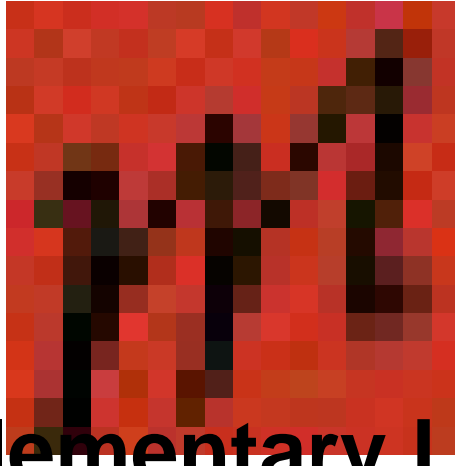


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Supplementary Letter I

- Persian Letters - Letters -

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The principal eunuch to Jaron, [1] a black eunuch [2] in Erzerum [3]

I pray heaven to bring you back to these halls, and protect you from all dangers.

Although I have never known that engagement people call friendship, and have closed myself in on myself, you have nevertheless made me feel that I still had a heart ; and while I was of bronze for all those slaves who were living under my rule, it pleased me to watch your childhood develop.

The time came when my master cast his eyes on you. Nature had not yet spoken, far from it, when the blade separated you from nature. I will not say whether I pitied you, or I felt a certain pleasure at seeing you raised as far as me. I calmed your tears and your cries. It was like watching you reborn, and escape from a servitude where you would always have had to obey, to enter into a servitude where you were to command. I oversaw your education. Sternness, always inseparable from instruction, long prevented you from knowing that you were dear to me. Yet you were ; and I will tell you that I loved you as a father loves his son, if these words father and son could apply to our fate.

You are going to survey the lands inhabited by Christians, who have never believed. It is impossible for you not to contact much uncleanness there. How could the Prophet look at you in the midst of so many millions of his enemies ? I would like for my master, on his return, to make the pilgrimage to Mecca ; you will all purify yourselves in the land of the angels. [4]

The Isfahan seraglio this 10th day of the moon of Gemmadi 1711

[Letter 15](#)

[1] The name is taken from a city in Persia. Jaron, who accompanies Usbek as far as Smyrna, does not appear in edition A ; only as addressee of this first Supplementary Letter and as author of the second.

[2] The black eunuchs who guard the women can on occasion go outside to accompany their master, as here, or his wives, as in letter 45.

[3] This letter was first published in the edition of 1758, where it was numbered 15.

[4] For those who have the means, the pilgrimage to Mecca is one of the principal duties of Islam ; see Montesquieu's note to letter 37, which identifies the Hagi as "a man who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca".