowes. Neither did there want a number of others, that secretly watched to vsurpe any occasion that might be presented vnto them. How be it in this so great variety of thoughts, the Sultans aunswered the Lady with one consent, and promised her in most liberall termes all the protection, that their forces could afforde, or their wepons procure: and yet did euery one of them both in action and worde clerly dissemble their seuerall imaginations where unto they myrid was as proue and deady, as their harte was cunning to conceale them closely. And in this sort were ended those great noueltyes which arose (I know not vppon what occasion) & were brought in by this ambitious king.

Periaconcona
parleeth with the
captaines of Persia.

The answere of
the Captaynes to
Periaconcona,

Amurat at the stirres
in Persia, entreth into
mind to make warre
vpon them.

An auncient custome
of the Turkes.

Amurat intentiue to
the matters of Persia.

In the meane space, which was one yeare seuen monthes and six dayes of king Ismahels raigne, Amurat the new successor also of his father Selim, who was now wakened at the death of old renowned Tamas, and at the rumor spread abroade of the desyre which Ismahel had to passe to Babilon, & at the fresh report of this new published superstition, & had throughly learned of all sides, what harme this late inconstant & variable king had wrought in Persia, what dissensions he had raysed, & how hardly all the Prouinces of the Persian Empire had endured those strange calamities, & so hoped in himselfe either in Ismahels lyfe tyme, or after his death to succeed him, for that heereby occasiō might be ministred vnto him to take vp armes against Persia, & matter suggested to put in execution his vnmeasurable desires of some new conquestes: which desires had alwaies made both him and other his predecessors not onely suspected, but also terrible & fearefull aswell to his frendes as to his enemies: for asmuch as there is an auncient custom, which is growen as it were to be a law among the Ottoman kings, that those Emperours cannot challenge their due honours in their life tyme, nor their proud monuments after their death, (which are so durable, as at this day they remayne equall with Aeternitie,) vnlesse they attempt some great and ambitious actions & enterpryses, and vnlesse they performe some exployte, that may be conformable to theyr maiesty. Amurat therefore bending all his cogitations to these great stirres, would not direct his mind any other way, or moue warre agaynst any other nation, vntill he might first see what issue these maruellous innouations would bringe forth which in the succession that followed, & namely in the person of Mahamet now king, simed to be more pregnant and perseuerant, then euer they were before, and ministred to Amurat new occasions of victorious and strange hopes, for that assoone as Ismahel departed out of this lyfe, by the aforementioned Mirize Salmas, (being in dignitie the cheefe man among the Sultans, though in bloud and nobilitie inferior to them all) after many letters dispatched too and fro, Mahamet Codabanda was at last assured, how with all quietnes of mind and security of person he might come and take possession of the kingdome. He was also certyfyed by the same Salmas of the whole conspiracy plotted agaynst his Brother to put him to death, and likewise made acquainted how the fraudulent lady with the Sultans had capitally consulted against him, & how she fauouring Emir-chan & Abas Mirize of Hert, her nephew and his son, more then became her, did little regard the due and rightfull succession of him being her brother. And for these causes did Mahamet greatly beare himselfe bold of the faith and diligence of Mirize Salmas: and had withall no small desyre to see his eldest son Hamze Mirize, aduanced to some such soueraigne dignity, as he saw was due to the liuely hope,

that euery man perceaued to bein him, in regarde of his vertue & prudence, for managing the common wealth, and dispatch of matters of warre: wherein also he shewed himselfe to his father very iealous and suspicious, least some other man should vsurpe vpon him that honour and authority which so properly appertayned vnto him. And thereupon did Mahamet in the end resolue with himselfe, not to leaue the kingdome in the handes of priuate persons, not in the lightnes of an inconstat woman, who by the occurrents sent him from his counsellor, was detected to be an vnshamefaced queane, and are bellious conspirator against her owne bloud, where with she had now twice defiled her selfe, without any pittie or remorse of conscience. And therefore he wrote back againe, that he was mynded to take the rightfull succession vpon him: that (God so fauouring, ayding and assisting him) hee would enforce himselfe to profit Persia, to proue a more thankfull and commodious a member to the common wealth, then his dead brother: & that for the same purpose he was putting himselfe on his iourney: with strait charge notwithstanding, that Mirize Salmas, to make his comming seeme the more acceptable, should before his entrance within the gates of Casbin present him with the mischeeuous head of Periaconcona, a woman (in respect of the scorne exercysed agaynst yong Aidere, and of the treacherous death practised and executed vpon his brother, and of the perucise imaginations which she conceaued to cause the succession to fall into other mennes handes, and of the prodigall familiarity which she had with some of the Sultans,) well worthy of a thousande deathes. Secreatly did Mirize Salmas put in execution whatsoeuer Mahamet had priuately enioyned him, so that by his meanes he was presently & solemnly proclaimed king of Persia. And afterwardes hauing gathered togeather many squadrons of men, wholly deuoted to the bloud and name of Mahamet, the same Mirize Salmas put himselfe on his way to meete him, carying the head of that audacious & manlike virago vpon the top of a lance with her hayre dispersed, and some other vncouth behaiours that moued terror to the beholders. From which nouelties (one mischeife as it were hudling vpō the neck of another) there sprongvp dyuers inward hatreds, sundry tumultuous seditions, and many ciuill warres, insomuch that the king for his parte being continually solicited by Mirize Salmas, (the cheefest and deerest fauorite he had,) sought by all meanes to take reuenge of those treacherous companions and complices of his brothers death, who on the other syde did euen burne in immoderate desyres to aduance their owne priuate estates, and withall their might opposed themselues against his power and authority, whereby the state of Persia began to fall into greater inconueniences, and of these nouelties to reape new losses. Sahamal the Georgian, (he that by the appointment

Mahamet Codabanda
resolueth to
come and be
crowned King.

Periaconcona
beheaded.

New stirres and
mischiefes in Persia.