

# 1500's Bohemia to Ottoman (German ethnicity)

By Ted Monnich aka SCA name: Karl von Nord Mark, Ottoman name: Osman  
Kingdom of Atlantia

(Time Period/Culture)

My persona grew up in the early 1500's, of German ethnicity in the Kingdom of Bohemia. He became a Man at Arms, and served as a paid foreign soldier in the service of the King of Hungary, Louis II. At the Battle of Mohacs, September, 1526, our army was defeated, the king killed, and I was captured by the Ottoman army of Sultan Suleiman. I was lucky to not be executed as many were, but was enslaved and sent back to Istanbul with many other prisoners. On the journey the Turks learned of my musical training, and instead of imprisoning me in the notorious dungeons of Yedikule fortress, I was sent to the Enderun school of Topkapi Palace to be trained and serve as was required. Eventually I was appointed to the Janissary marching band, the Mehteran. Eventually I rose in rank through merit, as is the way of the Turks. In this way I find myself as the Mehterbasi or leader of our Mehteran unit which serves in the court, and Topkapi Palace. My life in Istanbul has been far from suffering. My devotion and service to my work, and the court has afforded me a prosperous life, far greater than I knew in my youth in Bohemia and Hungary.

## 1. Names

Given name at birth: Karl von Nord Mark

Name given by the Turks: Osman Turkoglu (son of the Turks)

## 2. Clothing (I will heretofore address my current life in the Ottoman Court and Army)

I hold a high rank in the Ottoman Army (no Janissaries are natural-born Turks)

I wear a long red linen or wool coat with a yellow cotton lining. This is worn over a long white cotton, linen, or silk kaftan which is belted with a wide golden silk sash as is fitting my rank and social status. Under the kaftan I wear a long sleeve cotton gauze gomlek, or undershirt. My trousers are black or gray salvar. On my feet are knitted socks and yellow leather shoes, or red boots fitting my rank. My hat is a large white turban over a tall red quilted hat like the Byzantines wear. This is my primary symbol of status or rank. I have been gifted an elaborate H'ilat gift robe from the great Sultan for my service.

## 3. Accessories

In war I am entitled to wear a commander's saber and belt. As leader of the Janissary band I carry a silver and gold staff. I admire the gold and silver embroidered pouches and fabrics.

## 4. Homes

I am given an apartment over the Enderun School in the inner court of the palace, near to the Treasury, with other members of the Mehteran.

## 5. Furnishings

Many low carved wooden divan platforms with stuffed cushions covered in beautiful fabrics as is required in the palace.

## 6. Food

We are fed by cooks in the palace kitchens. Our food is in the style of the Turks, and is tasty and filling. Most often lentil soup, good bread, vegetables from the palace garden or the neighborhood market, fowl, and occasionally lamb. Never pork, and not much fish, although the Harem does eat fish.

## 7. Past times

Bohemia and Hungary as I have noted. As a youth I studied music at the cathedral in Prague.

## 8. Medical Tools, Herbal, Apothecary,

Like all of the Janissaries, we are cared for by the Bektashi Sufi dervishes and the barbers.

## 9. Important People

The most important person in my life, today, is our Bright Faced Padishah, Kanuni Sultan Suleyman. He is the father of all of the Janissary soldiers, and as I now serve in their ranks, and perform for his Eminence regularly, He is my inspiration.

## 10. Important Events

Battle of Mohacs, Battle of Belgrade, Shazade's Circumcision Festival, Eid Festival

## 11. Artists (Paintings)

There are great artisans and craftsmen in service to the court. An artist named Bellini came from Italy to paint the image of the Sultan, and some of the Janissaries.

## 12. Musicians (Songs)

I am a musician and am surrounded by musicians. We play the compositions of Abdulkadir Meragi, as well as Sufi hymns and folk songs for our amusement.

## 13. Armor, Weapons

When I was in service to King Louis I covered my entire person in iron armor made in Augsburg. This was provided by the Bohemian court.

## 14. List of Occupations (Sorted by Class)

Music student, Man at arms, Musician to the Ottoman Court, Music teacher in the Enderun School, Leader of the Janissary band

## 15. Recommended Books

A Cultural History of the Ottomans (2016) looks at Ottoman material culture.

Subjects of the Sultan (1995) is an up to date look at culture and daily life, including women's issues.

Both are by professor Suraiya Faroqhi, and could serve as college textbooks.

Bountiful Empire (2018), by Priscilla Mary Işin, looks at a history of Ottoman cuisine in its cultural context, and is really excellent and inspiring.

## 16. Helpful Links

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/134233213955988/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/398762226986519/>